

Live for the Lord

I. WELCOME, 15 mins.

Plan one to two icebreakers for the purpose of mixing around and getting group participation or getting acquainted.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.

Prayerfully choose a few songs to lead people into God's presence. During this time, cell leaders will encourage cell members to listen to the Holy Spirit and release the words of **strengthening, encouragement, and comfort** they have received for the **cell group, the church and nations**. Upon each word shared, the cell leader will lead members by thanking and praising God for His promise and/or praying aloud together for the needs, etc.

During this time, the cell leader will also lead the group to pray aloud for: (1) the mission organization or daughter church that the cell group adopts (2) the church ministry needs (3) blessings for new comers, the sick.

MISSION ORGANIZATION: _____, their needs: _____
(Please contact the church if you don't know the needs of the mission organization.)

CHURCH MINISTRY:

III. WORD, 45 mins.

A. Sharing from last Sunday's message.

1. What is the main message from last Sunday sermon? What did God say to you from the message?
2. How would you respond to the message? What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Discussion Topic: "Live for the Lord"

Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 11: 16 -32

Memory Verse: If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying. (2 Corinthians 11:30-31 NIV)

Forward

People often engage in singing their own praises for having higher education, big title, or good income. Other times, they may brag about what they are good at: talented, robust, or wealthy. It is quite unusual that Paul would boast about his weakness and helplessness!

As we read 2 Corinthians, we may think that Paul is a windbag -- he was no professional speaker, he sometimes talked undeviatingly. In fact, we should recognize that rather than boasted about his own value, he boasted himself for God's sake. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." It clearly shows that Paul utterly recognizes the fact that he is redeemed by Jesus Christ with great cost, so he belongs to the Lord, and will do everything to live for the Lord. In today's verses, Paul may appear to try to defend for himself, yet we should know all he tries to do is to protect the church lest it should go astray. We consider Paul to be a wonderful spiritual example of "Living for the Lord." Let's be humble and learn how to live a glorious life as a godly person.

I. He who lives for the Lord concerns God's church (2Cor. 11:16-21)

The church is the body of Christ. If we determine to live for the Lord, we should also care about everything to do with the church. Everything means EVERYTHING that includes the build up of the church substantially as well as being the watchmen for the church spiritually. Therefore if we see anyone who tries to wreak havoc upon church, shouldn't we stand up and show him what the truth really is?

Here Paul mentioned about "false prophets" who falsely claim the gift of prophecy, but use that gift for evil ends. He tried to make it clear to the Corinthian in every way, so that they would understand and not be deceived. As a result they'd be able to gain the true freedom in Christ if they do understand!

1. Coerce (enslavement): The false prophets threaten people with seeming truth to confuse people, so that people would be bound by their "law" and serve them or satisfy their needs.
2. Exploitation: They would use the authority of church to embezzle people's money, possessions and property.
3. Taking Advantage: Setting up traps to ensnare people. It is as bad as plundering their rights and interests.
4. Disgrace: This is referring to teaching people with bias ideas that lead to discouraging people of their ambition and dignity. On the other hand, he also taught us how we can still be at ease during the worst embarrassment.
5. Attack: this is not only for physical attack but verbal attack.

II. He who lives for the Lord suffers for the Lord (2Cor.11:22-29)

1. The sufferings Paul experienced: Paul had to take a series of torments, both bodily and mental afflictions. Yet, he took it willfully for he understood these were what could empower him for what God had entrusted him. By boasting these things, he showed the church that he is the real servant of Christ to contrast with those who are but empty talkers.
2. The bondage Paul experienced: Paul had been put in prison frequently, been beaten with rods, lashed by the Jews, been flogged severely, been stoned badly, but the gospel eventually became prevalent.
3. The instability Paul experienced: Paul was constantly on the move. He has been in danger from rivers, bandits, his own countrymen, Gentiles, in the city, in the country, at sea, and from false brothers.
4. The worries Paul experienced: Paul was concerned about the life and faith of his brothers and sisters in Christ. His voluntary sufferings were all attributed to the love he had for the Lord and His church.

III. He who live for the Lord brags about his weakness (2Cor.11:30-32)

Paul has no choice but to boast, because the Corinthian were babies in spirit. They did not have the capability to discern the true nature of a real servant of Christ. That's why Paul can only differentiate himself with those false prophets by boasting.

Note that one who really lives for the Lord should know that he is spiritually lack of strength. As he humbles his heart and recognizes his insufficiency and limitation, he will turn to God and receive the limitless power of Christ.

If we think that Paul was exaggerating his sufferings, we missed that God is the living witness of those who suffer. God is true and living, "everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hew. 4: 12 -13)

Although there may be afflictions for those who suffer for God's sake, God always make a way for them. Just as Paul was preaching the gospel, the governor tried to arrest him, but he got lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands. As we suffer for God, God will always open up a door that is full of graces for us.

Discussion Questions:

1. *Why would Paul brag about himself? What is his purpose?*
2. *Can you briefly describe about the sufferings Paul experienced? Have you had experienced suffering for the Lord?*
3. *Why would Paul boast about his own weakness? How does that inspire you?*
4. *Why can Paul take it so easy on his sufferings? What do you think it may help him through all these? Do you also have similar experience to share?*
5. *Is it true that one who is willing to live for the Lord, would also willing to give? Think what are the areas you could give? Such as time, energy or money?*
6. *Have you ever experienced that the Lord has made a way for you? Please share your testimony.*

IV. Work (Pray for each other), 10 mins.

Please break into group of 2 or 3 to pray for each other's needs.