

**Date:** 23 June 2024 | **Speaker:** Ps Lam Zheng Xin | **Topic:** The Joy of Submission | **Scripture:** Hebrews 13:17

## SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Reflect about spiritual authority in the context of church and the responsibility of leadership
2. Reflect about the importance of our response to leadership

## SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor Zheng Xin preaches from **Hebrews 13:17**, and speaks regarding the spiritual authority of Church leadership and how leaders and members should relate to each other as they live in obedience of God's call and kingdom.

The responsibility of leadership:

1. Church leaders are to keep watch over your souls.
2. Church leaders are ultimately accountable to God, not to man.
3. Church leaders are not to lord over those entrusted to them.

### Two challenges

1. We live in a culture that prioritises self-determination and we need humility to submit to leadership.
2. We live with the possibility of leadership abuse – however there are also good leaders that have led us well.

### Our response to leadership

Let us learn how to “have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority.” – **Hebrews 13:17 (NIV)**.

As a church:

1. Submit yourself to be led by your leaders
2. Seek to understand the heart of your leader

## SERMON RECAP

Ps. Zheng Xin spoke about spiritual authority in the church. For the church to move in step with God, leaders must be willing to lead and members must be willing to be led. He shared two points of leadership.

### #1 The Responsibility of Leadership

In the book of Matthew, it says that we are to make disciples of all nations, and all of us are called to disciple, even if it's just one disciple

#### 1a. *Church leaders are to keep watch over your souls*

- Keeping watch means being sleepless, being constantly awake so that no harm will come over the person.
- Leaders are to keep watch about our spiritual health
- How we view our spiritual condition can be diff from the way our leaders see it. Those are spiritual blind spots and it justifies its own blindness because it cannot see what it is unaware of
- Pastor Zheng Xin shared about his own experience and how spiritual knowledge is not spiritual maturity (**1 Cor 13:2**)

#### 1b. *Church leaders are accountable to God, not to man*

- Church leaders are ultimately accountable to God. They seek to please God, not man
- Church leaders must be God-pleasers, and not man-pleasers

1c. *Church leaders are not to lord over those entrusted to them (1 Peter 5:2-3)*

- We are not to impose authority, nor to serve our own agenda (Mark 10:45)
- Our leadership becomes safe when our posture is to serve

Ps. Zheng Xin also highlighted 2 challenges we face in this day and age:

1. *We live in a culture that prioritises self-determination*

- Such a culture is in direct conflict with the spirit of submission
- We have also slowly seen how the church is becoming a service provider instead of Church being the body of Christ

2. *We live with the possibility of leadership abuse*

- While we recognize that a church leader's authority is not absolute, for one leader that falls, there are still many faithful leaders (1 Tim 5:19-20)

## #2: The Response to leadership

1. *Ps. Zheng Xin encouraged us to learn how to submit and be led by our leaders*

It is important for us to learn how to obey and submit. Both speak about dealing with the heart:

- Obey: Peitho (Which means to be persuaded, to have faith in, to trust, to have confidence, and in that context, to listen, to obey, to yield to, to comply with.)
- Submit: Hypeiko (Which means to yield to authority and resist no longer).

Submission is not a passive word but is an active word. Submission is a choice and we must be willing to submit to our leaders.

Scripture also exhorts us to make leadership joyful for our leaders and we need to reflect if our leaders find it a joy to lead us. We can do so by celebrate our leaders' strength, give grace to their weaknesses. In doing so, we become versatile followers. We learn more when we are hungry to learn

2. *Ps Zheng Xin encouraged us to seek to understand the heart of our leaders.*

He shared that there must be alignment and resonance across the chain of leadership in God's design. Following the form is not true submission as it is lukewarm and self-centred. He shared his own experience in his wrestle with God in trying to understand the heart of revival and shared his breakthrough through the wrestle. He encouraged RiverLifers to see how a desire to see healings and miracles take place stem from a heart for the lost to be saved.

