

DATE: 15 JAN 2023 | SPEAKER: PS BENNY HO
TOPIC: "LORD, DO IT AGAIN!" | SCRIPTURE: MALACHI 3:1-6

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Learn that revival comes in four phases, i.e., Preparation, Visitation, Purification, and Reformation.
2. Understand that revival happens when we humble ourselves, pray, seek His face and turn from our sins.
3. Be encouraged to yearn for a new wave of revival in our midst.

SERMON SUMMARY

In this last sermon of the series "Preparing for God's New Move", Ps Benny shared that the Church must look forward to times of revival where God rends the heavens and comes down in power and glory, *punching huge holes in the darkness*.

The prophet John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare the people for Jesus' first coming. God will again send the prophetic to prepare His Church before He comes again the second time. When this happens, we will see the spirit and power of revival. When God's revival comes, it will renew the Church and transform society.

Ps Benny urges RiverLifers to yearn for revival and to ask God to prepare us for His visitation. He described four phases of revival:

1. *Preparation* – prayer is needed before revival breaks forth;
2. *Visitation* – God's Spirit comes suddenly to a people who are prepared for His visitation;
3. *Purification* – revival is a baptism in the refining fire of God and He will purify His Church; and
4. *Reformation* – when an awakened Church begins to touch a broken society, she releases the fear of God and there will be transformation of society.

SERMON RECAP

Ps Benny began his sermon by narrating a story about how the author of *Treasure Island*, when he was a boy, exclaiming to his grandma that a man lighting up street lamps was "punching holes in the darkness". Similarly, in a world darkened by sin, we have been sent to metaphorically punch holes in the darkness so that the glory of God will shine in. In times of revival, God will rend the heavens, and He will come down to punch holes in the darkness with His glory and power. This is what we are preparing for – so God will visit our nation once again. ([Isaiah 64:1-4](#))

[Malachi 3:1-5](#) talks about two messengers. The first is John the Baptist who was sent to prepare the way of the Messenger of the covenant, who is our Lord Jesus Christ. However, Malachi 3 is not just speaking of the first coming of Christ as the Saviour (the first prophecy) but it was also speaking eschatologically of the second coming of Christ as the Judge ([Malachi 3:5](#)). Before Jesus comes again, we will see darkness become darker but we will also see the light becoming brighter. The world will become worldlier but the Church will experience revival.

Like John the Baptist, God will send the prophetic to prepare His Church for His second coming. Ps Benny urged RiverLifers to yearn for revival – to see the Church renewed and society transformed through the spirit and power of revival.

Ps Benny explained the four phases of revival. They are:

1. *Preparation:*

- Before revival breaks forth, it is always preceded by a season of preparation.
- God will send messengers to prepare the way (Malachi 3:1).
- The greatest hinderance to world evangelism is the carnality of the Church, i.e., our love affair with the world, our lack of passion for Jesus, and our prayerlessness.
- These are roadblocks that stand in the way of God's agenda and purposes for this world.
- The starting point of revival is not a passion for the lost but a passion for God.
- Spreading His name and His fame throughout the earth must be our highest pursuit.
- Now is the time for RiverLife to return to the altar of God and cry out to him until He rends the heavens and comes down in glory.

2. *Visitation:*

- In a revival, the Spirit comes suddenly to a people who are prepared for His visitation (Malachi 3:1).
- In Acts 2, 120 people were gathered in the Upper Room. Their hearts were united in prayer, their minds were immersed in the Word, and their posture was focused on waiting upon the Lord. God's answer to them was the day of Pentecost, which came suddenly.
- No matter how prepared we think we are, when revival comes, it is always a surprise.
- Revival is a season of "suddenlies", during which God will work swiftly and intensely.
- In 2 Chronicles 29, a revival took place under the leadership of King Hezekiah. He consecrated the priests and reopened the doors of the temple, and then revival quickly came ([2 Chronicles 29:36](#)).
- In a revival, the work of the Lord is accelerated.
- In a revival, the people of God are spiritually awakened suddenly:
 - There is an increased consciousness of sin;
 - There is an acute sense of the fear of God;
 - There is a spirit of repentance that will hit the people of God;
 - There is a renewed hunger for the Word of God and the presence of God;
 - There is a greater desire for the things of God.
- During a time of God's visitation, the most hardened sinner can break down before God and the most sceptical person can be touched by the power of God.
- We must not try to repeat history or replicate the "good old days", but we must ask God for a new wave of revival for today.

