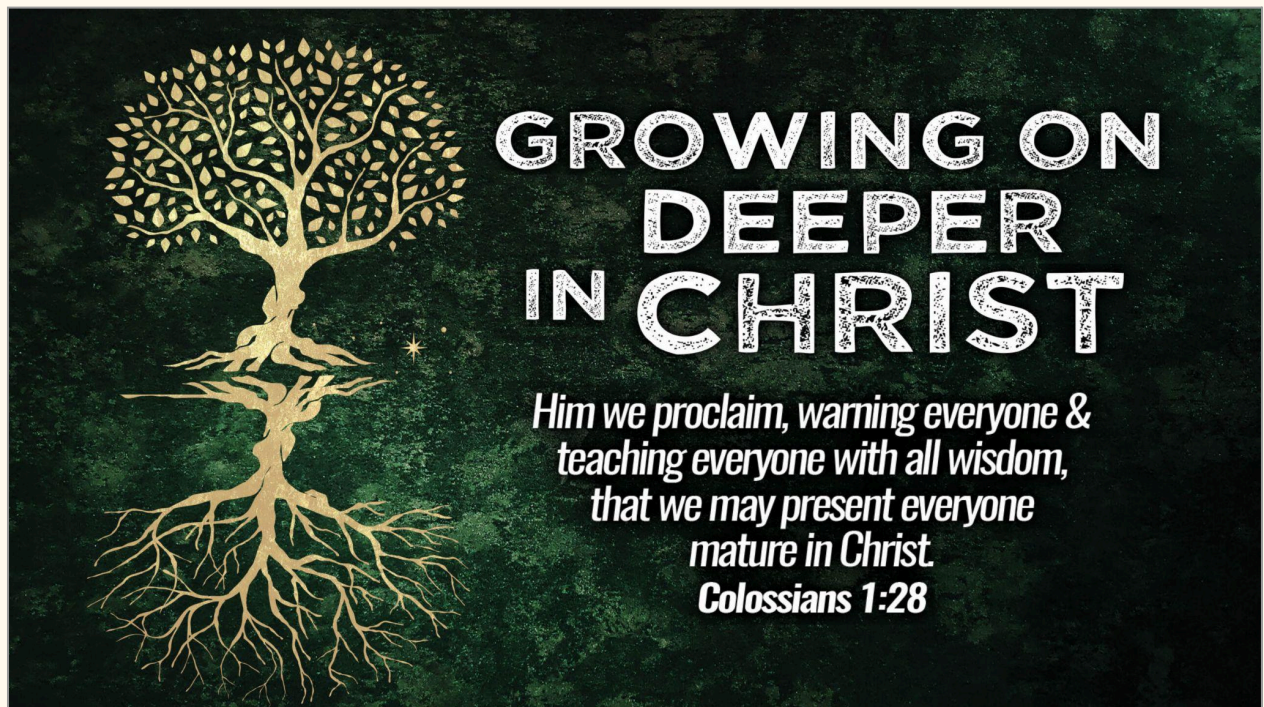

Engage

Dear Lord, we come before You with grateful hearts, united in our desire to serve those in need. Guide us to work together in harmony, setting aside our differences to reflect Your love and compassion. Strengthen our hands and hearts as we seek to be Your instruments of kindness and care. May our efforts bring hope to the weary, comfort to the broken, and glory to Your Name. Let Your Spirit lead us in humility, unity, and purpose as we walk this path together. In Jesus' Name, 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.

All for one and One for all!

Pastor Benny Liew

Mark 2:1-12

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that He had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and He preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to Him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.

*When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralyzed man,
“Son, your sins are forgiven.”*

*Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves,
“Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming!
Who can forgive sins but God alone?”*

Immediately Jesus knew in His spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So He said to the man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Introduction *Matthew 24:35*

The value of a single piece of art can be determined by three main considerations - the artist who curated the art, and its audience. Scripture, a valuable artful work of literature, is the Anointed Word, inspired by the divine Author for its Audience, the readers. Scripture is alive and will never pass away. As we read Scripture, we imagine the cinematography - the sights, sounds, and the characters at play within the narratives. The pictures and images that appear could be based on our own experiences in life, or they could be granted by the Holy Spirit to us.

This weekend's sermon is based on a narrative that may be familiar to many. It is the story of a few men helping a paralysed man who was unable to enter a house where Jesus was teaching to a large crowd. Against the odds of a two-storey mud-brick house, the men carried him on his mat, up to the clay roof, cleared the branches atop and lowered him down to where Jesus was. Within this short summary, we come across four characters - the Crippled, the Community, the Chosen and the Crowd.

