

DATE: 8 JAN 2023 | SPEAKER: PS DAVID LIM | TOPIC: FOLLOWING GOD INTO THE UNKNOWN | SCRIPTURE: JOSHUA 3:1-8

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Recognise that God is actively leading them
2. Desire to pay attention and follow God's leading in their lives
3. Commit to prepare and make themselves available for God to work through

SERMON SUMMARY

God is constantly moving forward to advance His purposes on earth, while the church often struggles to catch up with His move. As His Body in the world, we (both individually and as the church) need to be more kingdom-focused and more readily available, so that we can effectively follow God into the Unknown, and the new plans He has for us. How do we follow God into the unknown? We need to:

1. Be Alert to Follow God's Leading
2. Be Surrendered for God to Work through
3. Be Willing to Move on Ahead

SERMON RECAP

Many of us prefer the status quo in life because it is comfortable and secure. Changes make us anxious and we prefer the same old thing because it feels safe. However, God is one who is constantly doing new things. What should we do when God unveils a new direction in our lives, family and church? How do we follow God into the unknown?

In the book of Joshua, we read from [Joshua 3:1-8](#), that the Israelites were heading into the unknown: they had a new leader, they were going into a new place, they needed to take up new responsibilities, they would be facing new dangers, enemies, new temptations and challenges. Everything would be new and unknown once they crossed from the eastern side of the Jordan river to the western side, which was the promise land that God intended for them.

Ps David Lim shared 3 things we can learn from [Joshua 3:1-8](#), on how to follow God into the unknown:

1. Be Alert to follow God's leading (Joshua 3:1-4)

- The first instruction that the leaders gave the Israelites was to stay alert ([Joshua 3:3](#)). Amidst all their daily tasks and chores, it was easy for the Israelites not to notice the ark of the covenant moving away if they were not alert.
- While going about our earthly responsibilities, we must not be too preoccupied and distracted by them that we fail to see God's leading. We need to constantly keep one eye on our daily responsibilities and another eye on God's leading.
- You must be able to first **see** the leading of God, before you can follow. However, **do you notice** what God **has been** doing? Our problem is that often, we are not alert to see what God is doing in our lives. Have we been so preoccupied by the distractions in our lives that we fail to notice what God has been doing?
- There are 2 ways God lead us:
 - *We willingly follow His voice.* [John 10:3-4](#) reminds us that God is our shepherd; and His sheep listen to His voice. Like sheep, humans are short-sighted and only see the here and now. God sees ahead into the future, and actively leads each one of us.
 - *God must allow some things/events to happen in our lives (e.g. loss, encounters) before we repent and follow His lead (Psalms 32:8-9).* This is if our hearts are hardened and not submitted to the leading of His Spirit.
- Very often, it is not that God is not leading His people; it is that His people are not **paying attention** to His leading.

2. Be Surrendered for God to work through (John 3:5)

- Joshua told the people to “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you”.
- If you really believe God has prepared something for you tomorrow, **you prepare yourself fully today, for God to work through tomorrow.**
- If you really believe that God will do amazing things in your life, you start preparing and availing yourself today for the work that God will do tomorrow. Are you anticipating what God **will** do?
- God can use everyone for His purposes (E.g. God used both Judas and Peter). We read from [2 Timothy 2:20-21](#) that while God can use everyone in the church, He can specially use the people who prepare themselves – “Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes...ready for any good work” ([2 Tim 2:21](#)).
- It is one thing to pray for God to act; It is another thing to **make yourself available** for God to act through! God wants to work through His church (each one of us).

3. Be Willing to Move on Ahead (John 3:6-8)

- In [Joshua 3:8](#), Joshua told the priests to “pass on ahead of the people” and to go in and “stand in the river”, and then the miracles will happen.
- You need to **walk on ahead** with respect to the people you are leading, and **step in first** with respect to the challenges you are facing.
- For those who are leaders and parents, do not be discouraged if you are really called upon by God to walk ahead alone for a season, so that the people behind you can decide to follow.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Share a past experience of following God into the Unknown or something new in your life. What were some of the challenges you faced, and how did God work in your situation?**

Leader's Notes

This is a reflect question for members to share past experiences of how God worked in their lives when they chose to follow His leading. Leaders can invite members to share their experiences, as an encouragement to other members to follow God's leading.

