

Date: 11 Feb 2024 | **Speaker:** Ps Julia Sho | **Topic:** True Upside Down Blessings | **Scripture:** Psalm 65

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. To remember where true blessings come from
2. To be reminded that God is our Good Father and Jehovah Jireh, and we have been blessed to be a blessing.

SERMON SUMMARY

True Blessings come from God, our good Father.

Ps Julia preached from **Psalm 65**:

- a. True Blessings is Abundance (**Psalm 65:11**)
- b. True Blessings is Found in God (**Psalm 65:1-5**)
- c. True Blessings Allow the Hard Pathways to overflow with Abundance (**Psalm 65:6-13**)
- d. We can celebrate the Chinese New Year through various ways of reconnecting with God and loved ones.

SERMON RECAP

Ps Julia preached about our understanding of blessing and remembering to focus on the Source of true blessing. As we enter the Chinese New Year, we see how many practices were done with the pursuit of material prosperity in mind. This is shown in how we also turn the Mandarin word for Blessing '福' upside down '福倒' in hopes that it will sound like blessings have arrived to our homes '福到'. Let us remember that our true blessings come from God, our good Father.

- a. **True Blessings is Abundance (Psalm 65:11)**
 - The word "bounty" means goodness. We can understand it as God lavishing His goodness on our year. God desires for us to live a life to the full and we have received this through Jesus' work on the Cross.
- b. **True Blessings is Found in God (Psalm 65:1-5)**
 - God's goodness is lavished on us not only through material and relational blessings, but also through our ability to know and relate with Him.
 - While others place trust in chance and good luck, we place our trust in God, our good father (**Matthew 6:34**)
 - We need not be anxious about tomorrow because God gives us hope and assurance.
- c. **True Blessings Allow the Hard Pathways to Overflow with Abundance (Psalm 65:6-13)**
 - We will all encounter challenging seasons; however, we can find joy as God has empowered us to go through and emerge victorious from each season.
 - We can have faith and believe that we will live in the abundance of God's blessings even in the midst of challenges.
- d. **As disciples, we can also celebrate the Chinese New Year season through:**
 - Making it a time of thanksgiving to the Lord
 - Reconnect with friends and relatives; and bless the lowly among us.
 - Honour the Lord through our giving to others
 - Share the love and goodness of God to your friends and relatives that do not know God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What do the words “blessing” or “blessed” mean to you? How is it similar or different from the world’s view?**

Leader’s Notes

The question aims to let members share about the Biblical perspective of being blessed or blessings, and to discuss how it could be similar and different from the world’s. Aside from the passage of **Psalm 65**, members can also search for other verses with the word “blessed” or “blessing” to find out more about what the Bible describes as “Blessed”, e.g., the Beatitudes. God desires for us to live in abundance and we can find comfort in knowing that He will not leave us nor forsake us. At the same time, he desires for us not to pursue material possessions as an idol, and to find ultimate trust in Him.

Transition

As we have explored the meaning of blessed / blessing, let us now turn to look at God’s heart for us.

- 2. God is a God that desires to lavish us with good things and true blessing is found in knowing Him. How does this knowledge of God bring encouragement to you when you face challenging times?**

Leader’s Notes

Leaders can invite members to share about a past experience or to reflect on a current situation. As members focus on the character of God, invite members to share about how their knowledge of God and God’s love for them can act as an encouragement for them to journey through the tough times.

Transition

The ultimate blessing is being known by God and knowing Him and we have been blessed to be a blessing.

- 3. In small groups, share with each other a family member or a relative that you felt led to show God’s love to. Share with the small group about your struggles / challenges (if any) and to commit it in prayer.**

Leader’s Notes

This question aims for members to reflect and respond if there is any family members or relatives that they would like to commit to prayer for, especially for family who may not have known God or have not gone to church or been connected to a community for a while. Members can use the time to encourage each other and to commit each other in prayer.

Closing

As we continue to trust in Him, we can take comfort that God will empower us to be beacons of light and hope towards our loved ones, for God’s glory.