1. The Crippled *Mark 2:3*

A crippled person would be one who feels helpless, hopeless and hurting, perhaps paralysed not just physically like the man in the narrative, or socially outcast, but also emotionally, mentally or spiritually. Crippled by fear, shame and loneliness, one may suffer depression, be drenched in desperate cries and possess a dependent demeanour.

Do you know of someone who is currently 'crippled'? Give the person a word of encouragement, show care and love. Even for a moment or a single day, the person could be lifted up from despair.

2. The Community *Mark 2:3b-4*

The four men who came to the rescue of the paralysed man were unsung heroes, the everyday people whose names are not known. They may or may not know each other, but they came together to carry that mat.

These men heard the cry of the needy. They showed compassion and empathy. They went ahead and helped the needy even though they were faced with the challenge of carrying him up to the roof and lowering him down into the house. A single person may be unable to do all that, but as a community of four, the load was lighter. A little help (from each of them) went a long way. They may not have the answer but they encouraged hope in Christ. They shared the same faith and zeal to bring the paralysed man to Jesus, in hopes that he would be healed.

- **Cell Groups** *Ephesians 2:20, Mark 2:5*

An important community that we can be in is our Cell Groups, where love is shown to one another. Love that stems from the love of God. Being a Christian, we are saved by grace, that we may do good works. As the hands and feet of Jesus Christ, let us collaborate with one another, standing in unity to reach out to those who are alone and in need.

“All for one” represents all of us coming together to help, to support and to encourage the lost, the lonely and the least to come back to God.

3. The Chosen *Mark 2:5-7*

On that particular day, Jesus was in the house preaching the word to the crowd.

- **Jesus is our Helper** *Mark 2:9, Matthew 20:28*

Filled with compassion, Jesus did more than healed the man of his physical paralysis. He uttered to him, “Your sins are forgiven.” When questioned by the Pharisees and teachers of the law, Jesus asked them a rhetorical question, on whether it would be easier to forgive one’s sins or to make a crippled man walk again. Both are humanly impossible! They can only be done by God.

Jesus firstly declares that only the Son of Man has the authority to forgive sins. Then, He told the paralysed man to stand up and walk. Through the demonstration of His power to heal the man, it is indicative to the crowd that He also have the authority to forgive sins. Indeed, Jesus is the Son of Man. The Son of Man who came, to die for us, that our sins may be forgiven.

- **Jesus is our Hope**

Forgiveness is invisible, but the healing of the paralysed man was visible. The paralysed man, as we do today, has two options. He/We could choose to believe in Jesus or not believe in Him.

#1: To believe, it would lift a great burden of guilt and fear from the shoulders. It would bring joy, peace and comfort.

#2: To not believe, there would be the same old feeling of alienation from God and fearful expectation of judgment.

The man chose to believe. He got up, took his mat and left. Do we truly believe?

- **Jesus is our Healer** *Mark 2:10-12, Galatians 5:1*

Jesus took the extra mile of healing the man completely, spiritually and physically.

“One for all” describes that Jesus Christ is for all mankind. He restores life and helps us overcome adversities in life. He gives the gift of eternal life that all who decide to believe in Him will have eternal life. God does not want us to remain in our old wicked ways. He can set us free and transform our lives.

4. The Crowd

Together, we can make a difference. Through our actions and the sharing of our lives, we can reach and touch the hearts of people in our wider community.

BIG IDEA: All for one, and One for all. When we serve the needy together, Jesus works with us to reach all of them.

Conclusion

There are many people in the world who are in need. There are some who are visibly in need - those who are sick and crippled, on wheelchairs and hospital beds. And then there are those who are less visibly in need but we know of their lack when we hear of their stories of plight and needfulness. Families who cannot afford to feed their families, or abandoned children left to fend for themselves. There are perhaps many more whose crippledness is unseen - those who are seemingly happy but plagued with mental breakdowns and depression, fears and panic disorders.

There are so many out there, on our streets and corridors, in our neighbourhood and nation, who need an encounter with Jesus. Won't you (and I) lend them a hand?



