

Series - The Antioch Mandate

Date/s - 19 August 2018

Topic - "Runners" or "Messengers"?

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 "Cornerstone", "Tremble", "Here I Bow" or "Break Every Chain".

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Search our hearts on what God is prompting us to do to fulfil the Antioch Mandate; and
2. Go and reveal God's compassion to a broken world.

Word [45 min]

Ps Joachim wrapped up the series on the Antioch Mandate by presenting the stark choice for all believers: do we choose to stay where we are and disobey or do we go and become messengers for God?

He started off with a brief outline of Jonah 1-3. Jonah was a prophet who lived in the Northern Kingdom of Israel in a town near Nazareth. When given the command to preach against the city of Nineveh, he disobeyed God. But after spending time in the belly of a huge fish, he changed his mind. The people of Nineveh turned away from their wicked ways and a great revival broke loose. God relented and did not bring the declared calamity onto the city (see Jonah 3:10). This was despite the extreme brutality and cruelty of the people of Nineveh. God explained this in Jonah 4:10-11, citing the compassion He had for the people of Nineveh "who do not know the difference between their right and left hand."

Ps Joachim drew 3 learning pointers from the book of Jonah:

1. The God of compassion is the God of cities and nations – see Revelations 15:3b

Our God is the King of the nations. God's heart is huge for cities and nations, just as His heart is tender and loving toward every single person. See Psalm 4:2b, Psalm 103:8, 2 Chronicles 30:9 and Exodus 34:6.

The implications are that (a) We have to think wider than our own circle of friends, our local communities in Singapore, and our local church; and (b) We need to know God's heart when He sees the immense pain and suffering, and the plight that humanity is in today. Ps Joachim highlighted the pain and suffering in nearby countries, such as the Rohingyas in Myanmar. Hunger and fatal diseases also ravaged many parts of the world. And two-thirds of the world still does not know Jesus!

2. We have the choice to either follow or ignore the prompting of God

Jonah 1:1,3 speaks of Jonah fleeing from God and not following the word of the Lord. As we see in Jonah 1-3, it is far more dangerous for Jonah (and us too!) to be out of God's will and avoid Nineveh, than to go to Nineveh

in the will of God. Ps Joachim then shared that many “Christians run away from God if He calls them to do something they do not want to do” (quote by Bryan E Beyer). It is also tragic that many churches are found “sleeping” even when the situation is desperate!

3. God wants us to go for Him, to reveal His compassion and love to a broken world

Jonah is the classical biblical example of how God does His perfect work in an imperfect instrument. Closer to home, Ps Joachim mentioned Yakub and Yenni, a husband and wife missionary team in RiverLife, who continue to obey their call to the nations despite deep personal struggles. Ps Joachim then challenged us to prayerfully consider this:

***The World Has Needs,
God Has A Mandate.
Will You Do Your Part?***

Discussion Questions

1. **One recurring theme in this series on the Antioch Mandate is that we serve a God of compassion. Ps Joachim also shared about our God being the God of cities and nations. What need has God placed in your heart for your circle of friends, local communities in Singapore, our church and in the nations?**

[15 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a review question for members to share what God has prompted in our hearts when faced with the needs in this fallen world. God's heart is for all to be saved and for none to perish – see Jonah 4:11, Ezekiel 33:11, John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Peter 3:9. It is meaningful and often helpful for members to share any burden in our hearts for the needs that we can see around us. These can form the basis for what God will require of us in future, i.e. to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly – see Micah 6:8. Leaders can also remind members to remain open to God's prompting for the needs to any other people that God brings them into contact with.*

2. **Read Jonah 1:1-5, 15-17. It is about Jonah fleeing from the presence of God. Was there ever a time when you wanted to run away from the will of the Lord because it just seemed easier? Many of us have been in that situation at one time or another. Share with the cell your personal experience, if any, and where applicable, how God led you back to Him.** [15 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a relate question for members to share their personal experience of not obeying God's will. If the sharing touches on a past experience of disobedience, leaders can prompt members to talk about how God drew them back. If the sharing is about an on-going area of disobedience and there is a willingness to repent, the leader can point to God's sovereignty as demonstrated in the Book of Jonah and discuss practical ways the cell can help*

3. Ps Joachim shared the poem “The Church Sleeps” written by John Philips.

“Today’s world is being torn apart by drugs, drink, immorality, apostasy, and the menace of nuclear war; and the church sleeps.

False religions and wicked philosophies are making giant strides; and the church sleeps.

Abortion, pornography, syndicated crime, sodomy and dreadful diseases threaten mankind; and the church sleeps.

Family, friends, neighbours, and workmates grope in spiritual darkness; and the church sleeps.

Two-thirds of the world’s people will never hear of the gospel; and the church sleeps.”

God’s will is for Christians to go for Him, to reveal His compassion and love to a broken world. What is our answer? What are we to do? [15 min]

Leader’s Notes: This is a reflect and response question. John Philips’s poem is a call to action.

A quote from Craig Greenfield, “The church has been slow to respond to the call to practice true compassion, to suffer alongside, to follow Jesus into the dark places. Preferring instead to keep the poor at arm’s length, we have chosen service delivery and charity over real relationships. This allows us to maintain our lifestyles, while feeling good about our generosity.”

This is not to make members feel bad about God’s blessings in their lives, but to actively turn those blessings into a blessing to others. Leaders can discuss ways we can support the missional call!

Works [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. Every RiverLifer will sincerely obey as God calls us into His mission field. GO!

Announcements

1. **Alpha Course**

Sundays, 2 Sep – 25 Nov | 2pm – 4pm | Faith Chapel

Register online at <http://bit.ly/rlcalpha>

For enquiries, please contact Moses Sho at 65114146, email him at mosessho@riverlife.org.sg or visit our Guest Welcome Lounge on Sundays.

2. **Marriage Preparation Course**

Sundays, 30 Sep, 7, 14, 21 & 28 Oct | 1.45pm-5pm and Sat, 10 Nov | 9am-5pm

\$260 Per Couple | Classrooms 214/215 | RiverLife Church

There will be a celebratory dinner from 6-9pm on Sun, 28 Oct.

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 16 Sep. For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg or 65114141.

3 **Equipping for Parents by RiverLife’s Family Life Ministry**

Child Dedication

Class Dates:

- Sat, 22 Sep | 2-4pm | Grace Chapel or
- Sun, 30 Sep | 2-4pm | Grace Chapel

Please register for one session only. Both parents are required to attend the class.

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 16 Sep.

For more information, please contact Christine Tan at 65114141, or email her at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg.

4 **Water Baptism Class**

Sat, 6 Oct | 9am-3pm | Faith Chapel

Next baptism service will be held on Sun, 11 Nov.

Register for this class at the Information Counter by Sun, 30 Sep. For enquires, please contact Clara Tan at 65114160 or email her at claratan@riverlife.org.sg.

Church Vision Statement:

"A vibrant family where sons and daughters mature and reveal the Father's glory from generation to generation."