

# THE GREAT NEED OF THE HOUR

ONE TIME • ONE GENERATION • OUR MOMENT

22 SEPTEMBER 2018 | 2pm - 6:30pm

With JESS SHAO, VAN WENG  
& KAY-CHONG YEO



Isaiah 60:1-2 gives us a glimpse of where our generation is heading as we are racing towards the End-of-the-Age. Darkness will increase in a measure that we have never seen before, yet God promises that there will be an unprecedented increase of light and glory in the Church of Jesus Christ.

What is the great need of the hour? A people of God who are real, deep and authentic!

***The Great Need of the Hour*** is a call to the people of God who understand the times and know what they ought to do, so that we are made ready to partner with Jesus in this finest and most challenging hour of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Worship	2.00pm – 2.30pm
Session 1	2.30pm – 3.30pm
Break	3.30pm – 3.40pm
Session 2	3.40pm – 4.40pm
Break	4.40pm – 4.50pm
Session 3	4.50pm – 5.50pm
Break	5.50pm – 6pm
Closing Exhortation	6.00pm – 6.30pm

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# Being Real, Deep and Authentic

(Rev. 3:1-3)

## A. Introduction

1. The great need of the hour is a people who are real, deep and authentic in their walk with God – a people who possess real power and authority that comes from having a real, deep and authentic relationship with God.
2. Only people who are real, deep and authentic can prevail and shine.
3. Unfortunately, we are living in an Age where people primarily focus on outward form, reputation and appearance.
4. In 2 Tim 3:5, 7, Scripture says that in the last days, men will be “...*having a form of godliness but denying its power... always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth...*” This means that:
  - a. There is no living understanding of the truth;
  - b. There is a lack of power, freedom and authority in our walk with God;
  - c. There is no sense of reality of God in our lives.
5. Much of Christianity in our time is caught up with hype, superficiality and form. We are often caught up with church activities and have a love for Jesus only in our mind but have no living reality of God.
6. We are very much like the Church of Sardis in Rev. 3:1-6. They were living in past reputation or worse, living in false reputation. This means that they were merely having an outward form without being real, deep and authentic.
7. Instead of being concerned about what people would say about us, what is most important is what the Lord would say about us. More than what people see on the stage, the real us should be who we are when no one is watching.
8. When no one is watching, do we still pray, read the Bible and love Jesus? Is there a reality of God in our daily lives?

**B. God's Exhortation from Rev. 3:2–3**

1. Rev. 3:2–3 is a sobering Word for the Body of Christ:
  - a. It is not a Word of rebuke from God but a tender yet strong Word that beckons us to respond to God.
  - b. A “storm” is coming. We are entering into a new season of God. It is a serious season where we cannot afford to be casual or weak in our faith but we have to be diligent so that we can stand and be His voice.
  - c. This is a Word that invites us to:
    - i. Realign our hearts;
    - ii. Strengthen our resolve;
    - iii. Rediscover our zeal and passion for Jesus;
    - iv. Cultivate authenticity.
  - d. Rev. 3:6, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” May we hear what God is saying and respond to Him. God demands more than a casual commitment but a serious engagement with Him so that we will not suffer loss.
2. The context of this passage:
  - a. Jesus was speaking to the Church of Sardis. He asked John to deliver the Word to them. It was the Word for the season to take God's exhortation seriously and pay the utmost attention so that they will not suffer loss.
  - b. The Sardis Church was living in their past reputation of being alive and vibrant. They were birthed through the Ephesus' revival which had been twenty years before.
  - c. Twenty years later, they were still living in their past reputation. They were not being real, deep and authentic. The decline is often subtle.
3. Rev. 3:1 - “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.”
  - a. Jesus was speaking a strong Word and seriously evaluating the Church of Sardis. They were alive and vibrant in the eyes of men but dead in the eyes of Jesus.
  - b. True evaluation is from the Lord. The reality of who we are is based on how God defines us.
  - c. When we are more concerned with outward appearance or how people view us, it often leads to form, hype and superficiality.
  - d. May we be real, deep and authentic in the eyes of God!