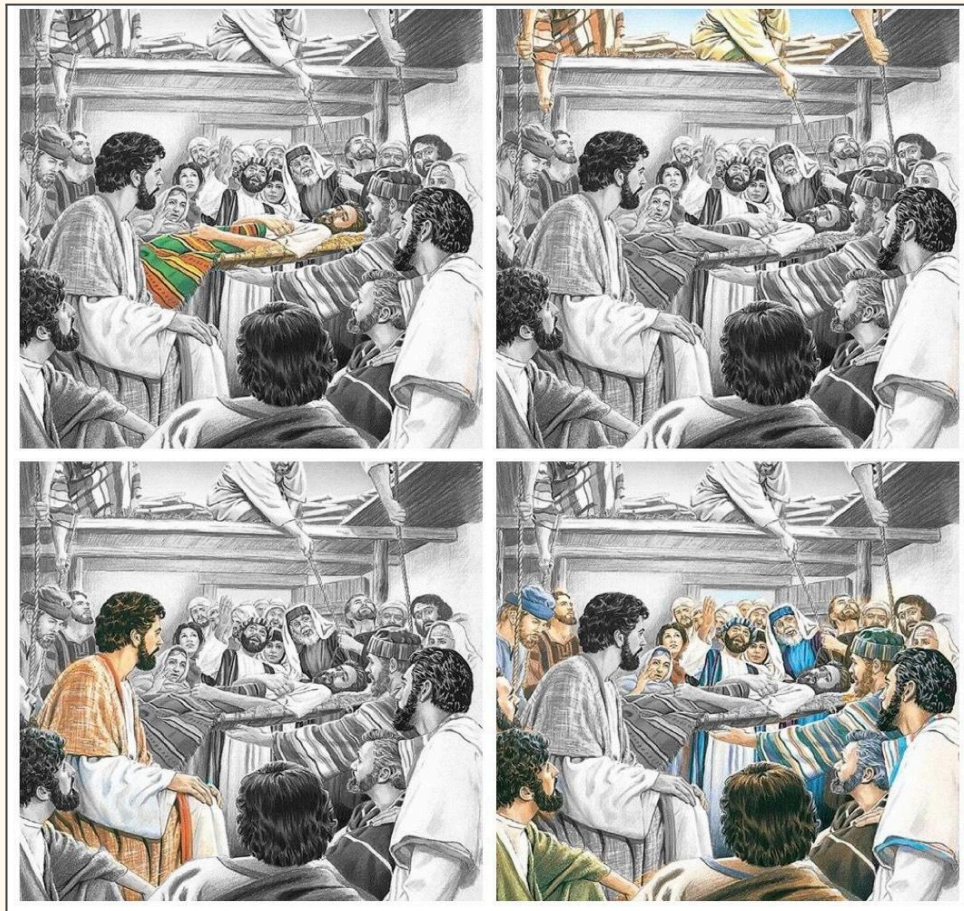
APPLICATION

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

- Let's talk about art: Who is your favourite artist and what artwork is he/she famous for? When or where was the last time you went for an art exhibition? What is your favourite genre of art? What is art to you? [Note to facilitator: Feel free to ask other questions related to art.]
- Online deliveries for gifts-giving have become quite popular over the years. What are your go-to websites to order gifts or cakes for special occasions? Share about the time when you received a thoughtful or interesting gift that was delivered to you.



Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- Who are the people in your life that help you grow in faith? How do they make you feel? How can you support them in return?
- There were four characters in the narrative - the Crippled, the Community, the Chosen and the Crowd. In this season of your life, which of the characters do you identify most closely with? Briefly explain why you picked that character.

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- Describe your experience in handling someone who is physically disabled and immobile? Does it come naturally for you to lend a helping hand or was it an awkward situation? What new knowledge did you gain from the experience? How would you encourage another person who is in similar predicaments, having to care for those who are crippled in one way or another?
- Are there areas in your life where your faith needs to be more visible and bold, like the friends lowering the man through the roof? What kind of challenges do you face that may be too much to handle but with the help of others, it would be possible to overcome?
- How has encountering Jesus transformed your life, like the paralyzed man? Are there areas where you still need healing? Name your prayer request so that the CG can pray for you.
- The Community and the Crowd are people who have the opportunity to come together in unity and to collaborate and help those who are in need. Post-pandemic, what is the CG doing to bring a positive impact to the last, the least and the lost? What new or ongoing efforts can the CG contribute in?

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

- How would you respond when others question or challenge your faith, as the Pharisees and teachers of the law did in this passage?
 - The impossible happened! The crippled man was healed of his paralysis. Share a testimony of how you were once crippled too, but now you are free. Were there “men of faith” who helped you encounter Jesus?
 - Picture the crowd who were in the house listening to Jesus. If you were there, how would you have responded to the situation? Consider how you would normally respond when you hear testimonies of miracles or extraordinary healing that has taken place?. Would you gape in wonder or doubt that it was real? Are you the type that has to see the proof to believe it? Do you shout for joy or keep silent? Are you inspired by the story that you would do something about it?
-



SERMON REFLECTION



Photo by JEFERSON GOMES on Pexels

"All for one..." 8 of us gathered last night at one of our CG members' home. It was a night to celebrate a year of 3 surgeries for one of them. Perhaps it may seem odd to an outsider, *"celebrating surgeries"*? Even though he lost some of his sight, he is content that he could still see with what is remaining. Unlike the time when he experienced double vision and blurred vision. Some of us would take turns to fetch him to and fro his home.

