

Impact Series

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# THE NARROW LUTHERAN MIDDLE

Following the Scriptural Road

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Daniel M. Deutschlander

试读本

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# The Narrow Lutheran Middle

Following the Scriptural Road

狭窄的路德宗中路

遵循圣经的道路

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试读本

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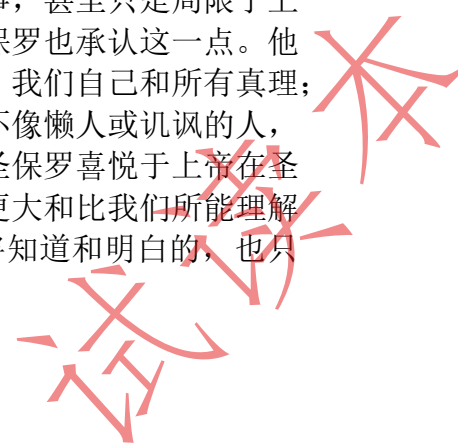
## Preface 前言

Some people say that the Bible is too hard for anyone to understand. They are both right and wrong. They are right if they expect to grasp and fathom with fallen reason everything that God has to say in his Word. Indeed, such an expectation should appear to us as foolish and irrational on the face of it. For what do we have in the Bible? Nothing less than God's revelation of his own mind and heart and will. If mere mortals could plumb the depths of the mind of God and fully comprehend it, they would be God's equals; they would in fact have achieved what Eve hoped to get when she imagined that with sin she could acquire the very essence of God and his wisdom. And we all know how that turned out!

有些人说，圣经太难了，任何人都不可理解它。他们既是对的，也是错的。如果他们指望用堕落的理性去领悟和探究上帝在他的道里所说的一切事，他们是对的。的确，这样一种指望，对我们来说，乍一看就是愚蠢和荒谬的。在圣经里我们有什么呢？全都是上帝启示的他自己的思想、感情和旨意。如果区区凡人能够探究上帝思想的深度，并完全理解它，他们就会与上帝同等了；他们就会在事实上已经拥有了夏娃希望得到的东西，即，她幻想借着罪，她可以获得上帝完全的本质和智慧。我们都知道其结果是什么。

So, yes, in one sense the Bible is indeed difficult to understand, since in it God shows us his own unfathomable being and wisdom. We will never fully grasp those things, even to the limited extent that God has revealed them in his Word. St. Paul admitted that too. He reminds us that while we are here on earth we know God, ourselves, and all truth only in part; we wait for heaven for our knowledge to become complete (1 Corinthians 13:12). But unlike the lazy person or the scoffer who dismisses the Bible because he cannot completely comprehend the mind of God revealed in it, St. Paul rejoices in what God reveals there. He can never get enough of it. He worships a God who is bigger than we are and wiser than we can comprehend (Romans 11:33-36). Could it be that even in heaven we will know and understand only as much as a creature can ever know or understand? Could it be that even in heaven the peak of our knowledge and understanding will consist chiefly in this, that in heaven we will be more fully in awe of the wisdom and knowledge of God?

因此，是的，在某种意义上，圣经确实是难以理解的，因为在其中上帝向我们显明了他自己不可测度的存在和智慧。我们永远不能完全地领会这些事，甚至只是局限于上帝在他的道里已经启示给我们的事，我们也不能完全领会。圣保罗也承认这一点。他提醒我们，当我们现在在这世上时，我们只是部分地认识上帝、我们自己和所有真理；我们等待在天堂里我们的知识变得完全（林前 13:12）。但是不像懒人或讥讽的人，他们因为不能完全理解上帝在圣经里显明的思想而拒绝圣经，圣保罗喜悦于上帝在圣经里所显明的。他永远不会觉得已经够了。他敬拜一个比我们更大和比我们所能理解的更智慧的上帝（罗 11:33-36）。是否甚至在天堂里，我们将知道和明白的，也只



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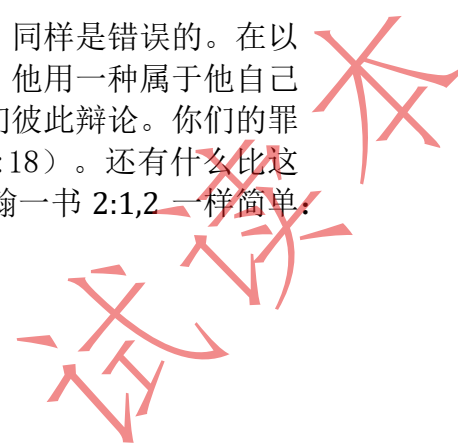
是一个受造物所能够知道和明白的？是否甚至在天堂里，我们知识和理解力的高峰将主要在这点上——在天堂里我们将更彻底地敬畏于上帝的智慧和知识呢？

God himself tells us that we should not expect to fully fathom his divine mind and way of thinking. He tells us through the prophet Isaiah: “‘My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isaiah 55:8,9). The really beautiful thing about this passage is that God speaks these words with special reference to the heart and core of the gospel: the almighty and the holy God calls pitiful, weak, sinful man to repentance; and he *wants* to forgive and receive mere mortals into his fellowship and blest communion—that is not the way *our* reasoning would go. But God’s divine mind, his perfect and holy reasoning, most happily for us goes way beyond what we would ever reason! Most blessedly for us, his reasoning is as far away from ours as heaven from earth! God be forever praised and adored that it is so! So, yes, in a sense those people are right who say that the Bible is hard to understand.

上帝亲自告诉我们，我们不应该期望完全测度他神圣的思想和思维方式。他透过先知以赛亚告诉我们：“‘我的意念非同你们的意念，我的道路非同你们的道路。’这是耶和华说的。‘天怎样高过地，照样，我的道路高过你们的道路，我的意念高过你们的意念’”（赛 55:8-9）。这段经文真正美好的地方在于，上帝谈到的这些话，特别关乎福音的核心：全能圣洁的上帝，呼召可怜、软弱和罪恶的人悔改，他想要饶恕和接纳区区凡人进入他的团契和蒙福的联合里——这不是我们的理性会走的道路。但是上帝神圣的思想，他完美圣洁的论证，对我们来说是最快乐的，远远超过我们可做的任何论证！对我们来说，最蒙福的是，他的论证与我们的论证之间的距离，正如天离地一样遥远。赞美和尊崇永远属于上帝，诚然如此！因此，是的，在某种意义上，那些说圣经很难去理解的人，他们是对的。

But in another sense, those who say that the Bible is hard, too hard, to understand are as wrong as they could be. At the very beginning of Isaiah’s book, God puts the heart and core of the Bible’s message so simply, and he does so with an expression of his own divine reasoning: “‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’” (Isaiah 1:18). What could be more simple? It is as simple as John 3:16, as 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, as 1 John 2:1,2: God forgives sin because his own Son paid its dread penalty; God welcomes and embraces the penitent; God gives eternal life to those who believe that saving message.

但从另一个意义上来说，那些说圣经很难，难得没法理解的人，同样是错误的。在以赛亚书的开头，上帝如此简单地呈现了圣经信息的核心，并且，他用一种属于他自己的神圣论证的形式，将其表达出来：“耶和华说：‘来吧，我们彼此辩论。你们的罪虽像朱红，必变成雪白；虽红如丹颜，必白如羊毛’”（赛 1:18）。还有什么比这更简单的吗？它如同约翰福音 3:16、哥林多后书 5:18-21 和约翰一书 2:1,2 一样简单。





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上帝因为他自己的儿子为罪付上了可怕的惩罚，而赦免了罪；上帝欢迎并拥抱忏悔的人；上帝赐永生给那些相信这救恩信息的人。

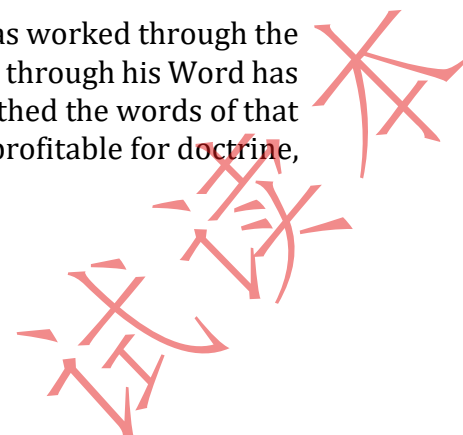
There is nothing difficult or complicated about those sentences. They are within the grasp of the most simple among us, yes, of even an infant newly baptized. And at the same time, they are so profound that only the miracle of the Holy Spirit working through those very simple words could bring us to believe them. That is the way it is with the gospel that is the heart and core of the Bible, of the very mind and heart of God. It is, as one ancient church father said, a water so simple that a child can swim in it and, at the same time, so deep that an elephant could drown in it.

这些句子没有任何困难或难解的地方。我们中间最单纯的人，是的，甚至是一个刚刚受洗的婴儿，都能够理解。与此同时，它们是如此地深奥，这些十分简单的话，只有圣灵透过其做工的神迹，才能带领我们去相信它们。这就是福音的方式，它是圣经的核心，是上帝完全的思想和心意。它是，正如一个古代教父所说，一盆如此普通的水，一个小孩能够在里面洗澡，但同时，它又是如此之深，一头大象也可以淹死在其中。

Others say that the Bible contradicts itself. Such people then dismiss the Bible altogether as the work of men with varying and inconsistent opinions, a book therefore worthy of no more respect than any other book. Or they try with their fallen reason to reconcile what they consider its contradictions and end up denying some truths and overemphasizing others to the point of turning even those into errors. Whichever path those go who contend that the Bible contradicts itself, they share in one common error: They begin with the conviction that the Bible is not the verbally inspired and therefore inerrant Word of God himself. Only with such a denial of the divine source of the Scriptures could they dare to declare that God doesn't quite know what he is talking about or that he contradicts himself and needs our help in straightening out the tangled web of his Word.

也有人说圣经自相矛盾。这样的人否定圣经，将其完全当作一群持有不同意见和彼此矛盾之人的作品，因此也是一本不比其它任何书更值得尊重的书。或者，他们试图用他们堕落的理性去调和其中他们认为的矛盾，结果是否定了一些真理，并过分强调其它真理，甚至到了把它们变为错谬的程度。无论那些主张圣经自相矛盾的人走哪条路，他们都有一个共同的错误：他们一开始就确信，圣经并不是逐字灵感的，因此也不是上帝本身完全无误的话语。只有这样否定圣经神圣的来源，他们才敢宣称上帝并不完全知道他在说什么，或者他自相矛盾，需要我们的帮助，去矫正他话语里纠缠不清的乱麻。

We, however, have the Spirit-worked conviction that the Spirit has worked through the Word itself, that the Bible is the very Word of God. The Holy Spirit through his Word has brought us to accept in childlike faith the truth that God has breathed the words of that holy, that unique Book. It is therefore, in everything that it says, profitable for doctrine, for faith, for life, and for life eternal (2 Timothy 3:15,16).



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然而，我们这有圣灵在我们里面作工的人，确信圣灵透过圣道本身工作——圣经就是上帝的道。圣灵透过他的道，带领我们以婴孩般的信心，接受这样的真理：这本圣洁独一无二的书上的话，是由上帝所默示。因此，它所说的一切事，于教义、信心、生命和永生都是有益的（提后 3:15, 16）。

It is in that conviction that the following chapters and pages have been written. We want to examine some of those teachings of the Bible that so many have found either too difficult or have declared to be contradictory. We want to examine them in the light of all that God's Word says about those teachings. It will not be our purpose to resolve every difficulty to the satisfaction of fallen reason. It will not be our purpose to dismiss some things that the Bible says in favor of other things that seem more reasonable to us. Rather, this is our intent: We want to see how God himself in his Word balances truths and does that invariably to our advantage. We want to consider how one truth is made the more clear and blessed for us by another truth that at first glance may seem to be at variance with the first truth. We will do that in the confidence that God does not lie to us or deceive us in his Word. We will do it in the certainty that whatever God teaches us in his Word is in perfect harmony with who he is, what we are, and what we so desperately need for life and for life eternal. Like Mary, we wish only to sit at Jesus' feet and receive from him in his Word grace heaped upon grace (Luke 10:38-42; John 1:16). If this book accomplishes that purpose for you, then you will join its author in still more gladly singing with the church over the centuries:

本书正是本着这样的确信写下的。我们想要去检验圣经上那些太多人要么觉得太难要么宣称是自相矛盾的教导。我们想要在上帝关于这些教导的话语的亮光中检验它们。我们的目的不是解决每一个难题，来满足我们堕落的理性。我们的目的不是去否定圣经说的一些事，来支持其它在我们看起来更合理的事。相反，我们的意图是，我们想要看到，上帝自己是怎么在他的话语里平衡这些真理，并使其总是有益于我们。我们想要思考，一个真理是怎样借着另一个乍看上去似乎和前一个真理不一致的真理，而变得更加清晰，并给我们更大的祝福。我们这样做，深信上帝在他的道里，并没有向我们说谎或欺骗我们。我们这样做，确信无论上帝在他的道里教导我们什么，都与他是谁、我们是什么、我们对生命和永生最迫切的需要，保持着完美的和谐。我们如同马利亚一样，单单想要坐在耶稣脚边，从他那里领受他话语里的恩上加恩（路 10:38-42；约 1:16）。如果本书对你达到了这个目标，那么你将和本书作者一道，与诸世纪的教会一起更加高兴地唱道：

How precious is the Book divine, By inspiration giv'n! Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine To guide our souls to heav'n.

圣经多么神圣宝贵，

借圣灵默示，

它的教义如灯闪耀，



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指引我们的心归向天堂；

Its light, descending from above Our gloomy world to cheer, Displays a Savior's boundless love And brings his glories near.

从黑暗世界之上降临，

它的光带给我们欢喜，

显出救主无止境的爱，

他的荣耀临到我们。

It shows to us our wand'ring ways And where our feet have trod But brings to view the matchless grace Of a forgiving God.

向我们显明我们流浪的路，

并我们的脚曾经之处，

又让我们看到，

赦免的上帝无比的恩典。

This lamp through all the dreary night Of life shall guide our way Till we behold the clearer light Of an eternal day. (CW 284)

生命中一切漫漫长夜，

这盏灯将指引我们前路，

直到我们瞧见更明亮的光，

在永恒的日子环绕我们。（CW 284）

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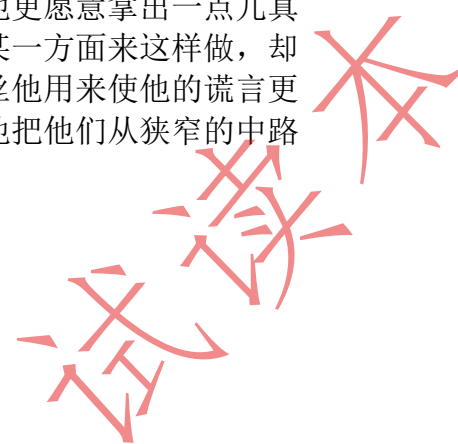
## 1. So What's the Problem?那么，问题是什么？

Aristotle (d. 322 b.c.) said in one of the most important and influential books ever written, *The Nichomachean Ethics*, that the goal of life is happiness. He defined *happiness* as the virtuous soul engaged in virtuous actions. But what is virtue? There are many virtues, said Aristotle, and most of them are in the middle between two opposite vices. The trick is to find and hold the middle between the two vices. The vices, he said, are often an overdoing or an overemphasis on some particular aspect of a virtue. Thus, for example, liberality or generosity is a virtue in the middle between stinginess on one side and wasteful prodigality on the other side. Find and practice the golden mean in the middle and, with respect to money, you will be happy—or at least that's what Aristotle thought.

亚里士多德（死于公元前 332 年）在他最重要和最有影响力的著作之一《尼各马科伦理学》中说，生命的目标是幸福。他将幸福定义为投身于美德的高尚灵魂。但是什么是美德呢？亚里士多德说，美德有很多，他们中大多数都在两个相反的恶习之间。诀窍是找到并持守这两种恶习之间的平衡。这些恶习，他说，通常是对一个美德的某个特定方面的过分强调或做得过头。比如，慷慨或大方是介于小气和挥霍无度之间的一种美德。找到并实践这中庸之道，你就会幸福——至少，在亚里士多德的思想里，就是这样。

In religion and theology there is something of a parallel to Aristotle's search for the middle between two false alternatives, between an overemphasis on some aspect of a truth at the expense of the rest of the truth. Any number of false doctrines are the result of falls off the narrow middle road into ditches on either side of the truth in the middle. See how clever the devil is: Often he does not make a frontal assault on the truths of God's Word. Rather, he prefers to take a bit of truth and distort it until it becomes a lie; he does that by emphasizing only one aspect of the truth at the expense of the whole truth. With the grain of truth that he has corrupted, a grain that he uses to make his lie believable, he seduces unguarded souls into error and even unbelief; he pushes them from the narrow middle into the ditches on either side of the truth.

在宗教和神学领域，在过分强调一个真理的某些方面，从而牺牲这个真理的其它方面之间，存在着一个类似于亚里士多德寻找的，在两个错误选择之间的中间点。相当多错误的教义，都是离开狭窄的中路，跌入在中间的真理或这边或那边的沟壑里。看看魔鬼多么地聪明：他常常不正面攻击上帝话语的真理。相反，他更愿意拿出一点儿真理并扭曲它，直到它变成一个谎言；他借着只强调这个真理的某一方面来这样做，却付出了全部真理作为代价。借着他已经腐败了的一丝真理，一丝他用来使他的谎言更加可信的真理，他引诱大意的灵魂陷入错误甚至是不信之中；他把他们从狭窄的中路推入真理或这边或那边的沟壑之中。



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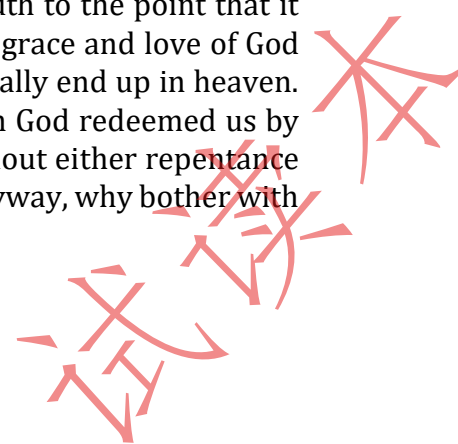
He even tried that ploy with Jesus. In the temptation of Jesus recorded in Matthew 4:5-7, the devil quoted the Bible, from Psalm 91:11,12. The devil held before Jesus the truth that God promises to protect his children. He urged Jesus to put God's promise to the test by throwing himself down from the peak of the temple; if God was faithful to his promise, then no harm should come to Jesus. There was a grain of truth in what the devil said. But Jesus saw the perversion of truth that was at the heart of Satan's temptation. In the first place, Satan left out an important part of the passage that he quoted. God's promise in Psalm 91 is that he will guard you *in all your ways*. The assumption of the psalm is that our ways will be in accord with God's Word. God does not promise his help and protection for us when our ways are no longer his ways. He does not promise his protection so that we can sin boldly and successfully.

他甚至试着对耶稣使用这个花招。在马太福音 4:5-7 记录的对耶稣的试探中，魔鬼引用了诗篇 91:11, 12 圣经的话。魔鬼将上帝应许保护他儿女的真理摆在耶稣面前。他怂恿耶稣亲自从圣殿顶上跳下去，借此将上帝的应许放入试探之中；如果上帝信守他的应许，那么没有任何伤害能够临到耶稣。魔鬼所说的话中存在着一丝真理。但耶稣看到，撒旦试探的中心是对真理的曲解。在一开始，撒旦就漏掉了他引用的经文最重要的一部分。上帝在诗篇 91 中的应许是，他将*在你所行的一切道路上*保护你。诗篇假定了我们的道路与上帝的话语保持一致。上帝并没有应许帮助和保护我们，让我们的道路不再符合他的道路。他并没有应许他的保护使我们可以大胆地顺利地犯罪。

Jesus' answer to the devil was, of course, perfect. He declared the truth of God's Word in Deuteronomy 6:16. Jesus, on the basis of that Word of God, answered that we are not to test God's promises to see if God will be faithful; rather, we are to trust his Word as we go about doing *his will in accord with his Word*. Trust in the promise of God is the middle. Doubt, which holds only to part of the promise, is the ditch on one side of that middle. Presumption, which makes use of the promise in a sinful way, is the ditch on the other side. (We will consider this particular stretch on the narrow middle road in greater detail in the next chapter.)

当然，耶稣对魔鬼的回答是完美的。他宣告了申命记 6:16 上帝话语的真理。耶稣，基于上帝的话语，回答说，我们不是要试探上帝的应许，看看上帝是否是信实的；相反，我们相信他的话语，我们依照他的话语来遵行他的旨意。相信上帝的应许是中路。怀疑，即只持守这应许的一部分，是这条中路其中一边的沟壑。盲目假定，即以~~一种~~有罪的方式使用这应许，是这条中路另外一边的沟壑。（我们将在下一章详细地讨论这条狭窄中路中这特别的一段。）

Examples of temptations to overemphasize one aspect of the truth to the point that it becomes an error abound. Some, for example, so emphasize the grace and love of God that they deny the existence of hell and teach that all will eventually end up in heaven. They make God's love into a license to sin boldly; it is as though God redeemed us by his blood so that we could continue comfortably in our sins without either repentance or any struggle against the flesh. For if we all end up in heaven anyway, why bother with





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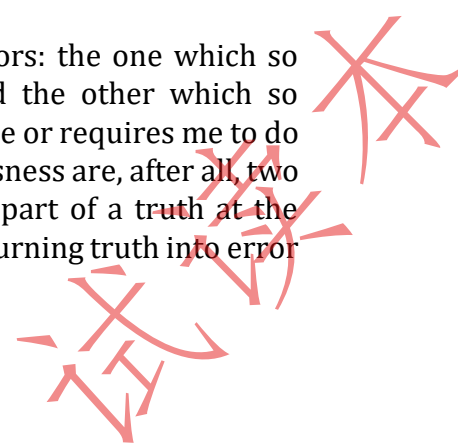
the struggle against sin and temptation? Indeed, why bother with his Word and sacraments at all?

过分强调真理的某一方面，以至于它成为一个错误，这样的例子比比皆是。比如，一些人如此强调上帝的恩典和爱，以至于他们拒绝地狱的存在，并教导所有人最终都会在天堂里面。他们将上帝的爱变成大胆犯罪的许可证；<sup>1</sup> 仿佛上帝借着他的血拯救我们，使得我们可以继续安逸地活在我们的罪里，既不用悔改，也不需要和肉体有任何冲突。因为如果反正我们所有人最终都会上天堂，何必要为与罪和试探争战而烦恼呢？甚至，何必要为他的圣道和圣礼而烦恼呢？

Others fall into still other ditches along the way. They overemphasize the justice and power of God to the point that they end up setting a limit on the grace of God. But if God's grace has a limit, how can I ever be sure that it extends even to me and covers all of *my* sin and guilt? Yes, and if God's grace does not extend to all, where can I look for some assurance that it extends to me? Despair of God's grace must be our lot when conscience accuses us; conscience should have no difficulty in convincing us that our faith and our works are never good enough to merit even the smallest particle of our salvation. The only alternative for those not satisfied with the Bible's teaching that salvation is altogether the gift of grace on account of Christ's merit is yet another ditch; if God's grace and Christ's merit are not sufficient to save me, then there must be something in me that must make up for whatever grace does not cover. I must add my works or my best efforts or my faith to Christ's work as causes of salvation. To put it another way, Christ has made my salvation possible; now I must finish the job. Both ditches are perilous indeed. Despair and self-righteousness alike are the opposites of faith.

另一些人在途中掉入了别的沟壑里。他们过分强调上帝的义和全能，以至于他们最终限制了上帝的恩典。但是如果上帝的恩典是有限的，我怎么能够确定，它甚至延伸到我身上，覆盖了我所有的罪和罪债呢？是的，如果上帝的恩典并没有延伸到所有人身上，我能够在哪里找到保证，说它也延伸到我身上了呢？当良心谴责我们时，对上帝的恩典的绝望就是我们必然的命运。良心本来就可以毫不费力的使我们相信，我们的信心和我们的行为，永远都不够好，不配使我们得到我们救恩中甚至最小的一点。除此之外，对于那些不满足于圣经教导——救恩完全是因为基督的功德而来的恩典的礼物——的人，唯一的选择是另一个沟壑；如果上帝的恩典和基督的功德不足以拯救我，那么在我里面必定有什么东西，补足了恩典不能覆盖的部分。我必须向基督的工作加上我的行为，或我最好的努力，或我的信心，作为救恩的原因。换句话说，基督使我的救恩成为可能；现在我必须完成这个工作。这两个沟壑真的很危险。绝望和自义都是信心的对立面。

So then, there is a narrow middle road between these two errors: the one which so emphasizes grace that it perverts it into a license to sin and the other which so emphasizes God's justice that it either places a limit on God's grace or requires me to do something to aid in my own salvation. (Despair and self-righteousness are, after all, two sides of the same coin.) Each of those errors holds on to only part of a truth at the expense of the whole. Each error misses the middle and ends up turning truth into error





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to the great harm of both Christian faith and life. The truth in the middle is that there is no reason to despair since Christ has done it all; the truth in the middle is that our life is a grateful response to the gift of salvation, not an effort to complete it.

因此，存在着一条狭窄的中路——在两个错误中间：一个如此强调恩典，以至于滥用它，使之变为犯罪的许可证，另一个如此强调上帝的公义，以至于要么限制上帝的恩典，要么要求我做些什么来帮助我获得我自己的救恩。（毕竟，绝望和自义是同一枚硬币的两面。）其中每一个错误，都以牺牲整体为代价，来持守真理的某一部分。每一个错误都偏离了中路，最终将真理变为错误，给基督徒的信心和生命都带来了极大的伤害。中路里的真理是，我们没有理由绝望，因为基督已经做了一切；中路里的真理是，我们的生命是对救恩的礼物感激不尽的回应，而不是努力去完成它。

It is the narrow middle road that we will seek to find and travel in this book. We undertake such a search with the awareness that the task is urgent and that failure in our quest threatens our faith. Jesus bids us to enter on this task with his own warning of the danger to our souls if we fail to find and walk that narrow middle road. He warns against the ditches and points to the ease with which one can fall into them when he urges us to “enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (Matthew 7:13,14).

在本书中，我们将会努力寻找并走在这条狭窄的中路上。在进行这样一个探索时，我们意识到这个任务是紧迫的，我们探索的失败会对我们的信心造成威胁。耶稣吩咐我们做这样的工作，他亲自警告我们，如果我们不能找到并走在这条狭窄的中路上，我们的灵魂就会遭到危险。当他督促我们说，“你们要进窄门。因为通往灭亡的门是宽的，路是大的，进去的人也多；通往生命的门是窄的，路是小的，找到的人也少”（太 7:13, 14）。他对这些沟壑提出警告，并指出一个人是多么容易掉入其中。

As we begin our search and our journey, it may be well to ask a few basic preliminary questions. Why is it, for example, that so many fall into the ditches? How come so few find that narrow middle road that leads to life and life eternal? And just as important, how can we know that we ourselves are not already in one of the ditches? Or how can we be sure that we will not fall off the narrow middle road at some time in the future?

在我们开始我们的探索之旅时，不妨先问几个基本的初始的问题。比如，为什么那么多人掉入这些沟壑里？为什么那么少的人找到那条通往生命和永生的狭窄的中路？同样重要的是，我们怎么知道我们自己没有正处在其中一个沟壑之中？或者，我们怎么能够保证，我们不会在将来的某个时刻，离开这个狭窄的中路？

试读本

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## Why do so many end up in the ditches?为什么如此多人最终陷入这些沟壑里?

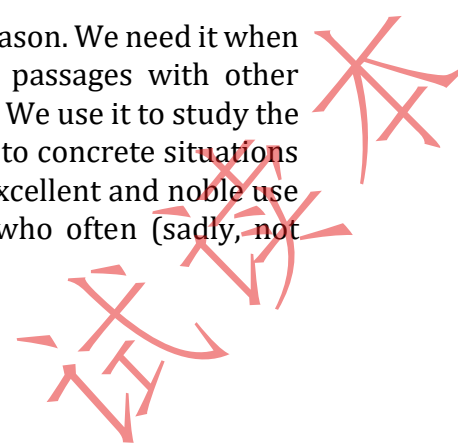
The short answer to the question of why so many end up in the ditches is this: They listened to their reason and let reason take control where the Word of God should have been in control.

为什么如此多的人最终陷入这些沟壑里，这个问题简单的答案是：他们听从了他们自己的理性，并让理性控制了本应由上帝话语控制的地方。

Reason, to be sure, is one of the greatest gifts that God has given to us. It is second after the gospel in Word and sacraments with its faith-creating message of salvation by grace through faith in Christ and his work for our salvation. God wants us to use the precious gift of reason in our daily lives. He wants us to use it when we decide how to vote, how to spend money, how to find a spouse, how to raise children, how to carry out the work we have to do in this life. Without the use of reason, life descends into a swamp of disorder, then into a sea of chaos, and finally into certain misery. How many people do you know who, as the saying goes, “never use their heads”? They have no grasp of the concept of cause and effect, no ability to see any further than the moment. Abandoning the use of reason, their attention spans are fixed on the fleeting and their lives are devoted only to the moment. They have the attention span of a gerbil! The result is a plunge from one mess into another. Sadly, no matter how miserable they make their lives with their irrational lifestyles and choices, they often never change. Nor does it occur to them that they need to. That’s life without a good use of God’s gift of reason.

理性，毫无疑问是上帝赐给我们的最伟大的礼物之一。它唯独在圣道和圣礼中创造信心的福音信息之下——这福音本乎恩，透过对基督和对基督工作的信心，拯救我们。上帝想要我们在我们每日的生活里，使用理性这珍贵的礼物。他想要我们在决定怎样投票、怎样花钱、怎样找伴侣、怎样抚养孩子、怎样实施我们今生的工作时使用它。离开对理性的使用，生命就会陷入一片失序的沼泽，然后是无边无际的混乱，最后是确定无疑的悲剧。你认识多少人，如同俗语所说，“从没使用他们的脑子”？他们没有因果关系这样的概念，没有能力看到比此时此刻稍远一点的地方。他们放弃使用理性，他们将注意力放在稍纵即逝的事上，他们唯独为此时此刻而活。他们鼠目寸光！其结果是从一场混乱跌入另一场混乱。可悲的是，无论他们因为他们荒谬的生活方式和选择，让他们的生命变得多么地悲惨，他们往往从不改变。他们也不会想到他们需要改变。这就是没有好好使用理性这个上帝恩赐的生命。

In our religious life and in theology too there is a proper use for reason. We need it when we study the Scriptures. We use it, for example, to compare passages with other passages in order to see all that God has to say on a given subject. We use it to study the languages of the Bible. We use it to apply the truths of the Word to concrete situations in life. Indeed, many of the greatest of the church fathers made excellent and noble use of God’s gift of reason. Among the most brilliant theologians who often (sadly, not



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always) knew how to use reason properly in theology we could mention St. Athanasius of Alexandria, St. Augustine of Hippo, and St. Anselm of Canterbury. Among the best and greatest Lutheran theologians who had a deep respect for the proper use of reason in theology we would put Martin Chemnitz and the other authors of the Formula of Concord at the top of the list.

