

Series - Missional Living

Date/s - 21 Aug 2016

Topic - Set Apart For His Purpose

Speaker/s - Pastor Joachim Tan

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like "Purify My Soul" or "In The Presence Of A Holy God"

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will understand:

1. The purpose of being set apart for God.
2. How to be in the presence of God all the time.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Joachim started the sermon by sharing about the different countries that RiverLife Church has established mission projects in. These are: The Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar and many more.

He recalled in his previous sermon about the Nazarite vow and how a Nazarite would set himself apart to live a holy life so that God's glory will be made known to everyone around.

He also shared that Ps Lionel believed that this is the season that God will begin to move so that RiverLife Church will experience a breakthrough. God will mightily empower RiverLife Church in the process and that lives will be changed. However, we need to consciously set ourselves apart and spend much time on our knees to pray and even fast constantly to lead a godly life.

Pastor Joachim then shared about the Church in the Book of Acts in the following sequence:

- a) In Acts 1 and 2, the disciples received the infilling and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
- b) From chapters 2 to 7, the believers' activities and conversions mainly took place in Jerusalem
- c) Then in Acts 8 to 11, the Acts Church became "unintentional" missionaries because of persecution.
- d) Acts 13: First missionaries sent out from Antioch Church. In Acts 13:2, it was Barnabas and Saul.

He also observed that from Acts chapter 9 to 12 after Saul was converted, he was preaching and ministering to others but there were no significant events. However, after being set apart and prayed for in chapter 13, his ministry began to experience power and miracles. See Acts 13:9-12 and Acts 14:8-11 on examples demonstrating God's power in healing of the sick and the bold proclamation of God's Word through Paul.

We need to understand that in order for our ministry to be effective and powerful, we must get down on our knees to pray. We must set ourselves apart, like how Barnabas and Saul were, to be purified and spend much time with God in prayer and fasting as well.

How do we reveal His glory? The only way is to experience His glory. Before we want to reveal the glory of God

to those around us, we must first experience it ourselves. Pastor Joachim shared how God had convicted him to spend time with Him to pray. He started with a 15-minute night prayer walk at 11 pm and very soon, his nightly prayer walk stretched to more than two hours into the early morning of the next day! Through this, he finds that his ministry has become more anointed. This was how he overcame his personal struggles for impartation and healing to be present in his ministry. He also learnt that instead of being fixated on spiritual gifts and anointing, we must hunger for the greatest gift, that is, the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that we can receive every other spiritual gift as well.

If we want to experience breakthrough and power in our ministry, we need to consciously set ourselves apart for God. Setting ourselves apart involves spending a lot of time on our knees in His presence. This includes, praying and fasting. In order to reveal the glory of God to those around us and thereby be witnesses for God, we need to experience and understand what it means to be in His glory and presence first. There is no other way except to prioritise and intentionally plan to spend time with God and coming into His presence constantly and consistently.

Discussion Questions

- 1 **In the OT, what must a Nazarite not do when called upon to fulfil his vow to God? What was the purpose of the Nazirite’s vow (Numbers 6:8)?** [5 min]

Leader’s Notes: *A Recap question to encourage light sharing and to open up discussion. A Nazarite was given strict orders to set himself apart so that he led a “purified” life. The abstinence and observation of the vow was to remind him to keep himself from the “ways” of the world so that he was strictly “preserved in Holiness” for God alone. In the Old Testament, this Nazirite vow includes: a) not coming into contact with corpses or graves, b) abstaining from wine, vinegar, grapes, intoxicating liquors, eating or drinking any substance that contains any trace of grapes, and c) refrain from cutting one’s hair. These were practices to remind him that he was set apart. The Nazirite is described as being “holy unto Yahweh” (Numbers 6:1 to 8).*

- 2 **Read Romans 12:1-2 and how is this similar to the Nazirite vow?** [5 min]

Leader’s Notes: *A relate question. Although the Nazirite vow is an Old Testament concept, there is a New Testament parallel to the Nazirite vow. For Christians, the ancient Nazirite vow symbolises the need to be separated from this world, a holy people consecrated to God (2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:15). We set ourselves apart from that found in habits, hobbies, ambitions and lifestyles of the world that can corrupt us and draw us away from God. While we should not withdraw completely from the world by setting ourselves apart consciously reminds us of our relation to and spiritual worship for God. The vows and practices of a Nazirite also served to remind the Nazirite to be “clean” before God. Our being must be kept especially for God as He dwells in us. As He dwells in us, we take on His nature. We must become like Him - holy and righteous. This renewing of the mind by placing God at the centre of all we think and do – brings about transformation.*