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

1. Sermon Application

- Thank God for what He has blessed us with
- To know that we can trust in God to be our Jehovah Jireh
- For God to show us how we can continue to be a blessing to others

2. RiverLife

- Pray for our church, that as we enter into 2024, we will determine to grow into Christlikeness.
- Pray that we will position ourselves for God to mould us into the church He desires us to be.

3. World

- Continue to pray for the various nations that are at war:
 - a. Russia and Ukraine
 - b. Myanmar (Civil War)
 - c. Israel & Hamas
- Continue to pray for countries that have an escalated conflict situation:
 - a. China and the Philippines in the South China Sea
 - b. North & South Korea
- Continue to pray for countries recovering from recent natural disasters:
 - a. Japan (Earthquake)
 - b. Iceland (Volcanic Eruption)
- Pray for the situation at the Red Sea where militants from Yemen are attacking various ships
- Pray for Indonesia as it approaches its elections.

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.

1. FamilyLife Portal

- Our Family Life ministry strengthens relationships within the family so that they are reflective of who God is – married couples loving and serving each other, parents discipling their children in the ways of God, grandparents inspiring the generations by their faith and actions, and the singles living secure and fruitful lives for God’s kingdom!
- RiverLife's Family Life portal is an online platform that contains this year's calendar of Family Life initiatives as well as a wide range of resources for various life stages.
- You can access the portal via:
 - rlc.sg/familylife
 - Resources/Family Life Portal on RLC’s website – www.riverlife.org.sg

2. New Sermon Series: The Book of Joshua: A Life of Faith & Obedience

- Spread over two parts, this sermon series based on the book of Joshua will help us cultivate a life of faith and obedience, and realise how different life can be when we love the Lord our God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him and serve Him with all our heart and soul (Joshua 22:5).
- Part 1: 28 Jan to 25 Feb, Part 2: 2 Jun to 25 Aug

3. Chinese New Year Lo Hei Party Organised by Caleb Ministry for Seniors Aged 55 & Above

- Sat, 24 Feb | 9am to 12.30pm Grace Chapel (Level 1)
- A special Chinese New Year gathering for seniors that is suitable for family and friends who are unchurched or pre-believers.
- Speaker: Ms Kwan Poh San. Ms Kwan was one of the first Singaporean pioneers to embark on cross-cultural missionary work. Her journey started in 1977 in Papua New Guinea and continued for 25 years. Subsequently, she served in several other countries for another 20 years. Though retired and turning 80 soon, she is still actively and faithfully serving the Lord and others.
- Register by Sun, 18 Feb: rlc.sg/lohei
- Note: Participants have to be registered to attend this session. Due to limited seating capacity, registration will close when seats are filled. There is no fee for this session. A freewill offering (suggested giving is \$12) will be collected to defray costs.
- For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg.

4. Marriage Preparation Course Run 1

- 3, 17 & 24 Mar (3 sessions) Sundays, 11am to 3pm
- This course will help couples lay the foundation for a God-centred marriage.
- Sign up online by Sun, 25 Feb: rlc.sg/mpc
- Fees: \$50 per couple (Excludes US\$35 for PREPARE-ENRICH)

5. Complimentary Shuttle Bus Service

- In view of our Filipino Service returning to RiverLife premises on Sundays, there is a shuttle bus service for Filipino congregants at 10.20am and 10.50am. This is to help them ease in as they transit from the previous service venue at Bible House.
- As such, we have a shuttle bus slot at 11am from RiverLife to Pasir Ris MRT.
- From RiverLife to Pasir Ris MRT: 11am at our Level 1 Drop Off Point
- Do note this is a provisional arrangement and subject to change following the transition period.

- 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 interested in joining the gatherings and would like to find out more, connect with us on our Telegram Channel: [rlc.sg/ya](https://t.me/rlc.sg/ya)

Gathering Dates: 24 Feb, 6 Apr, 4 May, 1 Jun, 3 Aug, 7 Sep, 5 Oct, 2 Nov

YA Camp: 5-7 Jul

Christmas Outreach: 14 Dec

- RiverLife Prayer Meetings.**

- *RLC Prayer Room.* Tue, 8-9.30pm, Victory Chapel. (Livestream: rlc.sg/rpr-watch)
- *Revive Nights.* Wed, 8pm – 9.30pm, Victory Chapel. (Livestream: rlc.sg/revivenights)

We encourage you to set aside every Wednesday for a time of fasting.

