



Lively Stones

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Holding forth the word of life

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HINDRANCES TO SERVING GOD

Introduction

Many young married couples have put on hold in serving the Lord with the arrival of the little bundle of joy, family commitments or pursuing a career. I believe many including young married couples are facing insurmountable struggles in their work and family in Singapore. But the danger comes when the focus on work and family robs us of our piety and service towards Christ. Little do we expect that this holding on of our service to God will lead us into complete cessation to our service to God.

The questions that every child of God should consider is, "does life consist of just activities involving our work and family?" and "do we have eternity's value in view." In the end, when we come before the judgment seat of Christ, will He commend us as "good and faithful servants"?

In Ephesians 2:10, we are reminded by the Word of God that says, "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" We were shaped for a purpose, not to consume life but to contribute to life namely our spiritual life. Our life is characterized by not how long we live but how we live for Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us (Gal 2:20). Now if God expects us to serve Him, He will equip us to do that. We are His "*workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works.*" God shaped us for the purpose of serving Him. He gave us spiritual gifts, a heart, abilities, personality and experiences. He expects us to use all of these when we serve Him. None of us have those five qualities in exactly the same proportion. God did that so that each of us would have a unique place of service that was

tailored just for us.

So let us examine our hearts whether we have conveniently stopped serving the Lord. In the Gospel of Luke, we read of three hindrances of serving Christ. As we ponder on this passage that is, Luke 9:57-62, may we be admonished to see whether we have steered off course in our following with God.

The Peril of Personal Ease and Comfort

*Luke 9:57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest . We encounter a man here telling Jesus with much sincerity that he will follow Jesus wherever he goes. However, Jesus is a discerner of man's heart. He is not swooned over by man's outward piety towards Him. It is the heart that He is yearning for. Although this man was professing his readiness to follow Jesus, our Lord knew that his words of allegiance were mere words. He knew that this man had not counted the cost of following Him. As long as it is convenient and comfortable, the man would follow but once there is hardship and difficulty, he will throw in the towel. We read no more of this man after Jesus gave him the litmus test of sacrificial service, "*foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*"*

Do we serve Christ when it is within our comfort zone and when nothing inconveniences us? Our comfort zones need to be challenged always. John Wesley said, "Do all the good you can by all the means you can by all the ways you can in all the places you can and at all the times you can to all the people you can for as long as you can."

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Sunday School Promotion : Adults Department

Our Lord spoke to Joshua the following words:

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

In following the mandate, Life Bible-Presbyterian Church Adult Sunday School is set up for equipping the saints in Biblical knowledge and to move people from the basics of the Christian faith to a deeper walk with God.

The goal and purpose of the Adult Sunday School are:

- Reach persons for Bible Study
- Teach the Bible systematically
- Witness to others concerning Jesus Christ and lead them into church membership
- Minister to persons in need
- Foster Christian fellowships
- Develop Christian values and attitudes
- Lead members to worship

The major purpose of the Sunday School is to teach the Word of God in order that lives may be changed. Thorough Bible instruction will result in worship, expression, and service. If these instructions does not lead to such response or lives, it is incomplete.

The Sunday School teaches for Spiritual transformation – leading people to be changed from inside out!

Currently the Adult Sunday School Department have six classes to cater for every need :

Adult Class 1:

Held in sanctuary where Elder Ong Eng Lam teaches using powerpoint presentation and expository teaching on the Book of Exodus.

It is the biggest Adult Class with between 80 – 90 mixed students.

