

Series - Be Wise
Topic - Church (1 Corinthians)

Date - 24-Nov-2019
Speaker - Senior Ps Ben Lee

WELCOME [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

WORSHIP [15 min]

You may select songs like

1. Spirit Touch Your Church

WORD [45 min]

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Commit to manifest holiness, oneness and love to reflect God's character in us.
2. Support each other to live Godly, Christ-like lives in a world that is full of corruption and self-indulgence.

Sermon Summary

The following are the key points of the sermon:

1. Paul's emphasis was on Christian life and conduct in the local church.
2. The purpose of the church is to manifest or reflect the character of God to the world.
3. Therefore, as a church, we are called to be a people of holiness, oneness and love.

Sermon Recap (Full Summary)

Senior Ps Ben wrapped up the year-long study of 1 Corinthians in this sermon.

1 Corinthians is the first letter written by Paul to the Corinth church. It teaches us what a church is supposed to be like and why. What is the ultimate purpose of the church? It is not what the church does for us, but what it does for God. This changes our focus from self to God. Church is the expression of the living God in His world. Below are the main emphasis of Paul's description of the church:

1. The Church Is To Be Holy (Ch 5-11)

- The church is called to be holy (1 Corinthians 1:2); thus the members must be pure and holy as well. Holiness is to possess a certain kind of strangeness to the world as we are not of the world.

- Paul advised the church to expel unrepentant sinners as sin, like yeast, spreads (1 Corinthians 5:5-8). Sin affects everyone, not only the sinner. By expelling the unrepentant person, Paul hopes that he/she will see the seriousness of the sin and his/her soul might be saved.
- Paul also rebukes the church for tolerating sin. Toleration of sin cancels the very nature of the church. The church is to be marked by holiness as we hold up a better, humane, and God-honouring way of living. We are to be the salt and light of the world.

2. The Church Is To Be One (Ch 1-4, 12, 14)

- The church in Corinth is facing division. They were in factions and cliques. Some members wanted to honour God, others wanted worldly things (1 Corinthians 3:3).
- Some took others to secular courts to settle internal disputes (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). But Paul suggests another option: choose to lay down your rights (1 Corinthians 6:7). We should exercise our Christian freedom to serve others, not serve ourselves.
- Pride was the root of the divisiveness. When the church is divided by preferences of particular cell groups, age groups, or personalities, we divide the body of Christ. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it (1 Corinthians 12:27). Oneness binds us and supersedes differences.

3. The Church Is To Be A Loving People (Ch 13)

- We possess much knowledge in today's technological age. Paul writes that "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8:1). Paul does not mean for us to be ignorant to be loving, but to use the knowledge we possess with love.
- It is when we use our gifts and knowledge in love that it benefits others. When it is not used in love, it is annoying like a clanging cymbal (1 Corinthians 13:1).
- Love determines the Christian's use of various freedoms; Christians do what is loving toward others, not just what we are free to do. Love prompts one to deny oneself, to put others first and to serve others sacrificially.
- At the very heart of our holiness and oneness is love and concern for each other. Love is a posture of the heart for God and others, which then naturally shows itself in our actions.

Summary

- Why is the church a people of holiness, oneness and a loving nature? Because God is all these things and the church is meant to reflect the character of God (Ch 15-16).
 - We are holy to reflect God's holiness.
 - We are one because God is one (1 Corinthians 10:17).
 - We are to be a loving people, because God is a loving God.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that your cell reflects God's character of holiness, oneness and love as mentioned in the sermon? **Climate Question (Recap)** [15 min]

Leader's Notes:

A recap question to urge cell members to honestly assess the spiritual health – holiness, oneness, love – of their cell. Discuss objectively what your cell has done well and what are the areas for potential improvements. Are any of the characteristics of holiness, oneness and love lacking? What can be done to instill these characteristics?

It is easy to point out what others can do better in the cell. This approach may omit ownership from those who share. Therefore, encourage them to share for their lives – do you reflect these characteristics in your cell time? If not, what can you start doing?

Try to prevent the discussion from entering into an opinion sharing segment. Rather, direct it into a ‘personal ownership discussion’. Therefore, you might want to halt and sharing that is overly leaning towards opinion of others or shared in pride.

Encourage your members to be patient and open to one another’s feedback as there may be conflicting viewpoints but remind members that we are all one body in Christ with the common aim to be more Christ-like. As one body we have a oneness that binds us and supersedes all differences. If possible, note down the comments and possible solutions to be shared with your zone pastors.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

As a church we are called to holiness, oneness and love. Therefore, as a cell, we are called to these as well. This is the standard that RiverLife and its members should aspire to achieve.

- 2. 1 Corinthians also expounds on the practice of our Christian freedom. Have you seen someone in RiverLife misusing his/her Christian freedom? How does it affect the church and its members? Understand Question (Relate, Reflect)** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes:

This is an understand question to relate how Christian freedom is exercised in RiverLife and reflect how it affects the community. Leaders, also encourage your members to examine their own actions and behaviour and how it affects others. For example, Christian freedom does not mean tolerating sin nor does it mean freedom to behave in a manner that may stumble others. How do we choose to lay down our rights despite the Christian freedom afforded to us?

This is a good article for the cell to read on exercising Christian liberty:
<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/4-principles-exercise-christian-liberty/>

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

Christ has given us the gift of Christian freedom, but it must be used with love and others in mind. The purpose of our Christian freedom is to be free from the worldly value system (old nature) and to freely serve the body of Christ. Christian freedom must be used within Biblical boundaries.

- 3. What can I be and do within RiverLife to make this kind of Godly community more of a reality? Translation Question (Response)** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes:

This is an exercise for members to think of concrete ways to transform RiverLife into a community of holiness, oneness and love. How can they contribute to the church

individually or as a cell to create a Godly community? Reinforce the call for members to serve the church community with their spiritual gifts. Serving also helps you to discover your gift; gifts become evident the more and longer you serve.

Transition (Wrapping Up, Vision Casting to Cell & Closing The Discussion)

We are created in God's image and together as a church (one body in Christ) we should reflect His character. 1 Corinthians teaches how we should conduct ourselves as Christians and what a church should be – holy, united and loving. We are to be pure, to be harmonious, and to love others – to be God-honouring examples of a better way of living. Therefore, let us work together as a cell towards that. All of us must own this journey because it takes all of us to reflect God's character in our cell and in our church.

WORKS [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. that we will never get used to a sub-culture that tolerates sin. Pray for our homes and cell group to be holy because God is holy.
2. that we will never get used to a sub-culture that ignores division and unites around secondary things. Pray for our home and our cells to shine as light into the dark places by being a unified community.
3. that we will never get used to a sub-culture where love is just about feelings. Ask the Holy Spirit for the supernatural ability to love others more than ourselves.
4. for our upcoming Cell Christmas outreach.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Synchronised Prayer Alarm

8am on Wednesdays

Follow on Facebook & Instagram (@riverlifechurchsg) for weekly prayer pointers.

Church Vision

"A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations."

Mission

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.