

Date: 22 Sep 2024 | **Speaker:** Ms Lam Bao Yan | **Topic:** It Starts With Obedience | **Scripture:** Various

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Seek to let go of the world and pursue God and His Kingdom.
2. Have a deeper desire to love God and obey Him to fulfil His Great Commission.

SERMON SUMMARY

Ms Lam Bao Yan shared her life testimony of how God used her and husband to serve and bring the gospel to the people in Ukraine. Bao Yan, and her husband Rudy – who run an architecture firm in Singapore, are founders of *Love On Ukraine*. Since the invasion took place in 2022, they have been walking the ground serving the peoples of Ukraine – the last, the least and the lost.

It all starts with obedience – God can use our lives to serve Him if we would just say ‘Yes’.

SERMON RECAP

1. Letting Go of the World, Pursuing God

- *“For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?” – Mark 8:36*
- 12 years ago, Bao Yan and her husband ran a successful architecture firm in Singapore and were enjoying success in their careers. They built many well-known buildings and won many awards. However, they felt a holy discontentment and dissatisfaction with their lives. They wanted their lives to count for eternity and they asked God if this successful career was the destiny He had for them. As they felt God drawing them more into His presence, they bought a one-way ticket to Africa. They went to Mozambique – one of the poorest nations, to learn to be missionaries.
- Bao Yan and her husband experienced living amongst the poor in Mozambique. Some things she experienced in Africa changed her life forever and shifted her perspectives. E.g. She shared how she had to cook and feed 800 hungry people with just one bag of rice and one bag of beans, and how God multiplied the food such that there were leftovers after all 800 had eaten their fill. She experienced many miracles in Africa, and they subsequently built many schools and buildings for the poor in Africa.

2. Seeking the Kingdom of Heaven

- *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.” – Matthew 13:45-46*
- After returning to Singapore from Africa, Bao Yan found herself begging God to use her, to count her in the work of His Kingdom.
- She felt God asking her to focus on God Himself – to love the Lord Himself and not godly things like missions or revival or nations, but to **love God first and foremost**. When we love God, He will direct us what to do.
- *“He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ and he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know everything; you know that I love You.’” Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep.’” – John 21:17*
- Love looks at practical needs – food and water for the hungry and thirsty.

- In 2022, when the Ukraine-Russian war broke out, Bao Yan and her husband went to Germany to serve the Ukrainian refugees. Bao Yan felt God told her to “bring God’s light to darkness” and “to be there for the most broken people”. Despite having no visa, no plan, no petrol and no friends in Ukraine and not being able to speak the local language, Bao Yan shared how she managed to enter Ukraine without a visa after driving for 21 hours. She witnessed the death, pain, and suffering there and felt God share with her His broken heart over the suffering of the people (**Matthew 9:36**), and heard God telling her to stop and serve the ones in need.
- Bao Yan shared how God sent her to comfort individuals and bring the gospel and healing – the poor, soldiers, elderly, widows, and children who had lost their husbands and fathers on the frontlines of the Ukrainian war.
- She also shared how she had to humble herself to witness and love those who rejected her. **Philippians 2:8-9** – Jesus humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death.

3. The Highest Commendation

- *“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’” – Matthew 25:23*
- When you see God face to face – can He say to you “Well done, my good and faithful servant?” Awards and recognition from people do not last, but the word from the Lord is the highest commendation.
- Sometimes we want to be successful, and we run with all our might – but direction is more important than speed. We run, but where are you running to? Can you have the highest commendation when you see God face to face? Can God say to you, “Well done, good and faithful **servant?**”
- God is looking for those whose hearts are after Him. God is looking for workers, sons and daughters who will yield and obey to do what he says.

Discussion Questions

1. What is God speaking to you about through the sermon and Bao Yan's testimony?

Leader's Notes

Bao Yan shared how she and her husband gave up their high-paying jobs and careers to pursue God and His Kingdom and how God worked through her and husband in the nations – in Africa and later on in Ukraine.

Invite members to share their personal reflections from the sermon. Leaders can ask members to share how Bao Yan's life testimony and sharing of what God is doing through her in Ukraine has inspired them or shifted their perspectives about Missions, and what they feel God is speaking to them about.

Transition

Mark 8:36 reminds us: "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" May we seek to let go of the world that will soon pass away, to pursue God and His Kingdom which is everlasting.

2. Bao Yan exhorted us to first and foremost "love the Lord your God with all your heart" instead of loving "godly" things like Missions, Revival, the Nations or Ministry. How would loving God first look like in your daily life?

Leader's Notes

For Bao Yan, loving God first also translated practically to feeding His Sheep – **John 21:17**, and God directed her to "bring His light to the darkness" by bringing comfort, practical help (e.g. shelter, food, electricity etc.) and the gospel to the most broken people in Ukraine.