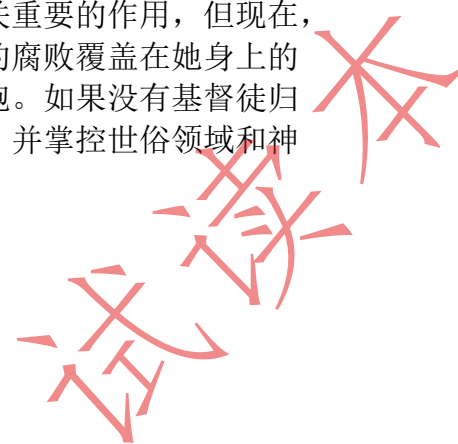
在我们的信仰生命和神学中，理性也有适当的用处。当我们研究圣经时，我们需要它。例如，我们用它来对某一经文和其他经文进行对比，以便于发现对某一特点主题上帝所说的一切话。我们用它去研究圣经的语言。我们用它将圣道的真理应用在生命中的具体情况。事实上，许多最杰出的教父都出色地高尚地使用了理性这一上帝的恩赐。对那些最杰出的神学家，他们往往（不幸地是，并不总是）知道在神学中怎样恰当地使用理性，对此，我们可以提到亚历山大的圣亚他那修，希波的圣奥古斯丁，坎特伯雷的圣安瑟伦。在那些最优秀最伟大的路德宗神学家中，他们对在神学中恰当地使用理性有着深深的尊敬，我们要把马丁·成尼慈和协同信条其他作者放在这份名单的首位。

What then is the problem with reason, that as great and good and useful a gift of God as it is, it nevertheless gets misused to the ruin of many? How is it that reason, so necessary in our daily life and in our religion, ends up singing a siren song that lures so many into a ditch that leads to destruction? The answer is as simple and as complicated as this: *In the temple of God, reason is the servant and the scullery maid; the Bible is queen! As beautiful as the maid may be and as useful, even as necessary, as she may be, she must never be allowed to usurp the role of the queen.*

理性，作为上帝赐予的如此伟大、美好和有用的礼物，最终却被误用，导致了很多人的毁灭，那么，问题出在哪儿呢？为什么在我们日常生活中和在我们信仰中如此必不可少的理性，最终却奏响了海妖的靡靡之歌，并诱惑那么多人陷入导致毁灭的沟壑呢？答案足够简单，却又如此复杂：在上帝的圣殿里，理性是仆人和女佣；圣经是女王！尽管女佣可能很漂亮，也很有用，甚至很重要，但她决不被允许篡夺女王的角色。

Our reason however has been terribly corrupted by the fall into sin. Though reason still has vital uses, now, because of that corruption, she is never satisfied with her position as maid. While trying to hide the warts that cover her because of sin's corruption, she struggles with might and main to paint over the warts and then to steal royal robes for herself. If not controlled by the Christian's converted will, if not governed by the Word of God, she will dethrone the queen and take control of both the secular and the sacred.

然而，我们的理性已经被罪严重地腐坏。虽然理性依然有着至关重要的作用，但现在，因为这腐坏，她永不满足于她女佣的位置。当她试着隐藏因罪的腐败覆盖在她身上的脓疮时，她竭尽全力地掩饰这脓疮，然后为自己偷取女王的长袍。如果没有基督徒归信了的意愿的约束，如果不受上帝话语的管控，她将废黜女王，并掌控世俗领域和神圣领域一切的事。



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We see that already in the Garden of Eden. Eve allowed reason to rule over God's Word. After all, what could be more reasonable and on the surface more desirable and pious than to get what Satan promised? He promised wisdom equal to the wisdom of God himself! Wouldn't that be a good thing, to be even more godlike than she was at her creation? Eve's reason was seduced. In this instance there was but one ditch. And deep it was indeed. And Eve fell headlong into it by choosing to follow Satan's word instead of God's Word. She fell into sin when she enthroned reason and threw away faith in the plain and clear Word of God. But reason enthroned and the Word of God dethroned equals unbelief and its dread consequence of spiritual death.

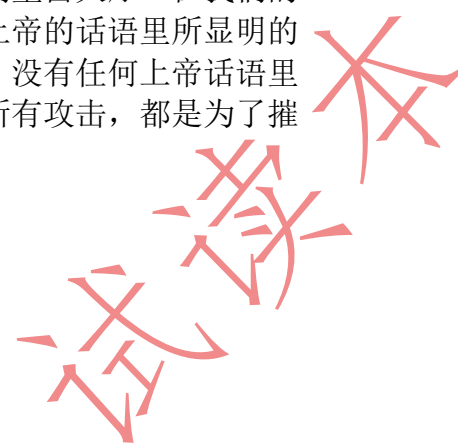
我们在伊甸园已经看到了这样的事。夏娃允许理性统治上帝的话。毕竟，还有什么比得到撒旦应许的东西更合理，并且在表面上更敬虔更值得做呢？他应许了和上帝本身的智慧同等的智慧！比她被创造的时候更像上帝，这难道不是一件好事吗？夏娃的理性受到了引诱。在这种情况下，存在着一条沟壑。并且它真的是何等地深。借着选择跟随撒旦的话而不是上帝的话，夏娃一头栽进这条沟里。当她登上理性的宝座，抛弃对上帝平白清晰的话语的信心时，她陷入了罪里。但是，当理性登上王位，并且上帝的话语被废黜时，这意味着不信和其可怕的结果——属灵的死亡。

Since the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden, little has changed. Satan still seduces us by urging us to enthrone a fallen and rebellious reason over of the clear Word of God. Few heresies and few sins are there that do not have a misuse of reason somewhere prominent in the evil.

从亚当和夏娃在伊甸园堕落以来，情况一如既往。撒旦依然鼓动我们，将堕落和反叛的理性放在上帝清晰的话语之上，并借此来引诱我们。很少有异端或罪恶没有将理性滥用在邪恶的某一个显著的地方的。

No one can surpass St. Paul in the appreciation of this fundamental truth: The devil likes nothing better than to push our reason from the backseat into the driver's seat, from the broom closet into the throne room, when matters of faith and morals are at issue. Paul saw the conflict between fallen reason and the Word of God at its sharpest in the truth that our salvation is altogether the work of Christ on the cross—as is revealed in God's Word. The devil hates no truth of God's Word more than that one. Indeed, all of his attacks on the rest of God's Word have as their goal the destruction of this central truth of our salvation. Paul saw that and declared:

没有人能超越圣保罗对这一基本真理的理解：当信仰和道德的事存在争议时，魔鬼最喜欢做的，就是将我们的理性从后座推到驾驶室，从清洁间推到皇宫大厅。在我们的救恩完全基于基督在十字架上的工作这一真理上——正如它在上帝的话语里所显明的那样，保罗看到了堕落的理性和上帝的话语之间最尖锐的冲突。没有任何上帝话语里的真理，比这一条更讨魔鬼厌恶。确实，它对上帝其它的话的所有攻击，都是为了摧毁关于我们得救的这个核心真理。保罗看出了这点，宣告说：



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The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. (1 Corinthians 1:18-21)

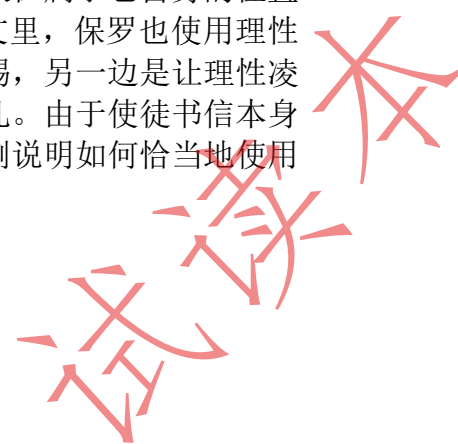
因为十字架的道理，在那灭亡的人是愚拙，在我们得救的人却是上帝的大能。就如经上所记：“我要摧毁智慧人的智慧，废弃聪明人的聪明。”智慧人在哪里？文士在哪里？这世上的辩士在哪里？上帝岂不是已使这世上的智慧变成愚拙了吗？既然世人凭自己的智慧不认识上帝，上帝就本着自己的智慧乐意藉着人所传愚拙的话拯救那些信的人。（林前 1:18-21）

In the rest of the chapter, the apostle pursues the theme that the gospel is nonsense to fallen reason and to those who give their reason the throne and the deciding voice in spiritual matters.

在哥林多前书这一章剩下的部分，保罗继续他的主题，即，对于堕落的理性，和那些将他们的理性捧上王位，并以此来裁决属灵之事的人来说，福音是荒谬的。

But that doesn't mean that Paul had no appreciation for a proper use of the gift of reason, even in expressing the truths of the Scriptures. He demonstrates that best in the whole organization of the epistle to the Romans. He arranges the truths of God's Word—by the direction and the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit himself—in a perfectly logical order, and he argues them in a reasonable manner. But then, when reason wants to get in the way and raise an objection to God's reasoning, Paul puts reason in its place. (Consider, for example, Romans 3:5-8; it is interesting to note that even in this passage Paul uses reason to put reason in its place.) He knew where the narrow middle road is between contempt for God's gift of reason on the one hand and the enthronement of reason over God's Word on the other hand. Since the epistle is itself the verbally inspired Word of God, it is God himself who is giving us an example in this epistle of the proper use of reason.

但这并不意味着，保罗不明白对理性这一恩赐恰当地运用——甚至是用在表达圣经真理上。在罗马书的整体架构中，他对此做了最好的示范。他以一种完美地逻辑顺序——借着圣灵亲自的指引和启示——组织上帝话语的真理，并以一种合理的方式讨论它们。但是，当理性想要阻碍并反对上帝的道理时，保罗将理性放在属于它自身的位置上。（比如，想一想罗马书 3:5-8；有趣的是，甚至在这段经文里，保罗也使用理性将理性放在属于它自身的位置上。）一边是轻视上帝理性的恩赐，另一边是让理性凌驾于上帝的话语之上，保罗知道这两者之间那狭窄的中路在哪儿。由于使徒书信本身是上帝启示的话，也就是说，上帝在这封信里，亲自向我们举例说明如何恰当地使用理性。





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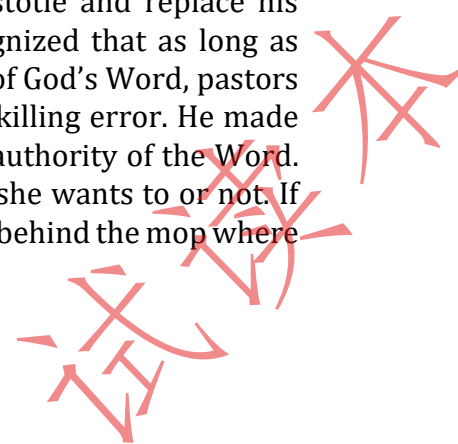
Luther too appreciated reason for the great gift of God that it is in secular and temporal matters. But like St. Paul, he saw all around him the damage done to the church, to souls, and yes, to civil society as well when reason took control in spiritual matters. So great was the damage done by reason enthroned over the Word of God that Luther called reason the devil's own harlot.<sup>2</sup>

路德同样欣赏在世俗和属世的事情上，上帝赐下的理性这一伟大的恩赐。但是正如圣保罗，他看到当理性掌控了属灵的事情时，在他周围发生的对教会、对灵魂，是的，也是对公民社会的一切伤害。理性凌驾于上帝话语之上所造成的伤害是如此之大，以至于路德称理性为魔鬼的婊子。<sup>2</sup>

The sad fact that Luther experienced before the Reformation was that pastors and theologians knew Aristotle better than they knew Paul. Aristotle, of course, knew nothing of the revealed Word of God. For Aristotle, reason was queen, yes, even a god. In Luther's day, Aristotle's very reasonable-sounding philosophy was imposed on the Bible so that whatever the Bible said was forced to fit into one of Aristotle's categories. The result was that church teaching often appealed to fallen reason but contradicted the apostles and prophets. As brilliant as Aristotle was—and arguably no one outside of the household of faith ever used reason more brilliantly than he—his philosophy has no place as queen in the temple of God. While Aristotle's use of reason in the formation of logical categories can be helpful in organizing the truths of the Scriptures, his philosophy is no substitute for the light of the gospel. Reason is not light but darkness when it rules as queen over the revealed Word of God.

在宗教改革之前，路德经历的令人悲哀的事实是，牧师和神学家对亚里士多德的了解超过他们对保罗的了解。当然，亚里士多德对上帝话语的启示一无所知。对亚里士多德来说。理性是女王，是的，甚至是上帝。在路德的时代，亚里士多德听起来非常合理的哲学被强加在圣经之上，以至于无论圣经说的是什么，都不得不与亚里士多德的某一个哲学类别相符。结果就是，教会的教导常常诉诸于理性，却与使徒和先知相矛盾。无论亚里士多德有多么地杰出——可以说，在教会之外，没有人比他更善于使用理性——在上帝的圣殿里，作为王后，没有他的哲学的位置。虽然亚里士多德在逻辑类别的形成中使用理性可以帮助组织圣经真理，他的哲学不能代替福音之光。当理性凌驾于上帝话语的启示之上时，它不是亮光而是黑暗。

Much of Luther's work was devoted to attacking the rule of reason both in the papacy and in the work of other reformers who wanted to get rid of the pope but not the rule of reason. Luther worked long and hard, for example, to purge the University of Wittenberg's curriculum for training pastors, to clean out Aristotle and replace his influence with the simple and clear Word of God. Luther recognized that as long as courses in logic and philosophy took precedence over the study of God's Word, pastors and their people would continue to fall into the ditches of faith-killing error. He made the study of logic and the rules of reason always subject to the authority of the Word. When God speaks in his Word, reason must say *Amen*, whether she wants to or not. If she objects, we must take the whip to her and drive the maid back behind the mop where





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she belongs! Again, many are the ditches that make up the broad roads leading to destruction; they are found on both sides of the narrow road that leads to life. Few there are who find and remain on that narrow middle road.

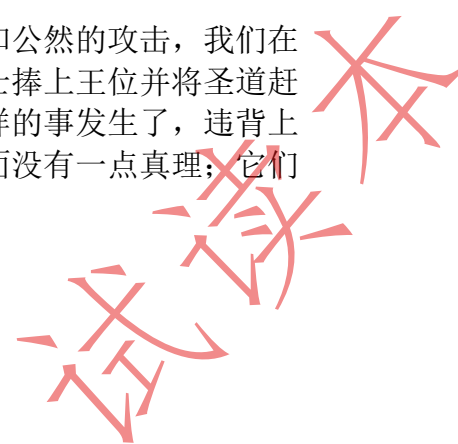
路德的许多工作，都致力于攻击理性的统治，既在教皇权上，也在其他改革者的工作上——他们想要摆脱教皇，却不要摆脱理性的统治。路德的工作持久而艰辛，例如，清理维滕堡大学的牧师训练课程，清除亚里士多德的影响并用上帝简洁清晰的话语取代它。路德认识到，只要逻辑和哲学课程优先于对上帝话语的研究，牧师和他们的民众就会继续陷入这扼杀信心的错误的沟壑。他使逻辑的研究和理性的统治始终服从于圣道的权威。当上帝在他的道里说话时，理性必须说阿门——不管她愿意不愿意。如果她反对，我们必须拿鞭子抽她，并将这个女佣赶回墩布后面她本该在的地方。再次地，很多这样的沟壑组成了通往毁灭的宽阔的道路；它们随处可见于通往生命的狭窄的道路两旁。很少的人发现并持守在这狭窄的中路上。

In the chapters to come we will consider a number of truths that turn into errors when reason takes hold of them and sits as judge over the Word of God. Most of the ditches we will be examining are subtle; Satan has hidden some of the ditches so cleverly that it is easy for us to miss them. Other ditches are not hidden at all; Satan has made these so attractive and appealing that the uncautious are tricked by their apparent attractiveness and run into them, totally unaware of the danger. Satan has made still other ditches so crude and obvious that it is difficult to understand why so many fail to recognize them and plunge headlong into them to their own destruction.

在接下来的章节里，我们将思考，当理性抓着一一些真理并成为上帝话语的裁判时，这些真理就会变成谬误。我们将考察的大多数沟壑都是微妙的；撒旦如此巧妙地隐藏一些沟壑，我们很容易就忽略它们。其它的沟壑根本就没有隐藏；撒旦把这些东西变得如此有魅力和吸引人，以至于不谨慎的人被它们表面的吸引力迷惑而陷入其中，却完全没有意识到它们的危险。撒旦也把别的沟壑弄得如此的粗糙和显著，以至于很难理解为什么如此多的人未能认出它们，并一头扎进这些沟壑里自取灭亡。

Since in the following chapters we will not be dealing with the most obvious and blatant attacks of the devil on the Word of God, we will spend a few moments now briefly noting some of them. These ditches Satan digs right out in the open, after people have already enthroned Dame Reason and consigned the Word to the broom closet; once that happens, there is no end to the follies contrary to the Word of God that people will embrace. These errors have no grain of truth in them at all; they are not on either side of a truth but are error and delusion from beginning to end.

由于在接下来的章节里，我们不会讨论魔鬼对上帝的道最明显和公然的攻击，我们在此处将花一小会儿时间简要地指出其中一些。在人们将理性女士捧上王位并将圣道赶到杂物间之后，撒旦就会直接地公开地挖掘这些沟壑；一旦这样的事发生了，违背上帝话语的恶行就会无穷无尽，并被人们欣然接受。这些错误里面没有一点真理；它们不站在真理的任何一边，而从头到尾都是错误和幻象。



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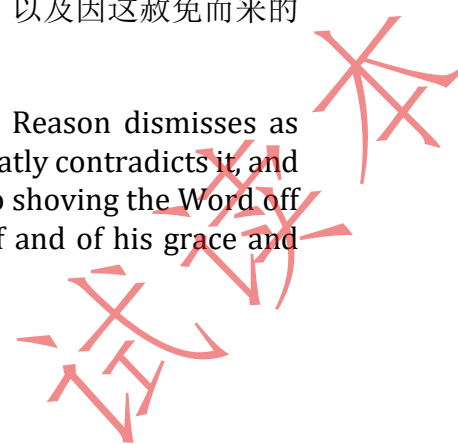
Think of some of the more obvious and blatant examples of the perverse use of reason that people use who live in the ditch far from any narrow middle road. The thief reasons that he needs what he steals more than the one from whom he steals it. The murderer reasons that his own life and well-being are somehow threatened by the continued life of his enemy; therefore, it makes perfect sense to him that his enemy should die. The two people “living in sin” and the adulterer each in turn use reason as a see-through cloak to cover shame; with that cloak, each declares without shame, “But we love each other; how can that be wrong?”

对于那些活在离任何狭窄中路都相当遥远的沟壑之中的人，他们对理性有着不正当的应用。想想一些更明显和更厚颜无耻的例子。小偷认为他比被盗的人更需要他所偷窃的东西。杀人犯认为，他自己的生命和福祉，总是被他敌人的生命所威胁；因此，他完全有理由认为他的敌人应该去死。两个人“活在罪中”（通奸），却彼此以理性为透明的衣裳来掩盖羞耻；借着这个衣裳，每个人都不知廉耻地宣称，“但我们彼此相爱啊；爱怎么可能有错呢？”

In matters of doctrine as well, some errors are just ditches, without any element of truth at all. In these the devil dresses up Dame Reason so that her attempts to overthrow the Word of God will not seem as ugly as they are. He has Dame Reason pretend to be the helper of the queen, even though the queen is nowhere to be found. Reason subtly suggests that she only wants to make some doctrine more clear than it already is in the plain words of the Bible. For example, Jesus said in his institution of the Sacrament of the Altar, “This is my body, this is my blood given and shed for you, for the forgiveness of sins.” Dame Reason confronts the host of problems presented by those simple and clear words of Jesus and objects that he could not have meant what he said so plainly. He must have meant that the bread and wine in the Sacrament are symbols that represent his body and blood. And he could not really have intended, she declares, that the Sacrament would actually convey forgiveness of sins and the life and salvation that come with forgiveness.

在教义的事上同样如此，一些错误只有沟壑，压根没有任何真理的成分。在这样的事业上，魔鬼给理性女士盛装打扮，使得她推翻上帝话语的企图看上去没那么丑陋。它将理性女士假扮成女王的助手，即使女王已经荡然无存。理性巧妙地暗示，她只是想要让某些教义，比它在圣经朴素的话语里更清晰一些。比如，耶稣在他设立圣餐时说，“这是我的身体，为你们舍的，这是我的血，为你们流出来的，使罪得赦。”理性女士面对耶稣这简单清晰的话呈现出的一系列问题，反对说，他的意思不可能如他所说的如此直白，他的意思必定是，圣餐中的饼和酒是象征，代表着他的身体和血。她宣称，他真正的意图不可能是说，圣餐事实上传达了对罪的赦免，以及因这赦免而来的生命和拯救。

The simple truth that Jesus meant exactly what he said Dame Reason dismisses as beyond belief. And so she pushes the truth of God’s Word aside, flatly contradicts it, and assumes for herself the role of queen in the church. In addition to shoving the Word off of its throne, she robs Christ of his glory as the giver of himself and of his grace and



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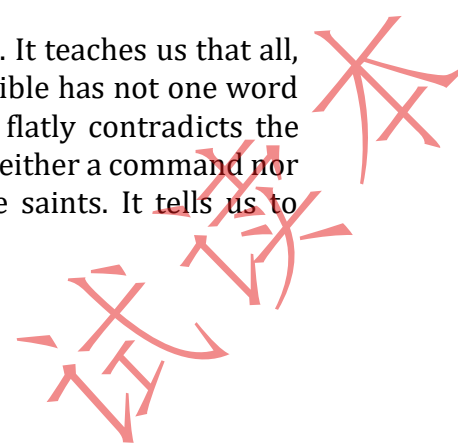
mercy in the Sacrament. And of course, whenever the Word is pushed aside and Christ is robbed of his proper glory, the sinner always ends up deprived of the comfort of the gospel that Jesus intends to give in his Word and sacraments.

耶稣所说的这一简单的真理，就是他的意思，却被理性女士斥责为难以置信。因此，她将上帝话语的真理推到一边，断然否定它，并假定她自己在教会中是女王的角色。除了将圣道推下王座，她还剥夺了基督将他自己赐给我们的荣耀，和他在圣礼中的恩惠和怜悯。当然，当圣道被置之不理，而基督完全的荣耀被剥夺时，罪人最终就会失去耶稣在他话语和圣礼中赐下的福音的安慰。

At other times Dame Reason just ignores the Bible altogether and presents notions that seem to make sense but have no foundation at all in the Word of God. She says, for example, that it makes sense that there must be a place between heaven and hell. To such a place we (or at least some people we could mention!) should go after death to be purged of sins and made pure enough to enter heaven (the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory). Bold reason declares as well that it makes perfect sense that the mother of the Savior should be without sin. Why would the holy Son of God want to be enclosed in the womb of a sinner? Why not, the devil's reasoning continues, appeal to this supposedly sinless mother of God for help both now and even hereafter for rescue from the pain of the imagined purgatory? Would not her Son listen to the interceding prayers of his mother and be pleased as well when we seek his mother's help? And if he is pleased with our devotion to her, would he not also be pleased if we were likewise devoted to his friends in heaven: the saints and angels? Would he not listen to his friends in heaven if they interceded for us together with his mother? It all makes sense; it makes sense, that is, if the Word of God has been pushed aside.

在其它时候，理性女士完全忽略圣经，并提出一些看上去有意义，但在上帝的话里完全没有基础的概念。例如，她说，在天堂和地狱之间必定会有一个地方这样的想法是很有道理的。在我们死后，我们（或至少一些我们可以想到的人！）应当去这个地方，洁净我们的罪，并使我们纯净地足以进入天堂（罗马天主教关于炼狱的教义）。理性同样大胆地宣称，救主的母亲没有罪这样的想法是完全有道理的。为什么圣子会被装在一个罪人的子宫里呢？为什么不，魔鬼继续推论道，请求这个所谓的无罪的上帝之母，在现在甚至在来世帮助我们，拯救我们脱离想象中的炼狱之苦呢？她的儿子难道不会听他母亲的祈祷，并同样喜悦于我们寻求他母亲的帮助吗？如果他喜悦于我们向他母亲的祈祷，那他不会也喜悦于我们向他在天堂里的朋友——圣徒和天使——同样的祈祷吗？如果他们和他的母亲一起为我们说情，难道他会不听他在天堂里的朋友的话吗？这一切都很有道理；如果上帝的话被置之不理，它们都会特别有道理。

But the Bible teaches us to rely on Christ alone for our salvation. It teaches us that all, even the greatest of saints, are in need of his saving work. The Bible has not one word about a purgatory; and in fact, the whole notion of purgatory flatly contradicts the gospel of salvation full and free. Additionally, the Bible contains neither a command nor a promise nor an example regarding prayers addressed to the saints. It tells us to



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address our prayers to God alone and reminds us as well that only God is present everywhere with power sufficient to hear and answer our prayers.

但是圣经教导我们，我们的救恩唯独依赖于基督。它教导我们，所有人，甚至是最伟大的圣徒，都需要他拯救的工作。圣经没有一个词和炼狱有关；事实上，整个炼狱的概念，直接与完全的白白的救恩的福音相矛盾。此外，圣经既没有命令，也没有应许，更没有向圣徒祷告的例子。它告诉我们，我们唯独向上帝祷告，它也提醒我们，唯有上帝无处不在，有足够的力量倾听并回应我们的祷告。

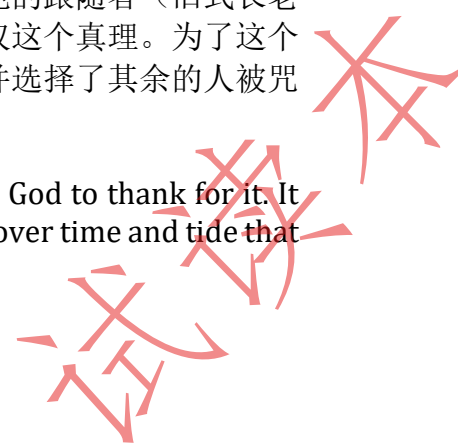
But none of that deters Dame Reason. All of these errors and all the others that spring from reason separated from the Word of God share in these attributes: They are all contrary to the clear Word of God in the Bible; they all rob Christ of his glory as our perfect and only Savior; they all deprive the Christian of certain comfort precisely because they are without foundation in the Word and push Christ and his work to the sidelines. Nevertheless, into the ditch of these superstitions plunge all of those who place faith in reason instead of in the clear Word of God. For superstition is best described as a faith based on lies and errors.

但所有这些都不能阻止理性女士。所有这些错误，和所有其它从与上帝的话语相背离的理性而来的错误，都有着共同的属性：它们都与圣经中上帝清晰的话语背道而驰；它们都夺走了基督作为我们完美的唯一的救主的荣耀；因为它们不以圣道为根基，并将基督和他的工作置于一旁，它们都剥夺了基督徒确定无疑的安慰。所有这些将信心建立在理性而不是上帝清晰的话语之上的人，都坠入了这些迷信的沟壑。因为迷信最好的描述就是，一种建立于谎言和谬误之上的信心。

Sometimes Dame Reason is just a bit more subtle. She pretends to defend one truth of God's Word in order to dismiss another truth. She pretends that she wants to save us from one ditch by leading us into the ditch on the other side, with little or no regard at all for any truth in the middle. Thus, for example, she convinced Calvin and his successors (old-style Presbyterians and the Dutch Reformed) that they should defend the truth that God is almighty, just, and sovereign. In the interest of that truth, she convinced Calvin that the sovereign and almighty God has chosen some to be saved and that the rest he has chosen for damnation; that is the false doctrine called double or absolute predestination.

有些时候，理性女士只是有一点点微妙。她假装去捍卫上帝话语的一个真理，以便于去否定另一个真理。她假装她想要救我们脱离一个沟壑，却带领我们进入另一侧的沟壑，并全然不顾在这中间的任何真理。例如，她说服加尔文和他的跟随者（旧式长老会和荷兰改革宗信徒），他们应该捍卫上帝是全能、全善和全权这个真理。为了这个真理，她让加尔文相信，全权全能的上帝选择了一些人得救，并选择了其余的人被咒诅；这就是双重或绝对预定的错误教义。

The Bible does indeed teach that those who are saved have only God to thank for it. It assures that God has chosen them from eternity and has so ruled over time and tide that



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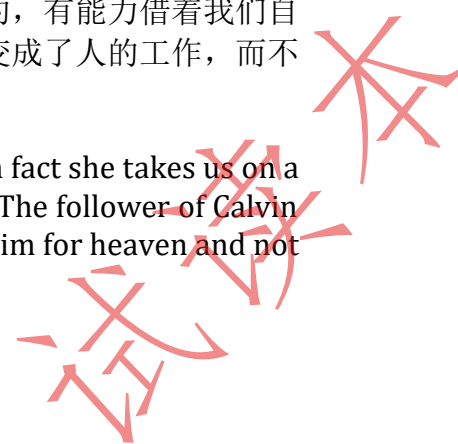
they hear his Word, believe it, and die trusting in Jesus alone for their salvation. But the Bible likewise teaches that those who reject his Word and perish eternally have only themselves to blame for it. God neither asks nor expects us to blend those two truths; rather, through the power of his Word, he brings us to trust them both. Reason doesn't like that. And Calvin didn't like it either. Instead of simply bending his mind to receive what God had said and letting it go at that, he chose reason over the Word of God and came up with his false doctrine of double predestination.