Transition

Following God can be tough and scary. But like how the Israelites crossed the Jordan river when they followed God's leading (Joshua 3:1-8), God can bring us through the unknown, help us overcome our difficulties and do amazing things when we follow His leading.

2. **"You must first see the leading of God, before you can follow." However, Ps David highlighted that our problem is that often, we are not alert to pay attention to what God is doing in our lives. What are some distractions or things that hinder you from being attentive to God's leading in your life? What practical steps can you take to be more attentive to God's leading in your life/family?**

Leader's Notes

This is a question for members to reflect on their lives – whether they have deviated from God's leading in specific areas, and consider what they will do practically, to get back on track and effectively follow God's leading and plans. Leaders can encourage members to incorporate routines and disciplines into their daily lives, to help them pay more attention to God's leading and what He is doing.

Transition

Let us not be so preoccupied with our daily lives and tasks and miss out on what God is doing. Amidst our busyness, may we constantly keep one eye on God's leading, and pause to reflect on what He is doing in our lives.

3. **Are you faced with a challenge, decision, or is God leading you into something new? In the midst of your situation, how can you start preparing and availing yourself to be ready for Him to work through you?**

Leader's Notes

This is a response question. In his closing, Ps David addressed 2 groups of people whom he sensed God speaking to: (i) those tempted to stay (instead of moving on with God), and (ii) those who are in two minds about the new thing God is calling them into. Ps David encouraged them to take the step of faith to move on ahead and not hesitate to step into the new thing that God is leading them.

Leaders can ask members if Ps David's exhortation resonated with them, and to share specific areas in their life which they sense God leading them to in 2023. Leaders can invite members to consider practical ways in which they can start preparing or availing themselves, to anticipate what God will do in their life/family and the church.

Closing

As we embark on 2023, let us make a commitment to consecrate ourselves to God, make space in our lives to be attentive to His leading and avail ourselves to let God work through us.

PRAYER

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

1. Sermon Application

- That God will help us look up from the distractions in our lives and pay attention to His leading in our life, family and church
- For more faith, courage and strength to follow God's leading and avail ourselves for His kingdom's work, even when it means following Him into the unknown

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 God's providence as we go through a challenging year.

4. Opportunities for Outreach

- 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. Cost: \$50 per pax (excluding \$70 PREPARE-ENRICH Assessment Report)

- *Marriage Preparation Course*. 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*. 24-26 Mar 2023. Forest City, JB. Cost: \$300 per individual. Link to signup: rlc.sg/mr

2. Pulpit Series: Preparing for God to Move. 1-15 Jan.

Our first sermon series of 2023 will help us consider the posture we have to take and priorities we have to make for God to move in our lives, our church and our communities.

- 1 Jan – Seizing the Defining Moment
- 8 Jan – Following God into the Unknown
- 15 Jan – Lord, Do It Again!

3. 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

4. **RiverLife Kindergarten Recruitment.** RLK is recruiting for the following roles. Email: oileng@riverlifekindergarten.org.sg. Refer to the e-Bulletin for more details.
 - Chinese Teacher
 - Teacher Assistant
5. **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.
6. **Alpha Course. 11 Feb – 29 Apr.** Sign Up Link: rlc.sg/join-alpha.
7. **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.
8. **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
9. **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.
10. **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.)
11. **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.
12. **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)
13. **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.

14. **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.
15. **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.*
16. **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>
17. **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

ONLINE GIVING TO MISSIONS

Donate digitally:

PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200100806DTNO.

Interbank Transfer

UOB Account 450-309634-4

Kindly indicate "Missions" in your transaction reference.



ONLINE GIVING TO RIVERLIFE CHURCH

Contribute your tithes and offering digitally:

PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200100806DSCB.

Interbank Transfer

RiverLife Church Bank Account: DBS Autosave 029-902431-0

Bank Code: 7171 / Branch Code: 029



ONLINE DONATION TO RIVERLIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Donate digitally:

PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200711586WDON

Kindly indicate your NRIC No. under the Bill Reference to qualify for tax deduction.