3. *Purification:*

- A revival is a baptism in the refining fire of God ([Malachi 3:2-4](#)).
- In times of a true Holy Ghost revival, God will purify His Church.

- God's refining fire will expose and depose the areas in our lives where we have compromised.
- However, this is not a destructive fire but a purifying fire that will change us.
- When revival comes, it separates the sheep from the goats; it separates the passionate from the lukewarm.
- The key is not to run away from the Refiner's Fire but to draw near and love Jesus as our Refiner.
- Let God come near to us to clean us, heal us and set us free ([Psalm 24:3-4](#); [Malachi 3:3-5](#)).

4. *Reformation:*

- The final phase of revival is when an awakened Church begins to touch a broken society ([Malachi 3:5](#)).
- When the Church in a nation sleeps, society sins.
- When the Church is awakened, it releases the fear of God into the society.
- Once the Church is revived and purified, God will confront society and the lost will begin to come to Christ.
- Examples of this are the Methodist Revival under John and Charles Wesley in 1738, the Welsh Revival in 1904, John Sung's preaching in Singapore in 1935, and the ACS Clock Tower Revival in 1972.
- Revivals are powerful times when God moves in awesome ways.
- Revivals are times when we see backslidden Christians slide back to the Church and the un-saved getting saved.
- In Acts 2, after Pentecost, the 120 who were touched by the Holy Spirit spilled into the streets and proclaimed the Gospel to the society. The result was that 3,000 were added to the Kingdom that day.
- The fruit of all revivals is the salvation of souls and the transformation of society.

Ps Benny believes that God is going to take RiverLife through the four phases of revival. He explained that revival itself begins when we humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from our sins (2 Chronicles 7:14). These are not prerequisites to revival; they are revival itself. He added that forgiveness of our sins and healing of our land are the outcomes of revival.

In closing, Ps Benny urged RiverLifers to depend on God instead of our abilities to bring about spiritual transformation. He said that true awakening happens when we realise in the depth of our being that there is not a good thing in us. It is only by the grace and the faithfulness of an unchanging God that we can come to Him in repentance and brokenness and know that He will respond to us. When we return to Him, He will return to us. It is guaranteed not because we are good and able but because God is good and He is able. He is the faithful and unchanging God who is here to meet with us today.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Ps Benny preached that before revival breaks forth, it is always preceded by a season of preparation. What can we do to prepare ourselves for revival?**

Leader's Notes

This is a recap and reflect question for members to ponder on how much each one of us actually yearns for revival and how much we are preparing or not preparing for it. Members can share honestly about their thoughts of revival, if they are yearning for it or are lukewarm towards it. Leaders can encourage members by recapping the charismatic outpouring of God in the Asia Pacific region in the 1970's and encourage members to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit.

Leaders can encourage the individuals in the cell to first have a passion for God and then to seek after God's heart for the lost to be reunited with Him.

Transition

As we pray for revival, let us examine our lives to see if there are any hinderances to our desire to reach the lost.

Suggestion

You can opt to show a video clip of past revivals:

- Cane Ridge Revival (8:33 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xV6YPv6ap4A>
- Revival 1972 in Singapore (41:25 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unTU24qD-q0&t=1996s>

- 2. Ps Benny shared that what is holding back world evangelism is the carnality of the Church. Share one or a few areas of our lives that we need to seek forgiveness and repent of. How can we continue to keep our hearts pure as we wait for revival?**

Leader's Notes

This is a reflect and response question for members to share vulnerably about possible roadblocks in areas of their lives which stand in the way of God's agenda and purpose for this world. The cell can also pray together or leaders can break the cell up into smaller groups to ask God to help us in our scepticism and unbelief as well as for God to prepare our hearts for revival. Leaders can encourage members to come boldly to God to expose areas of our lives where we have compromised with the world and for God's refining fire to expose and depose these areas.

Transition

As we seek God to purify our hearts, let us yearn for revival to happen in our midst.

