



CHRISTMAS @ RIVERLIFE

Cell Guide (Leaders)

11 DEC 2022 | PASTOR JASON ONG | IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Reflect on God's sovereignty and His purpose in our lives
2. Recognise that God's healing power is real.

SUMMARY OF SPEAKER'S TESTIMONY

Pastor Jason shared about his own testimony of pain and suffering from brain cancer and how Jesus miraculously healed him.

In his teens, Ps Jason was a rebellious teenager who often got into trouble with fights, smoking and drinking. Even his own family gave up hope on him. He had first heard the name of Jesus in a church kindergarten, but God caught his attention when his father was about to pass away. As his father was on his deathbed, Ps Jason called on the names of every god he knew but nothing happened. However, when he called on the name of Jesus, his father's eyes opened and he asked his father to follow Jesus. From that point, Ps Jason gave his life to Jesus.

He met his wife, Judith in church, attended the same cell group and started going out together as a couple. Judith had a difficult first marriage and Jason was concerned about taking care of her child with special needs. Two years into their marriage, in 2004, Ps Jason was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer. It was so rare then that Ps Jason was the only one in Singapore who had such a brain tumour and there was no known cure nor medication. It felt like a death sentence to Ps Jason. It was a dark time of fear for Ps Jason and Judith. They then spent a lot of time praying and seeking the Lord.

The doctor recommended surgery to remove the tumour. After much prayer and seeking God, Ps Jason took the doctor's advice and went for surgery as he believed that God also heals through medication and surgery. After the 20-hour surgery, the doctors told Ps Jason that he only had 6 months to live as the cancer had already spread to the main artery. He was also left deaf in one ear due to the damage caused by the tumour. Nonetheless, Ps Jason was thankful to God that he could eat, talk and see despite the operation. 6 months later, Ps Jason went back to see the doctor and he was surprised that Ps Jason was still alive. But there was a 95% chance of relapse, hence the need to go for annual check-ups.

From 2004 to 2007, the Lord told Ps Jason and Judith to go into the nations to glorify His Name. The first country that God brought them to was Pakistan. He gave his testimony there that he was going to die but he still chose to say that God is good and that Jesus is His Lord. The people in Pakistan were very encouraged as the Pakistanis faced a lot of persecution.

In 2007, Ps Jason had a relapse and the doctor told him that everything must be removed, hence he would not be able to swallow, talk nor see and would have paralysis on his entire left side. That was not an option for Ps Jason as it would mean that he could not do ministry anymore. Even though he had to endure increasing pain and suffering, he continued to work even harder for missions work. This was also the time when Ps Jason and Judith started their business, Olive Vine, which the Lord led them to setup to finance their missions all over Asia, where they work with the hungry, poor, widowed and fatherless. Ps Jason continued to thank God that He had sustained him all the way over the 10 years of fighting cancer, without getting into depression. Even in pain, Ps Jason would be thanking Jesus and accepted his condition.

From 2007 to 2013, Ps Jason and Judith continued with a lot more mission work, saved many more children and worked very hard. However, Ps Jason's condition continued to deteriorate until he was bedridden. One day, while he was having his quiet time, Ps Jason shared that Jesus said to him, "I am moved by the tears of your wife and I will heal you."

In 2013, he underwent surgery again and after the surgery, he could not see and was in a lot of pain. After 10 years of fighting brain cancer, Ps Jason was at his end, at the bottom. He asked Judith to let him go back and return home to Jesus.

That night, lying on his hospital bed, Jesus came and healed Ps Jason in a miraculous way. He testified of the presence of Jesus and of His holiness when Jesus came, and when Jesus touched his forehead, he fell asleep. The next morning, he was able to get up from his bed and take a bath. His doctor examined him and said it was miraculous to see someone recover so quickly. He was discharged from hospital on the 4th day.

