

4Ws For Week 8, 20 – 26 February 2012

WELCOME (15 minutes)

Choose one of the following icebreakers.

(If you have first-time guests, begin with a round of introductions.)

1. You, Me, Left, Right

This is a fast-paced fun activity that helps move people around and memorise names.

Have the group form a circle, with the leader in the middle playing as the first "caller." At the start, everyone is to introduce himself/herself to the whole group. The cell leader then explains to the group how the game is to be played:

1. The caller points to a person and says either one of the codes, "Me", "You", "Left" or "Right".
2. The person being pointed at must give the correct name to the above code before the time lapsed (i.e. count of three).
3. If the person being pointed at succeeds, the caller moves on to a different person.
4. If the person being pointed at fails to answer within the time duration, he/she becomes the next caller.
5. You can add multiple callers as the game progresses.

"You" is the person being pointed at.

"Me" is the caller.

"Left" is the person to the left of the one being pointed at.

"Right" is the person to the right of the one being pointed at.

2. Word Link

This is a word game. Ask the group to sit in a circle. The first person starts with any word they wish i.e. red. The next person repeats the first word and adds another word which links to the first, e.g., tomato. The next person repeats the previous word and adds another word link e.g., soup, and so on. To keep this moving, only allow five seconds for each word link.

Transition to Worship:

Let us take a minute to thank God for allowing every member in this cell group to come to His altar to worship Him. Let us worship Him in spirit and in truth. Let us declare His praises as He is present in our midst.

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the suggested songs below or select your own worship songs for this week.

(Key = D)

1. O Lord Your Tenderness
2. More Precious Than Silver
3. Here And Now
4. A Place At Your Altar

Transition to Word:

Let us rest in the grace and mercies of God as we surrender ourselves to Him. Let us welcome the Holy Spirit for He is faithful and He is always at work us and through us.

WORD (45 minutes)

Sermon Title: Cursing Fig Trees

By Dr Douglass Norwood

on 19 February 2012

Scripture Reading: Luke 13:6-9

Luke 13:6-9 (NIV)

⁶ Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. ⁷ So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' ⁸ "Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

The disciples who heard this parable also saw what Jesus did to the fig tree a few months ago. He had cursed the fig tree and it withered. But there is a big difference in this parable compared with what they saw but have not heard before.

Q1: What is the difference between this parable told by Jesus (Luke 13:6-9) and the incident when Jesus cursed the tree (Mark 11:12-14)?

(A1: The difference is that the fig tree in this parable had an intercessor who pleaded with the master not to cut it down.)

But this parable is a story of grace because the unfruitful tree was allowed to take up space and additional nutrients to allow it to become fruitful. The master allowed the servant to sway him. The servant in this parable is the hero.

God has called us to abide in Him because He wants us to be fruitful. Each of us is expected to be fruitful for God but we often fail to do that. However, the difference is that our salvation is dependent on grace and mercy, not on our works. Jesus came knowing that the world is sinful and its inhabitants are living in a pit of sin. Yet, He chose to come to save us.

Q2: What are the some things that God wants us to do but we may have not been willing to do?

(A2: We are to forgive and bless our enemies, people who have lied to us or hurt us.)

Q3: It is interesting to note that the servant of the master did not just leave the unfruitful fig tree to become fruitful on its own effort. Besides fertilizing the tree, he had to dig around the tree so as to remove the weeds that were hindering the tree from becoming fruitful. What does this illustrate for us?

(A3: When we yield to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us for a second chance, surface these weeds and help us remove them from our lives. However, the process of "digging around the tree" of our lives can be difficult and painful. Yet if we persevere, our lives and ministry become more and more fruitful.)

Q4: What do you think are these "weeds" that hinder us from becoming fruitful?

(A4: Anger, bitterness, lying, immorality, dishonesty)

We are alive because God gave us a second chance. When we respond to God, we become the servant and are sent to find the ugly, cursed fig 'trees' in this world. We have to stop standing in judgment before we can step out to save them. In order for us to do ministry, we have to allow the Holy Spirit to dig around our roots to clear the weeds around us.

Q5: When we respond to God, we become the servants that are sent out to find and restore the unfruitful fig trees in the world. But to do that, Dr. Norwood stressed two important attitudes that we must have. What are these two attitudes?

(A5: (1) Stop judging; instead focus on the God-given potential in everyone. (2) Step out of your comfort zone so that the Holy Spirit can use you to reach out and minister to others.)

Application Questions:

1. If you had "one more year" (like the fig tree) to turn your life around, what would you do?
2. What fruits do you want to believe God will work in your life to produce by this time next year?

You can break up into smaller groups to share and minister to one another. Be open and honest with one another so that ministry can be more personal and effective.

Transition to Works:

Let us draw on God's grace and commit to "paint our town red" by reaching out to those who are in need and need Christ in their lives.

WORKS (15 minutes)

Let's praise God for a powerful and anointed G12 conference. Many members have attended and have been greatly blessed by it. We must be united as a cell group in our efforts to "paint our town red". Let us start by praying for those pre-believing family members and friends whom we have connected with during the Christmas and CNY. Ask God for opportunities to visit them and shower them with God's love. Plan a gathering for the cell in preparation to invite these friends for our Good Friday harvest event.

Announcements

1. G12 Asia Conference 2012

How many of you have enjoyed the G12 Asia Conference so far?

Now, you can relive all these moments when you download the G12 Asia Conference audio and video sermons, provided free for downloads at www.g12asia.com. Plus, you can get post-event pictures and articles at our website www.fcbc.org.sg or on our FCBC Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fcbc.singapore. Stay connected with FCBC wherever you are!

2. Faith Community Bible School

In the last 3 years, close to 200 people have taken hold of the opportunity and been blessed. That's right, application for Faith Community Bible School's 2012 intake is now open! This programme is specially designed to improve your effectiveness as a Christian in the marketplace. You can choose between a four-month or two-month intensive course, though the former is strongly encouraged. Application ends on 31 Mar (Sat).

3. Encounter Weekend

Please take note of the following encounter weekends and sign up early for the new converts or visitors in your cell group. Purchase a Pre-Encounter book and help the new converts prepare their hearts for the Encounter Weekend.

- a) **Women (English):** - YWCA Fort Canning Lodge, Mar 3-4 (non stay)
- b) **Combined (Hokkien):** - Bayview Hotel, Mar 17-18 (stay-in)
- b) **Men (English):** - YWCA Fort Canning Lodge, Apr 21-22 (non stay)

4. TYA Run and Raisin

TOUCH Young Arrows (TYA), a service of TOUCH Community Services, invites you and your loved ones to participate in Run & Raisin' 2012, a charity run and carnival to help the needy children from TYA. Join us for the run, which will be held on **Saturday, 31 March 2012, 8.00am at East Coast Park**. You can sign-up for the 5km or 10km run through the Run & Raisin' website www.tyarunandraisin.com. Alternatively, you can sign up at our booths at TC and TCT **next weekend**. Carnival coupons will also be on sale at the booths. TYA thanks you for your support!