
Ignite

"Dear Lord, help us to understand that You make no mistakes and are always in control so that we don't need to worry about anything. We feel anxious about our insecurities therefore provide us with the strength to accept ourselves like You do, so that our anxieties diminishes. We need Your comfort so that we can be free from these anxious thoughts. We can't do it on our own. We are so thankful for everything



that You've done for us already. 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.

Locked Down But Not Locked Out Amidst the Pandemic

Founding Senior Pastor Dato’ Dr Daniel Ho

Psalm 42:1-6a

*As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God,
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?
My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”*

*These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the
festive throng.*

*Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in
God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.*

Introduction

A wonderful Psalm from the sons of Korah during their time of capture. In today's context the Covid 19 outbreak had indeed lasted over a year and nations were not prepared for the effects and consequences of the disease. Lives and livelihood were lost unexpectedly and drastic measures were taken to curb the spread of the disease. Looking back in **Psalm 42:1-6a**, we see that the people of God were indeed locked down in prison for sharing the Good News. How then can our present situation be an opportunity to serve God and share the Hope and Love, which God gives us in this season of lockdown?

BIG IDEA: Locked Down But Not Locked Out

1. We are Locked down **Psalm 42:1-6a**

a. Physically **Psalm 42:4**

The psalmist declares **that he used to go to the house of God**. We too used to do that prior to the Movement Control Order. But then we were hampered and physically curtailed to go and worship God, just as what the psalmist experienced.

b. Emotionally *Psalm 42:3*

The psalmist had been in tears day and night and even wondered where God was. The distress, weariness, despair and discouragement had made people humble especially the B40 group and even the middle income group. In times like this many including Christians have asked 'Where is your God?' We are emotionally in despair.

c. Psychologically *Psalm 42:7*

The psalmist had been swept over just like waves and breakers and is overwhelmed, and numbed by the effect of the situation. Today, this lockdown has caused increasing rates of divorce and suicides. The affected people are not only the marginalised but even the middle class group as well.

d. Spiritually *Psalm 42: 1-2, 9-10*

The psalmist cries out that his soul thirsts and needs the living God. He feels disconnected from God. He is hungry for God and seemingly cut off from God. Do we at times feel the same when we feel downcast?

While we may be locked down physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually, we can make a choice to not be locked out.

2. But we don't have to be locked out *Psalm 42:5-6a*

a. In our mindset *Psalm 42:5-6a; Romans 12: 2*

Yet, we must talk to ourselves when we are feeling downcast, dealing and addressing our mind to renew it to think correctly and focus on Him. We then will be able to respond correctly. Have this mindset for a breakthrough.

b. In our motivation *Psalm 42:8; Psalm 27:4*

The psalmist reminds us here that God still loves us despite all we are going through. He has not abandoned us for His love is for us, in us and with us always. Know that God has a design and purpose for each of us, and we should trust in Him. His Perfect Love casts out all fear.

c. In our ministry *Psalm 42:5-6a; Jeremiah 29:11*

We walk in faith and focus upon Him. The psalmist urges us to put our hope in God and communicate it to others. The lesson from this pandemic is for the church to go out as the ministry is out there. We should reach out to others who are more fearful as they live without the knowledge of God. Let us live in freedom, peace and hope as God has plans to prosper us, to give us hope and a future. Let us upscale our ministry to impact others. After all, the church exists for the community.

d. In our mission *Psalm 42 :11*

Put your hope in God for yet I will praise him, my Saviour and my God; says the psalmist. He is our deliverer who offers us all our hope and the future. We live to share the Gospel and to touch and impact lives. Let us go all out to bless and serve people and extend God's kingdom. That is our purpose as believers of Jesus Christ. We are never locked down in our mission. Let us have the great urgency to share eternity with everyone we know, especially family members. *C.S. Lewis says, 'All that is not eternal is eternally useless.'*

Conclusion

Pastor Dato' Dr Daniel Ho concluded and urged everyone to be involved in building the kingdom of God that is everlasting. He encourages us to invite our friends and relatives to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour to have a new birth and new life in Christ Jesus. Let us ask God to release us from any lock out in our mindset, our motivation, our ministry and our mission; to give us a new mindset to pursue His thoughts and His ways. Let us all be released to walk in mental freedom to follow His plans and designs. The lesson from this pandemic is that God allows the church to be shut out so they can go out to live for Christ.

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain *Phillipians 1: 21*



SERMON REFLECTION



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As I look back on the past since March 2019 when the lock down MCO 1.0 had started, I am amazed and am so thankful for the presence of Jesus Christ as my Saviour.

The challenges at work due to the lockdown was resolved as God had provided a capable and far visioned CEO who planned and led our team of real estate negotiators to focus on training and applied Christian values of testimonies to motivate and encourage all in our real estate family. I must say he is a God fearing brother and had the support of God fearing team leaders to support his efforts in driving the company in the right direction.

In the midst of the challenges he had responded to Christ's call to reach out and touch lives in need. He spearheaded a donation drive to provide for the negotiators who were affected financially by the lockdown. Many leaders and negotiators who

were financially comfortable gave of their savings or earnings to assist those in dire straits.