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- e. The world is approaching the time of greatest crisis and the Church her time of greatest glory (Isa. 60:1-2). Darkness is increasing but the light is also getting brighter. This is not a time to lack authenticity.
  - f. Things will not get better but we can grow stronger, burn hotter and shine brighter. A great “storm” is coming. Only those with real strength will stand.
4. *Rev. 3:2 - “Be watchful....”*
- a. Jesus exhorted the Church of Sardis to pay utmost attention, to take heed, to not be casual and to listen to what He was saying. He urged them to be honest about their actual condition.
  - b. Some questions we can ask ourselves to examine our actual condition in Christ:
    - i. Are we still zealous and excited about God and the partnership that He has invited us to?
    - ii. Are our hearts vibrant and alive in Christ or dull?
    - iii. Is there a reality of God in our lives?
  - c. People who do not “watch” often “suffer loss”.
5. *Rev. 3:2 - “Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die...”*
- a. This is in the context of what God has invited and called us to as believers.
  - b. As a people of God, He has called us to cultivate an authentic lifestyle of holiness, live out the Joel 2 Lifestyle and be faithful to the call that He has entrusted to us. We need to ask ourselves, “Are we seriously doing that?”
  - c. We must watch ourselves so that we do not redefine what God has called us to or only choose to do what we deem fit.
6. *Rev. 3:2 - “for I have not found your works perfect before God.”*
- a. This verse is not talking about attaining perfection. It is an exhortation to do something to change, reorder our lives, reprioritize and reschedule.
  - b. Many of us will not be ready if we continue in our current lifestyle and not do anything intentional to change.
7. *Rev. 3:3 - “Remember therefore how you have received and heard...”*
- a. We are to recall what and how God has invited us to partner with Him in fulfilling the Great Commission.
  - b. As we remember how God has led us all these years, our response is not to a cold and hard fact. Instead, we should cherish, treasure and value our prophetic history with God. In fact, those who do not cherish and value God’s invitation will always lose their zeal, joy and excitement in the Lord.
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8. *Rev. 3:3 - “hold fast and repent...”*
    - a. Hold fast – Jesus exhorts us to take hold of the promises we have received, to reach for them and to not be casual about them.
    - b. Repent – We are to respond and realign to God and not to man.
  9. *Rev. 3:3 - “Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.”*
    - a. Jesus is not a thief. He neither steals, robs nor destroys like Satan.
    - b. Through this verse, Jesus is giving us the analogy that if we do not watch, we will suffer loss. This loss refers to more than just anointing, growth and impact that we create in ministry, but especially to the reality and closeness of Jesus that we experience in our heart. Very often, God’s reality and presence in our hearts are long gone before we realize it.
      - i. The fragrance of Jesus is so strong that when He walks into the room, it lingers on even after He has left for a long time. We should not assume that God’s presence is still with us.
    - c. This is not about God breaking His promise of His presence with us in Heb. 13:5 where God says, *“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*
      - i. People who do not “watch” and “remember” often do not realize that they no longer have the reality of Jesus in their lives and that His presence has left.
  10. The most important thing is to respond now to God – to be watchful, strengthen what has become weak, remember, hold fast and repent.

### **C. Trance Experience in December 2009**

1. I was awakened by a loud voice declaring like a trumpet, “Behold, I am coming quickly!”
  2. I saw in the vision that we, as a House of Prayer, were not ready.
  3. The Word of the Lord came to me twice saying:
    - a. “Tell them they are not ready.”
    - b. “Tell them that they must be intentional in preparation.”
  4. Then I saw a vision about Rev. 12:7–12. This passage of Scripture is about the End-Time conflict at the End of the Age. It is literal and not figurative. It will happen at the End of the Age.
  5. In the vision, we were in a prayer meeting-cum-conference. During the breakout session, there was a discussion about the power of God and the End Times. However, it was just an intellectual discussion that lacked real power, authority and living understanding that would stir up faith.
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6. Suddenly demons and principalities in the form of huge snakes fell all over the room. It was horrifying and scary.
  7. Everyone in the room, including me, was filled with panic and fear. No one responded with faith, power and authority.
  8. Everyone fled from the room. No one prayed and rebuked the demons in the Name of Jesus
  9. When we ran out of the building, we saw policemen outside the premise. Instead of helping us, they ordered us to get back into the building. I understood this to be the anti-Christ system that would dominate the world.
  10. The message of this vision is: There will be no natural solution to the coming crisis except real history with God. All of human history will reach this level of intensity!
  11. In the vision, I began to wish that IHOP – One Thing Ministries had prepared more urgently, seriously and intentionally. We need greater zeal, faith and authority. Empty arguments and mere head knowledge about the End Times will amount to nothing!
  12. Through this vision, God was exhorting us to be intentional to cultivate the following:
    - a. A deep and real walk with Jesus (Matt. 25:1–13);
    - b. Faith to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the Word and deed (1Cor. 2:4–5; 4:20);
    - c. A living understanding of the Forerunner Message – to “eat the scroll” (Rev. 10:8-11).
      - i. We are not just to grow in knowledge of biblical information. That is helpful but insufficient.
      - ii. Instead, we are to cultivate a living understanding that gives rise to confidence, a strengthened faith and an increase in authority. This will strengthen us to stand and prevail (Luke 21:34–36).
      - iii. Instead of succumbing to fear and confusion (Luke 21:25-26), let us pray and seriously engage the heart of God (Jer.23:20; 33:3). We engage God by engaging the Holy Spirit, feeding on the Word, “staying in the river” and gathering to pray.
  13. Unprecedented times require unprecedented confidence in God. In Heb. 11:7, Noah was called to build the “boat”. In those times, Noah did not know anything about rain and how to build a boat. However, Noah knew God’s voice.
  14. Only people who are real, deep and authentic will prevail and overcome.
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15. Rev.12:10–11