- Quarterly Calendar for Key English Adult Congregation Events**

**Some dates are tentative and subjected to change. Stay updated via our digital bulletin and our social media channels for the latest information.*

Quarter 1	Quarter 2
<p><u>February</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Feb – YA Gathering, Caleb Ministry • 25 Feb – Q1 Leaders Huddle <p><u>March</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 to 3 Mar – MegaLife Leader’s Camp (Youth) • 3, 17, 24 Mar – Marriage Preparation Course #1 • 8 to 10 Mar – FOPx Conference (Youth) • 17 Mar – Water Baptism Service #1 • 23 Mar – Parents Gathering #1 • 29 to 31 Mar – Good Friday / Easter Weekend 	<p><u>April</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06 Apr to 22 Jun – YA Gathering, Alpha #1 • 07 Apr – Dating Couples Briefing #1 • 13 Apr – Caleb Ministry Gathering <p><u>May</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 04 May – YA Gathering • 10 to 11 May – Leaders Advance • 24 to 31 May – Equipping #1: Numbers • 30 May to 01 Jun – SuperLife Camp <p><u>June</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2, 23, 30 Jun – Marriage Preparation Course #2 • 08 Jun – Caleb Ministry Gathering, Water Baptism Class #2 • 09 Jun – RiverLife AGM • 13 to 16 Jun – Youth Camp • 27 Jun – Fun Day (Youth) • 29 Jun – Parents Gathering #2

Calendar

Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<p><u>July</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 to 7 Jul – YA Camp • 13 Jul – Caleb Ministry • 14 Jul – Dating Couples Briefing #2 • 21 Jul – EA Welcome Lunch • 28 Jul – Baptism Service #2 <p><u>August</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 03 Aug – YA Gathering • 03 Aug to 3 Oct – Alpha Run #2 • 04 Aug – Q3 Leaders Huddle • 17 Aug – Parents Gathering #3 • 24 to 25 Aug – RLC 33rd Anniversary Weekend <p><u>September</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07 Sep – YA Gathering • 01 to 15 Sep – Marriage Preparation Course #3 • 01 to 29 Sep – SPYCs • 06 to 15 Sep – Equipping #2: Deuteronomy • 14 Sep – Caleb Ministry Gathering • 22 Sep – EA Mid-Autumn Lunch Outreach 	<p><u>October</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 05 Oct – YA Gathering, Water Baptism Class #3 • 06 to 20 – Marriage Preparation Course #3 • 12 Oct – Caleb Ministry Gathering • 13 Oct – Discipleship @ Home for Pre-School Parents (Parents Equipping) • 16 to 23 Oct – Feast of the Tabernacles • 19 Oct – Fun Day (Youth) • 26 Oct – Local Outreach (Youth) • 27 Oct – RTF (Essential Teachings) <p><u>November</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 02 Nov – YA Gathering • 7 to 9 Nov – Ministry Orientation Camp for Sec 1s (Youth) • 10 Nov – Discipleship @ Home for Primary School Parents (Parents Equipping) • 10 Nov – Water Baptism Service #3 • 15-24 Nov – Equipping #4 • 23-25 Nov – Marriage Retreat <p><u>December</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 Dec – YA Christmas Outreach, Caleb Ministry Gathering • 19 to 21 Dec – Youth Conference • 21-22 Dec – Christmas Outreach Weekend • 28 Dec – Parents Gathering #4

Ministry & Opportunities



1. The 9M Ministry.

This 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.

Enquiries/Registration: rlc.sg/serve-rlcares

4. Prayer Ministry.

If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. fear, worry, etc), you can sign up for RiverLife's RTF ministry: bit.ly/rlcrtf

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: rlc.sg/wachannelinvite

Telegram Channel: t.me/RiverLifeChurch

Facebook & Instagram: [@riverlifechurchsg](https://www.facebook.com/riverlifechurchsg)

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