In reflection, I remember too, when a CG member texted to say that she had driven herself to the ER because she had a very high fever. I was at my campus and was unable to drive back to SJMC to accompany her. Anxiety would have set in if not for the response from a few who told me they will be available to go over to the hospital if help is needed. Evening came and I made my way to the hospital. Another friend came as well. With no beds available, we fetched our sick friend back to her apartment, spent some time with her until she was comfortable before leaving.

Still another checked himself into a hospital when he experienced discomfort in the middle of the night. Some of us carpooled and drove down to the hospital in Klang to

visit and pray for him. The same brother who lives alone also needed help when he was shifting from one house to another.

There were those who had to work late into the night or the weekends, or travel frequently to hit sales. Those few were constantly tired out but they would try their best to make it to CG gatherings whenever they could. Through the years, I have seen how my CG family rally together to help one another should one fall or struggle in one way or another. They would still serve one another wholeheartedly. Most of the time, we come out stronger though we do have some misses as well with a few people leaving the CG.

At different timelines of our lives, we have been the crippled, the community or the crowd. As a Cell Leader, I am thankful that I don't have to do it all on my own, and it is my joy and privilege that I have a CG family who genuinely care and love one another as a family, a 'kampung'. We celebrate our wins, and our failures together.

Most importantly, through it all, we have that same stance, that no matter what the situation is, the good times and the tough times, Christ has to be the centre of it all. He is our helper (Jehovah Ezer) and our healer (Jehovah Rapha). He is our eternal hope. Jesus is our "One for all".

My personal desire for my CG is that in knowing Jesus is the One for themselves, that they would continue to grow on, deeper in Him, and wider in extending His love towards others outside of the CG. To be a pleasing sacrifice, in praise and thanksgiving to God, to the glory of His name. Amen.

Contributed by Wendy ML Tan



MISSIONAL

Note to CGL: Inspire and encourage the Cell Group members to participate in the activity suggested below (from our CrossFields, Missions department) together to cultivate a culture of being a missional church.

DUMC  **CrossFields**

Unreached People Group (UPG)

A people group where there is no indigenous community of believers with adequate numbers and resources to evangelise (or reach) the rest of its members without outside assistance



Pray for the UPGs adopted by DUMC



Javanese in Indonesia

- Ask God to ignite a fresh spiritual awakening among the Javanese people, deepening their faith and understanding of Christ and transforming their communities with His love.
- Pray that God will guide the Javanese believers to preserve their cultural heritage while embracing positive changes that promote their spiritual and social well-being.
- Pray for economic and social progress, that initiatives will drive development and improve living standards for the Javanese people.



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.

All Cell Groups come together and join in corporate prayer.

DUMC 

3-Day

**FAST &
PRAYER**

The Urgency of Time

27 - 29 Nov 2024 | 8.00pm - 9.30pm
Auditorium, Dream Centre

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not
know the day or the hour."
Matt 25:13

CGs to meet in church during the 3DFP

The Japanese People

Japan has 0.57% Evangelical Christians, declining annually at -0.4%. Major Religions: Shintoism & Buddhism.

Pray for:

- God's grace and mercy to free the people from cultural and lifestyle pressures and give them hope, purpose, and healing.
- The Japanese will recognise their need for God in every area of their lives.
- Compassion, hope and deliverance for those facing mental and emotional health challenges.
- Japanese believers to walk boldly in their new identity in Christ to grow and make disciples.

Japan Mission Team

Joseph Tan (Team Leader), Amy Ang (Assistant Team Leader), Low Yang Li, Mica Tay, and Tye Sok Min will be on a mission trip to Japan on 17 to 26 December 2024.

Pray for:

- The team to be sensitive to and operate in the Spirit in everything they do.
- Open doors and responsiveness to God's Word among those they meet.
- Protection and good health for the team members and their families back home.
- Good partnership with Sapporo Minami Evangelical Christ Church to expand God's kingdom in Japan.

The Vietnamese People

Pray:

- The Good News will become known in all of Vietnam, transforming families, communities and people groups, leading them to love and fear God.
- God will reveal His Truth to break the spiritual strongholds of ancestral worship, superstition, and idol worship.
- For repentance and revival in local churches, and unity in the face of opposition from the community and authorities.

Vietnam Mission Team

Pr Sophy Lim (Team Leader), Lim Jit Kiong (Asst. Team Leader), Chua Yuen Chee and Tammy Lye will be on a mission trip to Vietnam on 5 to 10 December 2024.

Pray for:

- God's anointing and protection over the team, granting them strength and wisdom throughout the trip.
- Opportunities to share the gospel with the young adults at the Winter Camp.
- Team unity and discernment as they conduct outreach programmes.
- Breakthroughs and manifestations of God's power through prayer and intercession.
- Protection and good health for the team and their families back home.