

ActNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Connect Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Connect Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

## Live Anew: A Word-Centred Life

Matthew 7:24-27

Ms Agnes Goh

### SERMON SYNOPSIS

The sermon touches on the importance for us as disciples@TPMC to have spiritual depth through our commitment and faithfulness to practice God's Word in every aspect of our daily lives.

- **The Necessity of Spiritual Depth:** Using the metaphors of deep roots versus quickly wilting flowers and the vast ocean versus a shallow puddle, the sermon emphasises that depth brings stability, while shallowness causes one to react to every disturbance.

As disciples@TPMC, it is essential for us to build spiritual depth *in* Christ and God's Word because we are building a firm foundation in our knowledge of God, our trust & love for God. This is accomplished over time when we experience *first-hand* God's love, faithfulness, grace and mercy through our obeying EVERYTHING God says in His Word, the Bible, regardless of our circumstances.

- **The Parable of the Two Builders:** Drawing from Matthew 7, the sermon contrasts the "wise man" who builds his house on rock with the "foolish man" who builds on sand. The "rock" represents not just hearing or reading Jesus' commands but actively putting them into practice. When faced with the same storms, only the one who has been obeying God's Word and knows God personally and trusts in Him completely, will stand firm as an overcomer.

Hence, as Christ's disciples, we are not to be satisfied with merely "consuming" Christian content or attending church. Instead, we are to be *active* in our practice of God's Word over *passive hearing*. We are to be "Bible living" rather than "Bible hearing" people, which involves moving beyond superficial religiosity and allowing the Bible to transform our character, habits, and identities from the inside out. And we achieve this by *actively choosing to follow Jesus daily* as we put Christ's commands into practice each time we wrestle with our self-will, voices of society and friends...etc.

- **Transformation Through our Relationship with Jesus:** Obedience to the Word is described as a process of transformation from the inside out, driven by a love relationship with Christ rather than legalistic rule-keeping. When Jesus calls us to obey, He is inviting us to a process to change inside out. Like a gardener, God wants to prune away the weeds of sin in our lives that tend to grow back again when left unattended so that we will bear Christlikeness and glorify God.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### RELATE

1. Was there a specific Bible verse or passage that really guided you to make a decision, or changed how you reacted to something that had happened? Share how Scripture shaped your decision &/or response to the situation you were in.

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## REFLECT

2. The sermon encourages us to grow deep in Christ by allowing God's Word to transform us from within, so that we become Bible living disciples whose values, desires and behaviours are aligned with Christ because of our love for Him. Share how 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12-13, and John 14:21-24 encourage you to grow in spiritual depth in Christ through the reading, meditating, understanding & practicing God's Word.

## RESPOND

3. What steps will you commit to take today to grow spiritual depth in the Word of God, driven by your love relationship with Jesus Christ, your Lord and Saviour? Share with your CG your plans on how you want to deepen your study of God's Word. [Some suggestions: Begin reading the Bible daily; begin reading a shorter Scripture Passage; choose simpler translations like NIV, CSB & NLT; pray earnestly, "God, please help me understand You!" or "God, please mould me to be driven to want to grow spiritual depth because of my love for You for You first loved me!" or, commit to read the Bible in a community like your CG, for accountability.]

## **PRAYER POINTERS**

- Thank the Lord for providing us with His Word to guide us in holy living. Thank the Lord for raising up pastors and church workers and teachers who devote themselves to the teaching of Scripture for the benefit of believers.
- Pray that we, as TPMC members, will grow depth as disciples of Christ – who thirst and hunger for His Word out of our love for Him.
- Pray that we, as adults and especially parents, will model for our children and youths through our spiritual walk with the Lord and in our spiritual depth and maturity, by holding steadfast to godly values despite the extensive worldly values, worldly practices and temptations embraced by society as the accepted standard of living.

## **SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON**

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is valuable for teaching the truth, convicting of sin, correcting faults and training in right living" [2 Tim 3:16]