

Date: 28 July 2024 | **Speaker:** Ps Ernie Song | **Topic:** Achan's Sin | **Scripture:** Joshua 7-8

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Be reminded of the seriousness of sin before God
2. Be committed to living out their lives according to God's ways and not the ways of the world or the flesh.

SERMON SUMMARY

God first made a covenant with Abraham ([Genesis 12:2-3](#)). This covenant involved the descendants of Abraham being a blessing to the nations ([Genesis 18:17-19](#)) through the conquering of the Promised Land. This covenant was renewed during the times of Moses ([Exodus 20](#)) and Joshua ([Joshua 5](#)). In the Mosaic Covenant, the expectations of the covenant were communicated through the giving of the law.

1. Covenant Expectations

- When Israel came into covenant with the Lord, they were expected to keep their covenant with the Lord by living according to His ways.
- Likewise, disciples are Christians who are in covenant with Him are expected to keep their covenant with Him by forsaking their old fleshly ways and living according to God's ways. ([Ephesians 4:17, 20, 22-24](#))

2. Achan's Sin

- Through the story of Achan's sin, we see that sin will always affect the whole Spiritual Community no matter how small the sin is. ([Galatians 5:9](#))

3. Joshua's Response

- Like Joshua, we must deal with sin ruthlessly and swiftly so that we remain in covenant with the Lord.

SERMON RECAP

Setting the Context: Understanding Israel's Covenant with God

- A covenant was made between God and Abraham ([Genesis 12:2-3](#)). This covenant involved God blessing Abraham and his descendants inheriting the Promised Land in order to be a light unto the nations. ([Genesis 18:17-19](#))
- The covenant was renewed during the times of Moses ([Exodus 20](#)) and Joshua ([Joshua 5](#)). In the Mosaic covenant, the expectations of the covenant were spelled out through the law.
- Israel was blessed and chosen by God to be consecrated as a light unto the nations.

4. Covenant Expectations

- God's covenant with Israel was directly dependent on Israel's obedience to God's ways as expressed through the law.
- God's expectation of Israel to be committed to His ways is a mirror of what He expects of us in the New Covenant.
- Being a disciple of Christ is not just a proclamation of faith. It involves us committing ourselves to a new way of living and leaving behind our old fleshly ways. ([Ephesians 4:17, 20, 22-24](#))

5. Achan's Sin

- Achan's sin represented the first time Israel stumbled in the Promised Land. ([Joshua 7:20-21](#))
- Achan's sin resulted in 3 consequences for Israel:
 - a) God's anger burned against Israel ([Joshua 7:1](#))
 - When Achan took the Harem (things devoted to destruction), the whole of Israel became a part of the Harem.

- The world and all its desires have been declared Harem. In the final judgement, heaven and earth will be destroyed. (1 John 2:17) Therefore, we must be in the world but not of the world, and fix our eyes on that which is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:18)
- b) Israel lost 36 men.
- c) The spiritual atmosphere of Israel was affected (Joshua 7:6)
- Our private sin always affects the whole spiritual community - the principle of the leaven. (Galatians 5:9)

"No individual Christian can sin without affecting the whole Church. No child of God can grow cold in his spiritual life without lowering the temperature of everybody else around him. The victory of the whole community depends on the victorious life of every individual church member." - Alan Redpath, Victorious Christian Living

- God demonstrated His grace and mercy to Achan through how Achan was determined as the one who sinned. (Joshua 7:16-19)

6. Joshua's Response

- Joshua dealt with Achan ruthlessly. (Joshua 7:23-26) Likewise, we need to ruthlessly deal with sin within our lives.
- This resulted in Israel being once again a part of their covenant with God. (Joshua 8:22)

How Do We Deal with Sin in Our Lives?

