



WEEKLY CELL GUIDE

28 MAR 2021 | THE MANDATE | JOHN 13:1-15, 34-35

Series : Pre-Easter | Speaker : Bishop Emeritus Wee Boon Hup



WELCOME

[15 MINS]

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

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)



WORSHIP

[15 MINS]

You may select songs like

1. Lord, I Offer My Life
2. Saviour King



WORD

[45 MINS]

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Do a “reset” and return to our first love and fulfil Jesus’ mandate of loving one another as Jesus loves us.
2. Abide in Jesus – to slowdown and stay with God and let Him change us and continue changing us.

SERMON SUMMARY

Sometimes the Mandate for Maundy Thursday is understood as the Lord’s Supper or the act of foot-washing. However, the mandate that covers both is the one Jesus gave in John 13:34-35, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” When Jesus was asked which is the most important commandment, His answer is that

love for God and love for neighbour are a single command ([Mark 12:28-31](#)). There are three aspects in fulfilling the mandate: our attitude that accompanies and flows out from love, where we aim our love at, and how we act out our love in deeds and conduct. But it all begins with another mandate Jesus gave: to abide in Him ([John 15:5](#)). To love one another as Christ loves us requires that we be captured by a love greater than we have experienced before.

SERMON RECAP

What is the "Mandate"?

- John 13:34-35, *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* This is THE mandate that covers all other mandates.
- When Jesus was asked which is the most important commandment, His answer is that love for God and love for neighbour are a single command ([Mark 12:28-31](#)).
- Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and you shall love your neighbour as yourself. If we profess to truly love our neighbour, it flows from our love for God and His love for us.

Why is it mandatory?

- 2020 is the year of "reset". We need to return to where we started – our first love – God.
- Jesus' disciples were also doing a reset. Jesus took an old commandment from the OT and made it into a "new commandment". He contextualised it for the disciples, to prepare them for the difficult road ahead without Him.
- Why is it a new commandment? From loving your neighbour as you love yourself (Mark 12:31), Jesus raised the bar of the commandment and changed it to loving your neighbour the way God loves you.

How do we fulfil this mandate?

1. The attitude
 - Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. It is an act of humility and servitude that could only come from divine love.
 - When we have the right attitude, we approach and serve those who we find difficult to love, those that we normally avoid. It is with them that our love will be tested.
2. The aim
 - Who we aim our love at. When Jesus gave the mandate, He is instructing His disciples to love each other. This means to love fellow believers.
 - If we cannot love fellow believers how can we love our neighbour? We have to start by loving the people 'inside' the Church before we can even serve the 'outside'.
3. The action
 - *"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."* - **1 John 3:18**.
 - The Greek word used for truth in this verse is "aletheia". It means a state of not hiding things, of disclosure – transparency.
 - When we are serving others, is our action in line with the truth of how we feel? Is our love or God's love evident to those we are serving? We need to align our internal feelings with our outward actions so that when others see us serving, they see the motivation behind it (God's love) and they see who we are (Christians).

Where do we start to do our "reset"?

- We go to a related mandate: **to abide in Jesus** ([John 15:5](#)). If we want to love one another, we have to abide in Jesus, and centre ourselves with Him.
- We have a result-oriented and action-driven culture. We just want to get down to the works and achieve our goals as quickly as possible. But in this "reset", we need a **slowdown-and-stay-with-God approach**.
- It is not our beholding of God that changes us, it is God's gaze upon us that changes us (God's grace). Alexander MacLaren wrote, *"You have been trying, and trying, and trying half your lifetime to cure faults and make yourselves better and stronger. Try this other plan. Let love draw you, instead of duty driving you. Let fellowship with Christ elevate you, instead of seeking to struggle up the steps on hands and knees. Live in sight of your Lord and catch His Spirit."* (<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/mac/2-corinthians-3.html>). Stay in God's presence.

- What will make us stay in God’s presence? It is when we’ve been seized by the power of a great affection for God. Ultimately, it is not what we can do for Him, but what He has done for us and is continuing to do in us that helps us in our “reset” and to fulfil The Mandate.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **The conversation Jesus had with His disciples starting in John 13 continues with a discourse up to chapter 16. What prompted Jesus to begin this teaching occasion? Start your discussion with [John 13:1](#), referencing this verse to [John 13:34-35](#). [10 Mins]**

Leader’s Notes

Jesus started the discourse as He knew that His time (to leave this world) has arrived. It would be His last teaching to His disciples and in it lies the Mandate and the Greatest Commandment: to love God and one another as God has loved us ([John 13:34-35](#)). In this occasion Jesus also promised an advocate to help us and be with us forever – the Holy Spirit ([John 14:16](#)). Jesus also spoke about the vine and the branches ([John 15:1-17](#)). He is the vine, our lifeline, and we are the branches. Without the vine, the branches are nothing. We must remain (abide) in Jesus and we will bear much fruit. Finally, Jesus assures His disciples that He will return and that their grief will turn into joy ([John 16](#)). They will have trouble in this world, and will be persecuted and martyred, but Jesus reminds them that He has overcome the world. Jesus told His disciples all these because He loves them ([John 13:1](#)) and so that they may have peace ([John 16:33](#)) while they do God’s work. This teaching is also meant for us, as disciples of Christ, to encourage and reassure us as we do His work.