Today, Ps Jason can praise the Lord for His healing. Even as the tumour is now dormant, Ps Jason continues to serve the Lord, to do missions and feed the poor and needy. He shares "To live is Christ. To die is gain", simply put is that his life is not his own and that he has chosen to live this life to be a blessing to many others, and so to live is for Christ. To die is gain means that when he dies, Ps Jason knows that he will be forever in the presence of Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. After his first surgery, Ps Jason was given only 6 months to live. Yet, he continued to serve the Lord in missions work, going out into the nations saying "Even though I'm going to die, I still choose to stand and say "God is good!". How should we choose to live our lives for Jesus amidst pain, sickness and suffering? How do we trust in the sovereignty of God even when He does not heal immediately?**

Note to leaders:

This is a recap and reflect question for members to reflect on the sovereignty of God. Sometimes, God heals immediately and miraculously. Sometimes, the healing is a process and also through medical science. Other times, complete healing comes as we receive our glorified body when we enter into heaven. Whether we receive our healing now, or in the future, God is always sovereign because His plans and purposes for us are always perfect. While we may not understand why He does not answer the way we want, we can trust that His ways are higher than ours and that He knows what is best for us. Therefore, we can live fully for Jesus, knowing that our lives are in his hands and that God is good.

Transition

God is sovereign and He has the power to save us from our sins and heal our sicknesses. We can trust Him with our lives.

- 2. Ps Jason shared his powerful testimony of Jesus' healing. Have you, or someone close to you, experienced healing from a sickness or injury? It could be through prayer or a healing ministry. It could also be through medication or surgery as Ps Jason shared that God also works through medicine. What is important is our trust is God's sovereignty and Jesus' healing power. Share this experience to encourage one another.**

Note to leaders:

This question is a reflect question for members to share about their own experience of God's healing power. Members can share about the illness/injury and how they trusted in Jesus to heal them. This could be through prayer, healing ministry, medication/surgery, but more importantly about appropriating the healing power in the name of Jesus and through His promises that "by his wounds you are healed" – [1 Peter 2:24](#) and [Isaiah 53:5](#). Members can share about their journey of faith and trust in God's healing and in God's sovereignty. Member can also share about their reflections about Ps Jason's testimony to encourage one another to continue to trust in the Lord for His healing, and for us to remember that God is sovereign in all circumstances.

Transition

In his testimony, Ps Jason experienced the healing power of Jesus in a miraculous way! Jesus still heals today!

3. **There is resurrection power in the name of Jesus to bring healing! Do you have any prayer needs for healing of physical illness, emotional pain or mental distress? Break out into smaller groups to pray for one another.**

Note to leaders:

This is a response question to the powerful testimony of Ps Jason. The healing power of Jesus is real and He continues to heal today. He wants to heal us of our physical ailments, our emotional and mental hurts today so that we can experience the full and abundant life that He has promised. Pray in faith for healing for members and trust in His sovereignty. We can pray for healing for members with the following steps

1. **Acknowledge** that Jesus can heal all sickness and illnesses and that He alone is sovereign
2. **Believe** and have faith that He will heal
3. **Claim** His promises in His Word that “by his wound you are healed” – [1 Peter 2:24](#) and [Isaiah 53:5](#) and ask for healing in the name of Jesus
4. **Declare** that He is sovereign and entrust the outcome to Jesus. If He heals, praise God and shout Hallelujah! If He does not heal, He is sovereign and He is still good!

WORKS

Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. Sermon Application

- Pray that we recognise God’s sovereignty in our lives and for us to trust in Him
- Pray for healing in the Cell where there is sickness and pain.

2. COVID-19 in Singapore

- Praise the Lord for the removal of the vaccinated-differentiated measures.
- Pray for God’s protection in the midst of a high number of community cases.
- Pray for protection against reinfection and the ill effects that it may bring.

3. World

- A swift end to the COVID-19 crisis globally, if not a reduction in cases in third world nations, and a stable environment where humans and virus coexist.
- Pray for peace especially in areas of conflict (Ukraine) and potential conflict – China & Taiwan.