# Discussion Questions

- 1. What is your understanding of spiritual authority or spiritual leadership in the church, and how do you relate to it? Share your experiences – the joys and challenges in relating with leadership (if any).**

## Leader's Notes

This question is for members to share about their experiences with spiritual leadership in the church. If leaders wish, the cell can take time to find out more about what spiritual leadership is and how it is different in God's kingdom verses in the world.

Resource:

- Two Types of Power and Authority** by Tyndale
- The Authority of Purpose: What Makes a Good Christian Leader** by Ronald JJ Wong

## Transition

To be a leader is a privilege and a calling and we are ultimately accountable to God in how we lead and submit.

- 2. Share a time where a leader reflected a blind spot to you. What was your experience and struggle? OR Reflect on your own experience as a sheep of the flock. What characteristics of the flock will make leading it a joy for our Shepherds?**

## Leader's Notes

This question aims to let members reflect about a time where they had been challenged about blind spots in the past and to share how the experience was for them. What did they understand about the leaders' intentions and were there also avenues where the leaders could have been gentler or sought to understand the sheep more e.g., instead of jumping to conclusions? (If suitable, leaders can tap onto the "Optional" box below as questions to facilitate this process). The second question aims to let members to think about characteristics of the flock that will make it a joy for leaders to lead. Leaders can also highlight to members that it does not mean that the flock must follow blindly, nor that sheep will not have their struggles or things to wrestle with God; rather it is the heart's intention to desire submitting to God's authority.

## Transition

As we come together to lead and be led, we learn to be disciples that can sharpen each other like how iron sharpens iron. May we sharpen each other to become more like Christ.

- 3. How can we come together as a church to support our leadership?**

## Leader's Notes

This question is for members to come together to consider avenues they could also help the cell grow and how different ones can bless their cell and beyond e.g., praying for our leadership, supporting local and overseas missions, speaking the truth in love, stepping up to meet needs as God leads. If suitable, leaders could also facilitate members to share about the wrestle they may have in submitting or aligning with the church e.g. about revival. Leaders can also invite the cell to come together to pray.

## Optional

You can bring this discussion to a deeper level for your cell by asking these questions:

- What should your response be towards the spiritual authority of your cell leader?
- What is the right response of your cell leader towards his/her sheep?

The goal of these questions is to strengthen the relationship between shepherd and sheep, and to establish the spiritual authority that God has given to every cell leader as shepherds of the house. If you felt led, you can use this time to share about your struggle as a leader in leading your sheep and how your sheep can play their part so that they can benefit from your spiritual authority over their lives.



# Discussion Questions

## Closing

God has given us the privilege to partner with each other and with Him in building this Kingdom. Even as we put our hands to the plough, God also desires to use such opportunities to shape us to become more like Christ. Part of this process is shaping us to submit to the leadership that is placed over us within the church, just as Jesus submitted to the leadership of His Father in heaven. May we, therefore, be open to His work of refining and maturing us towards Christ-likeness.

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 God to work in our hearts and to search what may be displeasing to Him in our relationship with leadership, and for us to submit it to Him
- Pray for our church and our leaders.

## 2. RiverLife

- Pray for our church, that as we enter 2024, we will determine to grow into Christlikeness.

## 3. World

- Continue to pray for the various nations that are at war:
  - a. Russia and Ukraine
  - b. Myanmar (Civil War) – Pray for the situation where military service was made compulsory for man and woman between the ages of 18 and 35.
  - c. Israel & Hamas – Pray for the truce talks between Israel and Palestine in Cairo, that a peaceful resolution can be reached.
- Continue to pray for countries that have an escalated conflict situation:
  - a. Japan, China and the Philippines in the South China Sea
  - b. North & South Korea
- Continue to pray for countries recovering from recent natural disasters:
  - a. Taiwan (Earthquake)
  - b. Indonesia (Volcanic Eruption)
  - c. South East Asia – Heatwave across various countries
  - d. Canada (Wildfire)
  - e. Guangdong, China – Flash floods
  - f. India - Heatwave
- Pray for Singapore
  - a. Pray for PM Lawrence Wong and his cabinet as they begin a new chapter for Singapore
  - b. Pray for a stability in the cost of living in Singapore
  - c. Pray for those affected by the Singapore Airlines's SQ321 turbulence incident
- Other Global Issues
  - a. Pray for the United States of America as they gear up for this year end's election
  - b. Pray for the heatwave that is affecting many Muslim pilgrimages in Saudi Arabia
  - c. Pray for those affected by the shooting in an Arkansas supermarket in the US.