- 3 **Saul who became known as Paul had a breakthrough through Ananias (Acts 9:10-19). Relate briefly how by setting ‘apart’ your time or your choices for God has helped you to experience a recent breakthrough in your faith journey or someone else’s.** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes: *A relate and reflect question. A breakthrough need not necessarily be accompanied with dramatic ‘loud thundering sound and lightning’ effects. It can be something that started out as simple as daily journaling, prayer walks, singing hymns, having a regular bible-reading time or even going on a short mission trip or praying for a stranger etc... share how these have helped you to grow to be more aware of God’s character, His manifest power and the Holy Spirit’s leading. Recognise that these could*

possibly be ‘training’ moments where God is preparing us to be ready for that very opportunity to be used as His hands, His feet or even His touch to reach out and minister to someone that will cause a downstream impact for God’s glory in time to come.

Look at the example of the disciple Ananias in Acts 9:10-19 whom God appointed to minister to Saul which resulted in Saul’s (or Paul’s) mission to both the Gentiles & Jews. Ananias was ‘prepared’ or ‘set apart’ for that one momentous turn in the history of the Church.

- 4 **What do you think is preventing you from being God-conscious and to spend more time with God? Suggest ways on how to practise walking in His presence at your workplace, in your household or even in the streets on your way to work or school.** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes: A reflect and response question. Some will prefer to laze around doing nothing or pursuing what we want instead of what we ought to do as a Christian. We either totally “RELAX” after a hard day’s work or just “UNWIND” doing our favourite things. While this is normal, let us be mindful as disciples of Jesus, we must pursue Him and give priority to our spiritual well-being and growth. 1 Corinthians 11:1 tells us to “be imitators of me (Paul), just as I also am of Christ.” Let us commit into our schedule time for God. Do not expect God to change and guide you if you are not surrendering yourself to Him. We may miss opportunities for Him to divinely intervene and transform us for greater spiritual growth and fruitfulness.

How do we practice being “in the presence of God”? We can spend our time in the train or bus praying. Look around you and see if there is a person in need. Offer a prayer or reach out. Like Pastor Joachim, pray while you walk or jog. Before you speak or act, be mindful of the character of Jesus. During fasting choose to pray, journal, read the Bible. Do not be distracted. Make that time your “GOD” time. As you begin to be more and more aware of His presence, He will begin to prompt you, to speak to your heart. Do not be surprised when you hear His voice audibly one day! We wait for Him and being in His presence make us more and more reliant on Him and less of ourselves.

Works [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. Every Riverlifer will choose to set himself/ herself apart for God and intentionally plan to spend time soaking in His presence.

Announcements

1. **PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT (PUP)** is an in-depth inductive bible study that requires five hours of homework weekly. This pilot run is opened only to those who have attended Precept Bible Study.

1. A Study On Hosea: A Love That Will Not Let Me Go Orientation: Sun, 4 Sep | 2.30–4pm | Faith Chapel
Classes: Tue, 27 Sep, 4, 11 & 18 Oct | 8–10pm | Victory Chapel
Course Material: \$14

2. A Study On Malachi: Revering The Lord, Standing In Awe Of His Name
Orientation: Sun, 16 Oct | 2.30–4pm | Victory Chapel
Classes: Tue, 1, 8 & 15 Nov | 8–10pm | Victory Chapel
Course Material: \$10

Register at the Cell Connection Counter by next Sun, 28 Aug. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at 65114142, or email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg.

2. BAPTISM CLASS | Sat, 1 Oct | 9.30am-3.30pm | Classrooms 214 & 215

Water baptism is a public declaration of a believer's union and new identity in Christ and an outward symbol of his commitment in receiving Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour. Join the class to learn more about the significance and importance of baptism. Our next baptism service will be on Sun, 13 Nov. Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 25 Sep. For enquiries, please contact Clara Tan at 65114160 or email her at claratan@riverlife.org.sg.