

# Q&A PASTORAL COUNSEL

A Part of the Rise Up Men of God Ministry

**Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.** The following are Rev. Quek's response to the unanswered questions that were posted at the RMG meeting held on 29th April 2023.

## FAMILY

**Q: Generally speaking, I observe Christian wives/mothers tend to be more spiritually minded and fervent in service compared to Christian men/husbands. In Singapore and overseas. Many seem to be 'leading' their families and dragging the men along. Why is this so and what can be done about it? It is a sad state of affairs.**

A: This observation appears to be a contradiction. The husbands are the heads of the home. They have oversight of the family's spiritual wellbeing. If the wife is spiritual, is it not due to the husband's spiritual leadership and encouragement? If the wife is spiritual should she not be a helper suitable for the husband and help him to be spiritual? If the wife is

not spiritual, then it is the husband's failure to care for the wife's spiritual growth. There may be instances where the wife is serving fervently because the husband may not be a believer. Or it could be because there are more women in the church such that more women than men are serving is the perceived observation and conclusion. There is a reason why God says that the marriage between Christian man and a Christian woman is one flesh!

Having said the above, husbands who are breadwinners in the home, who work hard and may find little time and energy for spiritual things, need to place their spiritual well-being as a priority. Wives in these homes need to be godly helpers to help, pray for, remind and encourage their husbands to pray without ceasing, to serve in church and study the Bible at Fellowship and Bible Study meetings to find spiritual strength from God to be spiritual, even as they work hard to provide for the family's material needs. They must heed the injunction from Christ to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and trust God to care for their family's material needs. Matthew 6:33 *"But seek ye first*

*the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

**Q: Can pastor share how to have family worship with a family of grown up children? All are adults and live our own lives so to speak. But we are all Christians. What can I do to have family worship? How to start? Sometimes it is difficult as we have different schedules and we don't have a habit to do so since young. Thanks.**

A: What is family worship? Family worship is time spent together in prayer, praising the Lord and listening to God's Word. This is best accomplished when the children are young, the younger the better. Family worship is meaningful and blessed of God only if Christian parents live a holy life and are exemplary in their conduct before their children. If this is not the case, then family worship will have the negative impact of hypocrisy! Family worship will become harmful as this will leave behind a bitter taste in the children's life.

Family worship is a time when the Bible is read and explained by father. If father is not around, then mother should take over. It is time of praise and prayer. It must always be enjoyable. It should not become a time of admonishment of children but encouragement. The frequency ought to be every night from when the children are very young. As they grow older and with a more independent life, the



frequency may be reduced accordingly. This will inevitably come to an end when the children leave home and begin a life of their own. Hopefully they will inherit the parents' spiritual legacy of "family worship" that they experienced growing up. They will have fond memories that they desire to pass on to their children.

If the parents did not conduct family worship when the children were growing up, the latter may find it a challenge to have family worship with their own children, but it is not impossible. They can start with once a week and increase to twice a week and so on. The frequency will depend on the family's busyness. The father ought to study the Word of God and have a planned approach for the biblical theme he would like to emphasize during Family Worship. Focus on a biblical theme that is needful for the family. For example, he can select Bible passages that teach prayer so that he and his family can learn to pray correctly. When the family gathers and learns together they will benefit and find it enjoyable, and they will look forward to it.

**Q: What is some practical advice [on] how to lead my family (wife and children in 20s)? Sometimes children have their own program and come back late. So family worship with me and my wife only? Or fix a day with everyone once a week? Tks**

A: The key is love. When you love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind you will be able to love your family correctly. Every believer's action and life hinges on his relationship with God. If he is close to God in obedience, prayer and the study of God's Word, he will be able to lead his family well. The reason is that God will help him. Transforming hearts

and changing lives belong to God's sovereign domain alone. Once all are in Christ, everyone in the family will desire to follow Christ according to Holy Scripture as all will have the indwelling of the same Holy Spirit. All will hear the voice of Christ when each one makes priority and makes time to study the Bible together and obeys the Bible.

Family worship must be enjoyable and meaningful. It is not a magic pill that will restore peace and tranquillity to homes. Both options stated above are viable as long as they are done with the right reason of drawing closer to God in Christ as a family.



