

Series - The Rise of the Church

Date/s - 29 May 2016

Topic - The Church in Antioch – A Spirit-led Community That Rocked The Roman World

Speaker/s - Pastor Lionel Goh

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “Spirit Touch Your Church” or “Come Holy Spirit”.

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Understand the importance and the marks of a Spirit-led Church.
2. Be inspired to make the church an effective and Spirit-led community.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Lionel began the sermon by sharing that RiverLife Church has been consciously focusing in three areas which we need to do well:

- 1) Fostering a vibrant family through understanding the culture of honor
- 2) Maturing sons and daughters through discipleship and to be more like Christ
- 3) Revealing God’s glory through our testimony and fulfilling our missional calling in private and public – see Luke 4:18-19.

To reinforce the above three points, the current emphases of our church are:

- 1) Strengthening the foundation of the family by understanding that God loved us first (through RTG, LTG, RTF and PRECEPT)
- 2) Doing church as a family (a shift from being program-centric to instilling relational discipleship).

Referring to Acts 11:19-30, Ps Lionel then asked the congregation: what makes the Antioch Church so powerful and dynamic that it rocked the Roman world? In AD 42, many persecuted Christians in Jerusalem moved to Antioch and started a Church there. Antioch was the third largest city of the Roman Empire with a population of more than 500,000 people. It was multi-religious and multi-racial. Besides being a Regional Administrative Centre, it was also the capital city of Syria and a major trading and commercial centre. It was rich but was an immoral city. Ironically, the Church thrived as a powerful and dynamic centre for God in Antioch and had a Spirit-led community of believers there. Here were the reasons:

a) They were well disciplined in the Word (Acts 11:26)

In the 1970s/ 80s, the ethnic tribes in Borneo had a major revival. There were signs, wonders and miraculous healings. Prophecies were uttered and all came to pass. That generation of tribal people became a vibrant and spirit-led community. However by the late 20th Century many had become lukewarm and some even turned back to animism. The reason? They were not taught the Word of God. The Word did not take root in their lives. In contrast, the Antioch Church focused on the teaching of the Word and many people were taught.

b) A strong team of Godly leaders (Acts 13:1)

The Antioch Church had very strong and capable leaders who were filled with the Spirit and were strong teachers of the Word. Prophets were also among them. Godly believers and leaders like Barnabas and Saul of Tarsus were in their midst. The leaders were all united, full of the Holy Spirit, full of faith, focusing on God and prayed together.

c) A God-centric ministry (Acts 13:2)

They had a very strong ministry in worship, prayer, fasting and their ministry was well grounded in the Word of God. Each and every believer saw the ministry as a service to God and one another. It was never about themselves but the focus was on God and serving others.

d) A radical obedience to the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2, 3)

The Antioch Church spent much time in worship, prayer and fasting. When the Holy Spirit prompted the church to ordain both Barnabas and Saul for special work, they immediately released them to God even though the two men were important leaders of the Church. They obeyed God when He spoke to them.

e) Generous and had a kingdom mindset (Acts 11:27-30, 13:2-3)

In Acts 11:27-30, a man called Agabus prophesied that there will be a famine. When the Antioch Church heard this, they immediately offered their help. Through Barnabas and Saul, they sent money to the believers in Judea. They had a kingdom mindset. To them, the church in Judea was part of them.

The Antioch Church became very powerful, influential and was the strongest Church in the latter half of the first century. They were led by the Spirit, strong in the Word and effective in their God-centric ministry. Led by strong leaders and having a kingdom mindset, they reached out to fellow believers and non-believers alike. They were obedient when God instructed them to carry out His plans.

Ps Lionel asked if we would aspire to grow and be a willing Church like the Antioch Church. He closed by sharing Jim Elliot's quote: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

Discussion Questions

1. **What are some things you know about the Antioch Church that impress you?** [10 min]
2. **Besides being blessed with supernatural signs, wonders and miracles, Pastor Lionel shared that the impact these bring could be lost if the Church is not anchored in the Word of God. How does the Word of God sustain the Church and grow members to be more God-centric?** [15 min]
3. **What are the marks of a Spirit-led Church? Relate one area of growth you would like to see in the RiverLife Church and/or the Cell Group.** [15 min]

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Every RiverLifer to get into the Word of God to know Him, His purposes & move in step with the Holy Spirit.

Announcements

1. Take the Whole Life Inventory

Visit wholelife.sg/inventory, enter access code: RiverLife

2. **AGAPE LIVING FOR END-TIME REVIVAL**

Sat, 4 Jun | 2pm-5pm | Victory Chapel

Speaker: Rev Daniel Lim (2016 English Adult Camp Speaker)

Register online at www.tinyurl.com/riverlifeseminar. Limited seating capacity. Free admission

3. **RIGHT RELATIONSHIP**

COMMUNICATION AT ITS BEST!

A practical seminar & interactive workshop with Dave & Linda Roeder

Wed, 6 Jul | 9am-4pm | Victory Chapel

Cost: Adults: \$10 | Students: \$5 (includes lunch, tea break and participant notes)

Register with payment at the Information Counter by Sun, 26 Jun. For enquiries, please contact Anita Cheok at 65114138 or email her at anitacheok@riverlife.org.sg.

4. **RTF Transformation Conference 2016**

Thurs - Sat, 14 - 16 Jul | 9am - 9.30pm (14 & 15 Jul), 9am - 1pm (16 Jul) | Worship Centre

Subsidised rate for RiverLifers: \$100 per pax (applicable for on-site registration at RiverLife Church Only)

Register with payment at the Information Counter by Sun, 3 Jul. For enquiries, please contact Anita Cheok at 65114138 or email her at anitacheok@riverlife.org.sg.