## 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.

- Sermon Series: Spiritual Authority.** 2-30 June 2024 One of the biggest truths that Christians tend to forget is this – we are in the midst of a spiritual war. For many Christians, the enemy seems to render them completely ineffective in this spiritual war – they are never a threat to the kingdom of darkness. As a result, many live as prisoners of this war – bounded by addictions, sinful patterns, demonic manifestations and strongholds. This is not the victorious life that Jesus, our Saviour, bought for us on the cross. When we live as sons of the Most High, the authority that was lost in the Garden of Eden is being restored to us. This authority is given so that the church can be the salt and light that flows into our communities and into the nations. In this sermon series, we will explore the believer’s rightful authority, how to exercise this authority where we are planted, and the benefits of coming under the spiritual authority of the shepherds in RiverLife. Our prayer is that through this series, believers will start to exercise their God-given authority, and live victorious lives in their families, workplaces, and in the world.
- The Courtship Journey. Sun, 28 Jul | 11.30am-1pm Victory Chapel (Level 1)** This initiative helps you to identify what to look for in a future spouse, as well as to understand the different stages of a courtship. Through this initiative, we hope couples will have a better starting point in their future marriages. There is no cost to join the gatherings. Register: [rlc.sg/courtshipjourney](https://rlc.sg/courtshipjourney)
- SPYCES (Spiritual Parenting of Young Couples). 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 Sep 2pm-5pm. Online via Zoom Fees: \$10 per participant.** SPYCES is a series of five workshop sessions where participants will connect with fellow parents in the same season, and learn biblical and practical ways of relating to their children and grandchildren.
  - For more info: [rlc.sg/spyces-info](https://rlc.sg/spyces-info)
  - Register online by Sun, 18 Aug: [rlc.sg/spyces](https://rlc.sg/spyces)
- Talk on Self-Care by Caleb Ministry. Sat, 13 Jul. 9am-12pm. Faith Chapel (Level 2).** Self-care is important for everyone, yet it is often the most neglected area for many. Jesus modelled self-care when He spent time alone praying (Mark 1:35) and invited His disciples to be alone to rest and sleep (Mark 6:31-32). This talk will explore what is self-care, biblical self-care, dimensions of human development and how to cultivate our own well-being.
  - Speaker:** Charmaine Chee, Charmaine Chee started worshipping in RiverLife Church in 2019 and currently serves on the team that supports Alpha At RiverLife. As a school counsellor, Charmaine has a Masters of Arts in Practical Theology & Human Services Counselling from Regent University, USA and has served across pastoral, education and counselling ministries.
  - Register by Sun, 7 Jul: [rlc.sg/calebselfcare](https://rlc.sg/calebselfcare)
  - There will be a freewill offering collection (recommended giving of \$12).
  - For more enquiries, contact Christine Tan at [christinetan@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:christinetan@riverlife.org.sg).
- The RiverLife Welcome Lunch. 21 Jul, 11.30am-1pm Faith Chapel (Level 2).** Relationships matter to us because church is family. Our Welcome Lunch is specially organised for those who started joining us at service or cell this year. You'll get to meet fellow RiverLifers as well as our staff team members too! Invite up to two family members or friends (including your host) – just let us know when you register. Sign up online by Sun, 14 Jul: [rlc.sg/welcomelunch](https://rlc.sg/welcomelunch)
- Outing to Singapore Garden Festival by Caleb Ministry.** This seeker-friendly outreach outing is specially organised for seniors aged 55 and above, as well as their family members. It is suitable for pre-believers or unchurched believers you are currently reaching out to. We will be having lunch together at Olive Vine before attending the Singapore Garden Festival. There will be a short sharing of the gospel over lunch.