圣经确实教导说，那些得救的人，为此完全归功于上帝。这样的教导确保上帝从永恒中拣选他们，并因此统治时间和岁月，以至于他们听到他的话语，相信这话语，并在对唯独基督是他们救恩的确信中死去。但圣经同样教导说，那些拒绝他的话语而永远灭亡的人，唯有他们自己该为此受责备。上帝既不要求也不希望我们将这两个真理混合在一起；相反，透过他话语的大能，他带领我们相信这两者。理性不喜欢这样。加尔文也不喜欢这样。他没有单单安心于接受上帝所说的话，并就此罢手，他选择将理性放在上帝的话语之上，并提出了他错误的双重预定的教义。

Arminius, who came after Calvin, thought it was a terrible thing to say, as Calvin did, that God had chosen some to go to hell. But Arminius was just as infatuated with Dame Reason as Calvin was. So, he followed reason out of Calvin's ditch into the ditch on the opposite side of the road and thus perverted the truth just as much as Calvin had. Arminius and his followers (e.g., Methodists, Baptists, and most other non-Lutheran Protestants) believe that it's up to us to decide whether we go to heaven or to hell, up to us to decide whether we should believe or not. They deny what the Bible says about the results of original sin. They deny that by nature we are fallen, blind, dead, enemies of God and that as such we are incapable of any good in the eyes of God. Arminius and his followers teach instead that we are born either neutral or perhaps basically good, with the ability to contribute to our salvation by our own will and choice. They turn faith, at least in part, into man's work instead of God's gift through the gospel's power in Word and sacrament.

在加尔文之后的阿米念，认为说上帝拣选了一些人下地狱——正如加尔文所说的那样——是一件可怕的事。但是阿米念对理性女士的迷恋和加尔文一样。因此，他跟随着理性离开加尔文的沟壑，进入了这条道路对面的沟壑，因此，他如同加尔文一样歪曲了真理。阿米念和他的跟随者们（比如，卫理公会信徒、浸信会信徒，以及其他大多数非路德宗新教徒）相信，我们上天堂还是下地狱由我们来决定，我们相信与否由我们来决定。他们否认圣经所说的原罪的后果。他们否认我们生来是堕落的，瞎眼的，死亡的，是上帝的仇敌，并因此我们在上帝眼里不能行任何善事。相反，阿米念和他的追随者们教导，我们生来要么是中立的，要么基本上是良善的，有能力借着我们自己的意志和决定促成我们的救恩。他们把信心，至少部分地，变成了人的工作，而不是上帝在圣道和圣礼里，借着福音的大能赐下的礼物。

Dame Reason pretends in these examples to help our faith; but in fact she takes us on a road that, if followed to its reasonable end, leads to destruction. The follower of Calvin may cast about looking for some assurance that God has picked him for heaven and not





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for hell. Ultimately, he may trust that his good works prove that he is fit for heaven, even though that was the opposite of Calvin's intent. Or his temptations and his guilt may convince him that he must be one who has been predestined to hell. Thus, convicted by God's law and his own conscience, he may fall into despair. Both pride in one's own works as a cause of salvation and despair that salvation can never be mine are the opposites of saving faith.

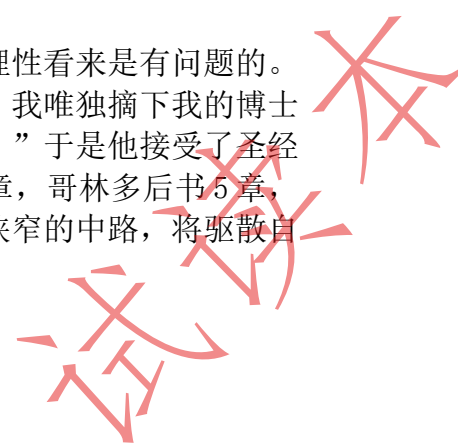
在这些例子中，理性女士假装来帮助我们的信仰；但事实上她带领我们走上了一条通往毁灭的道路——如果跟随着她走到这条道路符合逻辑的终点的话。加尔文的追随者可能会想方设法地寻找一些确据，保证上帝拣选他上天堂而不是下地狱。最终，他可能相信他的好行为证明了他应该是上天堂的，尽管这和加尔文的意图相违背。或者他的试探和他的罪使他确信，他必定是注定了要下地狱的人。因此，在上帝的律法和他自己的良心的控诉之下，他可能陷入绝望。以自己的行为为傲，将其当做救恩的原因之一，或者认为救恩绝不可能是我的并因此而绝望，这两者都是拯救信心的对立面。

The followers of Arminius, on the other hand, may become either proud that at least they made the right decision or else may doubt whether they really believe or believe enough to get into heaven. In either case, the Word is pushed aside, the glory of Christ the Savior is obscured, and faith is damaged or destroyed either by self-righteousness or by despair.

另一方面，阿米念的追随者们，可能会为他们至少做了正确的决定而骄傲，或者怀疑为了上天堂他们是否真的相信或足够相信。在这两种情况下，圣道被推到了一旁，救主基督的荣耀被遮蔽，信心或因自以为义或因绝望而遭受损害或毁灭。

In contrast to Calvin and Arminius, Luther granted that many of the teachings of the Bible present fallen reason with problems. But Luther "reasoned": "When something in the Bible conflicts with my reason, I simply doff my doctor's cap and assume that the Holy Spirit (the ultimate author of the Scriptures) is a little smarter than Dr. Luther!" And so he took the narrow middle road laid out in the Bible. Only the narrow middle road of the truth so clearly taught in John 3:16; Romans 1-8; 2 Corinthians 5; Ephesians 2; and so many other places in the Bible will dispel both the self-righteousness and the despair that are the logical results of Calvinist and Arminian attempts to be reasonable.<sup>3</sup> Only the truth that Jesus alone is Savior and his Word alone creates the faith which trusts in him as Savior, only that will put us on and keep us on the narrow middle road that gives life and brings us at last to heaven. Only that teaching finds its source in the Word of God; only that teaching gives all glory to Christ; only that teaching gives all consolation to the penitent sinner.

与加尔文和阿米念不同，路德承认圣经上的很多教导在堕落的理性看来是有问题的。但是路德“论证”道：“当圣经中的东西与我的理性相矛盾时，我唯独摘下我的博士帽，假定圣灵（圣经最终的作者）比路德博士聪明那么一点点！”于是他接受了圣经所陈列的那条狭窄的中路。唯有在约翰福音 3:16，罗马书 1-8 章，哥林多后书 5 章，以弗所书 2 章，以及圣经很多其它地方清晰教导了的，真理这狭窄的中路，将驱散自





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义和绝望，这自义和绝望是加尔文主义者和阿米念信徒试图变得更合理化的逻辑结果。<sup>3</sup>唯有耶稣是唯一的救主，唯有他的话语创造相信他是救主的信心，唯有这真理将我们放在并使我们走上这条狭窄的中路，赐我们生命并最终将我们带到天堂。唯有这教导来源于上帝的道；唯有这教导将所有的荣耀归给基督；唯有这教导将全部的安慰赐给痛悔的罪人。

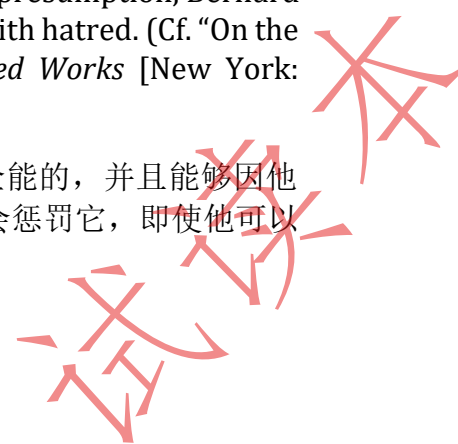
Perhaps the previous but by-no-means-complete listing of examples of Dame Reason's more blatant and crude attempts at pushing us into ditches will suffice to encourage our further examination of the devil's more subtle attacks on the narrow middle road. In the chapters that follow, we will strive to find and stay on the narrow middle road while taking careful note of the ditches on either side of the road. We will do that by riveting our attention on the Word of God while we at the same time take note of the attempts of Dame Reason to lure us into one ditch or the other. If we do not watch out for those ditches, it will be all the easier for us to fall into them. Yes, it is the ditches and their dangers that should make us all the more attentive and devoted to the Word. That's Jesus' own methodology in teaching us. He warns against the ditches and then encourages and urges us on with his words: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. . . . If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:12,31,32).

也许上面这些关于理性女士试图将我们推入沟壑里的，更公然和粗鲁的例子，并不完全，但它足以鼓励我们进一步探索魔鬼对这条中路更隐晦的攻击。在接下来的章节里，我们将努力地寻找并走在这条狭窄的中路上，同时小心翼翼的标注这条道路两侧的沟壑。透过将我们的注意力固定在上帝的话语上，我们如此做，与此同时，我们也注意到理性女士引诱我们进入一个又一个沟壑的企图。如果我们没有小心提防那些沟壑，我们所有人都特别容易掉入其中。是的，正是这些沟壑及其危险，让我们更加当心并专心于上帝的道。这就是基督自己教导我们的方法学。他对这些沟壑提出警告，然后用他的话鼓励和督促我们：“我就是世界的光。跟从我的，必不在黑暗里走，却要得着生命的光。……你们若继续遵守我的道，就真是我的门徒了。你们将认识真理，真理会使你们自由。”（约 8:12, 31, 32）

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> St. Bernard opines that this was the essence of Satan's fall: He did not doubt that God was almighty and could punish him for his pride; rather, he presumed that God was so gentle that he would not punish him, even though he could. Such presumption, Bernard says, is even worse than failing to love God; it repays God's love with hatred. (Cf. "On the Steps of Humility and Pride," in *Bernard of Clairvaux—Selected Works* [New York: Paulist Press, 1987], p. 127.)

<sup>1</sup> 圣伯纳德认为，这就是撒旦堕落的本质：它并不怀疑上帝是全能的，并且能够因他的骄傲而惩罚他；然而，它假定上帝是如此温和，因此他将不会惩罚它，即使他可以



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这样做。伯纳德说，这样的假定，甚至比不爱上帝更糟；它用恨来回报上帝的爱。  
(参见圣伯纳德选集《谦卑和骄傲的阶梯》)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luther's treatise "Against the Heavenly Prophets," *Luther's Works*, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, American Edition, Vol. 40 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955-1986), pp. 73-223 and his sermon for the Second Sunday after Epiphany, Vol. 51, pp. 369-380.

<sup>2</sup> 参见路德的文章《反对天上的先知》

<sup>3</sup> We cannot help but note that all attempts to help God out by submitting his Word to the rule of reason end up in folly, in total "unreason": The false doctrines designed to be reasonable at the expense of God's Word are always themselves unreasonable in the end. And why is that? It is because the devil is incapable of sound reason; he lost the sound use of reason when he fell. Thus, all that he produces and suggests is ultimately irrational and leads to ruin. Consider, for example, the total irrationality of all that the devil says and inspires others to say in Mark 5:1-17.

<sup>3</sup> 我们不能不注意到，所有通过将他的话语屈服于理性规则来帮助上帝的企图，都以愚蠢——完全的“非理性”而告终：那些以上帝的话语为代价而旨在变得合理的错误的教义，最终本身就是非理性的。为什么会这样呢？因为魔鬼本身没有健全的理性，当它堕落时，它丧失了对理性健全的使用。因此，它所提供和暗示的任何东西，最终都是非理性的，并导致了毁灭。比如，想想在马可福音 5:1-17，魔鬼所说的和它激励别人所说的话，都是何等地不合理。

试读本

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## 2. The Narrow Lutheran Middle Between Doubt and Presumption 在怀疑和自以为是之间狭窄的路德宗中路

We begin our journey along the narrow middle road with a stretch of the road that is one of the most important. On either side of this stretch of road we will find ditches that have to be wide enough to accommodate the many perishing in them. Therefore, let us give careful attention to the narrow middle road that is paved with the promises of God. But on each side of that middle is an enormous and perilous ditch. The ditch on one side is *doubt*. *Presumption* is the ditch on the other side.

沿着这条狭窄的中路，我们在其中一段最重要的路上，开始了我们的旅程。在这段路的两边，我们都会发现格外宽广的沟壑，足以让很多灭亡的人深陷其中。因此，让我们格外留意那条由上帝应许铺筑的狭窄中路。而在这条中路的任何一边，都是一个巨大而危险的沟壑。其中一边的沟壑是怀疑，而自以为是是另一边的沟壑。

### Consider the broad sweep and scope of God's promises 思考上帝应许的广度和范围

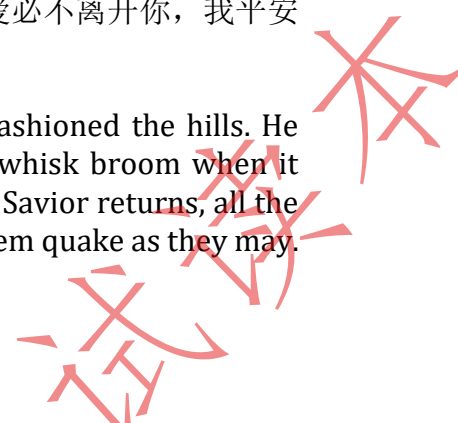
Of the many truths in God's Word that make Christianity unique among all the religions of the world, surely this is one of the most beautiful and delightful for the soul to ponder: Our God is a God of promises! Search and see if you can find a man-made religion where the promises are as sweeping and comforting as the promises made by the one true God in his Word. Just a sampler of his promises will leave us with eyes popping out and mouths hanging open.

上帝话语中的众多真理，使得基督教在世上所有宗教中独具一格，其中一个最美丽最令人愉悦的真理无疑值得我们深思：我们的上帝是一个应许的上帝！你可以找一找，看看你能否在一个人造的宗教中，找到和唯一真实的上帝在他的话语里，同样宽广和给人安慰的应许。仅仅是他应许中的一个小例子，就会让我们瞠目结舌。

He promises, for example, "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed" (Isaiah 54:10).

例如，他应许说，“大山可以挪开，小山可以迁移，但我的慈爱必不离开你，我平安的约也不迁移”（赛 54:10）。

That's a promise from the God who made the mountains and fashioned the hills. He shakes them in earthquakes and sweeps them away as with a whisk broom when it pleases him. One day, at the sound of the last trumpet, when the Savior returns, all the mountains and hills will fall down in a heap and perish. But let them quake as they may.



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Let them fall into the midst of the sea. Let them be weak as water and unstable as melting wax. This truth will remain: God's love for his children will not change or depart. He who is truth itself, he who is Maker and Redeemer, he who is not a mere mortal that he should lie—he has promised it. Nothing in heaven or on earth is more reliable than his promise!

这是一个来自于那创造大山小山的上帝的应许。他随自己的心意在地震中摇动它们，如同用扫把一样扫去它们。有一天，当救主回来，在最后的号角吹响的时候，所有的大山小山都将倒塌毁灭。但任凭它们震动吧。任凭它们落入海中。任凭它们如水一样软弱，如熔融的蜡一样动荡。这个真理依然存在：上帝对他儿女的爱既不改变，也不离开。他是真理本身，他是创造者和救赎者，他不是世人，必不说谎——他已经应许了。天上地下没有任何东西比他的应许更加可靠！

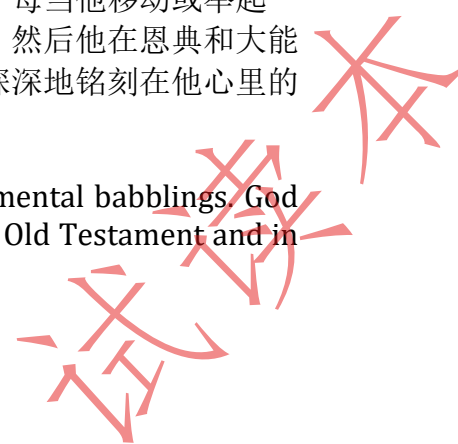
Or consider this promise: "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands" (Isaiah 49:15,16).

或者，想想这个应许：“妇人焉能忘记她吃奶的婴孩，不怜悯她所生的儿子？即或有忘记的，我却不忘记你。看哪，我将你铭刻在我掌上，你的城墙常在我眼前”（赛49:15, 16）。

Love greater and more tender than a mother's love? Love that neither age nor the behavior of the child can dim or destroy? Age may dim the mother's love, and the behavior of the child could conceivably diminish it. But the love of God is greater, yes, incomparably greater. It is a love so fixed and firm that it is as though God carved our names, one by one, on his hand and keeps them there ever before his eyes. To carve a name on one's hand is painful; it is surely a mark of supreme, dare we say it, passionate love. But that's how God describes his love for us. And that carving was indeed painful and expensive. After all, it cost him the blood of his only begotten Son. Whenever he moves or lifts a finger to act, he first sees the name of each one of us in love; then he moves his hand in both grace and power to protect and help those whose names are ever before his eyes, yes, inscribed deep within his heart.

比母爱更伟大更温柔的爱？年龄和孩子的行为都不能模糊和摧毁的爱？年龄可能会模糊母亲的爱，孩子的行为可能会缩减这样的爱。但是上帝的爱更伟大，是的，无比的伟大。它是一个如此确定和坚固的爱，就好像上帝把我们的名字，一个一个的刻在他手掌上，让它们永远留在他眼前。将名字刻在手掌上是痛苦的；它无疑是一个至高的——我们斗胆说——热烈的爱的标志。但这就是上帝怎么描述他对我们的爱的。这样的铭刻无疑是痛苦和昂贵的。毕竟，他付出了他独生子的鲜血。每当他移动或举起一根指头去行动时，他首先看到的是我们每一个蒙爱之人的名字；然后他在恩典和大能中移动他的手，去保护和帮助那些名字一直在他眼前，是的，深深地铭刻在他心里的人。

These promises are not empty words. They are not mere sentimental babblings. God proves his steadfast love with mighty acts in history. In both the Old Testament and in

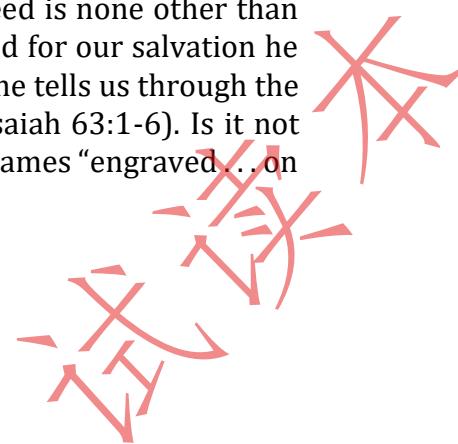


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the New, we find countless demonstrations of his changeless love and of his faithfulness to his promises. He promised to rescue Adam and Eve from eternal death while they were still mired in rebellion. He rescued Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from all their enemies, often before they ever even asked for his help. He took their descendants from the house of bondage in Egypt and carried them as on an eagle's wings in the wilderness for 40 years. And he did that in spite of their repeated failures to listen to him and to take his Word seriously. He brought their descendants into the land of promise by his own mighty arm. He purged them in the Babylonian Captivity and then kept his promise to bring them back home again. He saved them over and over again from their enemies. In the New Testament, he rescued the apostles from prison. He delivered them from the hands of those who wanted to kill them, until it pleased him to take them into glory by their deaths. Throughout the history of the church, for over two thousand years, God has frustrated and brought to nothing the attempts of men in alliance with the hosts of hell to destroy his church.

这些应许不是空话。它们不是多愁善感的客套。上帝在历史中用强有力的行动证明了他坚定不移的爱。无论是在旧约还是在新约中，我们都看到无数关于他不爱的爱和忠实于他应许的示例。当亚当和夏娃陷入反叛的泥潭时，他应许从永恒的死亡中拯救他们。他拯救亚伯拉罕、以撒、雅各脱离他们的一切仇敌——甚至常常在他们祈求他的帮助以先。他将他们的后裔从埃及为奴之地带领出来，在旷野如鹰展翅背负他们 40 年。尽管他们一再不听从他，不认真对待他的话，他还是这样做了。他用他自己大能的臂膀带领他们的后裔进入应许之地。他在巴比伦之囚中洁净他们，又遵守他的应许带领他们再次回归。他从他们的敌人手里一次又一次地拯救他们。在新约中，他拯救使徒们出监狱，救他们脱离那些想要杀害他们之人的手，直到他乐意借着他们的死亡接他们进入荣耀的日子来到。遍及教会历史，2000 多年来，上帝挫败了无数人和地狱之主联合起来摧毁他教会的企图。

All of these acts that demonstrate his faithfulness to his promises are rooted and grounded in his grace in Christ. Christ is the center of all of his promises, the ultimate proof of his love. In Christ, in the manger, on the cross, at the empty tomb, we see the lengths to which God is willing to go to carry out his promises to us. That grace in Christ is the essence of the promise made in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15). Immediately, without even waiting for Adam's and Eve's repentance, God promised a rescue that would come at a cost to him and at no cost to them. The cost would be the wounding of the Seed of the woman, a wounding that cut deep and pierced to the bottom of that Seed's body and soul. Read Psalm 22, and hear his cry. Read Isaiah 53, and see his agony. And then be forever astonished. Read again the Passion History in the gospels, and see these Old Testament writings fulfilled in all their horror: that Seed is none other than God himself, the Son of God in the flesh! All that he did for us and for our salvation he did without asking for the help of any of us. All alone he trod, as he tells us through the prophet Isaiah, the winepress of God's wrath against our sin (Isaiah 63:1-6). Is it not classic biblical understatement for God to tell us that he has our names "engraved... on the palms of [his] hands"?





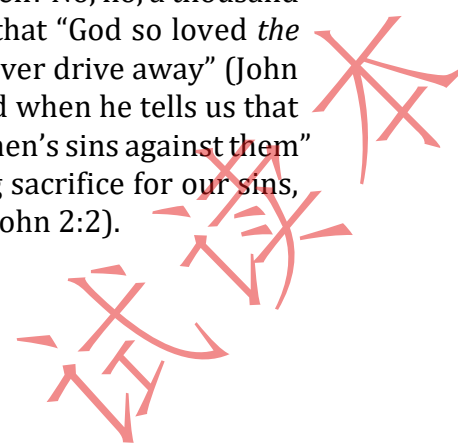
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所有这些展示了上帝忠实于他的应许的行动，都扎根于他在基督里的恩典。基督是他一切应许的中心，是他爱的终极证明。在基督里，在马槽里，在十字架上，在空坟墓里，我们看到上帝为了向我们实施他的应许，愿意走多远。在基督里的恩典，是在伊甸园里所作应许的实质（创 3:15）。甚至没有等待亚当夏娃忏悔，上帝立刻就应许一个拯救会临到他们，他会为这拯救付出一切代价，而不需要他们付上任何代价。这代价就是女人的后裔所遭受的伤害——一个深深刺入这后裔身体和灵魂最深处的伤害。读诗篇 22，听听他的呼求。读以赛亚书 53，看看他的痛苦。你会永远为此惊讶。再次阅读福音书中耶稣受难的历史，你就会看到这些旧约经文以一种何等恐怖的方式得到了应验：那后裔不是别人，正是上帝自己，上帝在肉身里的儿子！他向我们和向我们的救恩做了一切的事，他并没有寻求任何人的帮助。正如他透过先知以赛亚告诉我们的，他独自一人踏上了上帝对我们罪的愤怒的榨酒池（赛 63:1-6）。这难道不是上帝告诉我们他将我们的名字“铭刻在他的掌上”，最经典的圣经陈述吗？

St. Paul never stops being amazed at this ultimate evidence of God's love and of his faithfulness to his promise to redeem totally sinful, undeserving, doomed mankind. He marvels at it as he tells us: "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:7,8). Then he gives us his exultant conclusion on the basis of that perfect demonstration of God's perfect love and complete faithfulness to his promises: "What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:31,32).

对于上帝之爱这最根本的证据，和他忠实于他救赎完全有罪的，不配得的，注定受咒诅的人类的应许，圣保罗从未停止过他的惊讶。他赞叹不已地告诉我们：“为义人死，是少有的；为仁人死，或者有敢做的。惟有基督在我们还作罪人的时候为我们死，上帝的爱就在此向我们显明了”（罗 5:7,8）。然后他给了我们一个欢欣鼓舞的结论，这结论就是，上帝完全的爱和他对他应许完全的忠信，在基督身上完美的显明出来：“既是这样，我们对这些事还要怎么说呢？上帝若帮助我们，谁能抵挡我们呢？上帝既不顾惜自己的儿子，为我们众人舍了他，岂不也把万物和他一同白白地赐给我们吗？”（罗 8:31,32）

But it doesn't stop there. God knows how weak and frail we are, how prone to listening to Dame Reason's voice in our conscience when it condemns us. Conscience attacks and suggests this horrible thought: What if those promises don't apply to me? What if they are only meant for the good and the noble, for the saints among men? No, no, a thousand times no! declares the Word of God. For Jesus himself declares that "God so loved *the world*" (John 3:16). He promises, "Whoever comes to me I will never drive away" (John 6:37). And Paul exults in the fruit of that love for the whole world when he tells us that "God was reconciling *the world* to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (2 Corinthians 5:19). St. John says so too: "[Christ] is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the *whole world*" (1 John 2:2).





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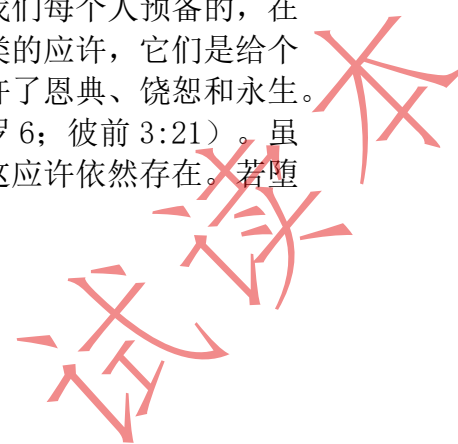
但它还不仅如此。上帝知道我们是多么地软弱，当理性女士谴责我们时，我们是多么容易听从它在我们良心里的声音。良心攻击并暗示了这样一个可怕的想法：如果这些应许不适用于我怎么办？如果它们仅仅是为那些好人和尊贵人，为人群中的圣徒而做的怎么办？不，不，绝对不是！这是上帝话语所宣称的。因为耶稣亲自宣称“上帝爱世人”（约 3:16）。他应许，“到我这里来的，我总不丢弃他”（约 6:37）。当保罗告诉我们，“上帝在基督里使世人与自己和好，不将他们的过犯归到他们身上”（林后 5:19），他为这对世人的爱所结的果子欢欣鼓舞。圣约翰也这样说：“他为我们的罪作了赎罪祭，不单是为我们的罪，也是为普天下人的罪”（约一 2:2）。

There go all grounds for doubt and despair! If God loves the whole world, then he loves me too. If Jesus counts those who come to him as those given to him by his Father, then he will look at me that way too; me too he will never drive away. If God's only begotten Son willingly suffered the torments of hell in order to reconcile the whole world to God, then he has reconciled me too. If his sacrifice pays for the sins of the world, then it pays for my sins too. What could be more sure, more certain, more comforting and consoling to the sinner's guilty soul than that? (Notice that we are using reason here; but it is reason used in obedience to the Word of God, as a maid servant, not as queen over the Word of God.)

所有的怀疑和绝望都有了答案！如果上帝爱全人类，那他同样也爱我。如果耶稣算那些来到他这里的人是他的父赐给他的，那么他也会以同样的方式看待我；我也是他总不会丢弃的人。如果上帝的独生子心甘情愿地忍受地狱的折磨，为了使全人类与上帝和好，那么他也使我与上帝和好了。如果他的牺牲为世人的罪付上了代价，那么它也为了我的罪付上了代价。还有什么比这更可靠，更确信，更能安慰罪人愧疚的灵魂的呢？（注意我们在这里正在使用理性；但是这理性依照上帝的话语被使用，作为一个女佣，而不是在上帝话语之上的女王。）

To put an exclamation point behind the promise that each individual is the object of God's grace and that the benefit of Christ's sacrifice is intended for each of us, God has given us the sacraments. They are seals and assurances meant for the individual, as distinguished from promises addressed to the whole world. In Baptism, God promises grace, pardon, and life eternal to one person at a time. Baptism unites the individual to Christ and all that he has done for our salvation (Romans 6; 1 Peter 3:21). While the individual may decide to turn his back on the promise in Baptism and reject its saving benefit, the promise stands. Should the fallen later hear the promise of the gospel and by its power return, the promise made by God in Baptism will remain firm and sure.

上帝应许每一个人都是上帝恩典的对象，基督牺牲的益处是为我们每个人预备的，在这令人惊叹的应许后面，上帝给了我们圣礼。不同于他给全人类的应许，它们是给个人的印记和保证。在洗礼中，上帝在一个特定的时刻向个人应许了恩典、饶恕和永生。洗礼使个人和基督并他为我们救恩所做的一切事联合起来（罗 6；彼前 3:21）。虽然个人可能会决定离弃洗礼中的应许，并拒绝它拯救的益处，这应许依然存在。若堕



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落的人在之后听到福音的应许并借着它的力量回转，上帝在洗礼中所做的应许依然坚固并确定。

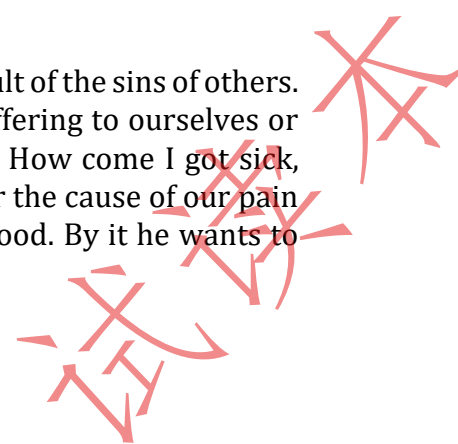
Just as firm and sure is the promise affixed to the Sacrament of the Altar. There we eat and drink the price of our salvation, Christ's true body and true blood. There one repentant sinner after another, one at a time, comes to receive under the forms of bread and wine the Savior himself. In receiving the Savior, one at a time, each receives the promise Jesus made: "This is my body; this is my blood; it is given, it is shed *for you* for the forgiveness of sins." When God sees us, he sees his Son. When God sees us, he sees the sacrifice that his Son made to win and redeem us. What could be more certain or more sure than the grace and love of God for those Jesus has washed in Baptism and fed with himself at the altar?

同样坚固并确定的是附着在圣餐里的应许。我们在那儿吃喝我们救恩的代价——基督的真身体和真宝血。在那儿，一个又一个懊悔的罪人，一个接一个地来，领受在酒和饼的形式下的救主自己。在领受救主的过程中，每一个人都领受了耶稣所做的应许：“这是我的身体，为你们舍得；这是我的血，为你们流的，使罪得赦。”当上帝看我们，他看到了他的儿子。当上帝看我们，他看到了他的儿子为了赢得并拯救我们而做的牺牲。还有什么比在洗礼里耶稣的清洁和在圣餐中耶稣用他自己的喂养我们，更能确定上帝的恩典和爱呢？

And still it doesn't stop. The promises of God's abiding love are not limited to his sacrifice for our sins. They are not meant only for our spiritual life or intended to come into effect only in the hour of death when we depart this world for life eternal in heaven. Those promises of God's love in Christ cover every moment of our lives. They cover, not least, those times in our lives when the consequences of our own sins have brought us to pain and misery. To a rebellious people who thought that their sacrifices to God were what delighted him most and who otherwise did whatever they wanted, God called out: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me" (Psalm 50:15).

