

Series - Living for God

Date/s - 8 Jan 2017

Topic - Living a set-apart lifestyle that honours God

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/](http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/)

[www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html) < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

**Worship** [15 min]

You may select songs like 'Lord, I give You my heart', 'Refiner's Fire' and the hymn 'Take my life, and let it be.'

**Spiritual Objectives**

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

1. Examine what defiles or distracts us from getting closer to God
2. Resolve to consecrate ourselves to overcome and master sin.

**Word** [45 min]

Following on in this series on Living for God 24/7, Ps Joachim cited Leviticus 20:7-8 as God's command for His people to live a "set apart" lifestyle that honours Him. We are to keep His decrees and follow them. God, who is holy, will keep us holy. In 1 Peter 1:13-16, we are called to be alert and sober. We are not to be conformed to the evil desires we had when we lived in ignorance of God's love, grace and power. Living this consecrated lifestyle, we must not take sin lightly. Instead, we should aspire to live a set-apart and holy lifestyle.

In Daniel 1:3-8, even though Daniel was exiled far away from home and subject to pressures and temptations to have food and wine in ways contrary to God has instructed in the Scriptures, he resolved in his heart not to defile himself with the king's food and wine. In Hebrew, to "resolve" means to determine, to lay down, to establish and act on a decision. It also means to plan and exert courage and the will. This is the first step towards a holy lifestyle.

Daniel resolved not to defile himself. He kept himself "clean" as God has instructed in the Scriptures by not touching anything unclean. What does this mean for us today? Ps Joachim listed a few pointers: we are to resolve to refrain from sin, idolatry and sexual immorality. In essence, what leads to defilement should not be present in our lives. We are reminded that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and we must use our bodies to honour God - see 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. Ps Joachim shared on the possible defilement that can come from popular entertainment and his personal journey and the lengths he went to stay away from defilement. He challenged us to examine what is defiling us and resolve not to compromise in our daily living. We should seek to worship God instead before and when we feel tempted. In Daniel 1:12-16, Daniel chose to be tested for the sake of following God's decrees. Daniel fasted to be set apart and consecrated for the Lord. This is an act of wholehearted worship. Daniel's mind was set on the things of God and not on what others think or the things of this world.

Why is consecration or being set apart so important? This is because the holiness of God demands it - see 1 Peter 1:15-16. Therefore, if we want to be of use to God and His kingdom, we must consecrate ourselves for His purpose (see Exodus 29:44). We want to be led by the Holy Spirit, not be controlled by the devil. We can be sure that we are led by the Holy Spirit by constantly seeking to hear from God and to follow Him as our master.

In Isaiah 7:9, we are called to stand firm in our faith. If we do not, we will not stand at all. Fasting from what distracts us from God and from what that can potentially defile us will build our faith and equip us to win the spiritual battles in our lives.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. **Read Daniel 1:3-8. Observe and highlight the difficulties that Daniel would face in not conforming to the king's instructions.** [10 min]

**Leader's Notes:** *This is an ice-breaking question. The Israelites were exiled and subject to foreign rule. The king's policy was to subjugate the people and to assimilate them under the foreign, Babylonian culture. Daniel risked offending the king and the court officials. He also had to withstand the temptations of good food and wine. Furthermore, other Israelites would have compromised and taken the king's food and wine, and other than Scriptural instruction, everything around Daniel would have informed or encouraged Daniel to similarly defile himself.*

2. **Being defiled can mean a lot of different things in the Bible (some were shared by Ps Joachim) but the underlying theme is that it is against God, that is, it is sinful. Distractions, on the other hand, are not in themselves sinful, but they have the potential to cause us to stray away from worshipping God. Therefore, we must be aware of these in our lives as we resolve to get closer to God. Reflect on what these are in your daily living and share.** [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:** *This is a reflect and relate question. Cell members are encouraged to be open about what they are struggling with in terms of distractions and defilement, with a view to work towards overcoming them in this new year. The group can also discuss the two examples brought up by Ps Joachim in his sermon: some entertainment such as TV programming with images and/or underlying values that go against Biblical values; sexual lust; and the praises or criticisms of others.*

3. **Discuss on what you can do differently in 2017 to overcome the distractions and/or defilement shared in the response to question 2.** [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:** *This is a response question. Other than the resolution to commit to overcoming the distractions and / or defilement, encourage cell members to commit to fasting. Fasting is a principal way for us to draw near to God and it is a spiritual discipline. Fasting can be physical. It can also be abstaining from an activity which takes time and focus away from worshipping God. After sharing, pray as a CG to work through these in 2017 as a cell.*

### **Works** [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We will take time to examine what is defiling us and resolve not to compromise in our daily living but set apart and consecrated for the Lord.

## **Announcements**

### **1. Precept Bible Study Classes (Tuesdays, 8pm | Victory Chapel)**

40 Minute Bible Study (17 Jan, 24 Jan, 7 Feb, 14 Feb, 21 Feb & 28 Feb)  
Jesus: Understanding His Death And Resurrection (A Study on Mark 14-16)

Precept Upon Precept (For those who have attended Precept Bible Study)  
17 Jan (Orientation), 24 Jan, 14 Feb & 28 Feb  
Titus: Developing Character & Integrity In The Midst Of A Society Which Has Lost Respect For God

Register at the Information Counter or online at [www.riverlife.org.sg](http://www.riverlife.org.sg) by Sun, 15 Jan. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at 65114142, or email her at [karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg).

### **2. Water Baptism Class**

Sat, 4 Feb | 9.30am-3.30pm | Faith Chapel  
Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 29 Jan. For enquiries, please contact Clara Tan at 65114160 or email her at [claratan@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:claratan@riverlife.org.sg). Our next baptism service will be on Sun, 12 Mar.

### **3. Father School Singapore**

Sessions  
Wed, 22 Feb | 7-10.15pm (dinner provided)  
Sat, 25 Feb | 1.30-5.30pm  
Wed, 1 Mar | 7-10.15pm (dinner provided)  
Sat, 4 Mar | 1.30-5.30pm  
Sat, 22 Apr | 7am-11.30am (optional)

\$90 (Special rate for RiverLifers) | \$150 (Usual Price)  
Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 12 Feb. For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at [christinetan@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:christinetan@riverlife.org.sg) or 65114141