**Q: Should parents bring their whole family to pray together at prayer meeting? Why or why not? It can be observed that not many bring their family for prayer meeting. Is there a reason why this is so? Should we not encourage our children to come together to pray even when they are young? Thank you**

A: It depends on how old the children are. The purpose of prayer meeting is to pray together as a church family. It is a spiritual warfare always. If the children are believers and of an age to be able to pray and understand its importance, it will be a blessed experience when parents and children pray together with God's family.

If the children are not able to pray and become a distraction, and affects their parents and other prayers negatively, then it is advisable to not bring them. If they are able to be quiet, then what is the purpose and benefit of your children staying up late if they are not able to pray? Do not see prayer meetings as a training ground. Children can pray with family together in their homes where they learn to pray from parents before they become believers.

**Q: My child is thinking of going overseas to study. What advise [sic] and consideration would you give me to advise my child?**

A: Make sure that your child is old enough mentally and especially spiritually before you agree to send him/her overseas. If his or her character is not set in Christ, the impact of the world without parental supervision will be very dangerous and disastrous. Parents should not think that success in studies is the same as good spiritual well-being. Many have sent their young children at the tender age of sixteen and now the children are lost

# UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE PASSAGES AND PERSONAL SPIRITUAL WALK

to the world. They might have done well in their studies but their spiritual lives are either floundering or dead. In other words they were not saved in the first place.

If he or she is mature enough to go, make sure that there is a sound conservative church nearby that he or she must be strongly encouraged to attend.

**Q: I have relatives who are charismatic. When we gather for special occasions, they would want to pray. What should I do?**

A: If it is their home, they have the right to decide who prays. If they are praying let them. If it is your home you decide. But before you eat your meal, give thanks to the Lord for yourself. Do not create a scene.

**Q: When evangelising or praying for salvation, one would naturally show more concern for a family member/blood relative. Is there a biblical basis for this or should we give the same attention to other unbelievers as well? What if the family member is hardened/unreceptive and even tries to pull you away from God instead - is it wise to attempt to minister to him/her?**

A: Sharing the gospel with prayer should be done for all the people God brings into your life. This is the burden all believers have. The doctrine of hardening of hearts is taught in Scriptures. However, the Bible also makes it clear that whoever's heart is hardened beyond salvation is known to the Lord alone. Therefore every believer is duty bound to share the gospel to all.

If the one who shares the gospel has weak faith, then he ought to strengthen himself in the Lord first and be more careful who he shares the gospel with. This is a spiritual exercise.

**Q: Mark 9:38-42 relates an incident where John tells the Lord that there were people casting out devils in His name but do not follow them. Could you help me to understand these verses in relation to the questions below?**

**a. When the Lord says "Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part." Does He mean these people are appointed to do what they do? Or is the Lord saying these people are not appointed/doing God's will, but since they do not hinder the work of Christ and His Apostles practically speaking to leave them alone? In other words, is Christ approving of their ministry?**

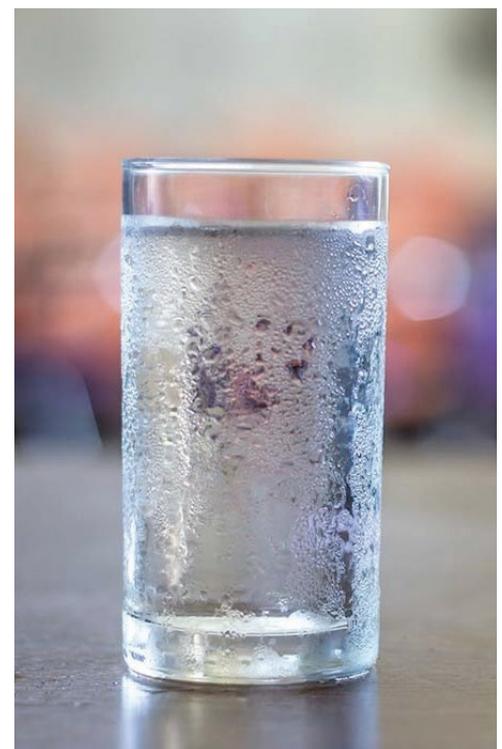
A: Mark 9:38-40 "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. 39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. 40 For he that is not against us is on our part." If the person was not a believer he would not be able to cast out any demon. Based upon what John said they witnessed and the Lord did not contradict him, we have to assume that the man did actually cast out demons in Christ's Name. However, he was not part of the twelve. Thus John asked if they should stop him. The LORD said not to do so. The man was for Christ because he was not against Christ. This is in the context of the

man already doing the work of God in promoting Christ.

