



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Now I'm Found - From Lost To Found	SPEAKER Elder Lok Vi Ming
THEME Good News of Great Joy	DATE 14 & 15 Dec 2019

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This sermon addresses those of us who feel lost - those of us who may know Christ, but may find themselves backsliding, living a double-minded life, unsure of how we are to live in the world but not be of this world.

Elder Lok assures us that experiencing this tension is a good thing, as this shows that we are trying. He shares with us reasons why Christians might backslide, but also comforts us and counsels us not to be afraid, for ultimately, there is Good News waiting for us in the word of God.

Come and glean what we may from the Word of God for us in today's message.

FROM LOST TO FOUND

A) WHY BELIEVERS BACKSLIDE

As Christians, we are called to be in the world but not of the world (1 Jn 2:15-17). Believers backslide when we are unclear about the laws which govern our lives; is it God's law, or the law of the world? We fail to make our choice or we make ambiguous choices when we are unclear. Just as Joshua invited all of Israel, we must choose today whom we will serve! And we must choose for each and every aspect of our lives.

In the various aspects of our lives (work, marriage, finances, education, values, relationships, responsibilities and priorities/goals/ambitions), is God's law being reflected, or are the world's laws being reflected?

While there are many blessings for obedience specifically listed in Deuteronomy 28, the same chapter listed many more curses for disobedience to warn us about the danger of making wrong choices. Conflict arises (and backsliding occurs) when we fail to make a choice, or when our choice is ambiguous and we find different aspects of our lives connecting back to different systems of laws. That is what it means to be double-minded.

It is for freedom that Christ has already set us free, we should no longer subject ourselves to be burdened again to the yoke of slavery (Gal 5:1) by operating under the wrong system of law. A divided life leads to ambiguity and dread. On the contrary, a life lived with a clear governing law should cause no Christian to compromise and backslide.

B) DO NOT BE AFRAID

If we are struggling and are not sure if we are doing enough for God, or if we don't know what to do or where to turn, Elder Lok reminds us of the person of Obadiah.

From the life of Obadiah in 1 Kings 18:1-6, 21-22, Elder Lok assures those of us who have been faithfully serving the Lord that our work does not go unseen before the Lord. There is no lesser or greater contribution as long as we present our talents faithfully back to service to the Lord. May we rise up against the Jezebels in our life.

Also from the life of Obadiah, Elder Lok reminds us that even in the face of evil, the Lord sends Obadiahs to rescue us and hide us from the evil one. When we do not know where to turn, pray for an Obadiah in our seemingly challenging environment.

C) GOOD NEWS

Finally, Elder Lok ends his message with hope. Hope for those of us who are willing to humble ourselves before God. Just as Boaz allowed Ruth to glean in his land out of his love for her, Christ who loves us so dearly will also generously allow us to glean what we can from Him and His word, if we are willing to work humbly for it.

Is God worth more to us than our pride?

When David danced for joy at the return of the Ark, his wife mocked him for it. What will we do when those around us mock us for our faith and obedience and hope in God? Will we reply as David did, that before the Lord who has blessed us with so much, we would be willing to debase ourselves even further, to be even more undignified for his sake?

After David was confronted by Nathan for his sin, he did not deny it nor condemn Nathan, but instead confessed his sin before God. What will we do when we are confronted with our sin? Do we defend ourselves and blame others for being judgemental and not understanding? Or will we put down our pride and confess our sins before God?

Even after David's great sin, the Lord saw the humble spirit within David and called him a man after His own heart. This, then, is the good news. If we put down our pride and look humbly towards the Lord to save us from our situation, He will. He is faithful and just and will cover all our unrighteousness.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Elder Lok reminded us of Isaiah 40 for those of us struggling not to backslide, fighting the tension of living with two laws. He calls us to hope in the Lord so as to renew our strength. This hope is not a passive hope, but an active one. The word hope is translated from the Hebrew word "qavah".

Elder Lok shares with us that the Hebrew word "qavah" can also be translated as "to bind together like a cord". The more strands that are twisted or woven together in a rope, the greater is its strength.

Drawing from this translation, Elder Lok encourages us to intertwine as many areas of our lives with God as possible. The more areas we "qavah" with God, the more He will be our strength, and the harder it is for us to backslide. As we look forward to the new year ahead, may we resolutely choose God's law as the only governing system to live our lives.

QUESTIONS

1. Elder Lok shared the various aspects of our lives as work, marriage, finances, education, values, relationships, responsibilities and priorities/goals/ambitions. Which areas of your life are operating under God's laws? Which are still under the world's laws?

2. What are some of the areas in your life that you want to surrender more to God in the upcoming year? Why is this area important to you?

3. What can you do to set in motion your surrender to God in the chosen area(s) of your life? How can the Cell pray for you?