4. Opportunities for Outreach

- Ask the Lord to bless us as we step out to reach a pre-believer this Christmas.
- Ask the Lord to grant you opportunities to reach out to a non-believing loved one, friend, or colleague this week as we seek to mature in Christlikeness.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Digital Bulletin: rlc.sg/bulletin

1. **Free Shuttle Bus.** Available on Sundays (4-25 Dec). Pasir Ris MRT to RLC @ 8.15am, 8.30am, 8.45am). RLC to Pasir Ris MRT @ 11.15am, 11.30am, 11.45am.

2. **Advent Devotionals.** A four-week daily devotional written by our own RiverLifers to help you reflect on Christ and His presence in your life as we celebrate His birth. Each week will centre around one of the four descriptions of Jesus found in Isaiah 9:6. Link: rlc.sg/advent.
3. **Watchnight Service. Sat, 31 Dec. 8.30pm – 12.00am. Victory Chapel.** Join us for a time of worship and thanksgiving as we reflect on what God has done for us in 2022 individually and collectively. After the service, we will fellowship over Teochew porridge.
4. **RiverLife Prayer Room.** Closed until next year.
5. **9M Ministry.** The 9M Ministry provides prayer support for expectant mothers on their 9-month journey of pregnancy. Sisters-in-Christ who are fellow RiverLifers are assigned as Prayer Buddies to walk alongside mums who sign up to receive prayer support.
 - Receive Prayer Support: rlc.sg/9m
 - Provide Prayer Support: rlc.sg/serve
6. **Dec Church Calendar**
 - 17 Dec, 2.30pm – RL Cares Community Outreach
 - 04 – 25 Dec – Christmas Evangelistic Services (with concurrent Children’s Services)
7. **Global Hunger Fund.** This fund will go towards RLC’s mission partners to help their local churches and communities gain access to food amid soaring costs. Refer to the [Digital Bulletin](#) for more details.
8. **Call for SuperLife Volunteers.** If you have a heart for children and a desire to disciple them in their spiritual journey, come be a part of the SuperLife team. Sign up at rlc.sg/serve. Immediate needs:
 - *SuperLife Primary Teacher* (Serve twice a month. Facilitate small group discussions after each Bible lesson, connect and pray with the children, be involved in SuperLife Ministry events, etc.)
 - *Special Needs Chaperone.* (Serve twice a month. Provided 1-1 support to children with special needs and help facilitate an inclusive environment between children with and without special needs.)
9. **Technical & Production (TAP) Ministry Recruitment.** The TAP ministry comprises five teams – audio, graphics, lighting, sound and video – and they all work as one in partnership with the Holy Spirit to support an atmosphere that allows the congregation to encounter God. We are now opening up recruitment for this ministry. If you desire to take the next step in your walk with God through starting to serve, we invite you to sign up to explore serving in one of the five TAP teams. You may sign up online at rlc.sg/serve or refer to our [digital bulletin](#) for more details.
10. **RiverLife Podcast.** The RiverLife Podcast allows you to listen to RiverLife content anytime, anywhere! The link to go to is rlc.sg/podcast or simply search *‘The RiverLife Podcast’* on Spotify.
11. **Spiritual Growth Resources.** We have put together a curated list of recommended resources for the RiverLife family. These resources (books, articles, podcasts and videos) are recommendations for the various spiritual growth stages as you seek to grow deeper in the River of God this year. You can access them at rlc.sg/resource. This list will be continually populated throughout the year.
12. **Cradle Roll.** Our Cradle Roll is open from 9am to 10.30am every Sunday for children 24 months and below. *NO booking of tickets is required.*
13. **Prayer Ministry.** If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. unforgiveness, demonic oppression, etc), you can sign up for RLC’s RTF ministry: <https://bit.ly/rlcrtf>

14. **Bible Reading Plan.** You can access our 2-Year Bible Reading Plan 2021-2022 by visiting: <https://rlc.sg/brp2021>.
15. **Testimony.** If you have a testimony to share, you can write to us at stories@riverlife.org.sg to share with us your testimony as an encouragement to others.

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