



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	Blessed Are Those Who Are Unloved	SPEAKER	SP Chua Seng Lee
THEME	Christmas in BBTC	DATE	7 & 8 December 2024

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

What we see matters. As we enter into the month of December where we see signs and festivities of Christmas all around us, how do we feel? Are we really feeling festive, merry and happy? The truth is Christmas can be a lonely time for many; some could also be going through a difficult time, or may be feeling unloved or unnoticed.

LEAH – UNLOVED, RACHEL – DEEPLY LOVED (GEN 29:15-30)

1) How Leah would have felt

Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah (Gen 29:30). Leah would have felt hurt (being made a pawn in her father's game), unworthy (being less significant compared to her younger sister) and rejected by her husband. Her deep longing for her husband's affection is reflected in how she named her first three sons. Upon the arrival of her fourth son, Leah then shifted her focus on God.

- Reuben – “Because the Lord has seen my affliction, surely my husband will love me.”
- Simeon – “Because the Lord has heard that I am unloved. He has therefore given me this son also.”
- Levi – “Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.”
- Judah – “This time I will praise the Lord.”

2) God's blessings upon Leah

In spite of Leah's feelings of hurt, rejection and unworthiness, God blessed Leah.

- God blessed Leah with the gift of childbirth - 6 sons and 1 daughter
- God's favour and love shown on Leah by having 2 great lines of descendants from two of her children:
 - Levi: the line of Priests where Moses and Aaron descended from
 - Judah: the line of Kings, where David and Jesus descended from
- God honoured Leah by allowing her burial to be in the family burial site where Abraham and Sarah were buried (Gen 49:31), signifying her status as Jacob's 'official' wife.

3) The Key to Unlocking God's Blessings

God's blessings upon Leah came after Leah shifted her focus – from her external circumstances – to God. Instead of remaining 'stuck' in the longing and waiting (for her husband's love), Leah praised God and lived her life for God instead. God became her source of hope, love and significance. In return, God blessed Leah and redeemed her life completely.

THREE THINGS WE CAN LEARN ABOUT GOD

1) He notices those who are unloved

God's ways are often different from our ways. From a human perspective, Leah was unloved and rejected. However from God's eternal perspective, Leah was loved and honoured by God. Psalm 34:18 states 'The Lord is near to the broken-hearted. And saves those who are crushed in spirit.'

2) He blesses/loves those who are unloved

When we shift our focus from human beings (who can fail us) to God (who is sovereign and loves us), we experience God's deliverance and redemption. Our lives may be used by God to be a blessing to those around us. Psalm 34:17 states 'The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles.'

3) He understands those who are unloved

Jesus was rejected by his people, hence he understands what it is like to be unloved. God loved us first even when we did not know God or accepted Him. 1 Jn 4:10 states 'In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'

We can always look to Jesus when we are undergoing similar rejection as He fully understands what we are going through.

CONCLUSION

1 Jn 4:11 states 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.' When we love someone, we want the best for the person. God understands and loves us. He calls us His sons and daughters and paid the price of sin for us so that we can be saved and reconciled to God. What can be better than knowing Jesus as Lord and Saviour? This Christmas, let us not just participate in the usual festivities and merry-making. Instead, let us make a difference by reaching out to those around us to share with them the greatest gift of all – the gift of knowing Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

QUESTIONS

1. Share a situation when you have witnessed or experienced 'favouritism' (or discrimination) in your life. What happened and how did it make you feel? How can we keep ourselves neutral, showing love to everyone?

Leader's notes – Being discriminated against can cause one to feel inadequate and lacking. Give members an opportunity to share whether they have experienced such situation(s) in their life. Alternatively, we may sometimes be guilty of showing favouritism or discriminating or being biased. Just as Christ loved us, challenge members to demonstrate Christ's compassion equally to people around them.

2. SP Chua Seng Lee shared that when we shift our focus away from our troubles and heavenwards to God, we experience God's blessing and redemption. Share about a time when you have experienced this transformation. How did the breakthrough come about? For those who may still be awaiting a breakthrough, share and pray for one another.

Leader's notes – A question for members to encourage each other by sharing their testimony/experience(s) of how God transformed a situation when we turn our focus upwards to Him. Pray for those who are still in a midst of a difficult situation or still waiting for a breakthrough.

3. The gift of Jesus Christ is the greatest gift of all. What can we do to share Christ to those around us? Think of someone(s) who we can reach out to and pray for one another.

Leader's notes – This question encourages members to reach out to share Christ to those around us. Remind members of the true meaning of Christmas – God sent His Son into this world to save us and let the spirit of evangelism fill our hearts. Encourage members to invite their oikos to BBTC's Christmas services and/or drama. Pray for one another and for our oikos.