300 negotiators from the Klang valley irrespective of which agency they belonged to were blessed. My husband, who had also taken part in this drive to help fellow negotiators, testified and shared through a zoom meeting how he had been blessed by closing two sales of property in our location during the lockdown. This has been a great motivation and changed the mindset of fellow negotiators that lockdown does not mean we can't work. If we focus on Him and do our part to answer the call to serve the community, God will always bless.

Serving the community also includes spending time with and making time for others especially in times of emotional distress or being psychologically overwhelmed. I recall many times during the lockdown when fellow negotiators needed advice for tense situations in their work and messaged me or my hubby at 10.30 pm. We consider them as urgent and respond to their call for help. We learn to humble ourselves and put the needs of others before our own.

Similarly, I am blessed to belong to our W2W Mid Week Moments group where we learn more about God and how to serve Him and apply His Word in our daily lives and situations which arise. I am so thankful for He has made a Way for me to continue to keep in touch with and communicate through our zoom meetings. All things are possible with God who makes the Way. Parallel to zoom, WhatsApp has been a great help to keep in touch with and share the Word of God everyday to so many people.

Let us not look at the challenges and be locked out but to renew our mind and follow Him as He leads us to serve others and share the Gospel.

Contributed by Michelle Chuah



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 Activity/Questions

- What is the difference between “locked down” and “locked out” from your point of view?
- Do you miss the lockdown we had experienced the past one year? In which area do you wish otherwise?



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Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- Has the recent lockdown caused you to be locked out as well? Share an example or an instance where you felt locked out. How did you overcome this?
- Has the lockdown enabled you to do something different in serving God? Share an experience that encouraged you during this time.
- Do you consider the pandemic as a world war against disease? If so, are you ready to face the war and trust God to see you through it?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- We have been locked out physically during this pandemic. What challenges do you face? Did you share your challenges with a CG leader or friend?
- How do you feel now that the lockdown has been lifted? Can you share a positive experience which came out of this lockdown?
- Has the lockdown affected your serving in ministry work? Did you overcome the challenges that you face?
- Is the current SOP preventing you from serving Him? Do you see guidelines as restrictions to attending church celebration?
- What are the challenges you face in returning to serve in Ministry?

Serving Opportunities! *The Multimedia Crew and Floor Team of DUMC currently need more volunteers to serve at our Saturday In Person Celebrations. If you would like to avail yourself to serve, kindly email serve@dumc.my to find out more!*

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

- Have you locked yourself out of any situation? What practical things can you do to come out from being locked out?
 - Do you know of anyone who is feeling locked down? How can we as a CG help those in need in this area ?
 - Are you comfortable being locked down and locked out?
 - How do we share eternity, hope and trust in God to the world outside the Kingdom of God?
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PRAYER



Photo by Olivia Snow on Unsplash

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.

Bible Translation Work in Papua New Guinea (PNG)

VIETNAM

The communist government of this Southeast Asian nation of 97 million people has freed the nation's economy, but not its politics. Similar to its neighbour (and rival) China, Vietnam is being transformed by economic growth, but the Government still attempts to keep a monopoly on power. This leads to persecution for religious groups and political activists.

The church is growing fast, especially among some of the mountain tribal peoples, but also among the majority Vietnamese.

- Pray for the Christian community (around 10% of this mostly-Buddhist country) to become a great force for good in a nation that has suffered trauma and warfare in recent decades.

- Pray for an easing of anti-Christian violence and the repeal of unjust laws.

NEPAL

Social justice is a huge challenge in this Himalayan mountain kingdom of 30 million people, one of the poorest countries in the world. Much has been achieved, but poverty, political struggles, geography and the caste system still leave many people struggling and oppressed – among them, child labourers, children trafficked into the sex trade, children dying of easily-prevented diseases. Many Christian groups are demonstrating the love of Christ in practical and spiritual ways.

The Nepali Church has grown through many trials. The first church started in 1952 with 29 Christians. By 2010, 850,000 of Nepal's population were followers of Christ, in nearly 10,000 church groups. Growth came - and continues - through prayer and through willingness to suffer for the gospel.

- Pray for political stability and the economic transformation of Nepal.
- Pray that the Church will continue to grow and mature, despite threats and opposition. Pray for godly leaders for the Church.



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!



Helping without Hurting in Short-Term Missi...

8 sessions (20-30 minutes average)

rightnowmedia.org

This stand-alone resource applies the principles of "helpin...

Brian Fikkert

Mission Social Concerns

Video Series



Discipleship Bands

1 hour a week for the duration of the discipleship group

discipleshipbands.com

A framework for discipleship groups for 3-5 people based...

J.D. Walt

Fellowship Prayer & Spirituality

Tool App



Gospel Comes with a House Key, The

13 videos (3 minute clips on average)

rightnowmedia.org

Rosaria Butterfield invites us into her home to show us ho...

Rosaria Butterfield

Fellowship Friendship Hospitality

Video Series Book Study



Knowing God (Video Series)

3 videos (8 minutes average)

youtube.com

The leader must know God and walk with God in a daily, ...

Malcolm Webber

Leadership Prayer & Spirituality

Video Series



DUMC STORIES

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