Leaders can ask members to share what it would look like for them in their daily lives to love God first.

Transition

When we love God first, He will direct us what to do.

3. When was the last time you obeyed God's voice or prompting to serve someone, or share about His love or the gospel? What are some gifts/talents/abilities God has given you that you can use for His Kingdom?

Leader's Notes

Leaders can invite members to share past experience(s) where they obeyed God's voice or prompting to serve someone in love or share the gospel. What happened when they obeyed God's voice?

Invite the cell to think about the people that God has placed in their lives currently, as well as the resources, gifts and abilities that God has given them and go deeper with these questions:

- How can you use what God has already given you for His Kingdom, to be His ambassadors to fulfil the Great Commission?
- Are there areas in your life where you need to yield and obey to what God is calling you to?

Closing

God is looking for sons and daughters who will yield/obey Him and fulfil the Great Commission. May we desire to make our lives count for eternity and to receive the highest commendation – which is to hear God say "Well done, my good and faithful servant" when we meet him face to face.

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 that God will help us be kingdom-minded and to love the lost and broken in our midst.

2. RiverLife

- Pray for our church, as we navigate through this season of transition. Pray for our leaders (pastors, elders, senior leadership team, etc.) to abide in Christ as they work together as one to move the church forward to fulfil our vision and mission.
- Pray for our upcoming mission trip:
 - *26-30 Sep: Ministry Trip to Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam*
 - A team of 12 will continue to build relationship with local churches and organisations in the city. They will minister and pray for spiritual breakthroughs, healing and salvation in the local communities.
 - Prayer Pointers:
 - For an outpouring of God's Spirit upon the land and its people. For the Lord to soften the ground where living waters will flow.
 - For the people that we will be ministering to – to have an open heart and teachable spirit so that that they may receive the Father's love and healing, and be filled and baptised by the Holy Spirit.
 - For journey mercy over the team as they travel to and around Vietnam and that they will be effective when they minister God's love and power.
 - For the team to be sharp in hearing and being led by the Holy Spirit.
 - For leaders serving locally to gain a deeper love for Jesus and His church, and a sure understanding of the spiritual direction for their generation and the nation.

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 – For any retaliation from Hamas and Iran as a result of the killing of Hamas' leader
- 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. Bangladesh – Flooding
 - b. Vietnam/China – Typhoon
- Pray for Singapore
 - a. Pray for a stability in the cost of living in Singapore
- Other Global Issues
 - a. Pray for the resurgence of the mpox virus in Africa.

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. **Water Baptism Class.** Sat, 5 Oct | 9am to 3.30pm Conference Room (Level 2). If you desire to take the step of faith to be water-baptised, do join our baptism class to understand the significance and importance of baptism.

- Registration: rlc.sg/baptism-class (Closing Date: Tue, 1 Oct).
- Enquiries: Karen Koh (karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg).

Note:

- Participants will have a one-hour lunch break at own expense.
- Our upcoming Water Baptism Service will be held on Sun, 10 Nov at 2pm.

2. **RiverLife Kindergarten 2025 Enrolment Now Open.** RiverLife Kindergarten is a Christian preschool that nurtures joyful learners. Registration for 2025 is now open.

- Playgroup (born in 2023 from 18 months onwards)
- Pre-Nursery (born in 2022)
- Nursery (born in 2021)
- Kindergarten 1 (born in 2020)
- Kindergarten 2 (born in 2019)

Note:

For enquiries, please call 6511 4168 or email us at office@riverlifekindergarten.org.sg.

Visit our website at riverlifekindergarten.org.sg to find out more about our programmes and curriculum.

3. **Volunteering with RCS.**

a. Maths Tutor for Primary 1 to 4. Serve from now until end Oct

Come alongside and provide academic support for our beneficiaries as they prepare for their year-end exams. Sessions will be online via Zoom for 1.5 hours, once a week. Day and time can be discussed and confirmed between volunteer and student as per their schedules.

b. BLESS Family Volunteer. Serve for a minimum of 6 months.

Journey with a family in need through building friendship and supplying month groceries and necessities. You will serve once a month and an hour each time. Specific time and date to be arranged at your convenience.

Registration: rlc.sg/rcs-serve24

4. **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)

5. **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: 5 Oct, 2 Nov, 14 Dec (Christmas Outreach)

2. **Caleb Ministry (For Seniors).** Caleb Ministry is part of our ongoing churchwide discipleship efforts, and aims to encourage, equip, and empower our seniors to live an abundant life (John 10:10) in their autumn years. The Caleb Ministry gathers on a bi-monthly frequency.

Gathering Dates: 12 Oct, 9 Nov, 14 Dec

3. **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.

4. **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>September</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 01 to 29 Sep – SPYCs • 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 • 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 • 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



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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