- a. *“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come...”* – The deliverance, power of God will be available to believers. However, we will not be automatically ready. Rev. 19:7 tells us that preparation is required.
- b. *“They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb...”* – Victory is achieved because of the work of the cross. We need to appropriate it.
- c. *“by the word of their testimony...”* – This refers to more than just mere declaration of the Scripture. What we believe, walk out and work out in our lives will be the authenticity that results in authority.
- d. *“and they did not love their lives to the death.”* – Believers who will not back down but stand firm with courage and love Jesus more than they love their own lives.

**D. Conclusion**

- 1. God is exhorting us to be serious in our preparation to be real, deep and authentic believers.
- 2. Many have said “yes’ but not many have done it.
- 3. God is saying to us now, “Tell them that they are not ready!”
- 4. Seek to be real, deep and authentic starting today!

# How Then Shall We Live

## A. Introduction

***“Hear this, you elders, and give ear, all you inhabitants of the land! Has anything like this happened in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell your children about it, let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.” (Joel 1:2–3)***

1. The first exhortation in the book of Joel is “hear and give ear”. This means to pay close attention and learn through what happened to Israel in times of God’s judgments. (Joel 1:1 – 2:9)
2. The call to “hear and give ear” is to learn from history and to hear what Joel said. In our context, we do this by studying the book of Joel. It is a call to hear God’s heart as we prepare for future glory and crisis.
3. Joel’s challenge to us is to hear, which includes embracing a Joel 2 lifestyle that is being presented in Joel 2:12–17.
4. We must realize that this hearing does not come automatically just because we are Christians. It requires an intentional and deliberate cultivating of an understanding of the book of Joel and living out the lifestyle.

## B. Four Contributing Factors to Global Crisis during End-Times

1. Fullness of man’s sin (Rev. 9:21, 14:18, 17:5; Dan. 8:23, 12:10)
2. Fullness of Satan’s rage (Rev. 12:12, 9:21; Dan. 7:21,25)
3. Fullness of God’s judgment (Rev. 14:10, 15:7)
4. Fullness of creation’s groan (Rom. 8:19–24)

## C. The Response that God requires (Joel 2:12–17)

1. In Joel 2:12–17, the LORD tells us exactly what we are to do to receive His mercy and deliverance in a time of crisis. We are to gather in solemn / sacred assemblies. This involves the leaders and people joining together to fast, pray and repent for our sin and asking God to release His favor on our behalf.
2. This is God’s primary call to a people in crisis. It is the most practical thing we can do before and during a crisis. God releases His favor and protection in response to prayer and repentance.

3. This is the clearest passage in Scripture that describes what God desires of us in times of crisis. As the global drama unfolds at the End of the Age, the Body of Christ has a clear roadmap. God is asking His people for a specific response.
4. The LORD does not leave us guessing what He desires from us. We can act with certainty in times of crisis. God will shake all that can be shaken. This will cause desperation so that there is no solution except in God. He will remove all our false hopes so that we hope only in Him.