- 3. As we close the series on "Preparing for God's New Move", how can cell group members spur each other on to prepare ourselves to see the Holy Spirit's revival in RiverLife, in Singapore and the rest of the nations?**

Leader's Notes

The cell can take the first step to commit together to humble ourselves, pray, seek God's face and turn from our sins ([2 Chronicles 7:14](#)). Members can share with each other (or in smaller groups) on the practical ways in which we would like to commit to making 2 Chronicles 7:14 part of our daily lives. Leaders can remind members that humbling ourselves, praying, seeking His face and turning from our wicked ways are not prerequisites to revival but they are a revival itself. Leaders can also encourage members not to depend on our own human effort to bring about spiritual transformation. Instead, we should anchor ourselves in the immutability of God, our unchanging and faithful God. (See Sermon Application under WORKS below.)

Closing

Revival comes when God's people humble themselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from their sins. True awakening happens when we realise in the depth of our being that there is no good thing in us. It is only by the grace of God and the faithfulness of God that we can come to Him in repentance and brokenness. He is a faithful, unchanging God who is here to meet with us every day. Let us prepare ourselves in earnestly praying for God's revival to come; be prepared to see revival come suddenly; turn our hearts away from the things of the world and let God purify us, and be awakened to touch broken people and transform of our society.

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

- Fast and pray for awakening and revival. Every historical awakening was birthed from the womb of intercession and petition.
- Enter into a renewed commitment to holiness and obedience. These are non-negotiables for revival to occur.
- Put to death those things in our hearts which do not clearly foster unity with other Christians. We must become intentional about this.

For the rest of the seven practical ways to prepare ourselves for revival, see

<https://transformingtruth.org/7-ways-to-prepare-yourself-for-revival/>

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 in 2023.
- 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. Family Life Initiatives.

- *Marriage Preparation Course*. Cost: \$50 per pax (excluding \$70 PREPARE-ENRICH Assessment Report). Sundays, 11am – 3pm. Link to signup: rlc.sg/mpc
 - Run 1: 26 Feb, 5 & 12 Mar
 - Run 2: 4, 18 & 25 Jun
 - Run 3: 3, 10 & 17 Sep
- Marriage Retreat 2023. 24-26 March. Forest City, JB. Cost: \$600 per couple. Link: rlc.sg/mr (*Currently on waiting list*)

2. Lunar New Year Calendar.

- 18 Jan (Wed) – No Wed Night Prayer Meeting
- 21 Jan (Sat) – No Chinese & Youth Services
- 22 Jan (Sun) – Bilingual Service (Combined with Chinese Congregation) at 9am, Victory Chapel. Café will be closed and there will be no SuperLife Services for Preschool and Primary School children.
- 24 Jan (Tue) – No RiverLife Prayer Room

3. **RiverLife Kindergarten Recruitment.** RLK is recruiting for the following roles. Link: oileng@riverlifekindergarten.org.sg. Refer to the e-Bulletin for more details.
 - Chinese Teacher
 - Teacher Assistant
4. **Water Baptism Class. 4 Feb, 9am – 3.30pm. Room 205.** Register at rlc.sg/baptism-class by Sun, 29 Jan. For enquiries, contact karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg.
5. **Alpha Course. 11 Feb – 29 Apr.** Sign Up Link: rlc.sg/join-alpha.
6. **RiverLife Prayer Meetings.**
 - **RLC Prayer Room.** Tue, 8-9.30pm, Victory Chapel. (Online: rlc.sg/rpr-watch)
 - **Wed Night Prayer Meeting.** Wed, 8pm – 9.30pm, Victory Chapel.
7. **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
8. **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.
9. **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.)
10. **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.
11. **Bible Reading Plan.** The church has provided 3 undated Bible Reading plans that will serve as a resource for those who wish to follow a Bible Reading plan. Link: rlc.sg/brp
 - 2 Year Chronological Bible Reading Plan.
 - 3 Year Bible Reading Schedule (Alternating readings between Old and New Testament passages)
 - Redemptive Historical Bible Reading Plan (At your own pace, focusing on the redemption story)
12. **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.
13. **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.

14. **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.*
15. **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>
16. **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.

GIVING LINKS & QR CODES

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