



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC T3 to Maturity

SPEAKER Elder Goh Hock Chye

THEME Knowing God

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

Introduction

God's goal is not our conversion, it is our adulthood. Elder Goh reminded us what the hallmarks of spiritual maturity and growth in Christ are: Love God, Love Others, and to Be fruitful.

Written by James the Just, brother of Jesus, the Letter of James is one to share with us practical wisdom to navigate life and living, since no one is exempt from trials and tribulations in this world. Expounding on the text James 1:1-25, Elder Goh shared with us the 3 Ts to reach Maturity: Trials, Tenacity and Truths.

Trials, Tenacity and Truths

1. Trials

In this life, no one is exempt from experiencing trials and tribulations, and they are often part of God's mysterious and good plan for turning us into something great.

Reality of Trials (James 1:2)

In face of trials and trouble in this world, we take heart from how Jesus has already overcome the world. Trials come in many different forms, and as Christians we are likely to face trials such as **fiery trials** (*intense encounters or struggles; bursts of anger, grief or lust*), **infirmities** (*physical limitations and illnesses*), **reproaches** (*ridicule and rejection on account of faith or holiness*), **persecutions** (*harassment and oppression due to religious convictions*), **necessities** (*wear and care of daily responsibilities*), **distresses** (*disappointments and deep hurts*), and **tribulations** (*unusual pressures and challenges*).

Responses of Trials (James 1:3, James 1:4, James 1:9)

When troubles visit us, it is common for us to complain, to push the blame to others or even to escape from them. James urges us to count them as joy for the testing of our faith guarantees perseverance. With this perseverance we will run the race, fixing our eyes on Jesus who will continue to perfect our faith (Hebrews 12:1-3). Our hearts must be met with humility amidst these trials as God promises to lift us up when we're humble.

Results of Trials (James 1:4, James 1:12, James 1:25)

Our maturity is not measured in church but is instead measured outside through the day to day living of the Christian life. Trials are what we undertake to growing in maturity, receiving completeness, blessings in whatever we do, and the precious crown of life (James 1:12). Akin to how a grain of sand in the shell of an oyster is slowly shaped into a pearl by the oyster, the suffering and trials we go through can be mysteriously shaped by God into something highly precious.

2. Tenacity

In order to be tenacious in face of trials, Elder Goh reminds us the how we can do so, through remaining steadfast and patient.

Steadfastness (James 1:4, James 1:12)

In face of trials, we must allow perseverance to finish its work in order for us to be mature and complete, not lacking anything. We will be able to stay under it and allow it to finish its course because He has promised to make us firm, strong and steadfast (1 Peter 5:10).

Patience (James 1:12)

Coupled with steadfastness is patience. As believers, we must learn to always trust in God's timing. We do not give up in face of the trials, for patience is a fruit that grows only under trials.

3. Truths

There are the truths that God has given to us through the bible that will help us grow in spiritual maturity while navigating the trials of life.

Wisdom (James 1:5-8)

Always ask God for wisdom, and not doubt Him, for He will give generously to all without finding fault. If one should ask for wisdom but doubt, he is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind, and should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Word of God (James 1:19-25)

Has the word of God been merely academic or is it life to you? The word of God has been given to us, but we must also learn to hear, receive and obey the word of God.

Temptations (James 1:13-18)

When we are tempted, know that He is not the source of temptations but instead He is the source of All things Good. Unlike shifting shadows, He will not switch and will never change. We are His creatures, His first fruits and His best.

Conclusion

In our walk with God, we know He is concerned with our walk and our growth in Him, where we are able to grow through trials, in tenacity while holding on to His truths. In view of this reality, it may be easy to complain, or give up. But God has promised us that even though it may look like things are falling apart on us but on the inside, He is making new life and there is not a day that goes by without his unfolding grace. The things we see now are here today, and gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever (2 Corinthians 4:17-18). He is all that you will ever need.

QUESTIONS

1. In this life, we are guaranteed to encounter trials. What do trials look like to you?

2. What did James mean when he wrote that we should consider trials pure joy in our lives?

3. Reflecting on 2019 and the difficult situations you may have encountered, do you respond to trials in life with joy? If yes, how? If no, why not and how can your cell group journey with you?