

Series - Going Deeper (Part 6 of 6)

Date/s - 7 April 2019

Topic - 3 Perspectives On Missions

Speaker/s - Pastor Benny Ho

## 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 “Awesome Is The Lord Most High”, “Worthy Is The Lamb”, “All Heaven Declares” or “Beauty of the Blood (Surrounded)”.

## Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Reflect on our perspectives on missions; and
2. Be inspired to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth!

## Word [45 min]

This sermon wraps up the series *Going Deeper*, with a call to RiverLifers to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth!

### From Jerusalem and Antioch

Ps Benny brought our attention to the well-known verse, Acts 1:8. This verse contains 2 key promises: the promise of *empowerment* (“...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you...”), and of *expansion* (“...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth”). With these 2 promises, Ps Benny reminded us that it is not enough to only receive God’s power – we must act on it. *It is not about what moving experiences we have, but where our experiences are moving us to.* The real test of any visitation of power is whether we end up going out and witnessing for Jesus. Unfortunately, the early church in Jerusalem failed this test.

How did the early church in Jerusalem fail this test? This was because the church in Jerusalem did not bring the gospel “to the ends of the earth” as Jesus commanded in Acts 1:8. They only preached the gospel within Jerusalem. Because of this, God raised up the church in Antioch to carry the gospel beyond Jerusalem. Ps Benny pointed out that in Acts 11, the focus shifted from the church in Jerusalem to the church in Antioch. Eventually, the church in Jerusalem took a back seat while the church in Antioch came into the spotlight.

Ps Benny reminded us that we can be a church that is very successful, sound in doctrine, powerful in signs and wonders, healing the sick and casting out demons, *and yet miss God’s heart.* That was what happened to the church in Jerusalem when they did not obey the mandate of Acts 1:8. In the same way, the contemporary church can stand in danger of missing God’s agenda for the nations, when we misunderstand Acts 1:8.

With this, Ps Benny highlighted 3 perspectives on missions.

### 1. “Come to us” vs “Go to them”

The contemporary church tends to focus on getting people to come to church. This is done usually by telling people what great preaching, worship, resources, and facilities we have. These are all good, but we will more

likely to attract fellow Christians to visit. Many times, we expect the lost to come to us rather than for us to go to them, but it is very likely that the lost may never even come into the church. No matter how great our church may be, nothing can replace God's command for us to go to the lost. Don't wait for them to come, let's go to them instead!

## 2. The sovereignty of God vs the responsibility of man

Next, Ps Benny reminded us that although there is a place for God's presence and power to bring people to church, that is not enough. It does not replace the responsibility of the church to bring the gospel to the lost. Ps Benny gave the illustration of a plumber who was hired to fix a plumbing problem at your house, but instead he mowed your lawn, painted your garage door, and did everything nice for your house except the one thing that he was hired to do – fix the plumbing problem! In the same way, let us not be caught doing everything else well (have good facilities in church, great worship, friendly befrienders), yet miss the key point of bringing the gospel to the lost.

## 3. Stages vs simultaneous

Some Christians have the idea that Acts 1:8 is to be fulfilled in sequential stages: first we complete reaching our "Jerusalem" (our family and friends), then we move on to our "Judea" (our community and city), and then to "Samaria" (nations with similar language and culture to ours), and finally to "the ends of the earth" (peoples of different ethnicity, language and culture). But this is not so! God meant for these to be fulfilled simultaneously. We see this example in Galatians 2, where the work of reaching the gentiles was done concurrently with the building of the church in Jerusalem.

### A matter of obedience

Ps Benny acknowledged that sometimes, God's ways of doing things does not make complete sense. But God calls us to obedience, not logical analysis. God's way of spreading the gospel may not seem very sensible at times, but we are called to obey and carry it to the ends of the earth regardless. In John 12:24, Jesus tells us that when a seed falls to the ground and dies, it will produce many seeds. Are we willing to die to our own self-interests, so that the gospel may be carried to the ends of the earth? Ps Benny ends his sermon with a moving poem of sacrifice and obedience which can be found in the link below.

<https://calledconvictedconverted.com/2016/07/06/my-choice-bill-mcchesney/>

Let us be obedient to God and carry His gospel to the ends of the earth!

### Discussion Questions

1. **Why did the focus suddenly shift from the Jerusalem church to the Antioch church in Acts 11? What lessons can we learn here?** [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:** This is a recap question. In particular, read Acts 11:19-21. As mentioned in the sermon synopsis, the Jerusalem church did not fulfill the command Jesus gave them in Acts 1:8, to be His witnesses "in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". Because of this, God gave this command to the Antioch church to fulfill instead. Some lessons that we can learn here are: 1) God calls us but if we are not careful to obey, He can give it to others who are willing to obey; 2) God's plans will always be fulfilled regardless of our obedience or lack thereof. God forgives our disobedience if we confess them, but we would have missed out on the joy of being a part of His plan.