但它依然没有停止。上帝始终不渝的爱的应许，并没有被局限于他为我们的罪的牺牲上。它们不仅是为了我们的属灵生命，也不仅是在当我们离开这个世界，得着天堂永生的那一刻，才会生效。这些上帝在基督里爱的应许，充满在我们生命中的每时每刻。它们尤其充满在我们生命中，那些当我们因为自身的罪而带来痛苦和不幸的时刻。悖逆之人认为他们向上帝的献祭是最讨他喜悦的，而在其它方面，他们做他们想做的任何事，上帝呼召他们说：“在患难之日求告我，我必搭救你，你也要荣耀我”（诗50:15）。

Often the trouble is of our own making. At other times it is the result of the sins of others. And at still other times we cannot trace a direct cause of our suffering to ourselves or others. How come the storm blew down my house and not his? How come I got sick, even after I did everything right to take care of myself? Whatever the cause of our pain or suffering, God promises to use the pain or suffering for our good. By it he wants to



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pull us closer to himself! He calls us to the worship of trusting him to help and deliver us even from the sorrows that our sins bring down on our heads. That's how God wants to be worshiped: he wants us to listen to his promises and trust him and live in that trust—not least in the days of sorrow and in the times of sadness.

患难往往是我们自己造成的。在其它时候，它是别人罪的结果。还有一些时候，对我们自身的痛苦，我们不能直接的归因于我们或他人。为什么风暴吹倒了我的房子而不是别人的？为什么即使我把我自己照顾地很好，我依然生病了？无论我们受苦的原因是什么，上帝应许为了我们的益处使用苦难。他想要借此使我们与他更加亲近！他呼召我们去敬拜他，相信他会帮助和释放我们，甚至是在我们的罪将我们彻底击垮的时候。这就是上帝想要我们去敬拜的方式：他想要我们听到他的应许，相信他，并活在这样的信心里——尤其是在悲哀和痛苦的时候。

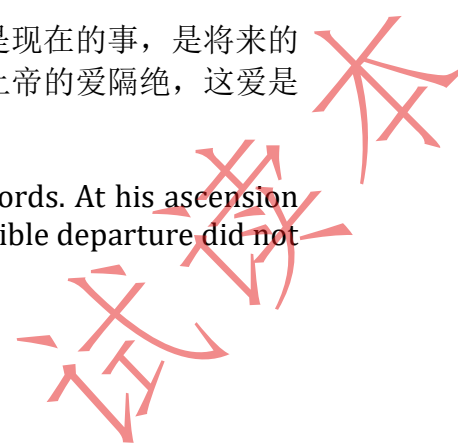
Yes, especially *in the day of trouble*, we find our peace, even our joy, in Christ's presence with us through his promises in the Word and the sacraments. The suffering can, as already noted, be the result of our own sins. It can come from the sins of others. It can be the result of Satan's attacks, as it was in the life of Job. Luther rightly said that Satan is the source of much of our suffering in this life, that he is not happy when we have so much as a crust of bread to enjoy.<sup>1</sup> Whether we know or do not know of a precise reason for *the day of trouble*, the promises of God in Christ are sure and certain. St. Paul registers his apostolic coda to the Savior's promise to be always and in every circumstance with us and for us. He sings of it through all of Romans 5 and 8 and then concludes with this exultant chorus:

是的，尤其是在患难的日子，我们透过基督圣道和圣礼中的应许，在他与我们的同在中找到了我们的平安甚至是喜乐。如前所述，苦难可能是我们自身罪的结果。它可能来自于别人的罪。它可能是撒旦攻击的结果——正如在约伯的生命中那样。路德正确的指出，撒旦是今生我们很多苦难的根源，撒旦并不快乐我们有如此多的面包可以享用。<sup>1</sup> 对患难的日子，无论我们知不知道它精确的原因，上帝在基督里的应许是确定无疑的。圣保罗将他使徒的生命的尾声，寄存在救主的应许上，这应许在一切境况下都一直与我们同在并为我们而在。他在罗马书 5-8 章从始至终都在歌颂它，随后他用这句充满欢欣的乐章总结道：

I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38,39)

我深信，无论是死，是活，是天使，是掌权的，是有权能的，是现在的事，是将来的事，是高处的，是深处的，是别的受造之物，都不能使我们与上帝的爱隔绝，这爱是在我们的主基督耶稣里的。（罗 8:38-39）

Paul's confidence is rooted and grounded in the Savior's own words. At his ascension into heaven, Jesus promised his disciples of every age that his visible departure did not



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mean that he was abandoning them. Quite the contrary! Since he possesses all power in heaven and in earth, he can be present with each one of us—fully and completely present. Jesus does not divide himself into fractions when he promises, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Dame Reason may bring in the laws of physics, or new math or old math. Aristotle and his camp of followers may protest with the rules of logic; they may loudly object and insist that a person cannot be present in more than one place at a time, much less *fully* present in more than one place at a time. They will accomplish nothing with their objections. There is the beautiful promise of Christ, the risen Lord, who has all power in heaven and in earth. He will not lie to us or deceive us. He is where he has promised to be. He is there, the entire Christ, the God-man, with both his divine and human nature. He is with us just because he said so!

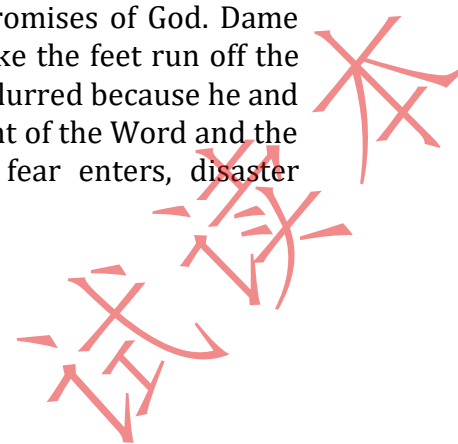
保罗的深信扎根于救主自己的话。当耶稣升天时，他应许他各个时代的门徒，他可见的离开并不意味着他抛弃了他们。恰恰相反！由于他掌管天上地下一切的权柄，他能够与我们每一个人同在——完全的全然的同在。当耶稣应许，“看哪，我天天与你们同在，直到世代的终结”（太 28:20），他并没有把他自己分成几部分。理性女士可能会引进物理定律或新老数学。亚里士多德和他的追随者们可能会用逻辑法则来抗议；他们可能大声反对并坚持一个人不能同时存在于多个地方，更不用说完全地存在于多个地方。他们的反对终将一无所成。这是基督——复活的主——美好的应许，他有天上地下一切的权柄。他必不向我们说谎或欺骗我们。他在他向我们应许的地方。完全的基督，带着他神性和人性的神-人，他就在那里。他与我们同在单单是因为他说过他必如此！

With such sweeping, such all-encompassing promises of God’s love and care for us, for each of us, for us in Christ, for us in life and in death, for us in time and in eternity, what could be the ditches into which we might fall on the right and the left of those promises?

伴随着上帝爱我们并看护我们的，如此内涵丰富包罗万象的应许，对我们每一个人，对在基督里的我们，对在生命和在死亡里的我们，对在当下和在永恒里的我们，什么会是我们有可能掉入的，在这些应许左边或右边的沟壑呢？

## The ditch of doubt 怀疑的沟壑

The ditch of doubt lies on one side of the road. Doubt does not necessarily reject the promises of God in bold unbelief. It does not call God a liar outright. The ditch of doubt is dug for those whose eyes turn to the left to glance for a moment at the evidence that can be seen, evidence that seems to contradict the beautiful promises of God. Dame Reason rushes to take advantage of that sideways glance to make the feet run off the narrow middle road into the ditch. There the sight of Jesus gets blurred because he and his Word are no longer the sole focus of attention. Where the light of the Word and the accompanying vision of Jesus grow dark, there faith fades, fear enters, disaster threatens.



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在路的一边是怀疑的沟壑。怀疑并不一定是在明显的不信中拒绝上帝的应许。它并不直接称上帝为骗子。怀疑是为那些左顾右盼寻找证据之人而挖的，这证据看上去与上帝美好的应许相矛盾。理性女士冲上去，利用这样的左顾右盼，让脚离开狭窄的中路进入这沟壑。在那儿，耶稣的景象变得模糊不清，因为他和他的话语不再是唯一被关注的焦点。当圣道的光芒和与之相伴的耶稣的景象变得昏暗时，信心就褪去了，恐惧就进入了，灾难就来临了。

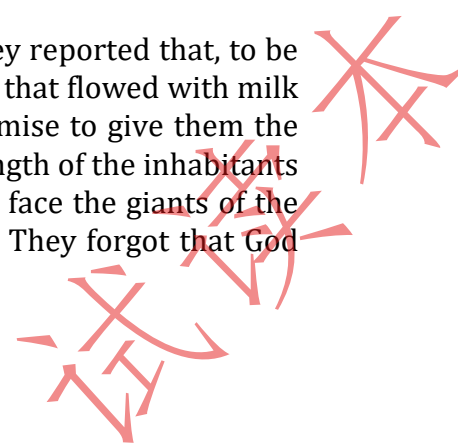
Think for a moment of the passages with which this chapter began. God promises through Isaiah (54:10) that even if the mountains shake and the hills tremble, God's love and his promises remain the same. Or think of the second passage referred to; God promises that our very names are engraved on his hand so that even if a mother can forget her child, he can never forget us or fail to act in love for us. Fallen reason quickly forgets God's powerful promises when it sees the mountains shake. Reason grabs hold of what it sees at the moment and leaves behind God's Word and all the proofs of God's faithfulness that we have experienced in the past. It focuses on the trouble of the moment, not on the face of Jesus in his faithful Word and sacraments.

思考一下本章开头的经文。上帝透过以赛亚书（54:10）应许，纵然大山震动小山摇晃，上帝的爱和他的应许依然如故。或者想想我们引用的第二段经文；上帝应许说，我们的名字被铭刻在他的手掌上，因此即使一个母亲可能忘记她的孩子，他也绝不可能忘记我们，或离开对我们的爱去行动。当堕落的理性看到大山震动时，它很快忘记了上帝大能的应许。理性抓住当下他所看到的，将上帝的话语和我们在过去经历到的一切上帝忠信的证据抛之脑后。它聚焦在当下的麻烦上，而不是在圣道和圣礼中忠实的显明的耶稣身上。

Consider a few examples in the Bible of those who fell into the ditch of doubt. In Numbers 13 Moses, at God's command, sent men from the 12 tribes of Israel to search out the land of Canaan that God was about to give his people. They were to bring back firsthand reports of how rich the land was and how abundant its fruits. Such firsthand reports would encourage the people to enter the Promised Land and receive it as a generous gift from their most gracious God and Savior who had promised it to them.

圣经中有很多人陷入了怀疑的沟壑，想想关于他们的一些例子。民数记 13 章，摩西奉上帝的命令，从以色列 12 支派差派人去探查上帝要给他子民的迦南地。他们要带回这地是多么地肥沃和它的出产是多么地丰盛的第一手报告。这样的第一手报告将鼓励上帝的子民进入应许之地，并作为一个慷慨的礼物接受它，这礼物来自于那已经将其应许给他们的最亲爱的上帝和救主。

But when the spies returned, what did most of them report? They reported that, to be sure, the land was just as God had said, beautiful and rich, a land that flowed with milk and honey. Nevertheless, they were not content with God's promise to give them the land. They took their eyes off the promise and looked at the strength of the inhabitants of Canaan. Their conclusion: "We are too weak and too small to face the giants of the land, to whom we will appear as grasshoppers by comparison." They forgot that God





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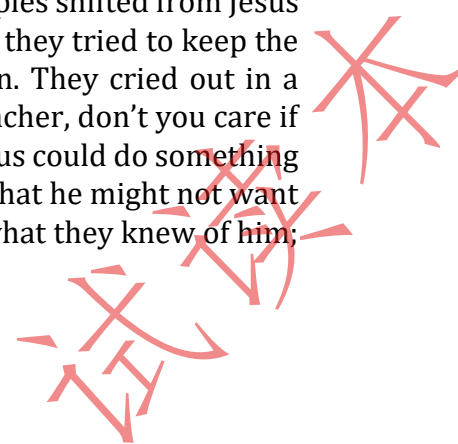
was the one who would give the land to them; forgetting the promise, they imagined that they would have to take it by their own strength, a strength that was weakness in comparison with that of the giants they saw.

但当这些探子回来时，他们大多数人是怎么报告的呢？他们报告说，诚然，那地正如上帝所说的，美好而肥沃——一块流奶与蜜之地。然而，他们并不满足于上帝给他们那地的应许。他们让他们的眼睛离开了应许，注目在迦南居民的力量上。他们总结说：“相比那地的巨人，我们太弱太小了，对他们而言我们看起来像蚱蜢一样。”他们忘记了上帝才是要将那地赐给他们的那一位；他们忘记了上帝的应许，以为要靠他们自己的力量去得到它，而这力量与他们所见的巨人相比是何等地软弱。

Once the eyes stray to the side, once they begin to focus on what appears as distinguished from what God has promised, doubt easily turns into blatant unbelief. Doubt questions the promise of God: Could it really mean exactly what it says? Does it really apply in this situation? Doubt starts out as the first cousin of unbelief but quickly becomes its father if the soul does not fly back to the middle road of the Word of God. Doubt asks Dame Reason for answers instead of relying on the promises of God. That's what happened in Numbers 13 and with disastrous results. Reason insisted: it can't be done; we're ruined; we should have stayed in Egypt! The reports of most of the spies moved the people to rebel against God and to despise his promises. As a result, the people wandered in the wilderness for 40 years and all died there, except for the two spies who had trusted the promise of God.

一旦他们的眼睛偏向一旁，一旦他们开始聚焦于看上去与上帝的应许不同的东西，怀疑很容易变成公然的不信。怀疑质疑上帝的应许：它的意思真的就是它所说的吗？在这种情况下它真的适用吗？怀疑一开始是不信的表亲，但如果灵魂不飞奔回上帝话语的中路的话，它将很快变成不信的父亲。这就是在民数记 13 章所发生的事，它带来了灾难性的结果。理性坚称：这不可能成就；我们会毁灭；我们本应该留在埃及！大多数探子的报告让人们反叛上帝，蔑视他的应许。结果，百姓在旷野飘荡了 40 年，除了两个相信上帝应许的探子外，他们都死在那儿。

Or consider the example of the disciples in Mark 4:35-41. The disciples had seen the evidence in Jesus' miracles that he was the almighty Son of God. His mighty and gracious Word had moved them to abandon their own interests and to follow him. And Jesus had made very great and very specific promises to them: they would become fishers of men (1:17) and would even follow him in preaching and have authority to cast out demons (3:15). But in chapter 4 a storm came up on the Sea of Galilee and threatened to sink their boat. Jesus himself was in that boat. But the eyes of the disciples shifted from Jesus to the evidence of the moment. With all their might and strength they tried to keep the boat afloat. All their own efforts, however, seemed to be in vain. They cried out in a prayer that was a mix and a muddle of both faith and doubt: "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" On the one hand, there still was a confidence that Jesus could do something about the storm. On the other hand, the prayer expressed a fear that he might not want to help them. The eyes were divided. One eye was on Jesus and what they knew of him;



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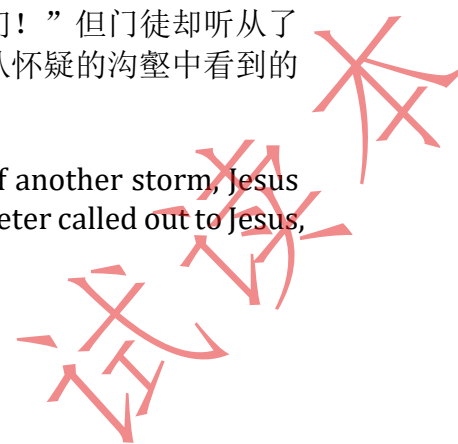
the other was on the wind and the waves. Dame Reason had pushed the disciples into the ditch of doubt; and with that doubt, all peace is gone. Fear and confusion take control.

或者，想想马可福音 4:35-41 中门徒的例子。在耶稣的神迹中，门徒已经看到了耶稣是全能上帝儿子的证据。他大能而亲切的话语已经使他们抛弃自己的利益去跟随他。并且，耶稣给了他们非常伟大非常具体的应许：他们将得人如得鱼一样（1:17），他们甚至能够跟随他传道，并有权柄驱逐污鬼（3:15）。但在第 4 章，加利利海起了风浪，他们的船快要沉了。耶稣自己也在这船上。但是门徒的眼光转离耶稣，注视在那一刻的证据上。他们竭尽所有力气试着让这艘船不沉。然而，他们一切的努力看起来都是徒然的。他们在混杂着信心和怀疑的祷告里呼求：“老师，我们快没命了，你不管吗？”一方面，他们依然相信耶稣对这场风暴可以做些什么。另一方面，这祷告表达了他们对耶稣可能不想帮助他们的恐惧。他们的眼睛分开了。一只眼睛注视在耶稣和他们对他的认识上；另一只眼睛注视在风浪上。理性女士将门徒推向怀疑的沟壑；在这样的怀疑下，一切平安都消失了。恐惧和混乱控场了。

We can easily sympathize with the disciples' fear. Under similar circumstances it is unlikely that we would be calm and unshaken. But we cannot excuse the doubt that produced that fear. For, as already noted, Jesus had made very specific promises to them. He had promised that they would preach and be fishers of men. He had promised that they would cast out demons in his name. None of those things had happened yet, nor could they happen if the disciples would drown in this storm. If Dame Reason had behaved herself and stayed in her role as Maid Reason, she would have reminded the disciples of the promises and then drawn the appropriate, divinely inspired, and rational conclusion: "Since these promises of the almighty Son of God have not yet been kept, clearly we are not going to perish. For if we drown now, the promises will never be kept and Jesus will have lied to us—and that's impossible." Then their prayer would have been the simple cry, "Lord, save us!" But instead the disciples listened to the voice of reason based not on Jesus' promises but on what they could see from the ditch of doubt.

我们很容易就能理解门徒的恐惧。在类似的情况下，我们几乎不可能保持冷静和坦然。但是我们不能放过产生这种恐惧的怀疑。如前所述，耶稣已经给了他们非常具体的应许。他应许他们将要传道，得人如得鱼。他应许他们将奉他的名赶鬼。这些事都还没有发生，如果门徒在这场风暴中淹死，这些事都将不会发生。如果理性女士规规矩矩，谨守它作为理性女佣的角色，它就会提醒门徒这些应许，并得出恰当的，属神的，合理的结论：“由于全能上帝儿子的这些应许尚未发生，显然我们将不会死亡。因为倘若我们现在死了，这些应许将永远不会发生，耶稣将会对我们撒谎——而这是不可能的。”然后，他们的祷告将会是单纯的呼喊，“主啊，搭救我们！”但门徒却听从了理性的声音，这声音并不建基于耶稣的应许，而是建基于他们从怀疑的沟壑中看到的東西。

We see a similar dilemma in Matthew 14:22-32. In the middle of another storm, Jesus came to the disciples, walking on the water. The ever impetuous Peter called out to Jesus,

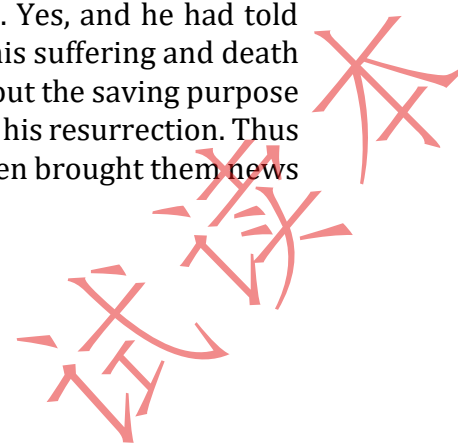


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“Lord, if it’s you, tell me to come to you on the water.” When Jesus bid him come, Peter, trusting in the Word of Jesus and his implied promise, jumped from the boat into the surging waves and began to walk towards Jesus. But then what happened? Initially Peter’s eyes were focused on Jesus and his heart was fixed on the promise implicit in Jesus’ call to Peter, “Come.” But Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and his mind off of the promise. And what happened? Into the waves he fell! He began to flounder and flail in the water and was at the point of drowning. Only at the point of total disaster, when all seemed lost, did he look again to Jesus and cry out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus heard his prayer and rescued him from the surging sea. Then Jesus asked him, “Why did you doubt?” We hear no answer from Peter. But the answer was the same as it always is from that ditch of doubt: the mind was moved from the Word and the eyes of the soul were moved from the image of Jesus to what appeared on the surface. In the crisis of the moment, it was easier to trust the merely apparent and to listen to Dame Reason’s conclusions about the merely apparent than to keep the eyes on Jesus and the mind fixed on his promises.

我们在马太福音 14:22-32 看到了类似的困境。在另一场风暴之中，耶稣行走在水面上，到门徒那里去。鲁莽的彼得对耶稣说，“主啊，如果你，请叫我从水面上走到你那里去。”当耶稣邀请他过来时，彼得，相信耶稣的话和他话里的应许，从船里跳到汹涌的波浪上，开始向耶稣走去。但随后发生了什么呢？起初，彼得的目光注视着耶稣身上，他的心聚焦在耶稣呼召彼得，“来吧，”的应许上。但是彼得将他的目光从耶稣身上挪开了，将他的心从这应许上面拿走了。发生了什么？他掉进了波浪里！他开始在水中扑腾挣扎，就快要淹死了。只有在这完全的灾难之中，当一切看起来都丧失了，他再次看向耶稣，哭喊道，“主啊，救我！”耶稣听到了他的祈求，从汹涌的海中拯救了他。然后耶稣问他，“为什么疑惑呢？”我们没有听到彼得的回答。但这答案总是一样的，它一直都来自于怀疑的沟壑：思想从圣道上挪开，心灵的眼睛从耶稣的形象移到表面上呈现的东西上。在危机的当头，相信仅仅是表面上的东西，听从理性女士关于这仅仅是表面上的东西的结论，比将眼光注视着耶稣上，将思想聚焦在他的应许上，要容易得多。

The most dramatic and most painful of all falls into the ditch of doubt for the disciples was the fall that occurred between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. How terrible for the disciples! In spite of all that they had heard and seen from Jesus, they were all in confusion. Already on Thursday they fled from him in the Garden of Gethsemane. On Friday we hear only of John’s presence at the foot of the cross. Peter was in anguish of soul because of his denial of Jesus the night before in the courtyard of the high priest’s palace. The other disciples were invisible. Jesus died. Jesus was buried. Jesus had told them repeatedly and in detail that he would suffer thus and die. Yes, and he had told them as well that he would rise again. Nevertheless, the sight of his suffering and death removed all recollection from their minds of what he had said about the saving purpose of his death. Gone as well from their memory was the assurance of his resurrection. Thus they were all surprised to hear of his resurrection when the women brought them news of it from the tomb.



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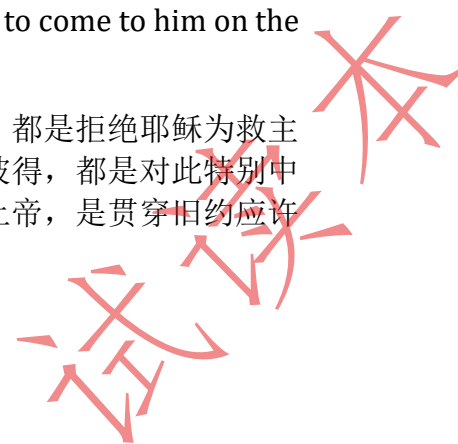
对门徒来说，在一切跌入怀疑的沟渠的经历中，最戏剧性和最痛苦的是发生在受难日和复活节之间的跌倒。这对门徒是多么可怕啊！尽管他们从耶稣那里听到和看到了一切，他们全都被迷惑了。周四在客西马尼园他们逃离了他。在周五，我们只听到约翰出现在十字架现场。彼得陷入极度的痛苦中，因为前一晚在大祭司的院子里他不承认耶稣。其他门徒都不见了。耶稣死了。耶稣被埋葬了。耶稣曾反复地详细地告诉过他们，他将会受苦而死。是的，他同样告诉过他们他将会复活。然而，他受苦和死亡的场景，夺走了他们思想里一切的记忆，他们不再记得耶稣关于他死亡的救恩计划说了什么。他们也不再记得他保证了他的复活。因此，当妇女们从坟墓里带来关于他复活的消息时，他们对此都相当惊讶。

Easter Sunday night they were still behind locked doors, in fear that they too might soon be arrested, tried, and executed as Jesus had been. Jesus was still out of sight, and his Word was a fog of confusion in their minds. What else then could they have but fear and doubt to the point of unbelief? Only the faintest glimmer of faith could still be theirs. Indeed, the best we can say of their faith at that point was that it was confusion. The ditch is deep, its slopes steep; and the pain of the fall into it is great indeed. It was Jesus' Word that rescued them and refocused their minds' eye on him and his faithful promises. He greeted them in the depths of the ditch when he showed himself to them that first Easter night. He brought them to life again with his powerful "Peace be with you!" . . . The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord" (John 20:19,20).

复活节晚上他们依然锁着门，担心他们也会很快如同耶稣一样，被逮捕、处决、杀害。耶稣依然在他们的视线之外，他的话语在他们脑海里是一团迷雾。除了恐惧和怀疑到不信的程度，他们还有什么呢？只有微弱的信仰之光依然属于他们。是的，在那时，我们对他们的信仰能说的最好的话就是，它是混乱不清的。这沟壑很深，其坡相当陡峭；掉进其中的痛苦及其巨大。正是耶稣的道拯救了他们，使他们心里的眼睛重新聚焦于他和他信实的应许上。在第一个复活节的晚上，当耶稣向他们显明他自己时，他在这沟壑的最深处，向他们笑脸相迎。他用他强有力的话，“愿你们平安！”将生命再次带给他们——“门徒一看见主就喜乐了”（约 20:19,20）。

We should not fail to note that not every instance of doubt in some specific promise of God is the same as the damning unbelief that rejects Jesus as Savior. The examples of the disciples in Mark 4 and of Peter in Matthew 14 are cases in point. The disciples and Peter in these instances still knew that Jesus was their God and the Savior promised throughout the Old Testament. The doubt that Jesus variously rebukes as "little faith" and "no faith" was not with reference to the promise of salvation but to other specific promises that Jesus made to the disciples: the promise, as already noted, that they would be fishers of men, and the promise implied when Jesus told Peter to come to him on the waves.

我们不得不注意，不是在每一个怀疑上帝某些特定应许的例子，都是拒绝耶稣为救主的该受咒诅的不信。马可福音 4 章的门徒和马太福音 14 章的彼得，都是对此特别中肯的例子。在这些例子中，门徒和彼得依然知道耶稣是他们的上帝，是贯穿旧约应许



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给他们的救主。耶稣多次斥责他们为“小信”和“不信”的怀疑，并不是关于救主的应许，而是耶稣给门徒的其它具体的应许：这应许就是，如前所述，他们将得人如得鱼，当耶稣告诉彼得行走在水面上到他那里来时，就隐含着这样的应许。

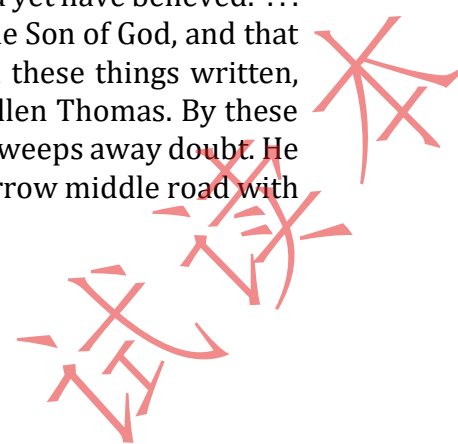
It is certainly likely that we too at times fall into the ditch of doubt without in every instance rejecting Jesus as our God and only Savior. When we, like the disciples, are overwhelmed by the sorrows and troubles of the moment, we may take our eyes off of his promises to us, just as they did. We may not see how his promise to be with us always in grace and love applies to the pain of the moment. We may cry out in the dark night of the soul: “Oh my God and Savior, where are you? Why do you not hear my cries and rescue me?”

有时，我们很可能同样陷入怀疑的沟壑，但在每一种情况下都是拒绝耶稣为我们的上帝和独一的救主。当我们如同使徒一样，被当下的忧伤和烦恼淹没时，我们可能会和他们一样将我们的目光从他给我们的应许上移开。我们可能不能理解，上帝永远在恩典和爱里与我们同在的应许，如何适用于当下的痛苦。我们可能在灵魂的暗夜中呼喊：“哦，我的上帝我的救主，你在哪儿？为什么你没有听见我的哭泣，没有拯救我？”

Such anguish, yes, such doubt may not yet be gross unbelief. But if it is not cured and corrected by Jesus' call to us in his Word, it may ultimately lead to that unbelief which rejects the Savior and his work for our salvation. The slope of the ditch of doubt is steep and perilous indeed. If we continue the slide down that slope, we may finally lose sight of Jesus altogether.

这样的痛苦，是的，这样的怀疑可能还不是恶劣的不信。但是，如果没有上帝在他的话语里呼召我们，治愈和纠正我们，它可能最终导致不信，拒绝救主和他对我们救恩的工作。怀疑之沟的斜坡相当陡峭和危险。如果我们持续沿着这斜坡下滑，我们可能完全看不到耶稣。

That's what happened to Thomas, who rejected both the promise of Jesus to rise again and the words and eyewitness accounts of the disciples and the women on Easter Sunday. So deeply did Thomas fall that he even arrogantly set the conditions that Jesus would have to fulfill before he would believe. How dreadful! How shameful! The wonder is that Jesus still loved the apostle who had fallen from doubt into wicked unbelief. Jesus loved him so much that he came to Thomas and reclaimed him, even fulfilling the terrible conditions that Thomas had set. In the process Jesus pointed the rest of us to the only cure for doubt: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” . . . These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:29,31). In these things written, Jesus seeks and finds us just as surely as he sought and found fallen Thomas. By these things written, he makes us blessed as he conquers unbelief and sweeps away doubt. He then is once more what he should always be—the light on the narrow middle road with his Word as the lamp for our feet.