**b. Following that question, is the salvation of these people affected (supposing they were sincerely ignorant that they were not doing God's will)? The Lord says, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward"**

A: Mark 9:41 "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

The Lord Jesus Christ went one step further to teach that anyone who served Christ even though he had not been appointed by Christ, like the Apostles who would write NT Holy Scriptures, he would be rewarded by Christ. He would not only be regarded by Christ as being on His side but would accept his service and reward him accordingly.



**Q: There are many (esp. in the US) who believe that the NT is sufficient for faith, holy living and sanctification. The OT is no longer relevant. What are the spiritual implications of such a belief?**

A: Those who believe that the NT is sufficient and the OT is irrelevant are called dispensationalists. Examples of dispensationalists are Baptists, Brethren, and mainly independent churches. They believe that God has different ways of salvation for different generations.

Taken from Wikipedia – **Typical divisions of dispensations**

“Although the number of dispensations typically varies from three to eight, the typical seven-dispensation scheme is as follows:

- Innocence — Adam under probation prior to the Fall of Man. Ends with expulsion from the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3. Some refer to this period as the Adamic period or the dispensation of the Adamic covenant or Adamic law.
- Conscience — From the Fall to the Great Flood. Ends with the worldwide deluge.
- Human or Civil Government — After the Great Flood, humanity is responsible to enact the death penalty, and as such, is the authority to govern. Ends with the dispersion at the Tower of Babel. Some use the term Noahide law in reference to this period of dispensation.
- Promise or Patriarchal Rule — From Abraham to Moses. Ends with the refusal to enter Canaan and the 40 years of unbelief in the wilderness. Some use the terms Abrahamic law or Abrahamic covenant in reference to this period of dispensation.

- Law — From Moses to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Ends with the scattering of Israel in AD70. Some use the term Mosaic law in reference to this period of dispensation.
- Grace — From the cross to the rapture of the church seen by some groups as being present in 1 Thessalonians and the Book of Revelation. The rapture is followed by wrath of God constituting the Great Tribulation. Some use the term Age of Grace or the Church Age for this dispensation.
- Millennial Kingdom — A 1000 year reign of Christ on earth (Revelation 20:1–6), centered in Jerusalem, ending with God’s judgment on the final rebellion.”

Based upon the above division of the Bible, dispensationalists view the OT as a historical Book with little application for NT believers since the latter live in the dispensation of Grace and not the Law.

The impact is very adverse to a believer’s spiritual life and understanding of God from eternity. For example, such believers will not keep the Sabbath Day holy. They do not



believe it applies to them as this doctrine is for the OT believers only. This will result in an attitude of doing what is right in man’s eyes to keep the Lord’s Day holy. To covenantalists, who believe that both the OT and NT apply to them, their lives will be spiritually much richer. They keep the Ten Commandments as a lamp and light unto their holy path instead of dispensationalists who believe in living a holy life that the individual defines because the Ten Commandments have been abrogated.

**Q: Is spiritual lethargy a biblical term to use? What can I do if I feel as if I’m going through the motion of the Christian life? No fervour and excitement in spiritual things even though I am busy in service. What can I do? Thanks**

A: 1 Thessalonians 5:6-10 “*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*”

Spiritual lethargy describes a spiritually sleeping believer, whereby carnality has slipped into his life. He is tired of living the holy life of a Christian. He is more interested in the things of the world than the spiritual things of God, like attending Bible Study, Lord’s Day worship and Christian Fellowship. Coming to church has become a feet-dragging ritual rather than a joy of meeting the Lord in praise and worship. The root of the problem is his love for Christ. When

a believer loves God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind, he will pray without ceasing. Reading the Bible is a joy and brings great excitement, for he knows that God is speaking to him. He communes and thinks of God throughout the day, the moment he wakes up every morning.