2. **Pastor Benny shared 3 perspectives on missions. Which of these would you say is the biggest challenge for yourself?** [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:** A reflect and relate question for members to think through. Some of us may identify more

with the 1<sup>st</sup> perspective, and are constantly promoting the good points about our church to our friends and family, without actually sharing the gospel with them. Those who identify more with the 2<sup>nd</sup> perspective may be actively serving in church to the point that serving in a ministry becomes more important than actually bringing the gospel to the lost. Others may identify more with the 3<sup>rd</sup> perspective, desiring that their immediate family and close friends be saved before they would consider going on a mission trip, for example.

It is important for the leader to note that none of the above examples are bad in and of themselves. The point here is to help members identify what obstacle(s) they face in bringing the gospel to the lost. Ask the Holy Spirit for sensitivity and love to lead this discussion in such a way that it spurs members on to focus on the key point of bringing the gospel to the lost, not for the purpose of condemning our shortcomings.

3. **RiverLife Church has several mission trips planned for 2019. Would you go for one?** [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:** This is a response question. Leaders can refer their members to the RiverLife Church website on missions: <http://www.riverlife.org.sg/into-the-nations>. Encourage members to prayerfully consider going on a mission trip. They can go alone, with family, or even as a cell group. Ask the Holy Spirit to awaken the desire in members to bring the gospel to the lost!

It is important for the church to desire what God desires and develop a heart for the lost. In his book *Radical*, Dr David Platt challenges Christians to embrace the following steps and invites others to join us for the following in "[The Radical Experiment](https://www.sermoncentral.com/pastors-preaching-articles/david-platt-the-radical-experiment-one-year-to-a-church-turned-upside-down-757)"

(<https://www.sermoncentral.com/pastors-preaching-articles/david-platt-the-radical-experiment-one-year-to-a-church-turned-upside-down-757>)

- Pray for the entire world
- Read through the entire Word
- Sacrifice our money for a specific purpose
- Give our time in another context
- Commit our lives to multiplying community

**Works** [10 min]

Read the scripture as a cell and pray using the verse:

1. **Matthew 20:18-19**

18 "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death

19 and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!"

**Notes to CL:** The gospel narrates for us what is going to happen in the final moments of Jesus's life. Let us pray and celebrate in the confidence that Jesus was raised to life that our pre-believing friends will come to experience this Life too.

**Let's Practice!** (pair up cell members and get them to role play)

**Gospel Conversational Starters**

**1. IF THIS WERE YOUR LAST MEAL, WHAT WOULD YOU EAT?**

- a. You can open this discussion during a meal or towards the end of it.
- b. Discuss how each other's last meal will be and follow up with "Why did you choose those food items?" or "How does these food items represent who you are or a particular memory?"
- c. Actually, Jesus also had a last supper meal that inspired the famous painting by Da Vinci.
- d. Do you know what Jesus ate for his last meal?
  - i. Jesus broke bread and took wine.
  - ii. He taught about how he was going to die for everyone.
  - iii. Jesus took his last supper before dying on the cross.
  - iv. Share gospel message.

**2. WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD "HOLIDAY"?**

- a. Did you know that Holiday is made up of 2 words – Holy and Day?
- b. In the past, religious institutions used to declare a particular day as special and set it aside for religious purposes thus it was called "holy day".
- c. Do you know why Easter Sunday is a holy day?
  - i. On this day, we remember what Jesus did for every one of us.
  - ii. He died on the cross on Friday to pay for our sins and He resurrected on Sunday!
  - iii. Share gospel message.

**3. I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. Share one thing that you cannot live without. For example: Food, Family, Mobile, Games, Coffee
- b. Discuss and imagine how life would be like without that one thing.
- c. Actually, I cannot imagine my life without Jesus.
  - i. Share personal testimony of who Jesus is to you.
  - ii. Share gospel message.

**4. WHAT IS THE MOST COURAGEOUS THING YOU HAVE EVER DONE?**

- a. Share the most courageous thing you have done. For example: I went sky diving, bungee jumping, ran a full marathon, went on a solo trip etc.
- b. Share the experience and how it required courage.
- c. To be honest, I think the most courageous thing someone ever did was how Jesus became a man and died on the cross.
  - i. Share about how Jesus walked on earth like a man.
  - ii. Share about God going the distance for us to encounter Him.
  - iii. Share the gospel message.

**BONUS TRIVIA**

Question: What is the only man-made thing in heaven?

Answer: The scars on Jesus due to crucifixion

Follow up by sharing the gospel story.

**Announcements**

**1. Alpha Course**

Sun, 5 May – 28 Jul 19 | 2pm – 4pm (12 sessions)

Register now at [bit.ly/rlcalpha](http://bit.ly/rlcalpha). For enquiries, please contact Karen Koh at 65114139, email her at [karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg) or visit our Guest Welcome Lounge on Sundays.

## 2. Passion Week Presence Room

15, 16, 17 & 19 Apr | 8-9.30pm | Victory Chapel

For four nights leading up to Good Friday, we will be setting apart a space for the church family to meet with God and reflect on the passion of Christ. Come once or on all four days to linger, worship, and pray together as we prepare our hearts for Easter. There will be prayer stations set up and devotional material provided to help you engage with the Lord.

**Church Vision:**

“A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations.”

**Mission:**

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.