
Ignite

“God of every blessing, in this new season we invite You to shape our soul with Your words and inspire our lives through Your works. Teach us to walk in the way of blessing as we choose to make our foundation firm in You. Amen.”



SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: *The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.*

Forward 2: Building on a Strong Foundation

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

Hebrews 6:19-20

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Introduction

As we forge ahead in 2021, we are to remind ourselves of the words in Hebrews 12:2 that is to fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Many parents (biological, step-, adoptive, or spiritual) wonder if the ones we bring up will stay in the faith especially once they are out in the world. Will they remain in the faith or will they run after the world? The answer is in building the right character foundations for them. We should remember that character grounding and spiritual training happens at the home, it is not something that can be easily subbed out to the school or church. At the same time, we are to remember that we cannot give what we do not have.

The question we should be asking ourselves and the people we disciple is not so much “Are you ready?” but rather “Are you rooted?” The question arose as Pastor Chris was reminded of the young when he did the enrolment service of the three Boys’ Brigade companies hosted by DUMC last December. The Boys’ Brigade’s objective is “The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Members and the promotion of habits of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect and all that tend towards a true Christian Character.” Their motto is “Sure and Stedfast” from Hebrews 6:19 (King James version 1900) “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast”. Discipleship matters because it affects what the younger generation will become in the future and how they get there. Passing the leadership baton well involves having a well-rooted character and sowing the seed of a well-rooted character in the next generation.

Big Idea: Growing deeper to be wider and higher.

Don’t go to places where your talents take you, but your character cannot sustain you.

We are to be reminded always that God is the absolute standard for He is the Unchanging One. Even Malaysia’s founding fathers recognized that –” Kepercayaan kepada Tuhan” is the first of the core national principles stated in the Rukun Negara.

God is the foundation who keeps us Sure and Stedfast. Using the building analogy, the most time spent in constructing a building is devoted to the foundations. They need to make sure that once the building is up, it will not be collapse due to the inadequacy of its foundations. Likewise, we are to build good, strong foundations so that we do not easily falter whatever comes our way. Let’s look at the three parts of a building in reflection of ourselves:

1. Superstructure - everything that is above the ground. In human terms, this is what everyone sees in our lives, something which is publicly viewed and visible. These are the accomplishments, achievements, and successes of our lives.
2. Structure - the columns and framework behind the superstructure façade that holds up what you see from the outside. These are what our close ones, family, relatives and friends see, the framework of relationships that holds up a person’s life. No one is truly a self-made man, because relationships and experiences through people are the structures that make us who we are at the present moment.
3. Substructure - everything that is below the ground. The foundation of a person lies in the principles and beliefs the person truly holds to, in their heart of hearts. The integrity of your “building” is defined by not by what others can see, rather it is defined by what you do when no one is watching.

If we want our young people to succeed in life, to be able to go places where their talents take them and their character can sustain them, the question is not whether they think they are ready, but whether they are rooted? We are to keep in mind that one cannot build up and out well without a good and proper foundation.

Conclusion

Richard Foster says it best in *Celebration of Discipline*: “Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people.”

The principle of the matter is this: When we take care of the depth, God will take care of the breadth. If we want to fly high, we are to dig deep and take care that our character is rooted well in the Lord. We are to take care when building foundations so that they will last a lifetime.

SERMON REFLECTION

As I look at my little one toddle about at home and ponder about the sermon this week with my fellow Igniters, I was reminded of my experiences in my formative years and how I came to be as a person. It must be said that even as I have grown up in a Christian environment, my personal view of Christianity and the church as a whole leant toward a more cynical view. This week’s sermon is especially poignant as I was part of Boys’ Brigade back in the late 90s and early 2000s.

Without going into much detail, I was exposed very early on to politics and favoritism. Certain experiences and opportunities were exclusively for the favored ones because of who their parents were or how “sweet” the person was. It was not a matter of qualifications or competency. It came to a point in my young life where I

resigned from the idea of God and the church. Gandhi's famous quote against the church "I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ" was never truer for me then (this remains true even today). It felt justified when witnessing many exoduses from churches and Christian organizations due to the exposed conduct of their leaders.