Adult Class 2 :

Mrs. Shirley Chew leads the all ladies



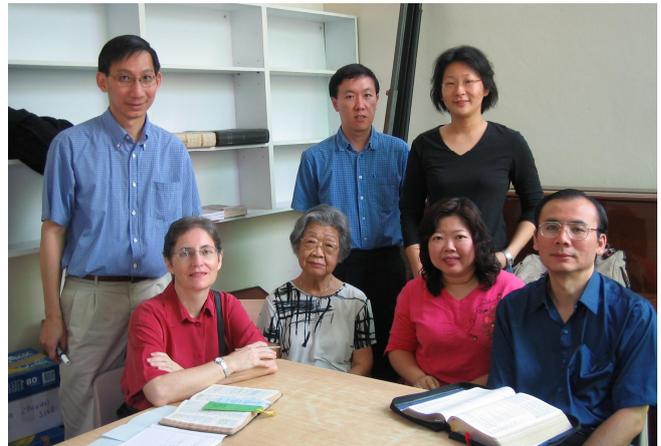
Adults 1 in the Sanctuary

class in understanding the Ten Commandments.

Typical discussion style with homework where everyone participates and benefits from the class discussions.

Adult Class 3 :

Ms Low Sow Mun currently leads another all ladies group in the study of the Book of Acts of the Apostles. A practical approach is taken to studying the Bible through mission trips to Batam to assist in the training of Sunday School teachers there.



Adults 4 in the Piano Room

Adult Class 4 :

A cosy mixed group where Christian fellowship is exemplified under the leading of Dr Khoo Hock Seng and his wife Carolyn.

The group is now engaged in digging into God's word in the Book of Zechariah and had profited much from it.



Sunday School Promotion : Adults Department

Adult Class 5 :

A class for those who had just completed their catechism class and are not joining any other Sunday School class.

Topics taught and discussed are the Fundamentals of the Faith where emphasis is given to the doctrinal stand of the church ie The five points of Calvinism, Covenant Theology, Biblical Separation, Systematic Theology etc and its various applications.

A must for those who wants a greater appreciation of the Bible Presbyterian stand and heritage and for a better understanding of God's plan in Salvation.



Adults 5 in the Guest Room Kitchen

Adult Class 6 :

A Men's only group where everyone is encouraged to participate through discussion and assignment/homework. Much souls have been blessed and spiritual life revived through these Bible Studies.

The latest study is on "Experiencing God" where we are taught to seek an intimate relationship with God. Through this relationship, God reveals His Will and invites you to join Him where He is already at work. When you obey, God accomplishes through you something only you can do. Then you come to **KNOW GOD** in a more intimate way by **EXPERIENCING GOD** at work through you.

equip people in God's Word. It is a great opportunity for you to dig into God's Word, ask questions, and keep growing in your faith.

We want to help you discover, learn, and apply God's biblical truths in your life. We would be glad to assist you in finding a Bible study group that best suits you. We are certain that the group will be a special place of discovery, fellowship, support, and spiritual growth.

*Dn John Ching
Superintendent
Adults Department*

The Adult Sunday school goes to great depth to train and



Adults 3 in the FEBC Resource Library

Sunday School Promotion : Adults Department

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Introduction

MF Sunday School Class started with a mission to provide a venue for our Christian men to share, interact and learn God's Word together.

The interactive mode of discussion enables the brothers to share their christian experiences.

It was through these times of fellowship, interaction and prayer that we encourage one and another to love God and His Church.

Objective

The primary objective of MF Sunday School Class is to enable the brothers in Christ to serve God more effectively.

These involve bible study which advocates ministry, outreach and fellowship: all of which can be accomplished more effectively and more personally in a small group setting to study the bible.

Teach the People about the Bible

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt 28: 19-20)

Thus bible study is central to the growth of an individual Christian, particularly when it is done in participation and small group discussion. The bible is God's revealed truth and God has promised to bless His Word as we teach it.

Fellowship with People

MF Sunday School Class provides an opportunity to assimilate the kind of bonding that will support and nurture Christian growth.

New friendship can be formed and mentoring will occur naturally.

The open sharing of personal issues and honest discussion of life questions is a great foundation for developing strong bonds and relationships which can be tremendously enriching in a person's walk with Christ.

Lead People to a Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ

The bible, taught with due emphasis on application, allows brothers to achieve an encounter with the Living God which will make all the difference in attaining Christ likeness.

