

19 MAR 2023 | SPEAKER: PS EUGENE SEOW | BEYOND COMPASSION – TO THE LEAST OF THESE | SCRIPTURE: [MATTHEW 25:31-46](#)

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Seek God's direction on how we can serve the poor and the disadvantaged in the community.
2. Be intentional and purposeful when embarking on the work or task that He has called us to do.

SERMON SUMMARY

This message is an urgent reminder of the call of God to serve the needy and disadvantaged among us. However, at the final judgement of the Sheep and the Goats, there is also a poignant reminder that beyond just a life mission accomplished, we will all be called to account for our service to Jesus – meeting the needs of *the least of these*. This message is about going *beyond compassion* to serve the least, the last and the lost among us.

SERMON RECAP

We have a Biblical mandate to go beyond compassion to reach out and serve the very poor, the disadvantaged and the marginalised. Jesus calls them *the least of these*.

The plain truth is stated clearly in the Word of God. Whatever *you did* or *did not do* for one of the least of these will determine your future in eternity ([Matthew 25:40, 45-46](#)).

We know it takes compassion to get us to start serving the poor in our community. But to continue to stay on course to do these things that really matter to Jesus, we need to go beyond compassion.

What does it take for us to go beyond compassion to serve the least of these?

1. **Make this your priority. This is God's heart. Be intentional.**
 - If God gives priority to the poor, then we should too. ([Proverbs 31:8-9](#)). If it is important to God, then it must be important to us too.
 - Be intentional to reach out and serve persons with special needs, and people with great needs (migrant workers in our midst).
 - Remember that our giving and our serving must be to Jesus.
 - *"Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."* ([Matthew 5:3](#))
2. **Make this your plan. This is God's way. Be purposeful.**
 - As we serve the least of these, not only will we discover God's divine priority for the poor, but we will also soon begin to realise His divine strategy and plan "for the poor" and "with the poor." There is a purpose.

- *“But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.” (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)*
- This picture points us back to God. When we are working and serving the poor, often we will hear ourselves saying, “It must be God!” God draws us to Himself, and He will use the poor to show us who He is. The starting point of our serving comes not from our strength, our wealth or our abundance, but from our own place of great need and lack, where we too desperately need God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share some examples where you have seen **1 Corinthians 1:27-29** at work.

“But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.” (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

Leader’s Notes

This question is help us dig deeper into **1 Corinthians 1:27-29**. What are some things that have happened in your life that could illustrate this Scripture? Did your experience point you back to God?

Sharing your experiences with each other will help everyone gain a deeper understanding and insights into the heart of God – His heart for the lowly, the weak and *the least of these*.

Transition

Be intentional in prioritising what God gives priority to.

2. Is there something stopping you from serving the poor?

Leader's Notes

This is a reflection question. What stops you from serving the poor? Is it tight finances? Lack of time? Or perhaps you do not know how to engage with, or are unwilling to engage with, the poor and needy.

Identify your biggest obstacles and discuss with your cell group and suggest ways to eliminate them.

Transition

God’s heart is with the poor and needy. This is where our heart should be too.

3. God has placed us where He wants us to be. How can we be a blessing where we are placed?

Leader's Notes

What does it mean to be a blessing to others?

(Extracted from <https://mintools.com/blog/be-a-blessing-to-others.htm>)

To bless others, then, is to extend God’s grace to them as we too have been recipients of grace (Eph. 4:29, 1 Pet. 4:10). To bless others is to show them the love of God that we ourselves have experienced (Jn. 13:34; 1 Jn. 3:14-18).

We're exhorted, "let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth" (1 Jn. 3:18).

Here are some ways we can be a blessing to others by extending His love and grace to them:

- Speaking uplifting and encouraging words that "benefit those who listen" (Eph. 4:29)
- Living authentically and honestly (Eph. 4:14-15; Col. 3:9; 1 Jn. 3:18)
- Being kind and compassionate (Eph. 4:32)
- Being hospitable, making people feel warmth and welcome (Rom. 12:13)
- Sharing of our resources to meet needs (financial and otherwise) (Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:16)
- Answering kindly to those who speak wrongly to or about us (1 Cor. 4:12-13; 1 Pet. 3:9)
- Doing good to those who have done wrong to us (Lk. 6:27-28; 1 Pet. 3:9)
- Forgiving those who have wronged us (Eph. 4:32)
- Praying with gratitude for people and letting them know you're praying for them (2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 1:16; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2)

Closing

There is no need for big dramatic gestures to be a blessing to others. As Mother Teresa says, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

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 for us to go beyond compassion to serve and reach out to those in need.

2. World

- Pray for those affected by the aftermath of the Turkey-Syria earthquake.
- Pray for the flood situation in Turkey.
- Pray for 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 the Russia-Ukraine war and in the US-China conflict.

3. Opportunities for Outreach

- Ask the Lord to bless us as we step out to reach a pre-believer.
- 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.



"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." – 1 John 1:8 (ESV)

Reflection

Jesus forgives us of all our sins – past, present and future. This is one of the core foundations of our faith. Yet, in the midst of the forgiveness we received from God, we forget that the penalty and consequence of sin is not done away with. Someone still has to settle the debt of sin, regardless of how small or minor it may be. When Jesus forgives us, He is saying to us, "I will be the One to pay for the penalty of your sin." The season of lent, is traditionally a time for us to reflect on the human condition – our sinfulness and our unworthiness of God love and grace. In this season may you once again learn to share God's sorrow and grief at your sin and to once again remember that Jesus paid the penalty of your sins so that you can receive forgiveness.