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这就是发生在多马身上的故事，他拒绝耶稣复活的应许，也拒绝门徒和妇女们在复活节的话和见证。多马陷入的如此之深，他甚至傲慢的为他会信设置了耶稣必须满足的条件。多么可怕！多么羞耻！神奇的是，耶稣依然爱着这个从怀疑坠入邪恶的不信之中的使徒。耶稣是如此的愛他，以至于他来寻找多马，再次呼召他，甚至满足了多马设立的可怕条件。在这个过程中，耶稣向我们这些人指出了怀疑唯一的解药：“‘那没有看见却信的有福了’……但记载这些事是要使你们信耶稣是基督，是上帝的儿子，并且使你们信他，好因着他的名得生命”（约 20:29,31）。借着这些被记载的事，耶稣寻找并找到了我们，正如他寻找并找到堕落的多马一样。借着这些被记载的事，他战胜了不信并扫除了怀疑，从而使我们蒙福。他再一次成为他一直是的样子——这狭窄中路上面的光，用他的话语作我们脚前的灯。

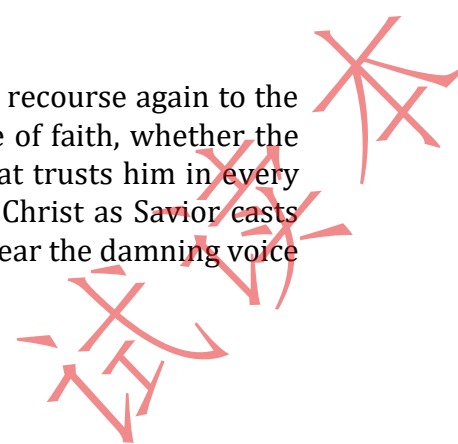
Jesus comes to us still in his quiet Word, in his lowly sacraments. He calls us out of the ditch and rescues us from doubt and from gross unbelief as we hear his Word and ponder his promises. By that Word he brings us again to abandon ourselves to him and what he has said and to leave behind the doubt and the fear that focuses only on what is seen at the moment.<sup>2</sup>

耶稣依然在他安静的圣道，在他卑微的圣礼里，来到我们中间。随着我们听到他的话语，思考他的应许，他呼召我们离开这沟壑，从怀疑和恶劣的不信中拯救我们。借着他的话语，他带领我们再次向他和他的圣道舍己，将那因单单聚焦于当下所见而来的怀疑和恐惧抛之脑后。<sup>2</sup>

Thus the stumbling into the ditch of doubt with respect to the specific promises of God to be our God of grace and help in every time of need is not necessarily or immediately the same thing as damning unbelief; it is nevertheless dangerous. Jesus points out the danger in his great parable of the sower in Mark 4:16-19. There he speaks of those who hear his Word and receive it with joy. But then when trouble comes, they take their eyes off of Jesus and his Word. They focus only on the trouble, not on its solution in Christ and his promise to never leave or forsake them; and so, they fall into the ditch to their ruin. Doubt left to itself ends up as choking weeds that can kill faith altogether.

因此，在每一个需要的时刻，当我们怀疑上帝是我们恩惠和帮助的上帝，并跌入其沟壑，这并不一定或立刻就等同于该受咒诅的不信；虽然如此，它依然是危险的。耶稣在马可福音 4:16-19 他伟大的撒种的比喻中，指出了这样的危险。在那儿他提到一些听到他的道又欢喜领受的人。当患难来临时，他们将目光从耶稣和他的道上移开了。他们只关注在患难上，而不是它在基督里的答案和他从不离开或抛弃他们的应许上；因此，他们掉入了这沟壑，自取灭亡。遗留下的怀疑最终如同疯长的野草一样将信心完全扼杀。

The only cure, the only poison for those weeds of doubt, is swift recourse again to the promises of God in Word and sacraments. It is the very essence of faith, whether the saving faith that embraces Christ alone as Savior or the faith that trusts him in every time of trial: Faith focuses on Christ and his promises. Faith in Christ as Savior casts aside the doubt and despair created when I look at my sins and hear the damning voice



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of both the law and conscience; it focuses on Christ's cross and his promise of forgiveness. Faith in days of trouble casts aside what is seen and fixes its attention on the promises of Christ to be with us in every trouble and to rule all things ultimately for our good here and hereafter. Do we see that always or at once? No; but so great is the power of Christ in his promises that he overcomes what is seen with what is unseen—the trouble of the moment with his sure and certain promise for the present and the future. The narrow middle road remains a focus on Jesus and a focus on his promises that refuses what seems to be true at the moment in favor of what always is true in Christ and in his Word.

对这些怀疑的野草唯一的疗法和唯一的解药，是迅速地求助于上帝在圣道和圣礼中的应许。这是信心的本质，无论是拥抱耶稣为唯一救主的救恩的信心，还是在每一个试炼中相信他的信心：信心聚焦于基督和他的应许上。对基督是救主的信心抛弃了怀疑和绝望——这怀疑和绝望产生于当我看着我的罪，并听到律法和良心咒诅的声音；这信心聚焦于基督的十字架和他赦罪的应许上。在患难的日子，信心抛弃了他所看到的，唯独专注于上帝的应许：他在一切患难中与我们同在，并为我们今生和永恒的益处掌管一切的事。我们总是能看到这个或是立刻就能看到这个吗？没有；但是基督在他应许里的能力是如此伟大，他用所不见的胜过了所见的——用他对当下和未来确定无疑的应许胜过了眼前的患难。这狭窄的中路持续聚焦于耶稣和他的应许上，这应许拒绝当下所见的“真相”，却喜悦在基督和他话语里永恒的真相。

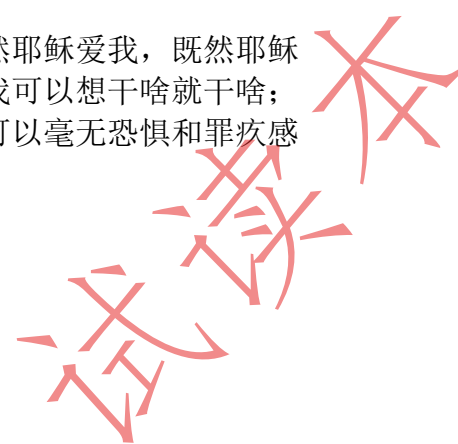
## The ditch of presumption 自以为是的沟壑

At least as common and equally disastrous is the ditch on the other side of the narrow middle road of simple trust in the Word of God. It is the ditch into which Satan tried to lure Jesus when he tempted Jesus to jump down from the temple peak (Matthew 4:5-7). It is a trust that takes God's promises of help and rescue, his promises of grace and love and mercy, as a license to sin.

在简单相信上帝话语的狭窄中路的另一边，存在一条同样普遍也同样危险的沟壑。这是当撒旦引诱耶稣从圣殿顶跳下去时（太 4:5-7），它试着诱惑耶稣陷入的沟壑。这是一种将上帝帮助和拯救的应许，他恩惠慈爱和怜悯的应许，当做犯罪许可证的信心。

The one who has fallen into that ditch listens to the luring voice of Dame Reason and concludes: "Since God loves me, since Jesus died to pay for all my sins, since God promises never to cast me out, I can do exactly as I please; I can sin boldly and to my sinful heart's content; I have been saved so that I can sin without fear or guilt!"

跌入这个沟壑的人听到理性女士引诱的声音，下结论说：“既然耶稣爱我，既然耶稣的死为我所有的罪付上了代价，既然上帝应许永不会抛弃我，我可以想干啥就干啥；我可以大胆地犯罪，满足于我的罪性；我已经得救了，因此我可以毫无恐惧和罪疚感的犯罪。”



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David fell into that ditch when he cast God's Word aside, when he took all of God's love and grace for granted (2 Samuel 11). He apparently was seduced into thinking that with all the evidences of God's goodness he could do as he pleased. And so, with reckless abandon, he committed adultery, then murder to cover up the adultery. For almost a year after that he hid from God. The results were disastrous not only for Uriah, whom David had murdered at the hand of others, but also for David—both in the short and in the long term (2 Samuel 12:9-14).

当大卫把上帝的话语抛弃一旁，当他将上帝的爱和恩典视为理所当然，大卫就掉进了这个沟壑（撒下 11）。他显然被引诱去这样想：带着上帝一切仁慈的证据，他可以随心所欲地去做。于是，他毫无顾忌地通奸，又用谋杀去掩盖通奸。在这之后的近一年时间他都在躲避上帝。这样的结果不仅对乌利亚——大卫借别人的手谋杀了他——是灾难性的，对大卫同样如此——无论是从短期还是从长远来看（撒下 12:9-14）。

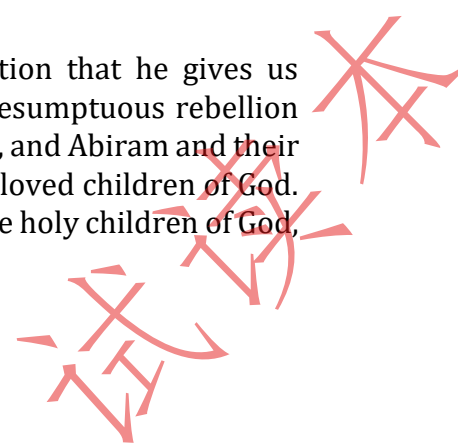
When the grace of God in the words of his pastor, Nathan, finally brought David to repentance and restored faith, the consequences of his sin nevertheless continued. David's family was tormented with grief at the death of the child conceived in adultery. Strife and bloodshed did not depart from David's house for the rest of his life. No one can cast aside God's Word and sin boldly without consequences. Not the least of those consequences for David was the abiding sense of guilt that he felt, a guilt whose torment David expressed so eloquently in the Psalms (for example, Psalms 6,51,130).

当上帝借着牧师拿单话里的恩典，最终带领大卫痛悔并使他恢复信心时，他罪的后果依然在继续。借着大卫在通奸中怀胎的孩子的死亡，大卫的家庭痛苦万分。在大卫余下的生命里，冲突和流血从未离开他的家。没有人能够抛弃上帝的话并大胆犯罪而没有后果。对大卫来说，这些后果中最重要的是他持续经历的罪恶感，这种折磨大卫的罪恶感在诗篇中表现得如此淋漓尽致（比如，诗篇 6、51、130）。

God uses the grief that follows a fall into the quicksand ditch of presumption to warn us not to take his Word lightly in the future. He uses the grief as well to remind us of the enormity of his grace when contrasted to the greatness of our guilt. Nevertheless, the pain of those consequences—whether outward pain and suffering or the gnawing of conscience that must battle against despair or both—can be severe indeed.

上帝使用坠入这自以为是的沟壑之后的悲痛，来警告我们在未来的日子不要对他的话语掉以轻心。他也使用这悲痛提醒我们，相比我们的罪恶之大，他的恩典是多么地巨大。虽然如此，这些后果的痛苦——无论是外在的痛苦和折磨，还是与绝望做着斗争的良心的煎熬，还是两者都有一一确实相当剧烈。

So earnestly does God warn us against the ditch of presumption that he gives us examples in his Word of those whom he destroyed for their presumptuous rebellion against his clear Word. Read about the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their comrades in Numbers 16. They knew the truth that they were beloved children of God. But then they let Dame Reason convince them that since they were holy children of God,



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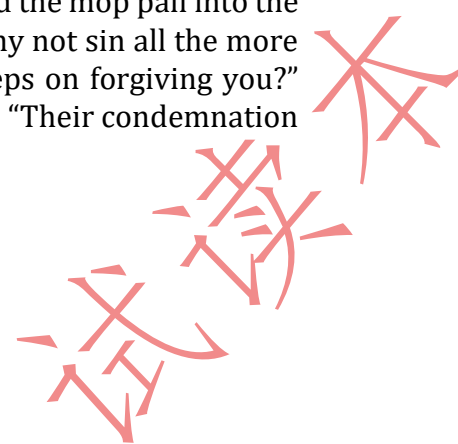
just as much as Moses was a holy child of God, they could set aside God's choice of Moses as his representative. They picked one aspect of God's Word, his choice of the people of Israel to be his own children, and then used that truth to reject another truth, the truth that God had expressly called Moses to be his spokesman and the leader of the people. For their presumption, the ditch into which they had fallen opened up wide and swallowed them: "They went down alive into the grave, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community" (16:33).

上帝如此恳切地警告我们抵御自以为是的沟壑，以至于他在他的话语里给我们一些例子，来说明那些因放肆地反叛他清晰的话语而遭他毁灭的人。阅读民数记 16 章可拉、大坍、亚比兰和他们同党的反叛。他们知道他们是上帝亲爱孩子的真理。但是他们容许理性女士说服他们，由于他们是上帝圣洁的孩子，正如摩西是上帝圣洁的孩子一样，他们可以拒绝上帝拣选摩西为他的代表。他们挑选出上帝话语的一方面——他拣选以色列人成为他自己的儿女，然后用这个真理来拒绝另一个真理，这真理就是，上帝特别呼召摩西作他的代言人和他子民的领袖。由于他们的自以为是，他们掉进的沟壑开了裂口并吞没了他们：“他们和一切属他们的，都活活坠落阴间；地在他们上面又合拢起来，他们就从会众中灭亡了”（民 16:33）。

In the New Testament we have a similar example in Acts 5. Lest the newly converted imagine that all of God's grace and love meant that God did not take his will expressed in the law seriously, Ananias and Sapphira were struck down when they lied to the Lord in public. Perhaps their crime might not seem so serious to us. That would be a shame indeed! God takes all of his Word seriously, whether we do or not.

在新约使徒行传 5 章，我们有一个类似的例子。当亚拿尼亚和撒非喇当众欺骗主时，他们就被击杀了，以免新归信者幻想上帝完全的恩典和爱，意味着上帝不会严肃地对待他在律法中展现的旨意。也许他们的罪行在我们看来并没有那么严重。这样的想法确实是一种羞耻！无论我们怎样，上帝都严肃地对待他一切的话。

To be sure, the ditch that takes God's love and grace for granted can appear very appealing. The devil knows that. He is quick to urge Dame Reason to seduce us into presuming on God's grace. Powerful and sweet to our sinful flesh is the siren song that since we have been saved, we can sin all we want. For that very reason, the Bible is filled with warnings against the ditch of such godless presumption. St. Paul met the alluring temptation of Dame Reason head on. Even when he teaches most beautifully about the promises of God to save us by grace alone through faith, he attacks the temptation to presumption. He knew that Dame Reason would rush from behind the mop pail into the throne room and argue: "If our sins magnify God's grace, then why not sin all the more so that God's grace may be magnified all the more when he keeps on forgiving you?" St. Paul answered with just a few words, but words that say it all: "Their condemnation is deserved" (Romans 3:8).



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诚然，将上帝的爱和恩典视为理所当然的沟壑显得非常吸引人。魔鬼知道这一点。他很快督促理性女士，引诱我们在上帝的恩典里自以为是。因为我们已经得救了，我们能够随心所欲地犯罪，这靡靡之音对我们的罪性来说是强大而甜蜜的。正因为如此，圣经充满了警告，提醒我们小心这亵渎神的自以为是的沟壑。圣保罗直面理性女士这迷人的引诱。即使当他以最优美的方式教导，上帝唯独借着恩典透过信心来拯救我们的应许时，他也在攻击自以为是的引诱。他知道理性女士会从抹布桶后面冲进王宫正殿，争辩说：“如果我们的罪显明了上帝的恩典，那么为什么不犯更多的罪，以至于当上帝持续地赦免你时，让上帝的恩典可以显明的更多呢？”圣保罗只用了聊聊数语，却道出了一切：“这等人被定罪是应该的”（罗 3:8）。

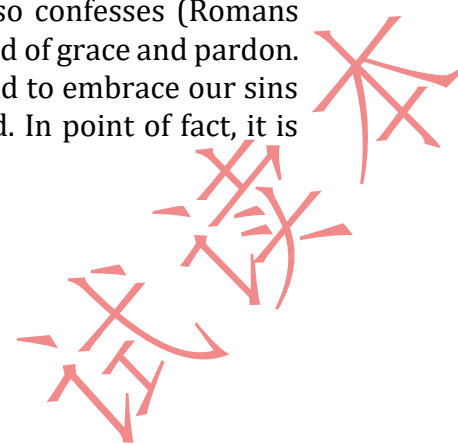
If we want to employ reason properly, we could use an analogy that is apt. Let reason argue this way: What if a bride said to her husband, “Dear, I will always love you and would forgive anything!”? What if the husband on hearing those words then concluded, “Now I have a license to be unfaithful, to abuse my wife in every way, and when not abusing her, to ignore her”? What would even reason say of such a husband? Would not even reason declare, “He knows nothing of love; he has forfeited the love that his spouse pledged to him!”

如果我们想要恰当地使用理性，我们可以举一个贴切的例子。让理性来争辩这个：如果一个新娘对她的丈夫说，“亲爱的，我将一直爱你，我会饶恕一切事！”如果这个丈夫听到这些话，然后总结说，“现在，我得到了一个不忠的许可，在各方面去虐待我的妻子，如果不是虐待她，就是去忽略她。”即使是理性，它会怎么说这个丈夫呢？难道理性不会断言道，“他一点都不知道爱；他抛弃了他配偶承诺给他的爱！”

That’s the appropriate answer of reason the handmaid to the rebellious voice of Dame Reason who wants to lure us into the ditch and overthrow the Word of God. Those who despise the will of God revealed in his law do not love God. In fact, they throw away the love, grace, and, yes, the forgiveness of God’s saving gospel when they are determined to live in their sins.

这是理性女佣，对于理性女士悖逆的声音——其想要引诱我们进入沟壑并颠覆上帝的话语，恰当的回答。那些轻视上帝显明在他律法里的旨意的人，并不爱上帝。事实上，当他们决定活在他们的罪中时，他们抛弃了爱、恩典，是的，以及赦免——上帝救恩的福音。

To be sure, our works and our obedience, no matter how good, cannot save us or contribute to our salvation in the least. And, certainly, we never get to the point in this life where we have reason to boast of perfection, as St. Paul also confesses (Romans 7:14-25). Always this side of the grave we will be in desperate need of grace and pardon. But to give up the struggle against sin and temptation and instead to embrace our sins and use God’s love as an excuse to do so, that is perilous indeed. In point of fact, it is damning unbelief.





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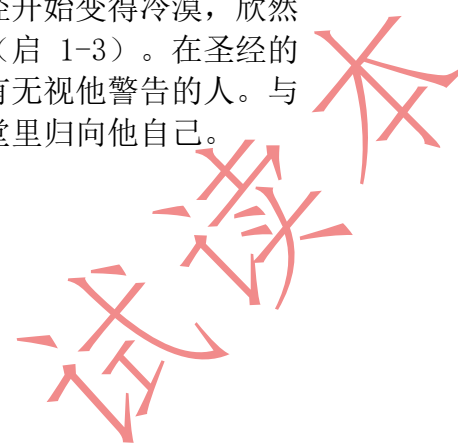
当然，我们的行为和顺服，无论多么好，都不能拯救我们，或者对我们的救恩有一丝一毫的帮助。并且，诚然，我们在今生将永远不可能到达一个地步，在那儿我们有理由以我们的完美夸口，保罗同样承认这一点（罗 7:14-25）。在死亡的这一边，我们将一直迫切地需要恩典和饶恕。但是，放弃与罪和试探争战，反而拥抱我们的罪，以上帝的爱作为一个如此做的理由，这实在是危险的。事实上，这是该死的不信。

The Bible warns us against such presumption powerfully and often. St. Paul in Ephesians 5 exhorts us to be imitators of God as dear children; then he warns those who reject such imitation that the wrath of God will surely fall on them. In Galatians 5 he warns that those who practice disobedience will not inherit the kingdom of God (5:19-21). He follows that warning up with this simple summation: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction” (6:7,8).

圣经常常强烈地警告我们反对这样的自以为是。圣保罗在以弗所书 5 章劝诫我们，作为蒙爱的儿女，我们该效法上帝；然后他警告说，那些拒绝这样效法的人，上帝的愤怒必临到他们。在加拉太书 5 章他警告说，那些悖逆的人将不能承受上帝的国（加 5:19-21）。他在这警告后面加上了一个简单的总结：“不要自欺；上帝是轻慢不得的，因为人种的是什么，收的也是什么。顺着肉体撒种的，必从肉体收败坏”（加 6:7,8）。

As the Bible from beginning to end is beautiful and comforting in its promises, so too is it powerful in its pleadings that we avoid the ditch that presumes on that love and grace and uses them as an excuse for living in sins. Right up to and through the last book of the Bible, the narrow middle road is laid out for us with warnings against presumption. The risen and ascended Jesus portrays himself as walking in the midst of his people and holding their pastors close to his heart. But at the same time he warns that those who have started to grow cold and to embrace their weaknesses and temptations will soon perish if they do not repent (Revelation 1-3). In the very last chapter of the Bible, Jesus warns against tampering with his Word and threatens with destruction all who ignore his warning. He does this at the same time that he is promising to come and rescue his own and bring them to himself in heaven.

正如圣经从头到尾，它的应许都是美好和充满安慰的，它对我们的劝诫也是有力的，使我们避开自以为是的沟壑，即，建立于爱和恩典上的自义为是，并使用它们作为活在罪中的借口。直到圣经的最后一卷书，这狭窄的中路，带着对自以为是的警告，一直在为我们铺开。复活和升天后的基督描述他自己说，他正行走在他的子民中间，并将他们的牧师牢牢地放在他的心里。与此同时，他警告那些已经开始变得冷漠，欣然拥抱他们的软弱和试探的人，如果他们不悔改，将会很快灭亡（启 1-3）。在圣经的最后一章，耶稣对篡改他的话语提出警告，并以毁灭来恐吓所有无视他警告的人。与此同时，他应许他会再来，拯救属他的子民，并带领他们在天堂里归向他自己。



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## The narrow Lutheran middle 狭窄的路德宗中路

It should be clear and it should be obvious where the narrow middle road is between the ditch of doubt on the one hand and the ditch of presumption on the other. The narrow middle road is a steadfast clinging to *all* of God's Word.

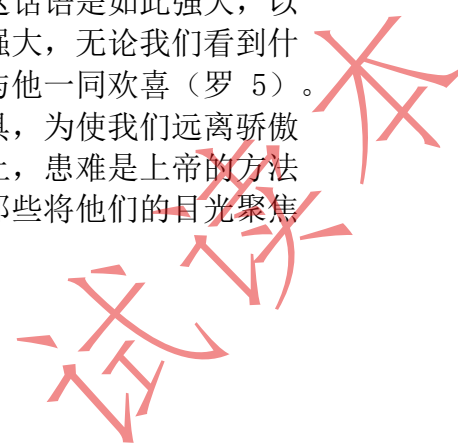
狭窄的中路，存在于怀疑的沟壑和另一边自以为是的沟壑之间，这一点应该是清晰而明显的。这狭窄的中路是坚定持守一切上帝的话。

Burdens may weigh us down. Uncertainty about health and wealth may press in on every side. Pain may torment us day and night. Just ask Job. Friends may betray. Just ask Jesus when Judas came to Gethsemane. Those we have served may spurn us. Just ask St. Paul. Ultimately, a little germ, a tiny virus, a little clog in an artery will bring most of us into the hands of the mortician. But God's promise stands firm! He has not forgotten us or forsaken us. In it all, in spite of it all, through it all, the cross of Christ and his resurrection guarantee his love and grace and mercy that cover us for time and eternity.

重担可能会压垮我们。对健康和财富的不确定可能从四面八方袭来。痛苦可能日以继夜地折磨着我们。正如约伯那样。朋友可能会背叛。正如当犹大来到客西马尼时的耶稣那样。那些被我们服事的人可能会鄙弃我们。正如圣保罗那样。最后，一个小小的细菌，一个微小的病毒，一丁点的动脉阻塞，会将我们大多数人带到殡仪馆。但上帝的应许坚定不移！他没有忘记我们，也没有抛弃我们。在这一切里面，虽然有这一切，透过这一切，基督的十字架和他的复活，担保了他的爱、恩典和怜悯，在今生和来世都覆盖着我们。

Will we always see and understand how that can be the case? No! But the promises of his Word and sacraments are so powerful that those promises can overcome all the outward evidence of the moment. So powerful is that Word that it can triumph over Dame Reason's pull into the ditch of doubt. So powerful is it that in spite of what we see, we can rejoice with St. Paul when he encourages us to rejoice with him even in suffering (Romans 5). Suffering is the devil's tool to drive us to doubt and then to despair. But it is God's tool for separating us from pride or from a love of the world that blinds us to his love in Christ. Indeed, suffering is one of God's ways of keeping us on the narrow middle road that leads to life eternal. However, only those who keep their eyes fixed on Jesus and his promises see and learn and appreciate that fact.

情况怎么就是如此呢？我们将一直看到并理解这一点吗？不！但是他的话语和圣礼是如此强大，以至于那些应许能战胜此时此刻一切外在的证据。这话语是如此强大，以至于它能胜过理性女士将我们拉入怀疑沟壑的企图。它是如此强大，无论我们看到什么，我们都能与圣保罗一同欢喜：他鼓励我们甚至在患难中都与他一同欢喜（罗 5）。患难是魔鬼驱使我们怀疑而后绝望的工具。但它也是上帝的工具，为使我们远离骄傲或对这世界的爱——这爱使我们看不到他在基督里的爱。事实上，患难是上帝的方法之一，保守我们在这条通往永生的狭窄的中路上。然而，唯有那些将他们的目光聚焦在耶稣和他应许上的人，能看到、理解并欣赏这个事实。



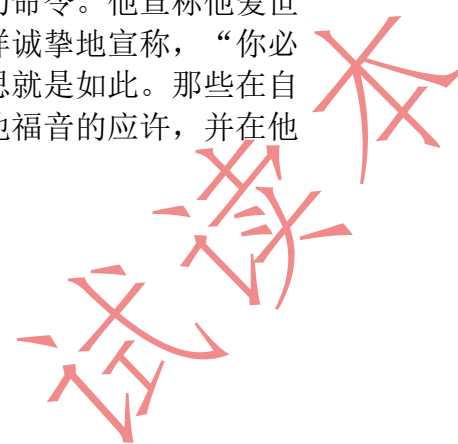
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The Bible is not without wonderful examples of those who triumphed on the narrow middle road in the face of the most severe testing. Think of those long years of David's struggle and exile before he became king. God had promised that David would be king. But God appeared to be in no hurry to keep the promise. David fled from Saul and even lived in exile among the enemies of his people for a time. His friends urged him to look to the ditch of presumption on the side of the narrow middle road of trust in God's promises. They urged David to consider the apparent opportunities of the moment and to take matters into his own hands. "Kill Saul while you have the chance," they pleaded; that way God's promises would quickly come to pass (1 Samuel 24, 26). But David refused. He trusted that God himself would keep his promise when it pleased God to do so. God kept his promise, kept it in his own good time and, therefore, in the best possible way. In the New Testament, the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews piles example upon example when he lists the great heroes of faith (Hebrews 11,12). All of them kept their eyes fixed on the promise, no matter how hard the road or how long they had to travel it. The holy writer bids us to follow their blessed example and so share in their blessed outcome—the victory that is the gift of Christ the Savior.

圣经不是没有那些面对最严峻的考验，在狭窄的中路上得胜的好榜样。想想大卫在成为国王前，他长年累月的斗争和流亡。上帝已经应许了大卫将做王。但是上帝似乎并不急着信守这个应许。大卫逃离扫罗，甚至有一段时间寄居在上帝子民的敌人中间。他的朋友催促他看看自以为是的沟壑，这沟壑在相信上帝应许的狭窄中路的一侧。他们催促大卫考虑下眼前这明显的机会，自己动手解决问题。他们恳求道，“一有机会就杀了扫罗”，这样上帝的应许就会很快实现（撒下 24,26）。但大卫拒绝了。他相信在上帝愿意的时候，上帝会亲自信守他的应许。上帝在他自己最好的时候信守了他的应许，并因此，也是用最好的方式信守了它。在新约中，当希伯来书作者列举信心伟人时，他陈述了一个接一个的例子（来 11,12）。他们都将他们的目光聚焦在这应许上，不管这条路有多么艰难，也不管他们必须得走多久。神圣的作者吩咐我们跟随他们蒙福的榜样，并因此分享他们蒙福的结果——救主基督赐下的胜利。

As God takes all of his gospel promises seriously, so he takes all of his commands seriously. He declares that he loves the world enough to become man and die for it—to die, therefore, also for you. He declares with equal earnestness in the law, "Thou shalt... Thou shalt not!" These are not just pious preferences on God's part. He means them. Those who cast aside his commands from the ditch of presumption will ultimately cast aside his gospel promises as well and perish in their unbelief. For as noted previously, God will not be mocked.

正如上帝严肃地对待他一切福音的应许，他也严肃地对待他一切命令。他宣称他爱世人，爱到成为人并为世人死，因此，也为你死。他在律法中同样诚挚地宣称，“你必须……你不能！”这不仅仅是上帝对敬虔的一种偏好。他的意思就是如此。那些在自以为是的沟壑里，将他的命令弃之不理的人，最终将同样抛弃他福音的应许，并在他们的不信中灭亡。因为如前所述，上帝是轻慢不得的。



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Yes, the ditches are deep and perilous indeed. On the one side of the road, Dame Reason would like to grab hold of God's promises of grace and let go of God's commands. On the other side of the narrow middle, she would have us doubt that all of God's promises are true and that he remains forever faithful to them and to us in Christ. God does not ask or expect us to satisfy Dame Reason. He bids us hear his Word and keep it. In his Word he gives the faith that trusts the promises and the love that strives after obedience to his commands. He gives faith that despairs of earning salvation, and he inspires in us a love that longs to live up to the high calling of a child of God. He gives grace heaped upon grace so that even in disaster and in the hour of death itself, we desire to see Jesus only and thus give way to neither fear nor doubt. That's the narrow Lutheran middle between the ditches of doubt on the one hand and presumption on the other with respect to the promises of God.

