



## CELL GUIDE

<b>TOPIC</b>	Winning the Youth – Whole Church Approach	<b>SPEAKER</b>	Pastor Andrew Tan & Ps Sarah Khong
<b>THEME</b>	Critical Issues – Knowing Our Times	<b>DATE</b>	5 & 6 August 2023

# MESSAGE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

Pastor Sarah began the sermon with Matthew 9:35 – 38 which describes Jesus' compassion for people who are helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He told His disciples that the harvest for the gospel is bountiful but there are few workers and asked them to pray for God to send out more workers into His harvest field. Our youths are analogous to the sheep that need shepherds to guide and mentor them with love and compassion.

## WHY DO WE NEED TO WIN THE YOUTHS AND HOW CAN WE DO SO?

The Book of Matthew in the New Testament depicts the period in which the Jewish people were living under Roman rule. Due to a combination of factors such as Roman rule, religious divisions and the economic and social challenges faced by the local population, there was a lot of social unrest and political tension. There were priests, Levites and scribes all over the land but they were idol shepherds (Zechariah 11:17). Instead of pointing them to God, they led the people astray. This provides the context as to why Jesus had compassion on the people as scattered sheep. Our youths today are like sheep that do not have a shepherd. We should therefore have compassion and do all we can to help them. Sheep are prey animals and have no way to defend themselves from predators. They are prone to wander for various reasons and when they go astray, they are helpless in finding their way back. There are multitudes of youths who are desirous of spiritual instruction and they form a plentiful harvest that needs many active labourers.

Our youths, while they have better living conditions today, are bombarded with many stressful situations that they may not be well-equipped to handle. They could be exposed to pornography at a young age as well as the far-reaching impact of social media such as cancel culture. Social media is constantly telling our youths how they should live their lives and what is right or wrong. However, our thoughts, actions and behaviour should be aligned with the wisdom of God. Our youths need us to point them to the Lord as a shepherd.

## THE URGENCY TO WIN THE YOUTHS

Pastor Andrew reminded us about the urgency to win the youths; it is now or never. He used the analogy of sowing and reaping in agricultural practices to emphasize the point. The speed at which

the harvest is carried out is essential to ensure optimal crop quality and yield and it is a race against time before non-optimal weather and infestation set in. Similarly, while we are able to captivate their attention and mould their belief systems, we should make the best use of such opportunities. This is so that they will have a Godly compass and road map for their future. It is important to do so before they reach the stage where many other competing priorities influence them and their decision-making.

It is crucial that we spend time with them and lend them a listening ear when our youths face difficulties. We are encouraged to build good relationships with the youths so that we can empower them to lead a Christ-like life of loving God and others. Traditional top-down approaches, which can be condescending, may not be effective for the current generation of youths. In order to help them develop internal convictions, we should ask them questions to prompt and guide them. Asking questions instead of talking down to them will show the youths that we respect, support and do not judge them. In doing so, we will build stronger relationships with the youths and empower them with handles to make wise decisions in their lives.

## CONCLUSION

Reaching out to the youths for Christ is pivotal as it nurtures spiritual growth during their formative years, fostering values that shape a resilient, compassionate and purpose-driven generation. Guiding their faith journey empowers them to navigate life's challenges with hope and conviction in Christ. To effectively reach out to our youths, we need all hands on deck. Let us arise as the labourers that bring our youths to Christ.

# QUESTIONS

**1. Why is there an urgency to win the youths for Christ?**

**2. Share if you had an adult to journey with you during your time as a youth.**

- a. If there was one, how did he or she impact you and how can you similarly impact the youth(s) in your life?
- b. If not, how do you think having a mentor would have helped you when you were a youth?

**3. Who are the youths in your life that you want to intentionally build a relationship with? How can you invest in their lives?**