



CELL GUIDE 2016

Theme	Beyond Church Walls
Topic	Reaching the Next Generation
Speaker	Elder Low Kok Guan
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Message Summary

The Need for Spiritual Fathers

Today, it is not easy to teach children, let alone adults! As a spiritual father to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul faced the same challenges we do. The church in Corinth was complacent, arrogant, and divisive and even undermined Paul's leadership. Yet, despite their disobedience, Paul still loved them dearly and did all that he could to reach out to them. In this sermon, Elder Kok Guan discussed the need to reach out to the next generation and expounded on how Paul modelled this for us in 1 Cor 4:14-21.

The Need to Reach Out to the Next Generation

1. Paul Reached Out BY ALL MEANS

As believers, we cannot give up on reaching out to the next generation to bring them to a place of faith in the Lord. At the same time, we need to know that Christ-likeness is the end goal (1 Cor 4:17). Paul first taught his disciple, Timothy, how to train the next generation through the word of God: **teach** what is right; **rebuke** and **correct** the wrong (2 Tim 3:16-17). Through this process Paul laid out for us, we are training the person toward righteousness and to be thoroughly equipped with the Word of God.

Paul carefully stated that it was never his intention to shame nor to condemn; he taught, corrected, rebuked, and trained the church out of a love for them. By all means, Paul reached out again and again, never giving up on the church. Like Paul, we should also continue to pour out our lives to build up the next generation for Christ with love.

2. Paul Reached Out BY BEING A MODEL

According to Paul, one of the best ways to build up the next generation is to "imitate" – to model after someone. Paul was not being arrogant when he told the church of Corinth to imitate him; he was simply telling them to follow him as he followed Jesus (1 Cor 4:16, 17; 1 Cor 11:1). Paul knew that the best way for them to learn was to see Jesus Christ lifted up in his life, so that they could see for themselves his faith in the Lord. Similarly, we need to imitate Christ and practice what we preach so that the next generation is transformed by following the example we set.

The impact of a parent on a child's life is very powerful. More often than not, there are people, especially our children, who look up to us, watch how we live our lives and follow our actions closely. It is often much easier to ask others to follow us than it is to ensure that we ourselves are following Jesus. Still, it is important for us to follow Jesus and live out the way of life in Christ so that we are good models for those following us. In the same way, God has placed in our lives good examples for us to follow, but we need to remember, we are all following the greatest and most perfect example of our Lord Jesus Christ.



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3. Paul Reached Out FOR HIS MASTER

In everything that we do, God looks at our motives. Who are we doing it for matters vastly more than what we do. In just 2 verses in 1 Cor 4:15 and 17, Paul emphasised “in Christ” 4 times! It shows just how close his relationship with God was. In Christ, we reach out to next generation. When we get discouraged, we remember that we are reaching out ‘in Christ’; we are reaching out to them for our Master who first loved us.

Paul took the time and effort to train his children (1 Cor 4:14-15) and it was only through his deep love for them that Paul did not disregard in their extreme disobedience. Of all the gifts we have, love is the most excellent way to carry out God’s ministry (1 Cor 13). There are many guardians who guide and correct us, yet, what is most needed is a spiritual parent like the apostle Paul who took the time and effort to journey with the Corinthians.

The church in Corinth was gifted, powerful and unstoppable, but they were immoral, divided and selfishly jealous. They had spiritual gifts, but they were spiritually immature. Like a loving father, Paul presented them with two choices of how he would guide them back to Christ-likeness. They could follow his counsel and receive his gentleness, or disobey him and reap his discipline (1 Cor 4:21). We need to imitate the example of Paul, who was loving, gentle and patient, yet at the same time, willing to use the shepherd’s rod when necessary.

Conclusion

God is calling us to mentor and journey with the next generation. We will face difficulties, but we should not give up in the same way that God never gave up on us. Let us start reaching out to the next generation. Find someone whom we can pour our lives into, keeping in mind that we serve a God who is worth all that we have. May we follow in the footsteps of Paul to love and mentor the next generation for our Master.

Questions

1) The Corinthians were a spiritually immature people, they were immoral and even undermined the authority of the apostle Paul. How and what did the apostle Paul do to reach out to these people?

(Fill In Answer Here)



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2) Do you recall things/a time in which someone modelled after you? Share your stories with your CG.

(Fill In Answer Here)

3) Love for others and God should be the motivation to be godly role models.

For those who have yet to mentor others, what are some steps we need to take in order to reach out to the next generation?

For those who are already in the journey of mentoring others, what are the areas of our lives that we need to grow in, in order that we may be godly role models?

(Fill In Answer Here)