Evangelism

MF Sunday School had just completed studying the book on "Personal Evangelism" by Coart Ramey.

It is a book on personal discipleship. It teaches our brothers on how to

lead people to Christ and helping people to follow Christ. It also has a detailed plan for witnessing and follow up and how to nurture a new believer to follow Christ.

The book was such a tremendous blessing that laid the foundations for biblical discipleship. Evangelism is the natural consequence of faithful attention to God's commandment.

May the Lord help each one of us to be faithful witnesses for Him.

Current Topic of Study

We are currently discussing on topics related to the book "Experiencing God" by Henry T Blackaby and Claude V King.

It emphasises on the seven realities of experiencing God, namely:-

1. God is always at work around you
2. God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal
3. God invites you to become involved with Him in His works
4. God speaks by His Holy Spirit through the bible, prayer, circumstances and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes and His ways
5. God's invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action
6. You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what He is doing
7. You come to know God by experience as you obey Him and He accomplishes His work through you.

So, do come and join us in this discussion how God can use you for His works here.



Adults 6 in the MF Room

Prayer Session

Every last Sunday of the month, Class members get together to pray for the Church, MF and Individual needs of members.

May each of us be a prayer warrior in the Lord, not only in the Sunday School but also in their personal prayer life.

Conclusion

About three years ago the Lord led the MF to start the MF Adult Sunday School Class with about 3-4 men . Today we have about 12-14 men today.

The brothers in Christ has shown the hunger for God's words by searching the scriptures and has fervently desiring the Bread of Life.

Throughout the end of 2004 till April 2005, we studied "Personal Evangelism" and for the rest of this year we embark on "Experiencing God".

We pray that as many as the Lord may lead will join us as we work together to serve Him and His church.

Sunday School Promotion : Adults Department

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (Ps 119:105)

I really thank God for the opportunity to attend Mrs Chew's Sunday School. Personally I have benefitted from the lessons and it is something that I look forward every Sunday.

After I finished my post Catechism class, I was not sure of which Sunday school to attend. In fact I was thinking that if I do not have to attend Sunday school, I could get more sleep on Sunday mornings! Obviously I do not know what I would have been missing and I thank God for sisters Ivy and Stephanie who introduced me to Mrs Chew and other ladies in the class.



Adults 2 in the Beulah House SS Room

Though the time we spend together on Sundays is short, it is fruitful and edifying. During the class, Mrs Chew, the Sunday School teacher will lead the bible study and explain the verses we are studying. More importantly, we will share on how we can apply whatever we have learnt to our daily lives, to overcome whatever trials we face in the biblical way.

From the sharings of others, I was encouraged to keep trusting in His Word despite whatever struggles. To add, Mrs Chew always encourages us to pray to God should we have difficulties in understanding the bible. Gradually, I have learnt to be more disciplined and more systematic in reading the bible.

We have just finished on the Book of Ephesians and I have learnt the privileges of being a Christian and not to take our salvation for granted.

We have just started on studying the Ten Commandments. I have discovered that I have not actually understood the Ten Commandments fully as I thought I had.

Truly, the Sunday school sessions have helped me to be filled with zeal to search the riches of truth in each and every line of His Word.

May this little sharing of mine encourages those who have not been attending Sunday school, to find a class where you can benefit and learn more about God's Word.

Daisy Tan

Subject of Study	:	The Ten Commandments
Duration	:	Till End 2005
Mode	:	Expository teaching & questions for homework and discussion
Members	:	Working Ladies Adult (currently attendance 8 – 10)
Teacher	:	Mrs. Shirley Chew
Aim	:	To encourage members to study the Bible diligently in systematic way and to experience a sanctified life through His word by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Purpose/Command	:	1. Warnings from the Scriptures e.g. a. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee," (Hosea 4:6) b. "The fear of the LORD <i>is</i> the beginning of knowledge: <i>but</i> fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Pro 1:7). 2. Benefits promised e.g. a. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Psa 119:130) b. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)
Question	:	Can you say that you don't need help and encouragement to study God's Word?