That was one part of the foundation that my elders gave me - the fact is that their foundations as Christian leaders were not right, and so this was reflected in the foundations they built for their disciples. Their foundations informed their conduct, resulting in collateral damage for many of the peers in my generation. Like buildings, a good foundation (or the lack thereof) is not just about the individual being able to stand tall despite the circumstances. It is also about making sure that the individual does not fall and start a domino effect, where they cause damage to other "buildings" and take down many lives. The effects of the downfall reach far beyond the fall of one person.

When I discovered God for myself, I had to rip out the false foundations and work to replace them over and over again. Even today, I discover personal prejudices and views built over time which are hurdles to faith. As I look to put the right foundations in my child, I pray and hope I give the right foundations while still humbly righting my own foundations in the Word and with those who faithfully journey with God. For I know the potential blessings of Godly foundations, and conversely the damages false foundations can cause.

The truth remains that we cannot give what we do not have. It is my sincere prayer that even as we look and work toward building the right foundation for the future generations, we take care to ensure that we have the right foundations in Him.

Contributed by Adeliyn



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Questions / Activities

(You may choose to have CG members type in their answers in the Zoom chatbox)

- What/Who makes you feel secure?
- What are the characteristics of children? Why is God attracted to childlikeness?
- Name 3 icons/celebrities (real or fictional) that you deem successful and why?
- What are the missed opportunities that haunts you to this day?
- What are your criteria of being successful (for yourself/children)?

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- What do you think makes a parent?
- What is your view as a child towards your parent(s) (biological, step-, adoptive, or spiritual)?

Suggested Questions linked to main point:

- In describing Christians boys and girls, what words come to mind when you think about the motto of the Boys' Brigade: "Sure and Stedfast"?
- What are the challenges young people face in the light of 1 John 2:15,16? (Refer to both NIV and The Message translation.)
- In what ways do you think deep rooted foundations of spirituality are built into our young in Church? What roles do parents play? What roles does the church play?
- Discuss this phrase "Don't go to places where your talents take you, but your character cannot sustain you" in the light of Hebrews 6:19,20 and Hebrews 12:1-3
- Evaluate: What is the condition of your 'substructure'?

Question Bank *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

1. What will you pledge this year in helping the younger Christians build strong foundations for their lives?



WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



Photo by Judit Peter from Pexels

Story of the week...

"It was always mind boggling before we finally arrived at the decision of serving in a formal ministry at church. I recall those days when my spouse and I were sorting through all the possible options at DUMC and putting them into a continuum of low to high time commitment e.g. Foodbank and First Touch are on the lower end and Resonate and DEW on the other extreme. We started forming a mental list of criteria that each ministry had to meet before we would even consider being a part of. It was almost like finding a life partner!..."

- Darren Lim, KL Zone

*Read the rest of Darren's story on dumc.my/blog !

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

- Maya Angelou

If you or your CG member(s) has a story to share related to today's Word or any other story that speaks of His goodness or of IMPACTNow, **share their/your story** [\[HERE\]](#)



PRAYER

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

The COVID-19 pandemic is one that requires us to be on our knees interceding before the throne of grace. Reports that were communicated raised an alarming fact that our medical facilities are not able to cope with the increasing cases each day, and our frontliners are struggling to cope with the incoming cases.

The National Evangelical Christian Fellowship (NECF) Malaysia is asking all our Churches to unite in prayer for:

1. The Lord's divine intervention and bring healing to Malaysia
2. Wisdom for the nation's leaders to find measures and practical solutions to contain the pandemic
3. The rakyat to stay safe, stay at home and be proactive to curb the spread of the disease.



OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some links to resources for you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!

FEATURED

In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!



The impossible task for a single grain of salt

saltandlight.sg

One grain of salt can hardly make a difference in the stew...

Lee Soo Tian

Society Work Vocation

Article



Life before the Pandemic

christianitytoday.com

Let's not return to our old way of life

Kelly Edmiston

Suffering Society Christian Living

Article



Why is Prayer So Hard?

christianitytoday.com

Amy Julia Becker

Prayer & Spirituality

Article



Practicing the Presence of God

39 pages

ccel.org

Lawrence is known for his devotion and ability to bring G...

Brother Lawrence

Prayer & Spirituality

E-Book (Free)

OTHER RESOURCES

Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!



DUMC STORIES

Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!