是的，这些沟壑确实既深又危险。在中路的一侧，理性女士想要抓住上帝恩典的应许却放开上帝的命令。在这狭窄中路的另一侧，她让我们怀疑，不是所有上帝的应许都是真实的，他在基督里对它们和我们也将不会一直持守信实。上帝并没有要求或期待我们去满足理性女士。他吩咐我们听他的话并持守它。在他的话语里，他赐下信心去相信这应许，又赐下爱心竭力追求顺服他的命令。他赐下对赚得救恩绝望的信心，又在我们里面激发爱心，渴望去实践上帝子民崇高的呼召。他赐下一堆又一堆的恩典，以至于甚至在灾难中和在死亡来临的那一刻，我们也只想看到耶稣并因此不向恐惧和怀疑屈服。这就是两侧沟壑——一侧是怀疑，另一侧是对于上帝应许的自以为是——中间狭窄的路德宗中路。

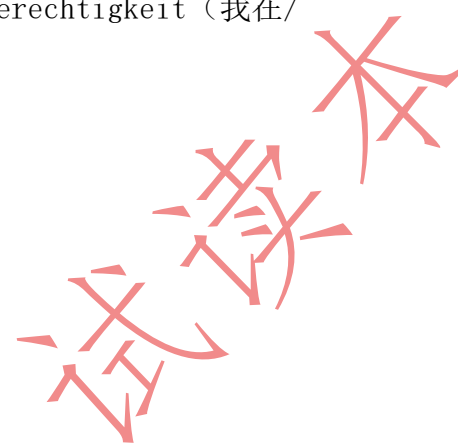
## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luther's Large Catechism, Fourth Petition, par. 81.

<sup>1</sup> 参见《路德大问答》，第四祷告

<sup>2</sup> German students will remember that beautiful construction used so often by our forefathers: *sich verlassen auf*. The simple dictionary translation is "to rely on," but the more literal translation is much more expressive: "to abandon oneself on." Thus: *Ich verlasse mich auf Gottes Gnade, auf Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit* ("I abandon myself on/to God's grace, on Christ's blood and righteousness").

<sup>2</sup> 德国学生会记得我们先人常常使用的优美的结构：*sich verlassen auf*。字典上简单的意思是“倚靠”，但是按字面翻译要有表现力地多：“放弃自己”。因此：*Ich verlasse mich auf Gottes Gnade, auf Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit*（我在/向上帝的恩典，在基督的宝血和公义上放弃自己）。



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### 3. The Narrow Lutheran Middle Between Carnal Security and Despair 在肉体安全感和绝望之间狭窄的路德宗中路

If we walk a few steps further down the narrow middle road, we will notice again ditches on either side of the middle. These ditches are very closely connected to those discussed in the last chapter. They are perilous ditches indeed! The ditches are those of carnal security on the one side and despair on the other. And again, many fall into one or the other of these ditches. Still others spend their lives running from one ditch into the other, with only so much time on the middle road as it takes to get to the opposite ditch.

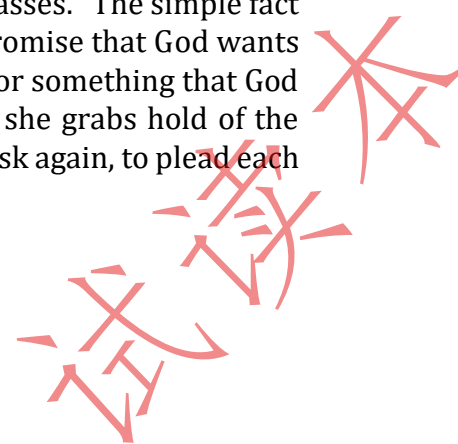
如果我们沿着狭窄的中路再走几步，我们将再次注意到在这中路两侧的沟壑。这些沟壑与上一章讨论的沟壑有密切的联系。他们确实是危险的沟壑！在一边的沟壑是肉体的安全感，另一边是绝望。再次地，许多人掉进了这些沟壑的一个或另外一个。还有一些人花费了他们的一辈子从一条沟壑跑到另一条沟壑，在中路上的时间和他们前往另一侧沟壑的时间几乎一样多。

#### God's promise of forgiveness 上帝对赦免的应许

The narrow middle road between despair and carnal security focuses on what God has to say in his Word about forgiveness and on what Christ has done to win forgiveness for us. The only change in the pavement on which we travel in this chapter is that the road is still more narrow than it was in the last chapter. There we were concerned with all the promises of God, promises that cover time and eternity, promises of grace and redemption for our souls as well as promises for help and rescue in every time of need. The pathway we travel in this chapter is concerned chiefly with just one promise, the promise of forgiveness.

在绝望和肉体的安全感之间狭窄的中路，聚焦于上帝在他的话语里关于赦免说了什么，聚焦于基督做了什么为我们赢得赦免。在这一章我们踏上的小径，相比上一章唯一的变化是，这路变得更加狭窄。在那儿，我们关注的是上帝一切的应许，包括今生和永恒的应许，对我们灵魂恩慈和拯救的应许，以及在每一个需要的时刻帮助和解救我们的应许。我们在这一章踏上的小径，主要涉及一个应许——赦免的应许。

Each day we show our trust in the promise of forgiveness when we pray the Lord's Prayer. It is Jesus himself who bids us pray, "Forgive us our trespasses." The simple fact that Jesus has taught us that petition carries with it an implied promise that God wants to forgive and will forgive. For why would Jesus invite us to ask for something that God did not want to give? Reason serves as a good handmaid when she grabs hold of the implied promise in Jesus' prayer and urges us to beg and then to ask again, to plead each day, "Forgive us our trespasses."





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每一天，当我们以主祷文祷告时，都表明我们相信赦免的应许。正是耶稣自己吩咐我们祷告说，“免我们的债。”在这个祷文所载的隐含的应许里，耶稣教导了我们一个简单的事实，即，上帝想要去赦免也必定要赦免。如若不然，为什么耶稣会邀请我们去祈求某件上帝不想给我们的东西呢？当理性抓住耶稣祷文中隐含的应许，督促我们不断地乞求，每日恳求说，“免我们的债，”它就在作为一个好女仆服事。

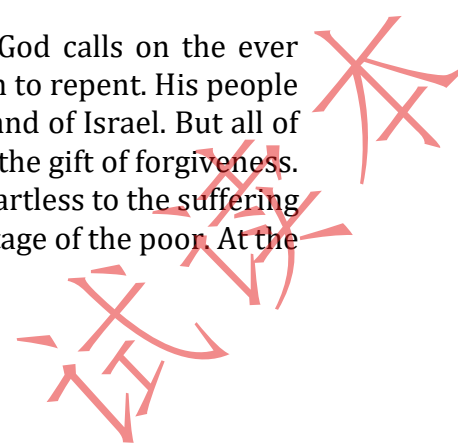
Reason rightly used may also infer that both the prayer for forgiveness and the trust that God really wants to and does forgive are not such easy matters. Jesus does not bid us to pray for easy or obvious things; he invites us to ask for those things which are beyond our power. That's true even when he tells us to pray for daily bread and all that belongs to daily bread.<sup>1</sup> Precisely because it is not such an easy matter, God in his Word repeats often both his urging that we cry out for forgiveness and the assurance that he wants to answer our repentant cries with pardon. His repeated calls to repentance and his many assurances of forgiveness are evidence that he knows how easily we find and fall into the ditches of despair and carnal security.

正确的使用理性也可以推论出，乞求赦免并相信上帝确实想要去也已经赦免了，并不是件那么容易的事。耶稣没有吩咐我们为容易或明摆着的事祷告；他邀请我们去乞求那些远超过我们能力的事。甚至当他告诉我们去为日用的饮食和所有属于日用饮食的事情祷告时，也是如此。<sup>1</sup>正因为这不是一件容易的事，上帝在他的话语里总是反复地出现两个信息——他催促我们迫切呼求赦免，他向我们保证，他想要用饶恕来回应我们懊悔的呼求。他对懊悔的一再呼召和他对赦免的多次保证，证明他知道我们多么容易找到并坠入绝望和肉体安全感的沟壑之中。

So let us consider some of his calls to repentance and some of the ways that he assures us of forgiveness. For a complete listing of passages, we can only urge the reading of the Bible each day. It is by the daily embrace of his Word that we come to grasp more fully the depth and the beauty and, yes, the earnestness and the passion with which God has paved this stretch of the narrow middle road. Consider the following passages as examples of the multitude of biblical references in which God urges us to heart-broken repentance and heart-bursting joy over his forgiveness.

因此，让我们思考一些他对懊悔的呼召和他向我们保证赦免的方式。每日阅读圣经，会帮助我们获得一份完整的经文列表。正是借着每天拥抱他的话语，我们才能更充分地把握，在这条狭窄的中路上，上帝铺砌的深度和美丽，是的，以及他的真挚和激情。思考下面圣经中被大量引用的经文，在这些经文里，上帝督促我们痛心疾首地懊悔，以及对他的赦免情不自禁地喜悦。

In a lengthy discourse with the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 18), God calls on the ever stubborn and rebellious remnant of his people in exile in Babylon to repent. His people had tasted of God's goodness and mercy for generations in the land of Israel. But all of his goodness had only made them indifferent to his greatest gift, the gift of forgiveness. Instead, they were only greedy for more of this world's goods, heartless to the suffering of others, and ever ready to cheat one another and to take advantage of the poor. At the



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bottom of their sins against one another was their spiritual adultery, their chasing after other gods; they often reflected, as in a mirror, that spiritual adultery in their physical adultery with the neighbor's spouse.

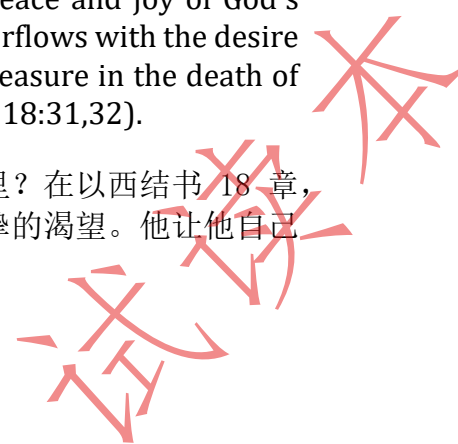
在与先知以西结冗长的讲论中（结 18），上帝呼召他被掳巴比伦顽固而悖逆的余民悔改。他的子民在以色列地世世代代都品尝了上帝的慈爱和怜悯。但是他一切的慈爱都只是让他们对他最大的礼物——他赦免的礼物——漠不关心。相反，他们唯独贪图于更多这个世界的财物，对他人的痛苦毫无怜悯，永远准备着彼此欺骗，欺负穷人。在他们彼此犯罪的底部，是他们属灵的奸淫，他们追求着一个个别神；他们常常与邻舍配偶发生身体上的奸淫，这如同一面镜子，反映出他们属灵的奸淫。

As a consequence of their sin, God sent them individually and as a nation one humiliation after another, loss followed by loss, defeat heaped on defeat. The Northern Kingdom of Israel he destroyed altogether. He sent the Southern Kingdom of Judah into a dreary and disgraceful exile in Babylon. But even when God sent loss and frustration, exile and humiliation to the remnant of his rebellious people, he sent these things in order to call them back to himself. He sent them so they would see that their sins had consequences in this life which were but preludes to far worse consequences in eternity. Sadly, all of those afflictions that he had designed and sent in order to call them to repentance with the goal of forgiveness were met by most with a stubborn refusal to repent.

由于他们的罪，上帝给他们个体以及整个民族，一个接一个的羞辱，亏损跟随着亏损，失败堆叠着失败。他完全毁灭了北国以色列。他使南国犹大在巴比伦凄惨而可耻地流亡。然而，即使当上帝将亏损和挫折、流亡和羞辱加给他悖逆的余民时，他赐下这些事的目的是呼召他们归向他自己。他赐下它们，让他们可以看到他们的罪在今生的结果，作为在永恒里更糟糕的结果的序幕。不幸的是，尽管他为了呼召他们悔改并导向赦免，设计和赐下了这一切的苦难，大多数遭遇到的人顽固地拒绝悔改。

But how did God deal with their rebellion even in their exile? In Ezekiel 18 he shows his persistent and continuing ardor for his people and his earnest desire for their return to him. He lets himself be drawn into an argument with them. The case he makes in that argument demonstrates his own divine and perfect reasoning. Instead of casting them off altogether, as he had ample reason to do, he pleads with them to come back and be forgiven. While warning them again that those who cling to their sins and refuse to repent will surely die, he promises over and over again that those who repent will live. The evidence of their repentance—not the price they would pay for forgiveness—should be that they turn from their evil ways and live in the peace and joy of God's pardon. He concludes with the plaintive appeal of a heart that overflows with the desire to forgive: "Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone," declares the Sovereign Lord. 'Repent and live!'" (Ezekiel 18:31,32).

但上帝是怎么对待他们的悖逆的呢——甚至在他们流亡的日子里？在以西结书 18 章，他显明了他对他们持续不断的狂热，和对他们回转归向他真挚的渴望。他让他自己



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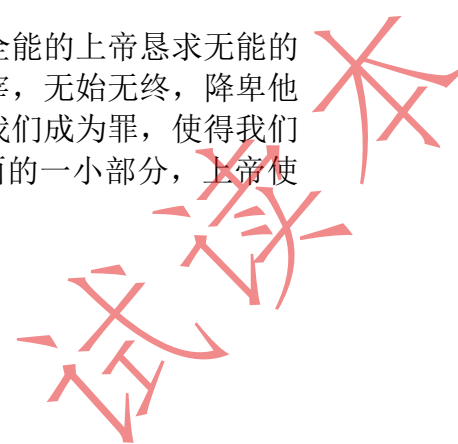
卷入和他们的辩论中，在这个辩论的例子中，他论证了他自己神圣完美的推理。尽管他有足够的理由将他们完全弃绝，但他并没有这么做，却恳求他们回来得蒙赦免。他再次警告他们，那些倚靠自己的罪并拒绝悔改的人必定要死，在此期间，他一遍又一遍应许，那些悔改的人将会活着。他们悔改的证据——并不是他们为赢得赦免付出的代价——就是他们转离他们邪恶的道路，活在上帝饶恕的平安喜乐中。最后，他带着一颗充满渴望饶恕的心，悲痛地呼吁说：“以色列家啊，你们为什么要死呢？我不喜欢有任何人死亡，所以你们当回转，要存活！这是主耶和華说的”（结 18:31, 32）。

Jesus in the gospels so often and so enticingly repeats the theme of his longing for our redemption. "I am the good shepherd," he declares. "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). He gives new meaning to the word *good* and to the word *shepherd*! Sheep should exist for the shepherd, not the shepherd for the sheep. But divine reasoning goes in the opposite direction. In the sacred and gracious and loving heart of Jesus, no price is too high to pay for the sinner who has lost all worth because of his sin. And so he dies, the One worth more than all of them, more than all of us put together. He dies for those who have made themselves worthy of death by their sins. He dies, the innocent for the guilty. He dies, the ransom for the whole of fallen mankind that sold and continues to sell itself willingly into a slavery to sin, death, and hell. He dies, the payment for every sin that ever was committed or ever will be committed.

耶穌在福音書中，如此頻繁如此迷人地重複着他渴望我們得救的主旋律。“我是好牧人，”他說，“好牧人為羊舍命”（約 10:11）。他給予了“好”這個詞和“牧人”這個詞新的含義！羊本應為牧人存在，而不是牧人為羊存在。但神的推論背道而馳。在耶穌聖潔、恩慈和充滿愛的心里，為了贖回一個因為他的罪而失去一切價值的罪人，付出任何代價都不為過。因此他，那比所有人，比我們全部加在一起更有價值的一位，死了。他為那些因着自己的罪導致他們只配得到死亡的人死了。他，那無罪者，為罪人死了。他，作為對所有墮落人類——他們欣然地將自己並一直將自己賣給罪、死亡和地獄做奴隸——的贖價，死了。他，背負著一切已經犯下和將要犯下的罪，死了。

Note the stunning contrast throughout in the way that God deals with us: the omnipotent God pleads with the impotent sinner. The Holy One of Israel pursues as a lover the ever sinful and adulterous generation. The Ruler of the universe, who has no beginning and no end, lowers himself into the womb of the virgin and makes his bed in the feed trough of sheep and goats. Yes, he who knew no sin becomes sin for us so that we should be clothed with his own righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). These are but a handful of the many powerful pictures that God uses to illustrate his zeal and his ardor for our salvation.

在上帝對待我們的方式中，自始至終，注意這個驚人的對比：全能的上帝懇求無能的罪人。以色列的聖者追求這罪惡不貞的世代為愛人。宇宙的主宰，無始無終，降卑他自己，進入童女的肚子，降生在馬槽里。是的，那不知罪的替我們成為罪，使得我們可以披上他自己的義（林後 5:21）。這只是很多強有力的畫面的一小部分，上帝使用它們來展示他對我們救恩的熱忱和激情。



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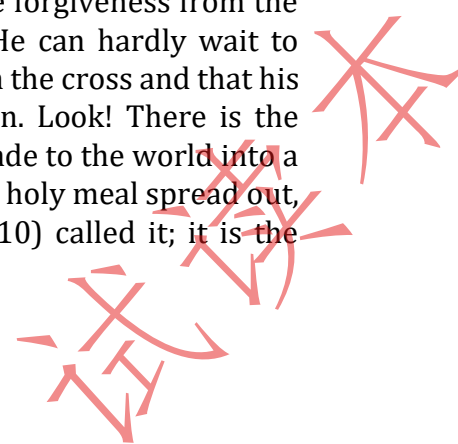
So great and beautiful is the theme that it is difficult to keep from dwelling on it with the hundreds of passages and pictures which repeat it and give ever new sweetness and delight to the guilty, sad, and despairing soul.

这个主题是如此伟大和美好，以至于我们很难不去深思它，用成百上千的句子和画面去重复它，给罪疚、悲痛和绝望的心灵带来恒新的甜蜜和愉悦。

Our Sunday morning liturgy reflects the longing in the heart of God for us. The call to repentance at the beginning of the liturgy invites us so warmly to do what our sinful nature does not want to do, either because it is proud and self-satisfied or because it is terrified and in despair. The first words of the call to repentance are “Beloved in the Lord!” Those already entice us and lure us to the overflowing heart of God. They invite us to ask that he pour out from his heart the forgiveness that fills it. The simple fact that this invitation comes to us week in and week out should thrill us. That’s how God’s heart always is toward us. It is the heart of God that cries out: “‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’” (Isaiah 1:18). It is the voice of Jesus in the last book of the Bible, with splendor laid by and glory hidden, that calls out: “Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:19,20).

我们周日早上的敬拜仪文反映了上帝心里对我们的渴望。在敬拜仪文开始时的悔改呼召，如此热切地邀请我们去做我们的罪性不愿做的事，它不愿这样做，要么是因为它的骄傲和自满，要么是因为它的恐惧和绝望。悔改呼召的第一句话是“在主里蒙爱的弟兄姐妹！”这句话就足以引导我们来到上帝满溢的心田里。它邀请我们祈求他，将充满在他心里的赦免倾倒在我们身上。这个邀请一周又一周的临到我们，这一简单的事实，就足以使我们震颤。这就是上帝的心一直面对我们的方式。上帝的心呼喊说：“来吧，我们彼此辩论。你们的罪虽像朱红，必变成雪白；虽红如丹颜，必白如羊毛”（赛 1:18）。耶稣在圣经最后一卷书中，带着掩盖着的光辉和隐藏着的荣耀，呼吁道：“凡我所疼爱的，我就责备管教。所以，你要发热心，也要悔改。看哪，我站在门外叩门，若有听见我声音而开门的，我要进到他那里去，我与他，他与我一起吃饭”（启 3:19,20）。

Could there be a more compelling reason to repent and confess than that? So great is the banquet spread before us in his forgiveness that it is a meal which lasts forever with the Savior himself as our ever gracious host! Could there be a more delightful moment than that moment in his house when we plead for and anticipate forgiveness from the Almighty and All-Holy One? See and hear him in the liturgy! He can hardly wait to embrace you with the pardon and peace that he has won for us on the cross and that his servant announces and gives to you in the words of absolution. Look! There is the baptismal font where he adopted you and turned the promise made to the world into a promise just for you. Lift up your eyes! There is the altar with the holy meal spread out, the “medicine of immortality” as St. Ignatius of Antioch (a.d. 110) called it; it is the



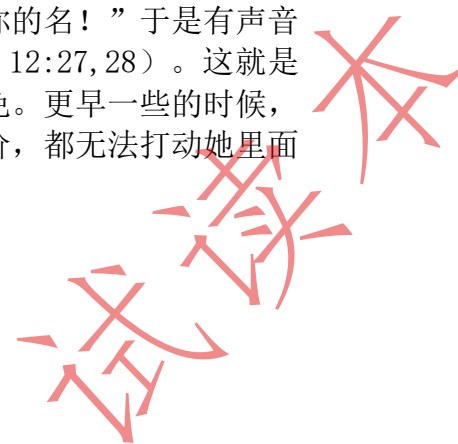
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promise of his true body and blood, the very price he paid for your salvation. Could there be a richer sign of his love for you than the promise of his forgiving presence in your body and soul? We may well, and with good reason, be disgusted with ourselves because of our sin. But when God sees you, he sees his Son and the price he paid for your redemption; he sees you forgiven, a saint!

还有比这更令人信服的懊悔和认罪的理由吗？在他的赦免里，摆在我们面前的宴席是如此丰盛，救主亲自作为我们最亲切的东道主，与我们一起赴这永恒的宴席。当我们从全能和全然圣洁者那里祈求并期待赦免时，还有哪一刻比在他的家里的这一刻更让人愉快呢？在敬拜仪式中来看和听他吧！他迫不及待地要用赦免和平安拥抱你，这赦免和平安，就是他在十字架上为你赢得，又借着他的仆人在宽恕的话语里宣告和赐给了你。看啊！正是在这洗礼盘里，他接纳了你，把对这世界的应许变为单单是对你的应许。抬起你的眼睛，那儿是分发圣餐的圣餐桌，那是安提阿的圣伊格内修斯（St. Ignatius of Antioch, 公元 110）所说的“不死药”；这是他真身体和真宝血的应许，他为你救恩所付的完全的赎价。他对你爱的记号，还有什么比他在你身体和心灵里赦免的临在，更丰富的呢？我们很可能，并且有充分的理由，因为我们的罪而厌恶我们自己。但是当上帝看到你，他看到了他的儿子和他对你的赎价，他看到蒙了赦免的你，一个圣徒！

Yes, it is on the cross that we see most fully and most clearly the ardor of God for our repentance and our rescue. Even there, he who suffers the torments of the damned prays for the forgiveness of his tormentors. Less than a week earlier, he had seen in all its horror the kind of death that awaited him. Did he run away? Did he complain about it? Did he lash out at least with his tongue against mankind, the reason for his coming suffering? No! This is what he said: "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" (John 12:27,28). Exactly that was his desire and his Father's glory, that he should suffer and die to win our forgiveness. Earlier still he wept over Jerusalem because he knew that even such love and such a price would not move most in her to cry out for the forgiveness that he came to win at so high a price (Luke 19:41-44).

是的，正是在十字架上，我们最完全和最清晰地看到，上帝对我们悔改和我们得救的热情。即使是在那儿，那遭受地狱之苦的他，也在为折磨他之人的赦免祷告。不到一周之前，在客西马尼园，他已经见到了那等待着他的死亡完全的恐怖。他逃跑了吗？他为此抱怨了吗？他是否至少用他的舌头抨击了下人类——他们是他即将遭受的苦难的原因？没有！他是这样说的：“我现在心里忧愁，我说什么才好呢？说‘父啊，救我脱离这时候’吗？但我正是为这时候来的。父啊，愿你荣耀你的名！”于是有声音从天上来，说：“我已经荣耀了我的名，还要再荣耀。”（约 12:27, 28）。这就是他的渴望和他父的荣耀：他应该受苦和死亡，来赢得我们的赦免。更早一些的时候，他为耶路撒冷哭泣，因为他知道，即使是这样的爱和这样的代价，都无法打动她里面的大多数人，让他们想要他以如此高昂的代价赢得的赦免。





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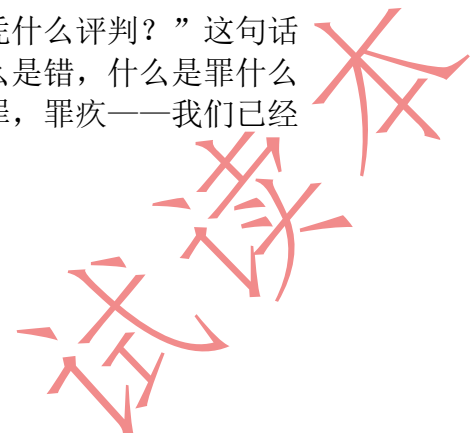
## The ditch of carnal security 肉体安全感的沟壑

As ardent and earnest as God's promises and Jesus' yearning for our forgiveness, those over whom he wept in the last passage cited wanted none of it. They had fallen into the ditch of carnal security and refused the outstretched and blood-spattered arm that Jesus extended to lift them from it. Let us then consider this ditch of carnal security into which so many plunge headlong, in spite of Jesus' death for them and his ever-serious and fervent call to them. If the ditch of carnal security was a broad and easy one to fall into in Bible times, it is these days an even broader and more popular ditch. Those in it have hearts that feel no twinge of guilt at the sound of the law and the sight of the cross. Whenever conscience raises its feeble voice to condemn, the glib answer is close at hand: "Well, nobody's perfect! At least I don't do . . ."—and there follows a list of sins never committed. The sins not committed are always held up as the only ones that really count; the sins committed are just little ones, mistakes, someone else's fault, or outweighed in any event by imagined virtues of far greater importance. So the gossips boast that at least they are not adulterers, and the adulterers brag that at least they aren't like one of those hypocritical gossips.

上帝对我们赦免的应许和耶稣对此的渴望，是何等热情和真挚，与此同时，在上一段引用的他为之哭泣的那些人，他们对此什么都不想要。他们坠入了肉体安全感的沟壑，并拒绝耶稣伸出的，为要将他们从那里举起的鲜血淋漓的手。现在，让我们来思考一下这个很多人一头扎入其中的肉体安全感的沟壑——尽管耶稣为他们而死，他严肃而狂热地呼召他们。如果说，在圣经时代，肉体安全感的沟壑是一个宽阔而容易坠入其中的沟壑，在当今的时代，它是一个更宽阔和更受欢迎的沟壑。那些在那里的人，他们的心对律法的声音和十字架的景象没有丝毫的愧疚。每当良心发出微弱的谴责时，那油腔滑调的回答就近在咫尺：“嗯，没有人是完美的，至少我没有做……”——接下来是一系列他从没有犯的罪。未犯的罪总是被认为是唯独会被计算的罪，已犯的罪总是微不足道的毛病，过失，别人的错，或者不管怎样，早已被想象中的远远重要的美德所抵消。所以那些长舌者吹嘘至少他们不是通奸者，那些通奸者夸耀至少他们不像那些虚伪的长舌者。

When the "At least I'm not like . . ." doesn't work, there is the ever popular, "Who are you to judge?" That line works well for those who have decided that there is no such thing as absolute truth and, therefore, no way to know what is right and what is wrong, what is sin and what is virtue. It's all up to the individual and his feelings at the moment. *Sin, guilt*—we have risen above and outgrown those old-fashioned notions.

当“至少我不像……”不起作用时，另一句话就会出现，“你凭什么评判？”这句话对于那些坚信没有绝对真理，因此也没有方式知道什么是对什么是错，什么是罪什么是美德的人，相当适用。它完全取决于个人和他此刻的感受。罪，罪疚——我们已经克服并超越了这些过时的观念。



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Also in this ditch we find those we saw in the last chapter. We find those for whom the death of Christ for the sins of the world has become a license to sin. "Since he died, since all sins have been paid for, it no longer matters what I do; I can do exactly as my flesh pleases because it has all been forgiven anyway." In their security, not to say arrogance and ingratitude, they go off like the pig who has been washed to wallow again in the filth of their choosing.

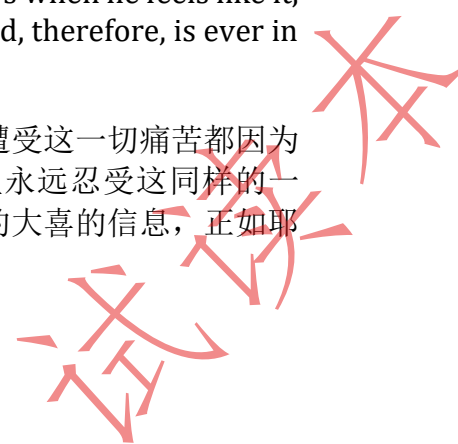
同样在这个沟壑里，我们发现了我们在上一章已经看到的。我们发现，对那些人来说，基督为世人的罪而死，成为了犯罪的许可证。“既然他已经死了，既然所有的罪都被偿还了，我做什么都无关紧要了；我可以随心所欲地做任何事，因为一切已经被赦免了。”在他们的安全感里，都不用说是傲慢和忘恩负义，他们就像猪一样，洗净了，又回到他们自择的污秽里打滚。

Those in the ditch of carnal security may hear Jesus calling from the narrow middle road on Good Friday, calling with the plaintive cry of Jeremiah: "Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look around and see. Is any suffering like my suffering that was inflicted on me, that the Lord brought on me in the day of his fierce anger? From on high he sent fire, sent it down into my bones. He spread a net for my feet and turned me back. He made me desolate, faint all the day long" (Lamentations 1:12,13).

那些在肉体安全感的沟壑里的人，可能会听到耶稣在受难日从狭窄的中路上的呼召，他用耶利米悲哀的哭泣呼召道：“所有过路的人哪，愿这事不要发生在你们身上。你们要留意观看，有像这样临到我的痛苦没有？耶和华在他发烈怒的日子使我受苦。他从高处降火进入我的骨头，克制了我；他张开网，绊我的脚，使我退后，又令我终日凄凉发昏”（哀 1:12, 13）。

The sermon may declare: "And all this he did for you, in your place. All this he suffered because you deserved it. All this he endured so that you would not endure the same forever in hell." On Easter Sunday they may hear the great glad tidings that are the result of Jesus' anguish for us, also from Jeremiah: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." But they will not answer as did Jeremiah: "I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him'" (Lamentation 3:22-24). Instead, they will yawn and utter the cry of the bored: "We've heard it all before, know it all already. Tears of sorrow in repentance and songs of joy in forgiveness are for the really guilty or the merely silly and sentimental!" Even the very simple but richly instructive warning from Proverbs does not move such a one: "If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable" (28:9). He will go on mumbling his prayers when he feels like it, imagining that he is doing God some enormous favor and that God, therefore, is ever in his debt to bless and keep him.