Go on your knees and repent, and ask God to restore your first love for Him. Start reading the Bible regularly and consistently by having a Bible reading programme. Use the Read, Pray and Grow booklet as a start. Immerse yourself in Christian activities and end the Lord's Day in God's house at the Sunset Gospel Hour service to praise the Lord. Little by little, you will be renewed as the Holy Spirit who dwells in you will sanctify you and help you to be holy as before when you first accepted Christ as Lord and Saviour.

**Q: You mentioned many times that if we cannot understand the Word of God, then we better check our salvation because it means that we are not saved. I find that I have difficulty understanding many parts of the Word of God and even the book of Revelation is very tough for me when I hear the sermons on Sunday morning, I still don't understand many things. Does that mean I am not saved?**

A: Understanding the Bible for every believer is a lifelong experience that never ends. It is from the LORD. The reason is that the Bible is an amazing Book of Life. The Word of God sanctifies the believer's mind and heart, resulting in godly words and a holy life. The more you study, the more you learn new things you could not see when you were spiritually younger. As you mature in faith, the Holy Spirit will enable you to see deeper into the

Bible. This is the wonderful truth about studying the Bible.

There are the milk and meat doctrines in the Bible. The bulk of the Bible comprises the meat section because these meat doctrines will mature the babe in Christ. The milk doctrines, also called first principles, refer to the gospel. Hebrews 5:12-6:3 *"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those*



*who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit."*

If you struggle and say that you do not understand these milk doctrines, you do not understand the gospel. Thus salvation has not been experienced. The one born again will begin to understand these first principle doc-

trines in greater depth with time as he grows spiritually. These milk doctrines would first be introduced when he accepted Christ as his Lord and Saviour. After that he should continue to learn them in greater depth.

The meat doctrines will be a struggle for many. Some who have been given the gifts of preaching and teaching the Bible will be able to understand the Word of God faster and in greater depth. Other believers will learn the Word of God slower, but they will learn.

The question is "What are the doctrines that a person does not understand?"



**Q: My colleagues are constantly gossiping about bosses and talking about leaving the company. How can [I] best respond to this?**

A: I assume that the colleagues referred to here are unbelievers. Take the opportunity to share your view from a Christian perspective. If they gripe about monetary matters, share what Christ said about gaining the whole world and losing your soul. Matthew 16:26 *"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

However, after you share Christ's

gospel and continue to associate with them and you find that their influence over you is greater than yours, it is best that you disassociate yourself from them. Otherwise, your testimony for Christ might suffer.

**Q: When seeing everything with spiritual eyes, whether something is of God or of the god of this world (by testing it against Scripture), it can feel borderline supernatural/superstitious. How do we not appear superstitious when we try to share or use it to teach others?**

A: When the believer sees and interprets the world with spiritual eyes, it is not within his control not to do so! He now has this spiritual perspective because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the mind of Christ that he possesses. Indeed, it is a supernatural experience. One might even say heavenly because the believer sees the world the way Christ would; of course, it will not be as perfect as Christ.

If you are speaking with an unbeliever, share your Christian perspective. Share the gospel with them whenever the opportunity arises. This spiritual perspective is the new natural for the believer. If he speaks with fellow believers, he is in his home environment. This home environment is even more blessed.



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## CHURCH LIFE

**Q: Why do we not invite pastors from friendly [BP] churches like [T]rue [L]ife and geth [Gethsemane] to speak at our SGH anymore?**

A: The reason is that they do not attend SGH. Our messages are themed and inter-connected. Furthermore, SGH is Pandan's ministry, and our spiritual responsibility is to feed God's flock in Pandan when we can.

**Q: In the Church, we seem to fight, hurt one another, and not come for fellowship with each other. We are to build up one another for service and more good works. Unity is supposed to happen. We are to guard the fruit of our lips v.15, to thank God for each other in His name. If there is a lack of fellowship between the leaders in like-minded churches today like tlpc [True Life BPC] and gbpc [Gethsemane BPC], I'm wondering how this can happen between and among ordinary members.**

A: The lack of fellowship among different churches is typical because we all have our different programmes, just like when two brothers in Christ marry and have their respective families, they begin to live separate lives. They may not find time to meet like before they were married and when they did almost everything together growing up.

