

DATE: 3 DEC 2023 | SPEAKER: PASTOR CHUA HOCK LIN
TOPIC: OPEN HEAVENS | SCRIPTURE: LUKE 3:21-22

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Open their hearts for Open Heavens.
2. Be empowered to be more like Christ.

SERMON SUMMARY

Open Heavens mean God's presence, love and power can be experienced. They reveal the love of God to save you, the power of God to change you, and the glory of God to give meaning to your life. The purpose of God for every believer after they are saved is for them to become more like Jesus. Your life, transformed to be like Jesus, will make a difference for good both to those who know Him and to those who do not know Him.

SERMON RECAP

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." – Deuteronomy 29:29

- 1) There are things that we will never know on this side of eternity. These are the secret things that belongs to God. We accept it by faith.
- 2) The things that are revealed to us belongs to us, for us to do and obey.
- 3) The things that are revealed to us that we obey by faith - they are our legacy that we leave for our children and their children.

We need Open Heavens

- to be able to see the things God is revealing to us and to empower us to obey what is being revealed
- to ensure we build on the right foundation.
- to ensure we build for God's purpose.

God's purpose for you

- Salvation (if you are not saved).
- Sanctification (if you are saved).

1. Open Heavens reveal the love of God so we can be saved

“When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased” – Luke 3:21-22

- Open Heavens revealed to Jesus that He was the beloved Son of God.
- God’s desire is for everyone to know he or she is a beloved child of God.
- Will you believe and receive Jesus into your heart today? Will you come back to Him today? ([John 3:16](#))

2. Open Heavens reveal the power of God so we can be changed

“Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” – John 1:50-51

- Jesus was referring to Jacob’s Ladder in [Genesis 28:10-22](#).
- God revealed His power to assure Jacob that He will keep him to fulfil His purpose for Him. God’s purpose for Jacob was for him to become Israel.
- The purpose of God after you are saved is for you to become more like Jesus. Nothing happens by chance or coincidence ([Romans 8:28-29](#)). With God all things are possible.
- God wants us to be holy. We are in eternity what we become on earth!
- Training in holiness begins when you know you are a beloved son of God. You are not what you can do; you are not what people say about you; you are not what you possess.
- Open Heavens empower us to become more like Christ ([2 Corinthians 3:16-18](#)).

3. What leads to Open Heavens? Open Hearts!

“We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.” – 2 Corinthians 6:11-13

“Make room for us in your hearts.” – 2 Corinthians 7:2a

- We must love well and forgive easily in order to have open hearts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is God concerned that I become more like Jesus after I am saved?

Leader's Notes

Open heavens reveal the power of God to change us to be like Christ. The purpose of God after you are saved is for us to become more like Christ. With God all things are possible. According to Ps Chua, we are in eternity what we become on earth! That is why God is concerned that we should be transformed and be more and more like Jesus after salvation.

You are a beloved child of God – and with the life of God, with the DNA of Jesus – we all have the potential to be like Christ.

“But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” – 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

Transition

Open heavens empower us to become more like Christ.

2. Is my life an influence for others to come to Jesus through who I am and what I do?

Leader's Notes

We need to reclaim the truth that all believers are beloved sons and daughters of God. Through knowing who I am in Christ and God’s purpose to conform me to His image, I should be more sensitive to changes needed in my life and in my lifestyle. My life should reflect God’s glory and love, and that in turn will naturally influence others to come to know the good God that we believe in.

Reflect on who you are, your life, and your actions. Are there changes that you need to make? Pray to God to give you desire to change and let Him do the work. All things are possible with God!

Transition

Our words and actions play a huge part in influencing people. It is our utmost testimony to others as beloved sons and daughters of God.

3. How do I compare with the description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a? How can we love better?

Leader's Notes

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” – 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

This question calls us to reflect on how we love others. Is our love the same as the Biblical love described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a? Where do we fall short?

After reflecting, come up with practical ways on how you can love better, or improve on where you fall short.

Closing

It is easier said than done but let us all strive to love each other well.

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

- Pray for open heavens to come upon all RiverLifers.
- Pray for all RiverLifers to be transformed to be more and more like Jesus Christ.

2. RiverLife

- Pray for our church that as we have concluded the 21 days of prayer and fasting, we will be determined to live in a new normal – one that follows after the example of Christ.
- Pray for our mission trips.

3. World

- Continue to pray for the conflict in the Gaza Strip between Israel and Hamas.
- Pray for the situation in Northern Myanmar where 50,000 civilians are displaced as a result of war.
- Pray for the worsening unrest in Dublin after 3 school children and their caretaker were stabbed.
- Pray for the situation in China where Beijing hospitals have a sudden surge in respiratory illnesses among children.
- Pray for Iceland as a state of emergency is declared over the threat of a volcanic eruption.
- Continue to pray for the Russia-Ukraine war and the avoidance of using nuclear weapons.

4. 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Digital Bulletin: rlc.sg/bulletin

1. **Christmas Is Coming! Let's Celebrate Together at RiverLife.** Share the love of Christ with someone this Christmas. Visit our Christmas microsite for details on seeker-friendly services in the month of December: rlc.sg/christmas2023. Write a heartfelt message this festive season and invite someone to our services using RiverLife Christmas cards!
2. **Serve in SuperLife.** Serve in SuperLife as a Teacher or Tech Support Crew!
 - Teacher's role:
 - Support the running of weekly SuperLife services for preschool children
 - Care for and manage the children during service
 - Tech support crew role:
 - Serve at our children's services for Kindy (aged 5-6) and Nursery (aged 3-4) levels
 - Operate the Pro-Presenter software on a laptop for videos and slides support
 - Operate the sound panel and microphones for audio support No prior experience needed as training will be provided.
 - Sign up to serve: rlc.sg/serve

CHURCH CALENDAR

1. **YA Gatherings (For Young Adults in their 20s). First Saturday Every Month, 5pm-8.30pm Victory Chapel (Level 1).** The YA Gathering is a space where young adults can get together to connect and build community. This gathering is made up of two components – Community Conversations & Communal Dinner – both with a focus on relationship building and life conversations. If you are currently in a cell, register your attendance with your cell leader. If you are currently not in a cell, do register online: rlc.sg/YAgathering-apr-reg.
2. **RiverLife Prayer Meetings.**
RiverLife Prayer Room. Tue, 8-9.30pm, Victory Chapel.
RiverLife Revive Nights. Wed, 8pm – 9.30pm, Victory Chapel (livestream: rlc.sg/revivenights)

CHURCH MINISTRIES & OPPORTUNITIES

1. **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
2. **Missions Microsite.** Discover how you can go, give and pray for the nations. Let's make a difference in the nations together! For more information, visit rlc.sg/missions.
3. **RiverLife Cares Opportunities.** Signup: <http://rlc.sg/serve-rlcar>
4. **Prayer Ministry.** If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. fear, worry, etc), you can sign up for RLC's RTF ministry: <https://bit.ly/rlcrtf>

RESOURCES & CONNECTING WITH US

- 1. 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)
- 2. 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.
- 3. 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.
- 4. 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.
- 5. Stay Connected with RLC.** Follow us to stay updated on latest church news and happenings.
 - **WhatsApp Broadcast:** Text 'Subscribe' to 8923 1939
 - **Telegram Channel:** t.me/RiverLifeChurch
 - **Facebook & Instagram:** [@riverlifechurchsg](https://www.facebook.com/riverlifechurchsg)

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.