讲道可能会这样宣告：“这一切他都已经为你并替你做了。他遭受这一切痛苦都因为你理应承受这一切。他忍受这一切，使得你可以不用在地狱里永远忍受这同样的一切。”在复活节，他们可能会听到那因着耶稣为他们受难而来的大喜的信息，正如耶



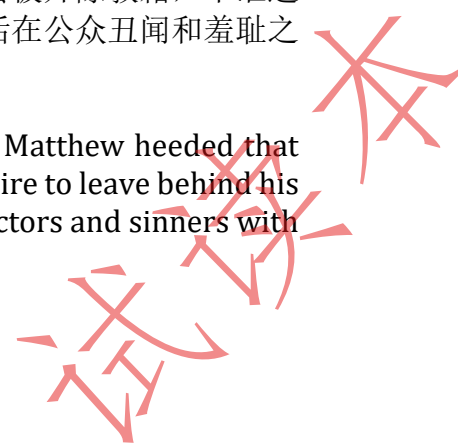
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利米所说：“因耶和华的慈爱，我们不致灭绝，因他的怜悯永不断绝，每早晨，这都是新的；你的信实极其广大！”但是他们却不会像耶利米那样回答：“我心里说：‘耶和华是我的福分，因此，我要仰望他’”（哀 3:22-24）。相反，他们会打着哈欠，无聊地喊道：“我们以前都听过了，我们都已经知道了。在懊悔里悲伤的泪水，在赦免里喜乐的歌声，这些都是为那些真正有罪的，或那些不过是愚蠢而多愁善感的人准备的！”即使是箴言中那些非常简单而富有启发性的警告，也不能打动这样的人：“转耳不听教诲的，他的祈祷也可憎”（箴 28:9）。当他感觉良好的时候，他会继续喋喋不休的祷告，想象他正在给予上帝某些巨大的支持，因此，上帝永远欠他祝福和保护。

In the gospels we see the Pharisees often stuck in this ditch of carnal security. For many of them repentance and confession were mere forms, devoid of any anguish in the heart or sincerity in the soul. Consider one of the most telling displays of their self-confidence and, at the same time, a display of their actual condition, of their desperate need for forgiveness. Read Matthew 9:9-13. Jesus had just called Matthew to be his disciple. Matthew was from that class of people always lumped together as “tax collectors and sinners.” The tax collectors made their money by collecting tolls and taxes for the Roman government. They bought their position from the government. Once in office they were required to remit a fixed sum in tolls and taxes to the state; but there was little or no limit on what they could collect. They got rich by gouging their countrymen. They were hated because of their greed and dishonesty. They were despised because their job supported the government of the hated Romans. They were loathed because with the Roman army behind them, they could bleed their victims at will. Tax collectors were generally excommunicated and excluded from the synagogue. Tax collectors were usually lumped together as one in class with sinners. “Sinners” were those whose whole lives were public scandals and disgraces, i.e., prostitutes and adulterers, the openly immoral and indecent.

在福音书中，我们看到法利赛人常常陷入这肉体安全感的沟壑里。对他们许多人来说，懊悔和认罪仅仅是一种形式，内心没有丝毫痛苦和真挚。想想其中一个最能表现他们的自信，并同时表现出他们实际上及其需要赦免的故事。阅读马太福音 9:9-13，耶稣刚刚呼召马太成为他的门徒。马太就是那一类总是被归入“罪人和税吏”的人群中的一份子。税吏通过为罗马政府收税和收过路费来赚钱。他们从政府那买来他们的职位。一旦上任，他们必须向政府交纳一笔固定数额的税款；但是对他们怎么收钱只有很少的甚至没有限制。他们通过剥削他们的同胞而致富。他们因他们的贪婪和不诚实而招人憎恶。他们因他们的工作支持了可恶的罗马人而招人鄙视。他们因他们借着罗马军队的支持，可以任意的榨取受害者而招人排斥。税吏往往会被开除教籍，不准进入会堂。税吏通常被归入罪人一类。“罪人”就是那些一生都活在公众丑闻和羞耻之下的人，如，妓女和通奸者，公开的不道德和不洁。

When Jesus called Matthew, the tax collector, to be his disciple, Matthew heeded that call. He showed his repentance, his joy in forgiveness, and the desire to leave behind his sin-dominated life by preparing a banquet for his fellow tax collectors and sinners with



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Jesus as the honored guest. The banquet must have been quite an event! It was not the normal gathering of tax collectors and sinners, a gathering during which the tax collectors would gloat over their dishonest gains and the sinners would flaunt their vices. Oh no, not that! Quite the opposite was the aim of this banquet. Matthew invited his friends because he wanted to share Jesus. He called them together to make public his confession of faith in the Savior, no doubt with the earnest desire that those invited would come to share in his confession and in his joy in forgiveness.

当耶稣呼召马太这个税吏做他的门徒时，马太听从了这个呼召。他以耶稣为尊贵的客人，为他的税吏同伴和罪人准备了一个宴席，借着这个宴席，他展示了他的悔改，他在赦免里的喜乐，和他渴望离开他被罪恶统治着的生命。这宴席一定相当隆重！这不是税吏和罪人通常的聚会——在那样的聚会里，税吏会对他们不诚实的收益得意洋洋，罪人会炫耀他们的罪恶。哦，不，不是那样！这场宴席的目的恰恰相反。马太邀请他的朋友，因为他想要去分享耶稣。他把他们召集在一起，公开宣认他对救主的信心，毋庸置疑，他热切渴望那些受邀者能够来和他一起分享他的认罪和他在赦免里的喜乐。

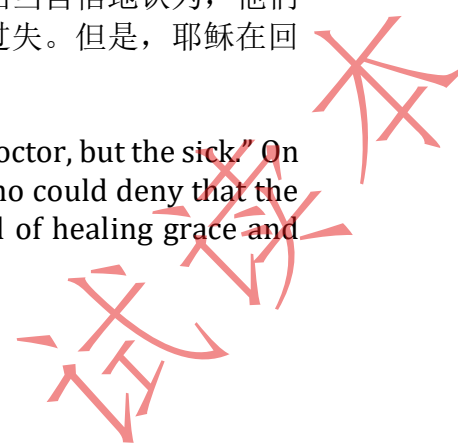
What was the response of the good people, the best people, the Pharisees to this whole spectacle? Always on the lookout for an excuse to criticize Jesus, they were sure they had him on the hook this time. Not daring to approach Jesus directly, they asked his disciples this question: “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and ‘sinners?’” (9:11). It was not an innocent query. It contained this implied accusation: Birds of a feather flock together.

那些好人，那些最好的人，那些法利赛人，他们对这样的场面有什么反应呢？他们一直在寻找批判耶稣的借口，他们确信这次他上钩了。他们不敢直接靠近耶稣，于是问他的门徒说：“你们的老师为什么与税吏和罪人一同吃饭呢？”（太 9:11）。这不单纯只是个问题。它隐含着这样的指控：物以类聚，人以群分。

Listen to Jesus’ answer: “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (9:12,13). The Pharisees were so sure that they were “healthy.” They were so confident that their participation in the liturgy of the temple sacrifices in and of itself made up for any slight lapses of which they might be guilty. But what was the reality as Jesus revealed it in his answer to their criticism?

听听耶稣的回答：“健康的人用不着医生；有病的人才用得着。经上说：‘我喜爱怜悯，不喜爱祭祀。’这句话的意思，你们去揣摩。我不是来召义人，而是召罪人”（太 9:12, 13）。法利赛人如此确信他们是“健康的”，他们相当自信地认为，他们参加圣殿献祭仪式本身，就足以弥补他们可能犯的任何微小的过失。但是，耶稣在回答他们的指控时所揭露的事实是什么呢？

Look at that first line carefully: “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.” On its simplest level, that answer justified what Jesus was doing. Who could deny that the tax collectors and sinners were sick, sin sick, in desperate need of healing grace and



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forgiveness? But go one step further, and see the arrow that Jesus shot at the hearts of those who thought themselves to be most healthy. Who really are the most sick and the most needy? It is not those who recognize their illness and long for the healing hand of the Physician. Rather, those who show no mercy are the most sin sick. Those are most needy who not only do not recognize their own sickness but who prevent the Physician from going to those who seek his help. It was bad enough that the Pharisees did not see their own need. But it was far worse that they wanted to keep the Physician away from those who longed for help and healing.

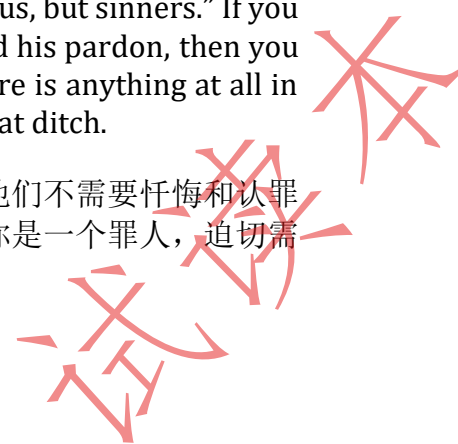
仔细看看第一行：“健康的人用不着医生；有病的人才用得着。”从最简单的层面上，这个回答证明耶稣所做的是正确的。谁能否认这些税吏和罪人病了——罪恶之病，急需医治的恩典和赦免呢？但是再往前走一步，就会看到耶稣射入那些自以为是最健康的人心中的利箭。谁是真正最有病和最需要帮助的人呢？不是那些意识到他们病了并渴望医生伸出援手的人。相反，那些一点怜悯之心都没有的人，得了最严重的罪恶之病。那些不仅没有意识到他们病了，还阻止医生接近那些寻求他帮助的人，最需要帮助。法利赛人看不到他们自己的需要，这已经足够糟糕了，但更糟糕的是，他们想要让医生远离那些渴望帮助和医治的人。

Jesus' words must have thrilled many at Matthew's banquet. Jesus wanted to heal them, not cast them into hell. He wanted to rescue them from their past and for a future in his blessed fellowship. But Jesus' words were just as much intended to call the carnally secure Pharisees up from their ditch. The Pharisees should have felt in his words the stinging arrow of the law that damned their cruelty, their heartlessness, their pride in themselves, and their contempt for those so obviously in need. If only they would have seen themselves as sick, they would have been ready for the remedy of the Great Physician. Then and only then would they have delighted in him who ate with tax collectors and sinners, in whose number they should have included themselves.

在马太的宴席上，耶稣的话一定让很多人激动不已。耶稣想要医治他们，而不是把他们丢到地狱里。他想要拯救他们脱离他们的过去，进入一个在他蒙福团契中的未来。但耶稣的话同样想要呼召陷在肉体安全感的法利赛人，从他们的沟壑里出来。法利赛人本该从他的话里感受到律法的利箭，谴责他们的残酷、无情，他们自身的骄傲，他们对那些明显需要帮助之人的蔑视。如果他们能够看到他们自己也有病就好了，这样，他们就准备好接受这个伟大医生的治疗。唯有这样，他们才会因这位与税吏与罪人一起吃饭的人而喜乐，这罪人本来就包括他们自己。

So Jesus addresses all in the ditch of carnal security—those who think they have no need of repentance and confession: “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” If you don't know that you are a sinner in desperate need of his call and his pardon, then you are stuck in the tar pit of carnal security. If you imagine that there is anything at all in you that does not need his grace, then you too are still stuck in that ditch.

因此，耶稣向所有在肉体安全感的沟壑里的人，所有那些认为他们不需要忏悔和认罪的人宣告：“我不是来召义人，而是召罪人。”如果你不知道你是一个罪人，迫切需





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要他的呼召和他的饶恕，那么你就被困在肉体安全感的沼泽里。如果你认为在你里面有任何东西压根不需要他的恩典，那么你同样陷入了这个沟壑。

The ditch of carnal security must be a well-populated one indeed, given the frequency with which Jesus warns against it and calls us from it in the gospels. There is the account of the tax collector Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. Again, the carnally secure murmur against Jesus because he has gone to be the guest of a sinner. And again, Jesus answers with words of richest comfort to the anguished penitent and with words that should have shocked the self-righteous into an examination of their own souls: “The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

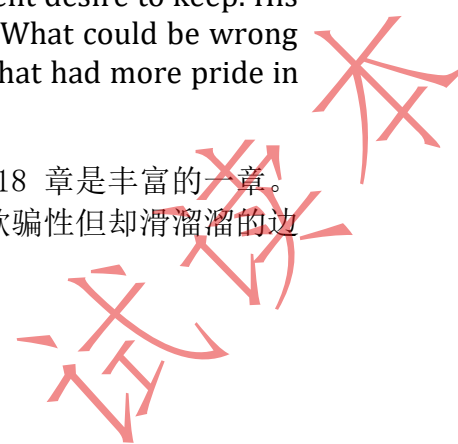
考虑到耶稣在福音书中频繁地警告我们抵挡它并呼召我们远离它，肉体安全感的沟壑里必然是摩肩接踵的。在路加福音 19:1-10 有一个关于税吏撒该的记载。再一次，那陷在肉体安全感中的人悄声反对耶稣，因为他去做罪人的客人。耶稣再次用他最富有安慰的话回答了那些痛苦的忏悔者，这话同时本该震动那些自义的人，让他们去反省自己的心：“人子来是要寻找和拯救丧失的人。”

These words of Jesus bid me to cry out: “O Savior of the lost, I did not sin with the same sins as those of the tax collectors and sinners. These are my sins: I covet the wealth of the tax collector; I share the lust of the sinner; I enjoy looking down on those who appear to have fallen while my fall is secret; I love the praises of men, praises that you and I know are undeserved; I rejoice not in your merit and goodness but rather in the fact that no one sees my heart; with my heart out of plain view, I can delight in the illusion that somehow I am better than the one whose sins are on shameful and public display.”

耶稣的这些话让我喊道：“哦，丧失之人的救主啊，我没有犯过与那些税吏和罪人一样的罪。我的罪是这样的：我垂涎这些税吏的钱财；我分享了这些罪人的性欲；我喜欢鄙视那些看上去似乎已经堕落的人，而我的堕落是秘密的；我喜爱人的称赞，就是那些你和我都知道我所不配得的称赞；我并不因你的仁慈和良善而欣喜，而更多的是因为知道没有人能看到我的心；由于我的心不为人知，我可以很高兴地幻想，无论如何，我总比那些罪恶昭彰的人要好一些。”

Luke 18 is a rich chapter for those who want to be on guard against this ditch of carnal security. It is a chapter of warnings against it and of markers that reveal its often camouflaged but still slippery edge. In Luke 18 we have the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector praying in the temple. In contrast to the tax collector, whose outward sins everybody knew about, the Pharisee was outwardly a model citizen. Indeed, even in his prayer he rejoiced in God's own law, which it was his fervent desire to keep. His prayer at first blush seems noble indeed. He was thanking God. What could be wrong with that? But closer examination of his prayer reveals a heart that had more pride in self and contempt for everyone else than thankfulness to God.

对于那些想要提防这种肉体安全感的沟壑的人来说，路加福音 18 章是丰富的一章。这一章包含了对抵挡它的警告和一些标志，揭示出它通常很具欺骗性但却滑溜溜的边



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缘。路加福音 18 章有一个法利赛人和税吏在圣殿里祷告的比喻。不同于这个税吏——他外在的罪人人人都知道，法利赛人外表上是一个模范公民。是的，甚至在他的祷告中，他都喜悦于上帝自己的律法，这律法是他热切愿意遵守的。他的祷告乍一看上去确实很崇高。他在感谢上帝。这有什么错呢？但是仔细观察他的祷告，就会发现一颗更多的是对自身的骄傲和对他人的鄙视，而不是对上帝感激的心。

So “thankful” was he that he saw no need to bow low and smite on his breast in anguish over his sins. He simply didn’t have any to confess. Or if he was aware of sin in his life, he was confident that his goodness more than outweighed it. The confession of Isaiah was as far from his heart as the cry of the tax collector was from his lips. Isaiah pleaded with God:

他是如此地“感激”，以至于他觉得他不需要弯着腰，因他的罪痛苦地捶胸顿足。他根本就没有什么需要认罪的。或者，倘若他意识到了他生命中的罪，他确信他的良善远远超过了它。以赛亚的认信离他的心何其遥远，因此他也不可能发出税吏这样的呼求。以赛亚恳求上帝：

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. . . . Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be angry beyond measure, O Lord; do not remember our sins forever. (Isaiah 64:6-9)

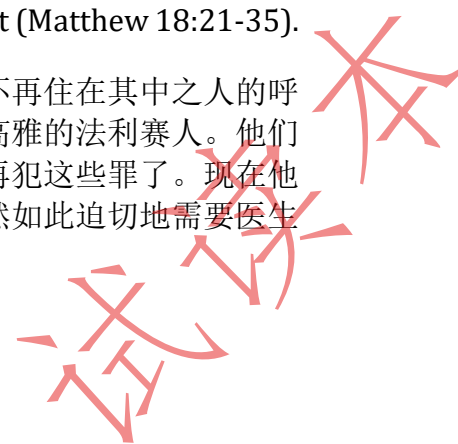
我们都如不洁净的人，所行的义都像污秽的衣服……但耶和华啊，现在你仍是我们的父！我们是泥，你是陶匠；我们都是你亲手所造的。耶和华啊，求你不要大发震怒，也不要永远记得罪孽。（赛 64:6-9）

That is the constant cry of the Christian on the narrow middle road.

这是基督徒在狭窄的中路上不断的呼求。

Yes, this too is the cry even of those who have been rescued from the most horrible sins of the flesh and live in them no more. It is surprising sometimes to find that people who are no longer coarse sinners have become refined Pharisees. They may remember their past sins. But more than that, they congratulate themselves that they no longer commit them. Now they look down their newly pious noses on those who still do, who still need the Physician so desperately. It is a sad truism that pietism/ Phariseeism is sometimes the final refuge of the guilty conscience. Their last state is worse than the first. Sometimes the most unforgiving can be those who have been forgiven most, a point that Jesus makes so eloquently in the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:21-35).

是的，这甚至也是那些已经被从肉身最可怕的罪中拯救出来，不再住在其中之人的呼求。令人惊讶的是，有些时候，那些曾经粗俗的罪人，变成了高雅的法利赛人。他们可能会想起他们过去的罪，但更多的是，他们庆幸他们自己不再犯这些罪了。现在他们用他们崭新的敬虔的鼻孔看着那些还在这样做的人，那些依然如此迫切地需要医生



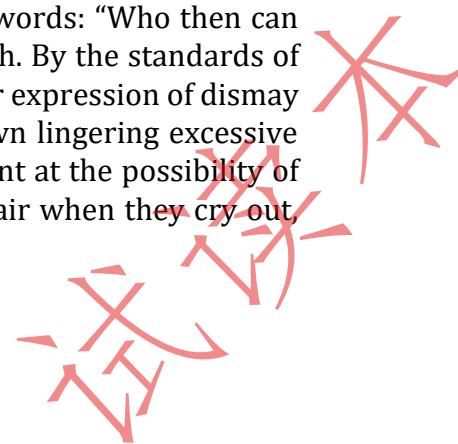
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的人。这是一个可悲的老生常谈，即，敬虔主义/法利赛主义某些时候是内疚良心最终的避难所。他们最后的状态比他们开始时的状态更糟糕。有时，最没有宽恕的人是那些被宽恕最多的人，这一点耶稣在无怜悯的仆人的比喻（太 18:21-35）中说的格外清楚。

Also in Luke 18 we have the story of the rich ruler (verses 18-27) who thought that he had kept the law. Yet there was the nagging thought in his soul that something was still wrong with him. He was secure, and yet. . . . So, he asked Jesus what he was still lacking. Jesus' answer was striking: "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." The rich ruler went away sad. We cannot help but wonder if he ever came back. We cannot but wonder if he ever got the point that Jesus made with this unusual command, a command which he never gave to anyone else. The words of Jesus were designed to yank the rich young ruler out of the ditch of his security. Jesus wanted this young man to see that for all his goodness and piety, he had miserably failed to keep the First Commandment. Jesus' words bring it to light: he did not love God above all things; he could not, he would not leave his wealth; he loved that more. He was, therefore, in absolute, desperate need of forgiveness. Crushing were Jesus' words to him. They were words that should have brought him out of the ditch and onto the narrow middle road that would plead with the tax collector in the temple, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner" (18:13).

同样在路加福音 18 章有一个富有的官的故事（18-27 节），他认为他遵守了律法。然而，在他的心里有一种挥之不去的想法，他依然感到有些东西不对劲。他是安全的，但是……因此，他问耶稣他还缺少什么。耶稣的回答让人震惊：“你还缺少一件：要变卖你一切所有的，分给穷人，就必有财宝在天上；你还要来跟从我。”这个年轻的官忧愁地走了。我们不禁想知道他是否之后又回来了。我们不禁想知道他是否明白了耶稣给他这个不寻常命令的要点，这个命令他未曾再给过别的人。耶稣说这话的目的，是将这富有的年轻的官，从他安全感的沟壑里拉出来。耶稣想要这个年轻人看到，由于他一切的良善和敬虔，他可悲地没有遵守第一条诫命。耶稣的话揭露了这一切：他并没有爱上帝超过一切；他不能够也不会离开他的财富；他更爱它。因此，他完全的迫切的需要赦免。耶稣的话对他来说是破碎性的。这些话本该把他从这沟壑里带到狭窄的中路上，让他能够和圣殿里的税吏一起乞求：“上帝啊，开恩可怜我这个罪人”（路 18:13）。

But just as noteworthy is the end of this story. At its conclusion, Jesus remarked on how difficult it is for the rich to enter into the kingdom of heaven: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples expressed shock, yes, despair, when they heard those words: "Who then can be saved?" Why did they ask such a question? They were not rich. By the standards of the day, we would probably consider them middle class. But their expression of dismay brings to light the hidden longing to be rich, or at least their own lingering excessive attachment to whatever wealth they had. Indeed, their words hint at the possibility of running from the ditch of security to the opposite ditch of despair when they cry out, "Who then can be saved?"



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但同样值得注意的是这个故事的结局。在结尾处，耶稣谈到有钱财的人进入天国是多么地困难：“骆驼穿过针眼比财主进上帝的国还容易呢。”当门徒听到这些话，他们表达了他们的惊慌，是的，甚至是绝望：“这样，谁能得救呢？”为什么他们要问这样一个问题？他们并不富裕。按照当时的标准，他们可能会被认定是中产阶级。但是他们沮丧的表情暴露出他们隐藏着的对富有的渴望，或至少他们对自己所拥有的财富挥之不去的迷恋。事实上，当他们呼喊出，“这样，谁能得救呢？”他们的话隐含着从安全感的沟壑跑入与之相反的绝望的沟壑里的可能性。

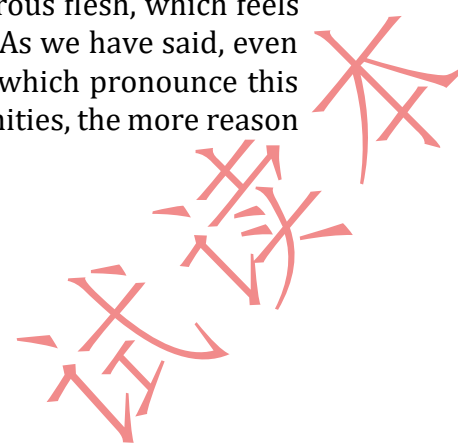
Jesus' answer is, of course, perfect: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." And that's the sum of it! Jesus' word in the law hauls us up from the ditch of carnal security when we recognize that we cannot possibly be saved; we have not even for a moment kept the First Commandment, let alone any of the others. For us, salvation is surely impossible. It is impossible, that is, except for the One who came to seek and save sinners. It is impossible, except for the One who not only makes my salvation possible but who has already accomplished it for me.

当然，耶稣的回答是完美的：“在人所不能的事，在上帝都能。”就是这个！当我们意识到我们不可能得救时，耶稣在律法里的话语就将我们从肉体安全感的沟壑里拉上来；我们从来没有哪一秒钟遵守过第一条诫命，更何况其它诫命了。对我们来说，救恩确实是不可能的。它是不可能的，除非救世主来寻找并拯救罪人。它是不可能的，除非救世主不仅使我的救恩成为可能，又为我完全成就了它。

But what if one's life is so peaceful and respectable that his conscience does not stir from its repose and drive him to his knees in confession that longs for the forgiveness we all so desperately need? There is no better advice for such a one than that which Luther gives. In his Large Catechism, he encourages us to seek the grace and pardon so richly offered in the Sacrament of the Altar and addresses those who feel no need for it:

但是如果一个人的生命是如此平静和受人尊重，以至于他的良心并没有备受搅动，驱使他跪下来认罪，渴求我们每个人都迫切需要的赦免呢？对于这样的一个人，没有比路德给的建议更好的了。在他的大问答中，他鼓励我们在如此丰富地提供了恩典和饶恕的圣礼中去寻找恩典和饶恕，并对那些认为他们不需要圣礼的人说：

If you cannot feel the need, at least believe the Scriptures. They will not lie to you, since they know your flesh better than you yourself do. Yes, and St. Paul concludes in Romans 7[:18], "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh." If St. Paul speaks this way of his own flesh, let us not wish to be better or holier. But the fact that we do not feel it is all the worse, for it is a sign that ours is a leprous flesh, which feels nothing although it rages with disease and gnaws away at itself. As we have said, even if you are so utterly dead in sin, at least believe the Scriptures, which pronounce this judgment upon you. In short, the less you feel your sins and infirmities, the more reason you have to go to the sacrament and seek its help and remedy.



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如果你感觉不到需要，至少要相信圣经。它们不会欺骗你，因为它们比你更了解自己的肉体。是的，圣保罗在罗马书 7 章（18 节）说，“我也知道，住在我里面的，就是我肉体之中，没有善。”如果圣保罗这样说他自己的肉体，让我们不要指望变得更好或更圣洁。事实上我们并不觉得它是最糟糕的，这标志着我们的肉体是一个麻风病人的肉体，虽然它伴随着疾病的肆虐和自我毁坏，但它却没有任何感觉。正如我已经说过的，虽然你完全的死在罪里，至少你应该相信对你宣告了这审判的圣经。简而言之，你越少地感受到你的罪和软弱，你就越有理由必须去参加圣礼，寻求它的帮助和治疗。

Again, look around you and see whether you are also in the world. If you do not know, ask your neighbors about it. If you are in the world, do not think that there will be any lack of sins and needs. Just begin to act as if you want to become upright and cling to the gospel, and see whether you will not acquire enemies who harm, wrong, and injure you and give you cause to sin and do wrong. If you have not experienced this, then take it from the Scriptures, which everywhere give this testimony about the world.

再次地，看看你的周围，看看你是否还在这个世界上。如果你并不知道，就此问问你的邻居。如果你还在这个世界上，不要认为你会缺乏任何罪和需要。按照你想要成为正直和坚持福音的方式开始行动吧，看看你是否不会收获敌人的伤害、毁谤和攻击，并使你犯罪和做错误的事。如果你并没有经历这些，那就从圣经中找到它，圣经到处都是关于这世界的见证。

Moreover, you will surely have the devil around you, too. You will not entirely trample him underfoot because our Lord Christ could not entirely avoid him. Now, what is the devil? Nothing else than what the Scriptures call him: a liar and a murderer. A liar who entices the heart away from God's Word and blinds it, making you unable to feel your need or to come to Christ. A murderer who begrudges you every hour of your life. If you could see how many daggers, spears, and arrows are aimed at you every moment, you would be glad to come to the sacrament as often as you can. The only reason we go about so securely and heedlessly is that we neither imagine nor believe that we are in the flesh, in the wicked world, or under the kingdom of the devil.<sup>2</sup>

此外，可以肯定的是，魔鬼同样存在于你周围。你不能完全地将它踩在脚下，因为我们的主基督尚且不能完全地避开它。魔鬼是什么呢？没有比圣经对它的称呼更好的了：说谎者和杀人者。它是一个说谎者，诱惑人心离开上帝的话语，使它变瞎，让你不能感受到你的需要或来到耶稣面前。它是一个杀人者，在你生命的每一刻都在嫉恨着你。如果你能看到每时每刻都有多少匕首、投枪和利箭瞄准着你，你将会很高兴地尽可能多地参加圣礼。我们之所以如此安心和掉以轻心地四处游荡，其唯一原因是，我们既不想象也不相信我们在肉体之中，在这个邪恶的世界里面，或在魔鬼的国度之下。<sup>2</sup>

试读本



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## The ditch of despair 绝望的沟壑

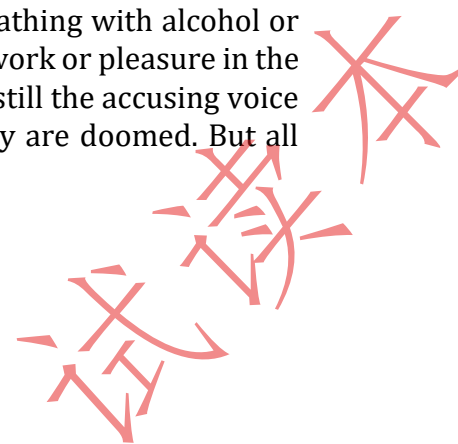
Jesus does not rescue us from the ditch of carnal security without warning us against the ditch on the opposite side, the ditch of despair. It is a ditch deep and dark. In a way, those in it are remarkably like those in the ditch of carnal security. Those in both ditches look at themselves instead of at the cross of Christ. They listen to their own voices rather than to his in Word and sacraments. Those in the ditch of carnal security think that they are so good that they do not need forgiveness; those in the ditch of despair think that they are so bad that forgiveness cannot reach them.

耶稣不仅将我们从肉体安全感的沟壑中拯救出来，同时也警告我们抵挡另一侧的沟壑——绝望的沟壑。这是一条又深又黑暗的沟壑。在某种程度上，那些在其中的人非常像那些在肉体安全感的沟壑之中的人。在这两条沟壑之中的人都聚焦在他们自己而不是基督的十字架上。他们都听从自己的声音而不是基督在圣道和圣礼中的声音。那些在肉体安全感的沟壑里的人，认为他们是如此之好以至于他们不需要赦免；那些在绝望的沟壑里的人，认为他们是如此之坏以至于赦免并不能临到他们。

But let us examine that ditch of despair and those in it a bit more closely. They lead tragic lives of anguish. The despair may be the result of a terrible sin known to all. It may be the sin of the drunk driver who killed someone as the result of his drunkenness. It may be the sin of the gambler who squandered the security of his family by his reckless greed. It may be the sin of the adulterer whose ruined marriage is a constant reminder of his lust. But just as likely, the sin of the one in despair may be a secret, known only to God and the sinner. The very fact that the sin is secret makes the anguish of this one in despair all the more acute; he feels that he has added to his guilt by what he counts as the hypocrisy of his outward uprightness. He may even wish that his guilt were known, so at least he would not feel like a hypocrite.