May you come to join us in the Ladies Adult Sunday School.

HINDRANCES TO SERVING GOD

(Continued from page 1)

It isn't lack of abilities or resources that hinder us from serving God. We are just too comfortable and when opportunity knocks on the door to serve Him we conveniently hang a "Do Not Disturb" sign on our hearts. We turn away from God and service to Him.

The Peril of Procrastination

Another peril that presents to not only couples with young children but to all in general is procrastination. In Luke 9:59, we read of the man giving excuse when he was bidden to follow our Lord. His immediate reply was "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father" It was a hasty retreat by the man to Jesus' sudden turn of attention to him to command him to follow Him. What he stammered before the Lord seems to be legitimate that he go and bury his father. Here was a man who truly wanted to follow the Lord but had an unavoidable conflict of duty. The Jews considered proper burial as the most important of all duties. It took precedence over the study of the law, the performance of temple service, the killing of the Passover lamb and the performance of the rite of circumcision. So with this knowledge, we perceived that since burial of a deceased parent is so important to be tended without delay, and above all ceremonial laws, why is this man still out in the street to catch a glimpse of Jesus?

The answer is that the man's father is not dead yet. He was putting off Jesus' demand with a plea of indefinite delay.

So here the man misses the importance of service to Christ. We should not lay before our Lord and tell him that until our children are grown up or until our careers are established, then we serve Him.

But Jesus says, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go

thou and preach the kingdom of God" Jesus is asking the man and us to rethink our priorities and to act with immediate decisiveness to serve Him. What is more pressing is our spiritual life, our vocation that we are called to. Jesus says, those who are spiritually dead can give themselves to tending to the matters of this life. But those who have spiritual life give evidence of it by putting Christ above everything else.

We are shaped unto good works and let us not take up the words of the foolish man: "Lord, let me first...."

The Peril of a Divided Heart

The third person's response to Jesus, in Luke 9:6, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house" was an excuse to Jesus because he was not gripped by the love of Jesus and the privilege of serving in Christ's kingdom. His attitude is in contrast with the prophet Elisha in 1 Kings 19:19-21 whereby he went home to make a radical break with his family in order to follow the prophet Elijah.

Jesus is the reason for our living. The Lord has blessed us with a family and a job that we might not be pulled away from serving Him but to be constrained by His love to serve Him readily.

Conclusion

It is always easy to retreat from God's service when things get tough in life. We must realize that service to Christ is a mandate that God wants us to do seen in Ephesians 2:10. Whether you are young or old, in whatever stage of life you are in, let us not fall into the perils of ease and comfort, procrastination and of a divided heart. Humbly come before the Lord and say "Lord, here am I, send me!"

Preacher Quek Keng Khwang

ADULT DEPARTMENT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

CLASS	AGE GROUP	GENDER	TEACHER	CO-TEACHERS	LOCATION	SIZE	CURRENT TOPIC
Adult 1	21 yrs & above	Mixed	Elder Sherman Ong	Elder Chin Hoong Chor	Church Main Sanctuary	80 -90	Exodus
Adult 2	21yrs & above	Ladies	Mrs Shirley Chew	-	Beulah House, SS Room	10	Ten Commandments
Adult 3	21 yrs & above	Ladies	Ms Leong Sow Mun	-	FEBC Resource Library	15	Acts of the Apostles
Adult 4	21 yrs & above,	Mixed	Dr Khoo Hock Seng	Mrs Carolyn Khoo	Piano Room	8	Zechariah
Adult 5	Post-Catechism, 21yrs & above	Mixed	Dn Victor Loo	Mr Henry Tan, Dn David Tan	Guest Room Kitchen	3	Fundamentals of the Faith
Adult 6	40 yrs & above	Men	Mr Ong Beng Hong	Elder George Tan, Dn John Ching	MF Room	9 - 14	Experiencing God