

Series -

Date/s -

12 Feb 2017

Topic - What Love Looks Like

Speaker/s -

Pastor Ben KC 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 "With All I Am", "A Common Love" or "I Am Free".

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Know what love looks like
2. Commit to act in love.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Ben Lee shared from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 on what Christian love looks like. He used the metaphor of porcupines out in the winter cold to describe how individuals are often isolated from each other by the defences that we put up and these spines can poke and hurt when others get close. Hence, missing out of the warmth we can have if we can huddle together.

Firstly, he discussed **what Love is**. Christian Love also termed agape love is something we choose to do, not something we feel to do. Jesus did not *feel* like going to the Cross but He *chose* to do so because of love. We cannot always control our feelings but we can and should control our actions and responses. Ps Ben shared that in the original Greek, "patient" and "kind" in 1 Corinthians 13:4 were not adjectives, but verbs. Thus, the apostle Paul was saying that "Love acts patiently" and "Love acts kindly." Love is long tempered, even when wronged. Furthermore, love is active. With love, we are motivated into action and acts of kindness. Sometimes, a kind word can make the difference. Are we prepared to go a second mile for another? Just as God's kindness should inspire us - Romans 2:4, kindness motivates people to change and melts people's hearts.

Secondly, he elaborated on **what Love is not**. He listed the following, taken from 1 Corinthians 13:4b-6a:

- a. Love does not envy, that is, not jealous - Proverbs 14:30, James 4:2
- b. Love does not boast, which is counter-cultural. We should not be given to exaggerate our achievements, to brag, to draw attention to ourselves by giving a false image to look good. This is the outward manifestation of pride.
- c. Love is not arrogant nor proud.
- d. Love is not rude. This means not insulting or offending others by not taking the time to understand cultural / social sensitivities of the people around us. Love calls for us to be considerate and to behave accordingly.
- e. Love is not self-seeking - Mark 10:45. We are not simply to look at people as tools that we use because people have intrinsic worth and value (in God's eyes). Self-seeking people on the other hand, behave as if the world revolves around them. We should adopt the attitude of Jesus Christ, who came to serve and not to be served.

- f. Love is not easily angered - Proverbs 19:11. Everyone has a "button", though some appear to have many and are easily offended, using their temper to intimidate and punish. We must control or learn to control our responses to circumstances and situations, and not just lash out in anger.
- g. Love keeps no record of wrongs. That is, love is forgiving. See Psalm 130:3-4 and Jeremiah 31:34 which tell of God's forgiving nature. We are not to hold on to bitterness. Do we keep a blacklist?
- h. Love is sympathetic - Psalm 119:136.

Thirdly, Pastor Ben shared on **what Love always does**. These are the qualities we are to pursue.

- a. Love always rejoices in the Truth - 3 John 1:4
- b. Love always protects
- c. Love always trusts. Love believes in people, even when they may have wronged us.
- d. Love always hopes in the Truth - Romans 8:28
- e. Love always perseveres. We need to endure to the end and not give up!

Finally, Pastor Ben mentioned that these qualities of Love are not meant to discourage us when we cannot live up to the standards. No one can love like that except Jesus and we are to model ourselves after Him. Bearing mind that "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love", 1 John 4:8. We are also motivated to love and draw strength to continue to persevere in love by relying on God – "We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19.

Discussion Questions

1. **Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. 15 qualities are mentioned on what love looks like. Of these qualities, which one strikes you personally as admirable? Share your personal perspective or story on why this is so.** [15 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a recap and ice-breaking question for members to share on what love looks like from their personal perspectives. Leaders can encourage members to reflect and share stories from their personal lives why and how they are touched by this specific quality in their life journeys. These experiences of members can edify or build up one another as we aspire and learn to express love to the people that God has placed in our lives.

2. **Pastor Ben shared on what love is and what love is not from the Bible. In relation to our family, friends, colleagues and others who we interact with, reflect and share on your positive and/or negative experiences with loving or unloving people.** [15 min]

Leader's Notes: A reflect and relate question for members to think about practical experiences they have with loving or unloving people in their lives. Leaders can consider to dwell deeper into a few of the qualities where there are more challenges in fast-paced Singapore, such as love is self-seeking, not easily angered and keeps no record of wrongs. For negative experiences, leaders can refer to Matthew 7:1-5 on judging others, and encourage members to be forgiving and see the intrinsic worth or value of people as God would see them. Leaders can also ask members to reflect on what a loving response would look like.

3. **Read Hebrews 10:23-25. The verses describe how a loving community of believers would look like. Discuss what practical steps you and others in the cell group can "spur one another on toward love and good deeds."** [15 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a response question. Leaders can ask members to suggest ways the cell group can form stronger and deeper relationships with one another and for outreach through good deeds. Read John 13:34-35 where Jesus says that "... everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one

another." As a community of believers, we are called to love one another. Jesus has modelled this love for us in the Bible.

Practical ways would include being available to one another, acts of kindness, praying for one another's needs, serving together in missions or outreach events, etc. Leaders can conclude with dedicating these suggestions to prayer as a cell group.

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We will always choose to tap into the Source of Love in us (Rom 5:5) & align our action with that of Lord Jesus.

Announcements

1. Building Prayer Alters Rekindling the Holy Fire

Speaker: Pastor Julius Suubi

Fri - Sat, 10 - 11 Mar | 9am - 4.30pm | RiverLife Church

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 5 Mar.

2. March Holiday Bonding Activities For Families

Intergenerational Futsal Tournament

Register online at bit.ly/rlcintergenfutsal by Sun, 19 Feb.

Date With Dad (Organised by Focus On The Family)

For more information or to register, please visit <https://www.family.org.sg/dwd>

Adventure With Dad (Organised by Focus On The Family)

For more information or to register, please visit <https://www.family.org.sg/awd>