However, within the church, where all members have taken the same commitment membership oath, there should be a closeness centred on Christ alone. For the closeness between two brothers to be true,

both of them need to have a closeness with Christ. If one does not study the Bible and is not close to Christ, the friendship will not be close. We know that closeness does not guarantee that there will be no sparks. But the sparks can be put out before they result in fires when both brothers walk close to Christ. When they love Christ with all their heart, soul, strength and mind, they will be able to love one another as themselves. 1 Peter 4:8 *“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”*

**Q: In the first message this morning, “The sanctification that saves” and the link to members who left, is there some implication that not one of them has left us with a cause? Can we say our teaching, preaching, etc. have been blameless? Can we include faithful churches like gbpc [Gethsemane BPC], tlpc [True Life BPC], Baptist, Brethren churches, etc. as also our Church Family to love them?**

A: The reference in the first message was to those who left for carnal reasons. It is not to be interpreted that members cannot leave for the right reasons, such as they prefer to grow spiritually in other sound biblical churches.

**Q: My children brought a friend from a Charismatic church to our YF. After the fellowship, the friend was “cornered” by the Exco leaders, and was bombarded with bible verses and condemnation of the Charismatic movement at the first meeting. The friend felt so “pressurized” and confused as the friend was “condemned” and “judged” of salvation. How**

**can the approach to witness to the newcomer be more sensitive and more welcoming instead of scaring the person away from attending our YF?**

A: The approach has to be very sensitively done. It does not mean we cannot reach out to a new friend and share the truth at the first meeting. It depends on the situation. If the new friend asks to know more, then we share more. If the person comes for the first time and is quiet after the meeting, it is inappropriate to barrage the newcomer with many questions. We all need to pray for the right time, words, place and heart before we share the truth. The leading of the Holy Spirit is essential. All of us desire a good outcome for God's glory. We do not want to do anything to drive someone away. Share the truth with patience and tenderness, and let the Holy Spirit work in the person's heart. Sharing the truth with one should not be more than two persons.

**Q: Some children (even adults) do not have many friends in church. It seems to be difficult to break into well-established groups of friends in church. What can be done? Is it possible for Christians to have 'different wave lengths'? Liberal churches are very open and friendly. Youngsters are always tempted and attracted to these liberal churches because they want to be accepted. What can we do more in our church in this area?**

A: Liberal churches have no truth to offer. They substitute it with a worldliness that appeals to the flesh than to the soul. The first and right reason for coming to church is Christ. This truth is sadly not taught. Attracting people for carnal reasons is sinful. We must help them to attend for



Christ and Christ alone. Christian fellowship with like-minded brethren comes only when they are in Christ; it is not something external that is of the world. Ephesians 4:2-6 *“With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* With this biblical experience as the basis, true friendship will then begin.

Not a few long-term “friendships” were not based upon oneness in Christ. They appeared to be good until a misunderstanding occurred. The animosity that arose resulted in a broken relationship as if the years of “friendship” never existed. The key to finding friends is to make Christ your best Friend first. Then when you seek earthly friends, you will find true friends that will last a lifetime. Friends that remain through thick and thin are difficult to find. Such a friendship begins from within the person and not someone else. Proverbs 18:24 *“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”*

It is not a matter of making friends but true friends that will always love

one another. So when trials come, they will still be like brothers and not become enemies. Proverbs 17:17 *“A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”*

**Q: What objective standard do we apply when it comes to how cultures affect worship in church? E.g. African churches that are fundamental may have different customs, like raising hands while singing or praying, which has been observed in Scripture. Would it be acceptable in SG churches for a person to do the same?**

A: Cultures refer to the societal culture, such as Singapore or African culture. In African culture, they use a drum made from wood and the skin of animals to keep time when they sing hymns. They also sway when they worship God. In Singapore, we do not have such a culture. In the past, Kenyan brethren, who studied in FEBC, presented a song of praise at SGH in Swahili. I know that when they sing in Kenya, they will sway. But they did not sway that evening. I asked them why. The reason they gave was that it is not the culture of Singapore. ❧