

Series - Going Deeper – The Manner of Spiritual Parenting

Date/s - 10 March 2019

Scripture - 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12

Speaker - Pastor Dinah Lee

Welcome [15 min]

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

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “Cornerstone”, “Have A Song”, “When Jesus Comes Again” or “Build My Life”.

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Reflect on the traits of being spiritual parents
2. Be encouraged to grow deeper in God through discipleship.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Dinah preached about the manner of spiritual parenting from 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12 (NASV).

The impact comes when we make Christ the centre of our lives and let Him live in and out through us. We all start off as infants, grow into spiritual adults and then spiritual parents. We become spiritual parents when we reproduce our spiritual life in helping others grow. (1 John 2:12 -14)

Pastor Dinah spoke about two metaphors of spiritual parenting:

First metaphor: To serve like loving mothers (v 7-8)

1. 1st trait: Love with care and tenderness (1 Peter 5:3) A baby is unable to fend for himself and needs someone to assume the role of the spiritual parent – to teach, guide and love him.
2. 2nd trait: Love with life impartation and sacrifice (v.8): It takes genuine love for people to blossom. In the passage, Paul writes “...shared our lives with you”. Discipleship takes decision making and attitude of thoughts.

Pastor Dinah also shared that many of us often do the safe thing. We keep a distance and do not do what is personal. We clamp our hearts and do not let anyone in. However, members who are being disciplined desire for their spiritual parents to be up close and personal with them. Though we share our opinions on the Word, there is no way a person is impacted if we do not share our lives and do not allow ourselves to love and be loved. To give the gospel without the willingness to give of ourselves is a contradiction. Pastor Dinah shared about Paul giving up his “rights” in order to address their needs.

Second metaphor: To serve like concerned fathers (v 9-12)

1. 1st trait: His work is diligent. Pastor Dinah shared about Paul’s example of personal sacrifice (2 Thessalonians 3:8-9 and Acts 20:34). She also shared positive and negative examples relating to the limited carpark lots for Sunday services and pointed through that these examples that life is more than living for ourselves; and we have the capacity to grow.

2. 2nd trait: His walk is consistent – his walk is holy, righteous and blameless (v.10). It is important to walk right with God. We also need to know that being blameless does not mean sinless – it is important to be honest in our inner core. We need to be role models and are unable to motivate, inspire or communicate what we do not have (Titus 2:7).
3. 3rd trait: His words are encouraging (vv. 11-12). Our words can take on a variety of tones - exhorting, encouraging and imploring. Pastor Dinah also shared a video about the Virtual Reality church by John B. Crist (https://youtu.be/R_bkNkrWdz8). She highlighted that it is important for leaders and members to have personal contact - modern technology is unable to replace the face-to-face way of imparting truth and love, because we are embodied spirits made in God's image. In-depth spiritual instruction and transfer of spiritual values require close relationship – which requires personal presence (3 John 13-14).

Pastor Dinah also shared a quote from Douglas Grootuis in *The Soul in Cyberspace* – “...the kind of community required for the resuscitation of (spiritual) life requires the grace that comes through the human touch, the human voice, the human gaze. Genuine community shines through the human presence of truth expressed personally.”

The purpose of spiritual parenting is to encourage every believer “to walk in a manner worthy of God...” Spiritual parents parent so that disciples can learn to bring God in every sphere of the living.

Spiritual parenting is a relationship that results in reproducing mature Christians called disciples - spurring one another so that we can know Christ more and become like Him. We need to know that the church is not a perpetual spiritual day care centre. Jesus' model of the church is a growing and developing family and every Christian is to become a spiritual parent. Making an impact on lives is not a formula, but it stems from people being deeply rooted in Christ. Pastor Dinah also exhorted members to consider what maturity looks like and if the way we relate with people is tender, loving, servant-hearted and life-giving.

Discussion Questions

1. **What to you, is a “disciple of Christ”, “spiritual maturity” and “spiritual parenting”? How does spiritual parenting play a role in growing disciples of Christ?** [10 min]
2. **Please refer to Ps Dinah's first point on “serving like loving mothers”. How does this guide you on the idea of being a spiritual parent? Share your thoughts with the cell.** [10 min]
3. **Please refer to the second point on “serving like concerned fathers”. How does this guide you in the way a spiritual parent should live? Share your thoughts with the cell.** [10 min]
4. **Where are you now in terms of your spiritual maturity? Share with your cell how you would like to continue growing in your faith – e.g. to be disciplined by other mature believers, to serve in a cell or ministry, or be a spiritual parent to younger believers.**

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Thank God for His faithfulness and provision, and His sovereignty over our future.
2. Every RiverLifer to make God the centre of their lives and to step out in faith to do His work.

Announcements

1. **Joining the Family, Saturday, 30 Mar | 1:30 – 4:30pm | Faith Chapel**

Joining the Family class will help you to understand God's heart for the Church and His call for us to be identified with a local body of believers. This is a pre-requisite for Associate Membership. Sign up at the Information Counter or online at bit.ly/rlcjoiningthefamily by Sun, 17 Mar.

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.