- a. Practice Confession – Bring the hidden sins to light (James 5:16)
- b. Be Accountable – Involve mature believers that will keep you accountable for the hidden sins (Hebrews 3:13)
- c. Walk by the Spirit – Listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit (John 14:25-26)

"When God is with us, Jericho is not too strong to be captured; when He is driven from us by our own sin, Ai is not too weak to defeat us." - Alexander Maclaren

Discussion Questions

1. **In your own experience, why do you think it is so easy for us to overlook our own sin? Read Jeremiah 17:9-10, Romans 7:15-20, Proverbs 18:12, 26:12. What lessons can you draw from these passages?**

Leader's Notes

The narrative that the world is painting to us is this – “everyone has a good heart”. Because of that, we don’t often think of ourselves as “sinful”. However, Scripture teaches us that all of us have deceitful hearts. It means that we cannot trust our hearts because it is distorted by the effects of sin. The reality is that we all have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory. A second factor is pride – the decision to ignore or deny one’s shortcomings or sin, in order to maintain one’s status. Pride is something that offends the Lord greatly as demonstrated in the writings of Proverbs and other places in Scripture.

Transition

The question is not if we have sin and shortcomings in our lives. Instead, the question is what these “sinful” areas of our lives are, and if we are humble enough to acknowledge them and to deal with them.

2. **Why do you think it is so difficult for us to “confess our sins to one another”? What does it reveal concerning the condition of our hearts?**

Leader's Notes

This is a reflection question. This will help your members discover the obstacles that prevent them from pursuing a life of holiness. Some may struggle with shame, while others may feel indifferent. We need to confront the fact that there are ugly parts of our lives that God is not pleased with. And, if we say we are disciples of Christ, then we will ruthlessly do all we can to root these hidden sins out from our lives. When we are not willing to acknowledge our shortcomings or sins, our hearts are hardened, just like the Pharisees. In order to break this attitude, humility is needed – to humble ourselves and to see how sinful we are before the Lord.

Transition

Breakthroughs can only come when we take sin seriously. So, let us not let obstacles get in the way of us pursuing a life that pleases the Lord (Holiness).

3. **We all have blindspots in our lives. These blindspots can be unintentional or intentional (addictions that have turned into something normative in our lives). How can the cell community help each other to deal with these blindspots? What are some rules we should have when “rebuking others”?**

Leader's Notes

This question aims to involve the spiritual community in one’s pursuit of holiness. Cell members need to know that the pursuit of holiness is a shared journey. We need each other in order to pursue holiness. Therefore, we must open ourselves to the correction or rebuke of fellow brothers and sisters, especially our shepherds.

However, ground rules are needed so that rebukes are done in love. For example, we should never call out an individual’s sin in public. Also, rebukes should be done gently and in private. Another possible ground rule that we should have is that offenses must be “dealt with” as soon as possible. Meaning, the one that has been hurt should pull aside the “offender” and share gently how he/she has been hurt. When this becomes a culture in our cells, we will then be able to spur one another on towards godliness and holiness. This is what maturing into the likeness of Christ as a community is all about.

Closing

May we take sin seriously in our lives and may we spur one another on towards a life of godliness and holiness.

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 reveal to us what are some strongholds we hold on to and to seek Him for breakthrough
- Pray that we will continue to submit our will to God as we trust and obey in Him.
- Pray that we will desire a greater intimacy and knowledge of God

2. 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
- 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. Eastern China – Typhoon Gaemi
 - e. Northern Japan – rains and flooding
 - 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
- Other Global Issues
 - a. Pray for the United States of America as they recover from the assassination attempt of Donald Trump
 - b. Pray for the UK as a new Prime Minister and Cabinet governs the nation
 - c. Pray for the attacks on French railways amidst of the Olympics.

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.

1. **Marriage Retreat. 23-25 Nov.** Forest City Marina Hotel. Cost: \$600 per couple. A meaningful weekend retreat for married couples to spend unhurried and uninterrupted time with each other to learn together, and evaluate and strengthen their marriage. **Registration:** rlc.sg/mr (Capacity: 40 couples. Closing Date: 30 September)
2. **The Parents Gathering. Sat, 17 Aug. 2.30pm-6pm, Grace Chapel.** Focus On the Family will be running two sessions in our upcoming gathering:

1) Raising Resilient Kids

We live in an increasingly fast-paced and competitive world, where the pressure to succeed academically and perform can leave our children feeling panic-stricken and overwhelmed. Discover how you can help your child by understanding your child's stressors, relishing the gift of failure and building psychological resilience.