#### **D. 5-fold response that God requires in Joel 2:12–17**

1. Develop an understanding of the severity of End-Times (v.1 and 11)
2. Turning to God with wholeheartedness (v.12)
  - a. God wants our hearts more than anything else. He wants all of our love (Matt. 22:37). This reveals His heart for us – He requires us to respond to His love for us, by loving Him in return.
  - b. What is it like to turn to Him with all our heart? We are to turn from sin and flee from all that is contrary to what He wants. Turning to God with all our hearts involves repentance, fasting and prayer. When we turn to Him, we position ourselves to receive His favor.
  - c. The place of immunity from God's judgment is in corporate, long-term wholeheartedness for God. The only place of safety is in the midst of God's people living in obedience to Him. In this way, we receive God's favor and are kept in a place of safety from the primary cause of pressure. This is God's zeal for His people.
3. Rend your heart and not your garment (v.13a)
  - a. Traditionally, the people would tear their garments to show their grief and desperation. To rend means to tear something violently or forcibly.
  - b. What God desires is the rending of the heart, which speaks of dealing radically with the matters of our hearts. This is the most challenging aspect of Joel's exhortation. We must separate ourselves from anything that displeases God.
  - c. We must tear our heart away from sin. Jesus speaks symbolically of this radical tearing in Matthew 5:29. He was talking about a radical pursuit of obedience that painfully tears the heart in the process. In other words, forsake all compromise!
  - d. It can be painful when we are confronting the root systems that support sinful bondage in our lives. Sometimes, it hurts to press through until we get a breakthrough, yet this is the way to freedom. This tearing of the heart is typically the part that is most overlooked in the process.

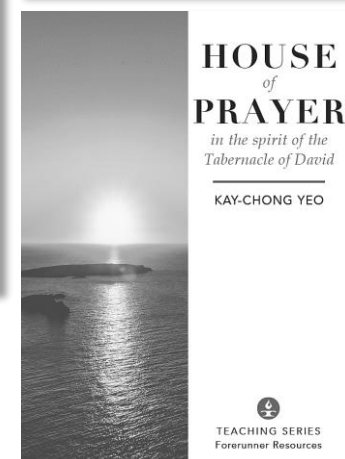
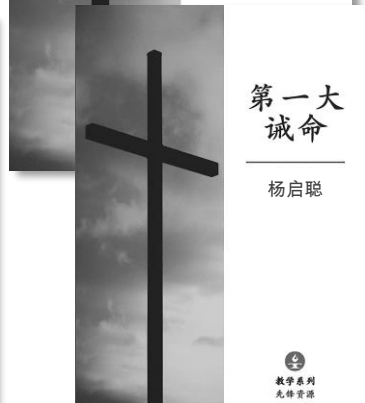
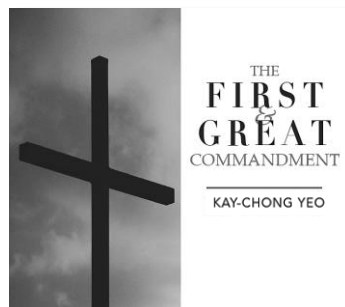
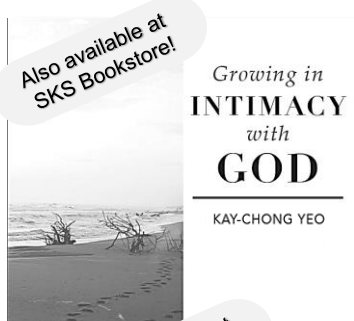
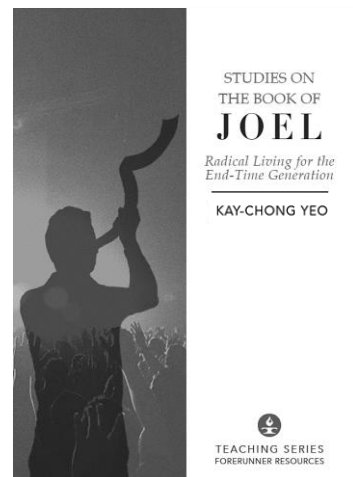
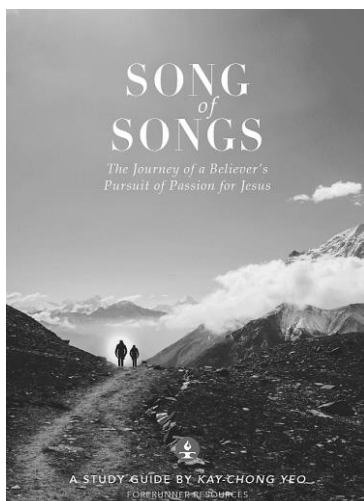
- e. We cannot pursue wholeheartedness in a causal way. Sometimes, we hope for a wholeheartedness that is gentle, easy and tame. It can be painful but the LORD will help us and He will empower us!
4. Repenting with Confidence because of God's tender heart – 5 fold revelation (v.13b–14)
- a. Joel summons the people to return to the LORD. He gave 5 reasons why this is wise. We must know that the LORD desires to make a way of deliverance for us. The knowledge of God's heart for us gives us confidence to tear our hearts in repentance. If we take one step toward Him, He will take ten steps towards us.
- b. Five-fold revelation of God
- i. The LORD is gracious
- God is gracious. He evaluates us differently from others. He remembers our frailty and that we are but dust. (Ps. 103:14)
  - God is not a harsh military leader or an angry coach who rejects any form of weakness. His requirements are within the reach of the weak. He will make a way of deliverance for us. (Ps. 103:10)
- ii. The LORD is merciful
- God delights in showing mercy. He delights in watching the heart responses of His people as we encounter His relentless mercy. (Mic. 7:18)
  - God enjoys what is awakened in us when we understand that He gives us a new start after each failure. (Luke 15:1–24)
- iii. The LORD is slow to anger
- God is slow to anger. Jesus spoke of this to the Church in Thyatira in Rev. 2. He gave them time to repent of their immorality (Rev. 2:20 – 22).
  - God is never quick to judge but gives time for people to repent. He is patient and often gives us ample time and warning to turn from our wicked ways (e.g. read the book of Jeremiah).
- iii. The LORD is of great kindness
- When we know that He is of great kindness, then we have the confidence to press through the hindrances and repent fully. (Eph. 2:12; Heb. 4:16; Jer. 9:24)
  - Knowing that He is of great kindness will give us courage to tear our hearts because we know that God desires to restore our fellowship with Him.