Transition

All the work that we do for God stems out of our love for God. It is through God’s love for us that we love others, and through that love we work to spread the gospel.

2. **What has been your experience of “loving one another” like? Share one positive experience, and one negative. What can you personally do to love one another (beginning with your cell, and family)? [10 Mins]**

Leader’s Notes

We all have positive and negative experiences when loving others. Share your experiences with the group. It is not meant to discourage you from loving, but to *continue* loving despite the difficulties and negativities. We are all imperfect people wrought with faults, which is why we are difficult to love. But Jesus loves us all the same – and His love is forever! He never takes away His love when we sin or when we disobey Him.

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38).

We are to recognise that though we are flawed, we are all children of God. If we love Him, this love will overflow to love others. How can we change our attitudes, align our hearts with Jesus and love not only in deed, but also in truth?

Transition

The mandate is to love others as Jesus has loved us. Having negative experiences when loving others is par for the course. It is part and parcel of loving. The crux is that we persist, because God persisted.

3. **Does our society instil in us a desire to serve? Where is the connection between what Jesus teaches about serving and what He teaches about love? Why is this important for disciples of Christ? [15 Mins]**

Leader’s Notes

This is a three-part question that requires us to reflect on the way society serves (serve *others* or to serve *ourselves*?), and how it is different from what Jesus taught about serving. Then, it also asks us to reflect on the connection between serving and love. Why is love important when we serve? Also, why is this distinction (serving out of love) important to Christians?

Read this article on loving through serving, which has answers to the questions: [Loving By Serving | Bible.org](#)

Closing

When we serve out of love, we are expressing Christ's love to others. Similarly, when we serve, we are also expressing our love for God. Love and serving are interconnected and cannot be thought of as separate. This is God's mandate! It is only when we love others as God has loved us that we will have the desire to serve others. And by serving, we are keeping His commands, because we love Him ([John 14:15](#)). Love and serve!



Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. Sermon Application
 - We will return to our first love and cultivate the love of God in us.
 - We will commit to serving others out of the love that God has for us, and us for Him.
 2. COVID-19
 - The community cases will remain low as the restrictions are further relaxed.
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1. **Bible Reading Plan.** You can access our 2-Year Bible Reading Plan 2021-2022 by visiting <https://rlc.sg/brp2021>.
2. **Cradle Roll.** Our cradle roll on Level 2 is now open for parents with children under 3 years of age for diaper change and feeding only. There will be no child-minding provided. To protect the health and wellbeing of our children and parents, kindly adhere to these safe management measures:
 - Only one accompanying adult per child under 3 years of age.
 - There can only be 6 pairs of parent and child in the cradle roll at one time. This number excludes our volunteers on duty in cradle roll.
 - Each parent and child are allocated 20 minutes for usage of cradle roll.Cradle roll will be open on Sundays from 9am to 10.30am only.
3. **Joining The Family.** Sat, 24 Apr | 10.30am-12.30pm | In-person at Faith Chapel (Level 2)
Sign up online at rlc.sg/jointhefam by Sun, 11 Apr
4. **Alpha Online**
Upcoming run starting, 15 Apr, Thursday (12 Sessions). Register at rlc.sg/ao-reg by 5 Apr.
5. **RL30, Short Broadcast, 9 APR, Friday, 8:30pm**
For those having cells on Friday Night (9 Apr), do tune in for a short broadcast by the church regarding RL30 at 8:30pm. The cell time can continue after that. For cells meeting on other days, you can still access the broadcast after Friday night. More details will be sent to you in the days ahead.

6. **RCS Family Run.** 31 May to 13 Jun | Sign up online: rlc.sg/rcsrn

7. **Good Friday & Easter Weekend**

- Good Friday
 - Commemorate in Our Cell Communities 2 Apr
 - Cells to meet in homes Cells will watch a special devotion video together and move into a time of sharing.
- Easter Sunday
 - English Adults Service
 - 4 Apr | 9am & 11am | Worship Centre
 - Attend in-person: rlc.sg/tickets-eng
 - Join us online: rlc.sg/eng-svc
 - Download the e-invite: rlc.sg/easter
 - Filipino Service
 - 4 Apr | 10am | Bible House



"HONOUR GOD WITH EVERYTHING YOU OWN;
GIVE HIM THE FIRST AND THE BEST."
PROVERBS 3:9 (MSG)

Give Digitally

Here are two cashless ways to give your tithes and offering.

1. PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app.
Scan this QR code on the right.

SCAN ME



2. Interbank Transfer

RiverLife Church Bank Account:
DBS Autosave 029-902431-0
Bank Code: 7171
Branch Code: 029