Prayer Pointers

1. Ask the Lord to grant you the courage to honestly look at your sins today. Ask Him to forgive you if you have taken sin too lightly.
2. Ask the Lord to allow you to encounter His sacrifice for your sins anew. May this fresh vision drive you towards holy living.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Digital Bulletin: rlc.sg/bulletin

1. Easter @ RiverLife.

- **Evangelistic Service Sun. 9 Apr, 9am. Worship Centre.** Speaker - Pastor David Peters. There will be prayer for those who need healing.
- **Preparing Our Hearts Through Prayer. Wednesdays, 22 & 29 Mar & 5 Apr. Access via www.riverlife.org.sg (Resources).** Use prayer pointers provided in our weekly cell guide for your time with God.
- **Combined Cell Gathering. Fri, 31 Mar, 8pm to 10pm, Worship Centre.** A combined gathering of cell groups for a time of contemplation, worship and prayer during this season of Lent.
- **Hosting Our First-Time Guests.** Invite your family and friends who are new to RiverLife to join our Welcome Lunch on Sun, 23 Apr.

2. A River Flowing Outwards: Our Community & The Nations.

As a continuation of our Vision Series, we will spend the next five weekends exploring how God can bring about Kingdom transformation in our city and the world through each of us living out our call as change agents. Join us on this journey to expand our hearts for people who matter to God and be available to serve as He leads.

- 5 & 12 Mar: Missions Emphasis
- 19 & 26 Mar, 2 Apr: Community Emphasis

3. **Learning To Love SuperLife Camp 2023 (P1-P6 Children). Thu-Fri, 8 & 9 Jun: 8.30am to 6pm Sat, 10 Jun: 9.30am to 5pm.** *Learning to Love 2023* is an onsite day camp jointly organised by RiverLife Church and Sterling Campus for children in Primary 1 to 6. Through hands-on activities, interactive sessions and Bible-based teaching, participants will learn about God's intended purposes for their studies and see their time in school with fresh eyes!
 - **Parents, you're invited! Sat, 10 Jun, 1.30pm to 5pm.** Parents-only Session by Sterling Campus Find out how you can journey with your child beyond what they've learnt at camp and how they can continue integrating faith in your home.
 - 1.30pm to 3pm: Parents-only Session by Sterling Campus
 - 3pm to 5pm: Family Celebration + High Tea
 - **Camp Fees:** \$70 per child (Early Bird Rate until 26 Mar), \$80 per child (27 Mar to 9 Apr), add \$10/pax for each additional parent and sibling coming for the High Tea.
 - **Registration:** rlc.sg/slcamp2023.
 - **Helpers.** We're also looking for RiverLifers who would like to serve at this camp as adult helpers. Sign up to serve here: rlc.sg/slcamp2023serve
4. **Israel Messianic Encounter. 20 Nov – 1 Dec.** Cost: \$4,950 (30 pax trip), \$4,850 (40 pax trip). More details to follow.
5. **Maranatha – Live Album Recording with Josh Yeoh & Friends @ RiverLife Church.** Sun, 23 Apr, 7pm (Doors Open at 6:15pm). Free Admission with Registration. Josh Yeoh and friends are gathering the Body of Christ from the nations for a night of worship and prayer to record 10 original songs at RiverLife Church. Registration Link: maranathalive.eventbrite.com.
6. **Workshop: Hearing God's Voice by Rev Pat Owyang.** This workshop seeks to activate the prophetic experience of hearing God's voice in your life, training you to discern His voice and to speak forth what you hear for the benefit of others (1 Corinthians 14:3). Over four sessions, you will be introduced to multi-sensory experiences of interacting with God's voice. As you engage with the activation exercises, you will discover the joy of receiving His words with increasing confidence, clarity and accuracy.

Fri, 17 Mar | 8-10pm Session 1: Introduction to the Prophetic

Sun, 19 Mar | 11am-1pm Session 2: Look to See (Visual Experience)

Fri, 24 Mar | 8-10pm Session 3: Listen to Hear (Acoustic Experience)

Sun, 26 Mar | 11am-1pm Session 4: Sense to Feel (Perceptive Experience)

All sessions will be held in Worship Centre.

7. Church Calendar Highlights

- **Quarter 1**
 - Equipping – “Engaging the Holy Spirit” Workshop: 17 & 19 Mar, 24 & 26 Mar
 - Cells Prayer Night #1: 31 Mar
- **Quarter 2**
 - Easter Evangelistic Services: 8-9 Apr
 - Bible Equipping – Acts: 26 & 28 May, 2 & 4 Jun
 - Children's Camp: 8-10 Jun
 - Youth Camp: 15-18 Jun
 - Cell Revival Nights (Fridays): 2 – 30 Jun
- **Quarter 3**
 - Young Adult Camp: 7-9 Jul
 - 32nd Anniversary Weekend: 26-27 Aug
 - Bible Equipping – Leviticus: 15 & 17, 22 & 24 Sep
 - Cells Prayer Night #2: 29 Sep

- *Quarter 4*
 - Equipping Series: 17 & 19, 24 & 26 Nov
 - Christmas Outreach: Dec
 - Cells Prayer Night #3: 29 Dec
8. **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.
 9. **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
 10. **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.
 11. **RiverLife Cares Opportunities.** Signup: <http://rlc.sg/serve-rlcares>
 12. **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.)
 13. **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.
 14. **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)
 15. **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.
 16. **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.

17. **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>
18. **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.
19. **Stay Connected with RLC.** Follow us to stay updated on latest church news and happenings.
 - **WhatsApp Broadcast:** Text 'Subscribe' to 8923 1939
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 - **Facebook & Instagram:** [@riverlifechurchsg](https://www.facebook.com/riverlifechurchsg)

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