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- iv. The LORD relents from doing harm
- This does not mean that God randomly changes His mind. Rather, He honors the free will of man without violating His justice.
  - God is willing to relent or to cancel the decree of judgment, instead of issuing it over a nation. Judgment comes because people refuse to change or repent. When people repent and turn to God, He will relent. Instead of releasing the judgment which they deserve, He sends blessing!
5. Gather the people to pray and sanctify the congregation (v.15–17)
- a. We are to blow the trumpet and call a sacred assembly. The elders assemble and gather the people; even the children are to be part of this gathering. Since no one will be exempted from this coming crisis and judgment, no one is exempted from crying out to God for mercy.
  - b. We are to consecrate a fast. Fasting positions our hearts to experience the grace of God in a greater way.
  - c. **Blow the trumpet** – boldly proclaim the coming judgment and the sacred assembly.
  - d. **Consecrate a fast** – put fasting into our schedule and take it seriously.
  - e. **Call a sacred assembly** – gatherings that are sacred in their priority in seeking the LORD.
  - f. **Gather the people and sanctify the congregation** – leaders sanctify the people under their care by laying aside ministry programs to make seeking God the top priority in terms of their time.
6. Joel describes the wholehearted response that God desires by emphasizing necessity of earnest prayer. We are to cry out for His visitation of mercy with earnestness. (Joel 2:17)

## E. Conclusion

1. We are entering a new season on the divine calendar. His glory and judgment will shake everything that can be shaken. We are in a unique period in which we have no frame of reference for. Noah is an example of embracing a prophetic message that was unfamiliar to him.
2. God wants a holy spiritual environment of faith and revelation to be established in the Church. Prayer with fasting and wholeheartedness must be an integral part of the spiritual culture of the End-Time Church.





### MP3 Recordings

#### Weekly Friday Teaching series:

1. End-Times : Developing Confidence in Times of Uncertainty (Jun-Aug 2013) - 20hrs
2. Encounter God Series (Jul 2011-Jun 2012) -65hrs
  - Encountering the Father's Heart
  - Encountering the Personality and Emotion of God
  - Becoming a People after God's own Heart
  - Encountering Jesus as our Magnificent Obsession
  - Encountering the Person & Works of the Holy Spirit

### Other Book Titles Available:

1. The Revelation of Jesus as Bridegroom, King and Judge
2. Encountering the Heart of the Father
3. The Beauty of God
4. The Life of David
5. Forerunner School on The End Times
6. 末日学校讲义