Sat, 10 Aug 10.45am-2pm

10.45am: Fellowship & Lunch (Olive Vine Pasta Fusion, #B1-17 Marina Square)

# Announcements

12.30pm: Singapore Garden Festival (Suntec City Convention & Exhibition Centre, Levels 4 7 6)

## Specially Discounted Rates

*Include lunch & admission to Singapore Garden Festival*

*Eligible for local residents based on age in NRIC*

- Seniors above 60 & Children below 12: \$35 per pax
- Those above 12 & below 60: \$40 per pax

*\*Our Caleb Ministry staff have kindly set up a booth outside Victory Chapel (Level 1) this Sun, 2 Jun should you need assistance in signing up for the event.*

7. **RiverLife Missions.** Mission trip schedule for 2024 is out now on our Missions website! Discover how you can sow into the nations this year: [rlc.sg/missions](http://rlc.sg/missions)

- 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: 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](https://rlc.sg/rpr-watch))
- *Revive Nights.* Wed, 8pm – 9.30pm, Victory Chapel. (Livestream: [rlc.sg/revivenights](https://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 2	Quarter 3
<p><u>May</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 May to 01 Jun – SuperLife Camp</li> </ul> <p><u>June</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2, 23, 30 Jun – Marriage Preparation Course #2</li> <li>• 08 Jun – Caleb Ministry Gathering, Water Baptism Class #2</li> <li>• 09 Jun – RiverLife AGM</li> <li>• 13 to 16 Jun – Youth Camp</li> <li>• 27 Jun – Fun Day (Youth)</li> <li>• 29 Jun – Parents Gathering #2</li> </ul>	<p><u>July</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 to 7 Jul – YA Camp</li> <li>• 13 Jul – Caleb Ministry Gathering: Self-Care</li> <li>• 14 Jul – Leaders Equipping with David &amp; Greta Peters</li> <li>• 21 Jul – EA Welcome Lunch</li> <li>• 28 Jul – Baptism Service #2, The Courtship Journey</li> </ul> <p><u>August</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 03 Aug – YA Gathering</li> <li>• 03 Aug to 3 Oct – Alpha Run #2</li> <li>• 04 Aug – Leaders Equipping</li> <li>• 10 Aug – Caleb Ministry Gathering: Outing</li> <li>• 17 Aug – Parents Gathering #3</li> <li>• 24 to 25 Aug – RLC 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Weekend</li> </ul> <p><u>September</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 07 Sep – YA Gathering</li> <li>• 14 Sep – Caleb Ministry Gathering</li> <li>• 01 to 15 Sep – Marriage Preparation Course #3</li> <li>• 01 to 29 Sep – SPYces</li> <li>• 06 to 15 Sep – Equipping #2: Deuteronomy</li> <li>• 14 Sep – Caleb Ministry Gathering</li> <li>• 22 Sep – EA Mid-Autumn Lunch Outreach</li> </ul>



## Quarter 4

### October

- 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)

### November

- 02 Nov – YA Gathering
- 7 to 9 Nov – Ministry Orientation Camp for Sec 1s (Youth)
- 9 Nov – Caleb Ministry Gathering
- 10 Nov – Discipleship @ Home for Primary School Parents (Parents Equipping)
- 10 Nov – Water Baptism Service #3
- 23-25 Nov – Marriage Retreat

### December

- 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](https://rlc.sg/9m)
- Provide Prayer Support: [rlc.sg/serve](https://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](https://rlc.sg/missions).

## 3. RiverLife Cares Opportunities.

Enquiries/Registration: [rlc.sg/serve-rlcar](https://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 RiverLife's RTF ministry: [rlc.sg/rtf](https://rlc.sg/rtf)

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://rlc.sg/wachannelinvite)

Telegram Channel: [t.me/RiverLifeChurch](https://t.me/RiverLifeChurch)

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

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