2) Raising Relationally-Smart Kids

Talking about sex can be one of the most daunting tasks for parents, especially if we never had the subject broached with us when growing up. How then can we confidently discuss healthy sexuality, love, and relationships with our children? Discover how you can equip your child to make wise decisions from young for their body and in their relationships.

Speaker

Joshua Liong is an international speaker and trainer on issues of youth, sexuality, marriage and parenting. Currently the Principal Trainer at Focus on the Family Singapore he loves connecting with young people and has spent more than 20 years strategising on ways to better equip them for life and relationships.

About RiverLife's Parents Gathering

All parents are invited to come together quarterly to connect with and support one another through the journey of parenting. As we discover more about ourselves and our children, may we grow to become parents that God intended us to be.

For more info & to register: rlc.sg/pg *There is no cost to join the gatherings.*

3. **Join the RiverLife Choir.** The choir meets twice a month for rehearsals and serve once a month at our English service. As a RiverLife Choir member, you will:
 - a. Lead God's people in worship. This is a calling, a joy and a privilege!
 - b. Develop the voice God has given you to praise Him
 - c. Be part of a team and get to serve with fellow RiverLifers

You will be invited for an Audition & Interview on Sat, 17 Aug upon sign up.

Sign up now: rlc.sg/serve (Kindly select 'Choir' under 'Worship & Music Ministry' in the signup form.)

4. **Alpha At RiverLife (Chinese Run).** 24 Aug – 26 Oct 2024, 9 In-Person Sessions. Alpha brings you on a journey to explore life's biggest questions - Who are you and why are you here on earth? If there's a God, what would you ask Him? All your questions about life, faith and God are welcomed at Alpha. Join us at our next run!
 - Find out more: rlc.sg/alpha-chi
 - Sign up online: rlc.sg/join-alphachi

5. **New Sermon Series (7 July – 25 August): The Book of Joshua: Walking with God in Faith & Obedience.** As we continue to trek the Israelites' journey after entering the Promised Land, we realise we are far from the end of their story. There were still battles to fight, enemies to defeat and above all – there was a choice to be made. A choice to obey God fully and walk with Him daily. A choice to believe the Promise Keeper would not fail them. This series of messages

will help us recognise that we're presented with the same choice today. In Joshua's last words to the people he led, he urges them to cling tightly to the Lord and be very careful to love Him. Perhaps he knew it would be a choice they had to make every day to see God's promises fulfilled. Every day, we have a choice to make. Would we choose to love God, trust in Him and walk in His ways? When we do so as His people, our lives will testify of who God is. This second part of our series based on the book of Joshua covers chapters 5 to 24.

Catch up on Part 1 here: rlc.sg/joshuapart1

6. **40.Day 2024.** 1 Jul - 9 Aug. For 40 days starting 1 Jul until Singapore's National Day, all believers in Singapore, regardless of church or denomination, are invited to unite in prayer for our nation. We encourage those who are committing to pray and convicted to fast, to also fast a meal a day for the 40-day period. This year's three prayer emphases are:
- Turning Singapore Godward
 - Winning the Youth
 - Blessing the Nations

Subscribe to the following for daily updates starting Mon, 1 Jul:

- Website: lovesingapore.org.sg
- YouTube: youtube.com/lovesingaporeonline
- Facebook: facebook.com/lovesingapore.org.sg
- Instagram: instagram.com/lovesingaporeonline

7. **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

8. **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)

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

9. **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

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 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

Christmas Outreach: 14 Dec

2. 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.

3. 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 3	Quarter 4
<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 – Leaders Equipping • 10 Aug – Caleb Ministry Gathering: Outing • 11 Aug – Water Baptism Service #2 • 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 • 14 Sep – Caleb Ministry Gathering • 01 to 15 Sep – Marriage Preparation Course #3 • 01 to 29 Sep – SPYCs • 06 to 15 Sep – Equipping #2: Numbers • 14 Sep – Caleb Ministry Gathering • 22 Sep – EA Mid-Autumn Lunch Outreach • 21, 22, 28 & 29 Sep - RTF Activation 	<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) <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) • 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 <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-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

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.instagram.com/riverlifechurchsg)

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