但是让我们更密切地审查一下这个绝望的沟壑和那些深陷其中的人。他们过着痛苦的悲惨人生。这绝望可能是一个众所周知的可怕的罪的结果。它可能是一个醉酒司机的罪，他因为他的醉驾而杀害了某人。它可能是一个赌徒的罪，他因为他无止境的贪婪而挥霍了他家庭的保障。它可能是一个通奸者的罪，他被毁的婚姻永远在提醒着他他的淫乱。但同样可能的是，这个在绝望中的人的罪可能是一个秘密，唯有上帝和这个罪人知道。他的罪是隐秘的这一事实，让这个在绝望中的人的痛苦更加剧烈；他视他外表上的义都是虚伪的，这让他更觉有罪。他甚至会希望他的罪是公开的，这样至少他不会感到像一个伪君子。

Some of those in despair may try to drown their fear and self-loathing with alcohol or lose it in a drug-induced fog. Others may abandon themselves to work or pleasure in the hope that they may somehow forget their guilt. They struggle to still the accusing voice of conscience and the nagging sense that in the eyes of God they are doomed. But all their efforts only increase their anguish.



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一些在绝望之中的人，可能会试图用酒精淹没他们的恐惧和自我厌恶，或是在毒品产生的烟雾中丢掉它们。其他的人可能会让他们自己陷入工作或娱乐中，希望他们可以以某种方式忘记他们的罪疚。他们努力地去平息良心谴责的声音和在上帝眼里他们注定灭亡的不安之感。但是他们一切的努力只会增加他们的痛苦。

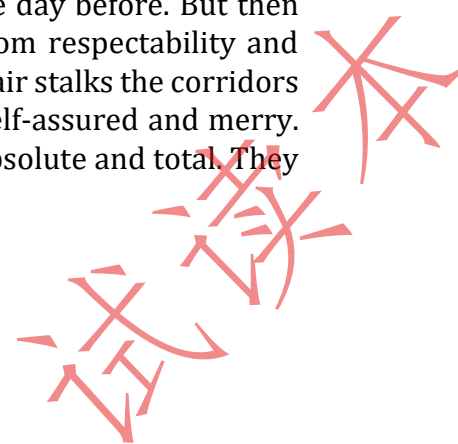
Whether their sin is secret or known to all, many in the ditch of despair carry their grief hidden and alone. In the stillness of the night, they may turn their faces to the wall and weep. In the light of day, they get dressed and go about their business, but always with the arrow stuck in the heart: "If people really knew! But God knows, and I know; he has cast me off because that is what I deserve; because of what I did, because of what I am, I am forever cursed and lost. It is just a matter of time before I get what I deserve."

无论他们的罪是秘密的还是众所周知的，许多在绝望沟壑里的人独自背负着他们隐秘的悲伤。夜深人静时，他们可能面壁而哭。光天化日之下，他们穿戴整齐，忙着他们自己的事，但是箭总是插在他们的心头：“不管人们知不知道！但是上帝知道，我也知道；他已经抛弃了我，因为这是我应得的；因为我的所作所为，因为我就是这样的人，我已经永远被咒诅和丧失了。我得到我应得的只是一个时间问题。”

Some in despair may struggle with might and main to emerge from the always black cloud that envelops their souls into the clear sunlight of a peaceful conscience. They may try again and again to better themselves and become worthy. The most tragic aspect of their despair may well lie exactly in those efforts. What they really want to do is get into the opposite ditch, the ditch of carnal security. They long for the day when they can be not forgiven but righteous by their own efforts and works, without any further need of forgiveness. If they succeed in this striving, they will be at least as bad off as before. The only difference will be that whereas before they knew their need, now they will choose to forget it. In either case, left to themselves they are still doomed.

一些在绝望中的人，可能会竭力地挣扎，想要从一直笼罩着他们心灵的乌云中摆脱出来，沐浴在和平的良心的光照之下。他们可能会一次又一次地，努力让他们自己变得更好和更有价值。他们的绝望最悲惨的一面，很可能恰恰在于这些努力。他们真正想做的，是进入相反的沟壑，肉体安全感的沟壑。他们渴望有一天，借着他们自己的努力和工作，他们不再需要任何进一步的赦免，不用被赦免却是义的。如果他们的努力成功了，他们至少会和之前一样糟糕。唯一不同的是，以前他们知道他们的需要，现在他们选择忘掉它，无论哪种情况，留给他们的依然是注定的灭亡。

Indeed, some of those in the ditch of despair come to it fresh from the ditch of carnal security. They may have been very comfortable in their skin the day before. But then something happened. There was a sudden and dramatic fall from respectability and virtue into some horrible sin. Now overwhelmed with guilt, despair stalks the corridors of their souls and dread darkens their hearts only recently so self-assured and merry. They do not grasp that the need for grace and mercy is always absolute and total. They needed forgiveness just as much yesterday as they do today.



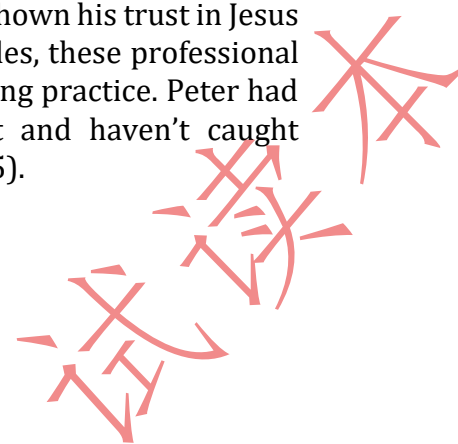
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的确，一些人刚从肉体安全感的沟壑里爬出来，马上就掉入了绝望的沟壑。他们可能前一天心里感到非常安逸。但随后发生了某些事，他们突然之间并戏剧性地从体面 and 美德中跌入某个可怕的罪里。现在，罪疚淹没了他们，绝望在他们灵魂的过道蔓延，恐惧使他们刚刚还如此自信和愉悦的心伸手不见五指。他们并不理解，对恩典和怜悯的需要总是绝对和完全的。他们今天对赦免的需要，和他们昨天的需要一样多。

That is not to say that the fall which has brought them to despair is unimportant. The sin may well have some very painful consequences in life and certainly in the soul. It needs repentance. Of course, tears of sorrow and anguish over what was done will not wash away the sin, even though such tears are altogether appropriate. The flood of tears serves a good purpose if it lifts us out of the ditch of carnal security; it is counterproductive if it drowns us in the ditch of despair. Here we observe the devil's favorite trick: First, he minimizes sin when he tempts us to it; then, he exaggerates it when we have fallen into it. But God uses our fall to demonstrate our need for grace and to exalt his own mercy and love for us in Christ. And that's where the narrow middle road is to be found: in Christ, in God's grace for the fallen, in mercy always desperately needed and always full and free at the cross and so generously poured out on us in the Word and sacraments.

这并不是说，使他们跌入绝望的事是不重要的。罪很可能在生命中带来一些非常痛苦的后果，在灵魂中必定也会这样。它需要悔改。当然，因所做之事而流的懊悔和痛苦的眼泪，并不能洗去罪，尽管这样的眼泪是完全恰当的。如果泪如泉涌能将我们从肉体安全感的沟壑里拉出来，它就是服务于一个很好的目的；如果它使我们淹没在绝望的沟壑里，那就适得其反了。在这里我们看到了魔鬼特别喜欢的把戏：首先，当他诱惑我们去犯罪时，它对其轻描淡写；然后，当我们坠入罪中时，它又对其夸大其词。但是上帝使用我们的跌倒来证明我们对恩典的需要，并在基督里为我们高举他自身的怜悯和爱。这就是狭窄的中路所能被找到的地方：在基督里，在上帝对跌倒之人的恩典里，在我们一直迫切需要的怜悯里，这怜悯在十字架上永远是完全和白白的，并在圣道和圣礼里如此慷慨地倾倒在我们身上。

Though the exact causes of despair are many and varied, the ditch for each person in it is dark and dreary indeed. We have in the gospels a striking example of one on the brink of the ditch of despair. His cry of despair was so sudden and so desperate that one may suspect that he had been at or in that ditch a time or two before. It was the cry of Peter in Luke 5:8. Overwhelmed by the power and the holiness of Jesus occasioned by the miracle of the catch of fish, Peter fell on his knees and cried out, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" This cry came from a man who had already shown his devotion to the Word of God as a disciple of John the Baptist. He had already shown his trust in Jesus only moments earlier; Jesus had told Peter and his fellow disciples, these professional fishermen, to do the opposite of what they knew to be good fishing practice. Peter had responded beautifully: "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. *But because you say so, I will let down the nets*" (verse 5).



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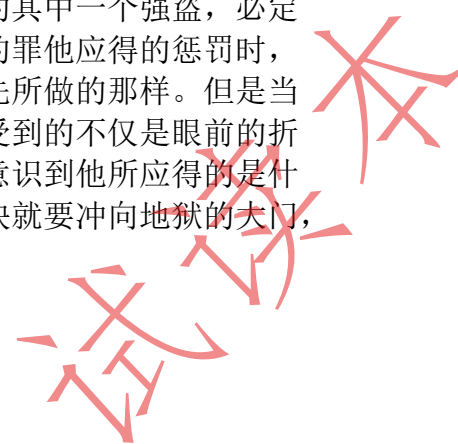
虽然造成绝望的确切原因是多种多样的，对每一个陷入这沟壑的人来说，它确实是黑暗而沉郁的。关于在绝望沟壑边缘的人，福音书中有一个惊人的例子。他那绝望的呼喊是如此地突然，如此地不顾一切，以至于我们很可能会怀疑，他陷入这沟壑已经不止一次两次了。这就是路加福音 5:8 彼得的呼喊。借着耶稣捕鱼的神迹，彼得被他的大能和圣洁压倒，跪下呼喊道：“主啊，离开我，我是个罪人！”这呼喊来自于一个作为施洗约翰的门徒，已经表明了他忠心于上帝之道的人。就在不久之前，他已经表明他相信耶稣。耶稣告诉彼得和他的门徒，这些专业的渔夫，去做与他们已知的好的捕鱼方式相反的事。彼得的回答很漂亮：“老师，我们整夜劳累，并没有打着什么。但遵从你的话，我就下网”（路 5:5）。

But what merit did even this good confession of faith have before the One who sees all, who knows the heart and the wickedness that dwells there? Peter recognized that fundamental truth. In his awareness of his own heart and the sin that dwelt there, he cried out as he did. Who dares to stay long in the presence of the One who knows exactly what lies hidden in the deepest recesses of the soul? And more than that, who wants to tarry with the One who knows all of that and who at the same time demands perfection and can punish any lack of it?

但是即使是这样好的信仰告白，在一个能看透一切，知道人心和人心里面所有软弱的全能者面前，有什么功绩呢？彼得意识到了这个基本的真理。由于意识到他的心和住在他心里的罪，他就像他所做的那样，大喊出来。谁能在一个精确知道隐藏在灵魂最深处一切事的全能者面前，站立得住呢？最重要的是，谁想要和一个知道这一切，同时又要求完美并能够惩罚一切不完美的全能者在一起呢？

Others in the Bible also knew a good deal about the ditch of despair, either because of time spent there or because of the frequent sight of that ditch close by. One of the two thieves with whom Jesus was crucified certainly knew about that ditch. It was from it that he spoke in those dread hours when he made confession of his guilt and what he deserved for his sins. His fellow criminal mocked Jesus, just as he himself had done earlier. But as his tortured soul saw the jaws of death and hell opening to swallow him, his sense of not just the present torment but of what laid before him pressed in on him. He first acknowledged what he deserved: “We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve.” Then in the anguish of one who knows that he should soon storm through the gates of hell, he cried out in his pain, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (Luke 23:41,42).

圣经中的其他人对这绝望的沟壑同样了解很深，要么是因为他们在那里呆了很久，要么是因为他们经常看到这沟壑就在眼前。与耶稣同钉十字架的其中一个强盗，必定知道这沟壑。在那些可怕的时刻，当他承认他的罪疚和因为他的罪他应得的惩罚时，他就是在这沟里说的。和他一起的罪犯，嘲笑耶稣，正如他早先所做的那样。但是当他备受折磨的灵魂，看到死亡和地狱张开口要吞没他时，他感受到的不仅是眼前的折磨，还有那陈列在他前面的这一切正倾倒在他身上。他第一次意识到他所应得的是什么：“我们是应得的，因为我们是自作自受。”当他知道他很快就要冲向地狱的大门，



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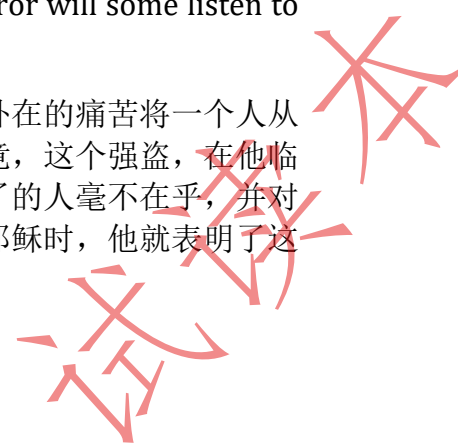
在这样极度的痛苦中，他呼喊道：“耶稣啊，你进入你国的时候，求你记念我”（路 23:41, 42）。

For the dying thief there were no excuses. Promises to do better in the future were out of the question. The presentation of evidence that somehow he had done other things that were good and that, therefore, he might have at least a shred of merit could not even come to mind. All that he could do was despair of himself. All he could do was plead for grace and beg for mercy. Prompted either by what he had known about Jesus earlier or by Jesus' earlier words of grace from the cross, that was exactly what he did. What grace that Jesus in the midst of his own torment, a torment far greater than that of this one criminal, looked on him, even on him, with pity. In the midst of his own misery, Jesus rescued the despairing from eternal ruin with his work and his word: "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). And by those words, he snatched the soul from the ditch of despair and transported him to the narrow middle road. Soon thereafter Jesus kept his promise and snatched the guilty soul up into the paradise of the blessed saints and angels.

对于垂死的强盗来说，再也没有任何借口。承诺在将来做的更好是一件不可能的事。展示一些无论怎样他曾经做过的好事，因此，他至少拥有一点点功德，但甚至连这样的“好事”他也想不起来。他所能做的就是对自己绝望，他所能做的就是乞求恩典和怜悯。要么是被先前他对于耶稣的认识所激发，要么是被耶稣在十字架上恩典的话语所激发，这恰恰就是他所做的。这是何等的恩典啊，耶稣在他自己的苦难中，在一个远比这个罪犯所承受的更大的苦难中，怜悯的看着他，甚至是他。在他自身的苦难中，耶稣用他的善工和他的话，把这个绝望的人从永恒的毁灭中拯救出来：“我实在告诉你，今日你要同我在乐园里了”（路 23:43）。借着这些话，他将这灵魂从绝望的沟壑中抓出来，把他放到狭窄的中路上。不久之后，耶稣信守了他的承诺，将这个有罪的灵魂带到蒙福圣徒和天使所在的天堂。

As in the case of the thief on the cross, so very often it may happen that outward misery has dragged someone from the ditch of carnal security to the brink of despair or all the way into the ditch. The thief, after all, had been quite secure before his encounter with Jesus at the approach of death. He had thought nothing of those he hurt by his crimes and had cared nothing for the judgment of God or man. He had demonstrated exactly that when earlier he had joined the other thief in mocking Jesus. But now in the hour of death and at the gate of hell, God ripped the thief from the jaws of Satan by just that agony of death and the anticipation of the far worse misery yet to come in hell. To put it another way, God in love sent the thief on the cross and sends many others a foretaste of hell in order to rescue them from hell.<sup>3</sup> Only in torment or terror will some listen to words of divine love and mercy.

就像在十字架上这个强盗的例子一样，经常会发生的情况是，外在的痛苦将一个人从肉体安全感的沟壑拉到绝望的边缘，一直到绝望的沟壑里。毕竟，这个强盗，在他临死与耶稣相遇之前，是相当安全的。他对那些被他的罪行伤害了的人毫不在乎，并对上帝或人的审判毫不在意。当他在先前与另一个强盗一起嘲笑耶稣时，他就表明了这





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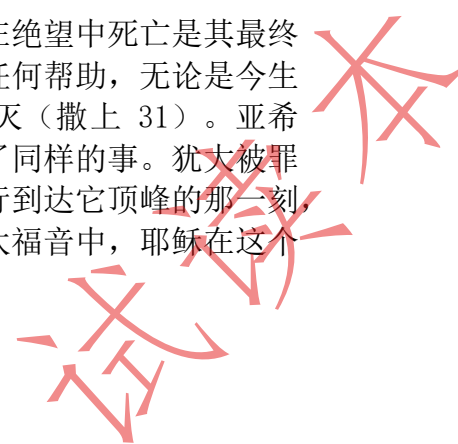
一点。但现在，在临死的时刻和地狱的门口，正是借着死亡的痛苦和预料到即将到来的在地狱里更糟糕的苦难，上帝将这个强盗从撒旦的口中抢了出来。换句话说，上帝在爱中把这个强盗放在十字架上，他为了把很多人从地狱里拯救出来，就让他们先预尝一下地狱的滋味。<sup>3</sup>只有在痛苦或恐惧中，才会有人倾听神圣爱与怜悯的话语。

We have another example of just such a jump from one ditch to the edge of the other in the case of King Manasseh, one of Judah's worst kings (2 Chronicles 33). In addition to the sins mentioned in the Bible, tradition has it that Manasseh had the prophet Isaiah killed by having him sawed in half. Only after God sent him misery did Manasseh recognize his sin and humble himself before the Lord. With a hook in the nose and bound in chains, Judah's most wicked king had time to remember his crimes and how he had despised the Word of God in favor of his own will and pleasure. As with the thief on the cross, Manasseh, and anyone else in the ditch of despair, only the Word of grace and forgiveness is powerful enough to rescue and save from despair.

在犹大最坏的一个王，玛拿西王（历下 33）的事迹中，我们有另一个从一个沟壑跳到另一个沟壑边缘的例子。除了圣经中提到的罪，传说是玛拿西将先知以赛亚锯成两半，杀死了他。只有在上帝使玛拿西受苦之后，他才意识到他的罪，并在上帝面前谦卑他自己。在被用钩子勾住鼻子，又被用铁索锁住之后，犹大最邪恶的王终于有时间想起他的罪行，想起他怎样为了他自己的意愿和享乐而藐视上帝的话语。正如在十字架上的强盗，玛拿西和任何其他在绝望沟壑中的人一样，唯有恩典和赦免之道，才有足够的力量从绝望中拯救他们。

Death in despair is exactly the end result for those who turn away from the only possible rescue in Jesus' Word of forgiveness. At its most extreme is the death of the unrepentant suicide. Saul despaired of any help from God either for this life or for the next and killed himself, and so he went to his eternal doom (1 Samuel 31). So too did Ahithophel during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Samuel 17:23). Judas did the same. Overwhelmed by guilt, Judas spurned the grace of his Savior. Even in Gethsemane, in the very hour when Judas' crimes reached their zenith, Jesus called Judas to repentance with his word of reproach so gently spoken, "Judas [in Matthew's gospel, Jesus in this hour even calls Judas 'friend!'], are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48). When Judas finally realized what he had done, he thought not of Jesus' words to him even in Gethsemane. He thought only of his crime and so went and hanged himself and thus entered into eternal despair (Matthew 27:1-5; Acts 1:18). Tragic indeed is the end of the unrepentant suicide for this life and the next if even in that last terrible hour he is unable to lay hold of the cross of Christ that has the power to cleanse even from this dread deed.

对于那些离弃在耶稣赦免之道里这唯一可行的拯救的人来说，在绝望中死亡是其最终的结局。最极端的情况是死不悔改的自杀。扫罗对来自上帝的任何帮助，无论是今生的还是来生的都充满绝望，他自杀了，因此他走向了永恒的毁灭（撒下 31）。亚希多弗在押沙龙背弃他时，也是如此（撒下 17:23）。犹大也做了同样的事。犹大被罪疚淹没，摒弃他救主的恩典。甚至在客西马尼园，当犹大的罪行到达它顶峰的那一刻，耶稣如此温柔地用他责备的话语呼召犹大悔改：“犹大（在马太福音中，耶稣在这个



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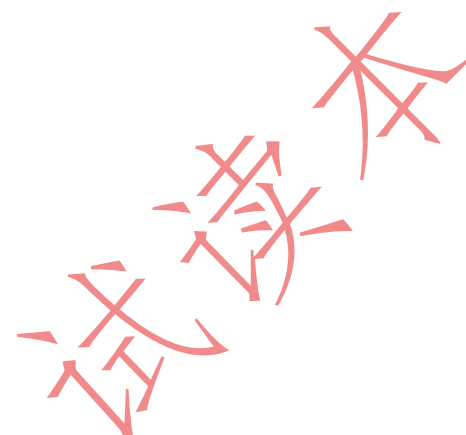
时候甚至称犹大‘朋友’）！你用亲嘴的暗号卖人子吗？”（路 22:48）。当犹大最终意识到他做了什么，他甚至都没有想到耶稣在客西马尼园对他说的话。他想到的只有他的罪行，因此他就去上吊自杀，从而陷入永恒的绝望里面（太 27:1-5；徒 1:18）。如果甚至在这最后的恐怖时刻，他都不能抓住基督的十字架——这十字架甚至能够从这可怕的行为中洁净他，他的结局——在不悔改中自杀——对今生和来生确实都是悲惨的。

Those who do not carry out their despair in the way that Saul and Judas did often find their lives crushed by two heavy burdens. The one we have already mentioned is the fear that God cannot forgive them, that their sin is too great for his blood to wash it away. A second kind of dread, one closely related but not quite the same, is this: the inability to forgive oneself. Such a one may hear of the love of God and his eagerness to forgive. He may even come to believe that God could indeed forgive him. But the mercy of God, his grace and pardon, give no peace to the one who cannot forgive himself. He is still tormented by his guilt that has morphed into self-loathing. That lack of peace, that inability to let go of the guilt once God has let it go can so crush the soul that it finally turns back again to total despair. On the way back to the bottom of the ditch, such a person may find that his disgust with himself draws him back again and again to the very things that disgust him most. Sick to death of the result of his earlier drunkenness, he seeks to forget it by more drunkenness. Disgusted with his immorality and despairing of rescue, he falls again into immorality. In the process, he turns his back on the mercy of God and ends up considering it irrelevant.

那些不像扫罗和犹大那样绝望的人，常常发现他们的生命被两个沉重的负担压垮了。我们已经提到过其中一个，那就是害怕上帝不能原谅他们，害怕他们的罪是如此之大，以至于他的血并不能洗去它。第二个可怕的，与第一个密切相关但又不尽相同的负担是：无法饶恕他自己。这样的人可能听说了上帝的爱和他对饶恕的热忱。他甚至可能相信上帝确实会饶恕他。但是上帝的怜悯，他的恩典和饶恕，却没有给这个不能饶恕他自己的人带来平安。他的罪疚感已经变成了自我厌恶，并依然折磨着他。这种对平安的缺乏，这种对放下上帝已经放下了的罪疚的无能，能摧毁灵魂，让它最终重新回到完全的绝望里面。在重回这沟底的过程中，这样的人可能会发现，他对自己的憎恶，将他一次又一次地拉回最令他憎恶自己的事情上。一个酗酒的人，对他先前酗酒的后果厌烦透顶，想借更多的酗酒来忘掉它。他对他不道德的厌恶和对拯救的绝望，让他再次堕入不道德中。在这个过程中，他离弃了上帝的仁慈，并最终认为这仁慈与自己毫不相关。

Tragic indeed is the lot of those in the ditch of despair.

那许多在绝望沟壑中的人确实是悲惨的。



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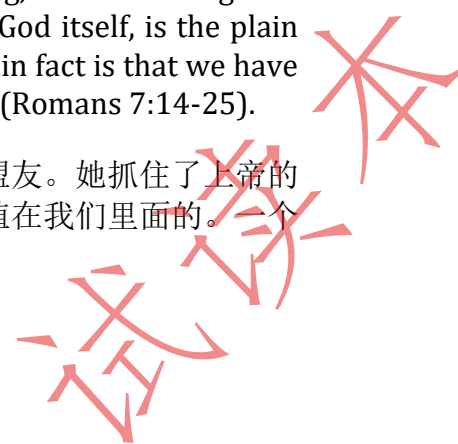
## The narrow Lutheran middle 狭窄的路德宗中路

How shall we get out of and stay out of these two perilous ditches of carnal security and despair? If we are to find and stay in the middle, we need at least briefly to look at the role of reason in pulling us into one or the other of those ditches. The role of reason is a strong one indeed. In the ditch of carnal security, however, one might think that her voice is a little ridiculous. If ever she is the painted harlot that Luther calls her, it is there in the ditch of carnal security. All dressed up, she minces and winks and poses before the fool to convince him that he can do exactly as he pleases without regard to the law of God. Smooth as silk are her words, and her tongue drips with honey as she whispers in the ears of the self-righteous: "You are so good and so right; you need not trouble yourself with any sense of guilt or with repentance. God is lucky to have you on his side, and he favors you with good reason." She sits on the throne of the *opinio legis*, that wicked and perverse notion that stirs in our souls from the moment of conception; it is the notion deeply rooted in us that we are, after all, not so bad and, truth to be told, pretty good; we are certainly not desperate sinners like so many others. But empty is the head and shallow the soul that listen to Dame Reason from the ditch of carnal security.

我们怎样才能离开肉体安全感和绝望这两个危险的沟壑呢？如果我们要找到并持守在中路上，我们至少需要简单看看，理性在把我们拉进这些沟壑所扮演的角色。理性确实扮演了一个强大的角色。然而，在肉体安全感的沟壑里，人们可能会认为她的声音有点儿荒唐。如果她是路德所说的浓妆艳抹的妓女，那就是在肉体安全感的沟壑里。她盛装打扮，在蠢人面前装腔作势、扭捏作态，使他确信他能够不顾上帝的律法，随心所欲地做任何事。当她在自义之人耳边低语的时候，她的话如丝绸般柔润，她的舌头滴着蜂蜜：“你是如此良善，如此正确；你不需要用任何罪疚感或任何懊悔感来烦扰自己。上帝很幸运有你在你身边，他有充足的理由支持你。”她坐上了律法见解（*opinio legis*）的宝座，律法见解这种邪恶和悖逆的观念，从我们受孕的那一刻，就搅扰着我们的心；它是一种深深根植在我们里面的观念，即，我们毕竟没那么坏——实话实说，相当地好；我们当然不像很多其他绝望的罪人一样。但是对于那些在肉体安全感的沟壑里听从理性女士的人，无知是他们的头脑，浅薄是他们的灵魂。

In the ditch of despair, however, Dame Reason takes to herself some powerful allies. She lays hold of the law of God. She brings along the voice of conscience that God himself has planted in us as a judge. The one who honestly looks into the law, the one whose conscience is alive and well, quite reasonably may despair. Dame Reason is right to declare that we merit only God's wrath and judgment. If anything, she does not go far enough. For unknown to reason, known only from the Word of God itself, is the plain fact that we are conceived and born in sin (John 3:6). And the plain fact is that we have not a single moment in a whole lifetime that is not stained by sin (Romans 7:14-25).

然而，在绝望的沟壑里，理性女士为自己找到了一些强有力的盟友。她抓住了上帝的律法。她带来了良心的声音，这声音是上帝自己作为审判者种植在我们里面的。一个



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诚实地查看律法的人，一个良心健全的人，完全有理由感到绝望。当理性女士宣称，我们只配得到上帝的愤怒和审判时，她是对的。如果有任何不对的话，那就是，她做的还不够。理性不知道的是，我们从受孕到出生都是有罪的（约 3:6），我们在整个一生中没有任何一刻不被罪所玷污（罗 7:14-25），这一清晰的事实，唯有透过上帝之道本身才能知道。

The problem, however, with Dame Reason's arguments from both the ditches is that she hangs on to only half of the truth as she lures the unwary to their ruin.

然而，来自这两个沟壑的论点的问题在于，当理性女士借着它们引诱那些轻率的人走向毁灭时，她只抓住了一半的真理。

The half-truth for the secure is that they may look good on the outside. What's left out is the fact that the outward appearance only masks the inherited corruption of our nature and the hidden idolatry of self.

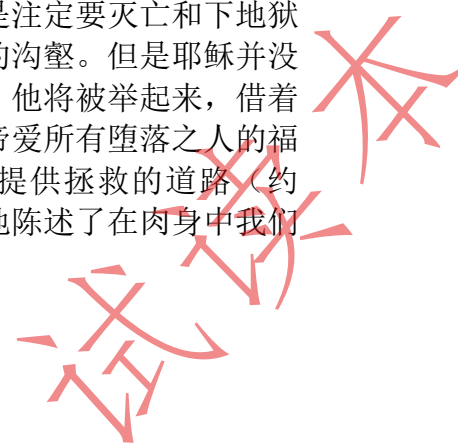
对那些安全的人来说，这一半的真理是，他们在外表上看起来可能很好。他们忽略了另外的事实，那就是，外在的形象恰恰掩盖了我们本性里遗传下来的腐败和隐藏着的对自我的偶像崇拜。

The half-truth for those in despair is that they indeed deserve nothing but wrath and punishment. What's left out is that God's grace is for the undeserving and his mercy is for those doomed to death and hell.

对那些在绝望中的人来说，这一半的真理是，除了愤怒和惩罚外，他们确实什么也不配得。他们忽略了另外的事实，那就是，上帝的恩典是给不配得之人的，他的怜悯是给注定要死并下地狱之人的。

Jesus tells Nicodemus in John 3:6 that all mankind born according to nature is doomed and damned. That should shatter Nicodemus' carnal security. It should send him running toward the ditch of despair. But Jesus does not leave Nicodemus to despair. He points to himself as the divinely sent Savior who would be lifted up to draw all to himself by his work for our redemption. He speaks the gospel of God's love for all of the fallen, not one excluded. He proclaims that the way of salvation is the way of trust in him alone for that salvation (John 3:14-18). St. Paul does the same thing in Romans 7. After he has graphically set forth the hopelessness of our condition in the flesh, he bursts out in a song of triumph: "Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:25).

在约翰福音 3:6，耶稣告诉尼哥底母，所有按本性出生的人都是注定要灭亡和下地狱的。这本该粉碎尼哥底母的肉体安全感，这本该让他奔向绝望的沟壑。但是耶稣并没有让尼哥底母陷入绝望里面。他指出他自己是上帝差派的救主，他将被举起来，借着他为我们救恩所做的工作，吸引所有人归向他自己。他宣讲上帝爱所有堕落之人的福音——没有一人被排除在外。他宣称救恩之道是相信唯有他提供拯救的道路（约 3:14-18）。圣保罗在罗马书 7 章做了同样的事。他形象生动地陈述了在肉身中我们



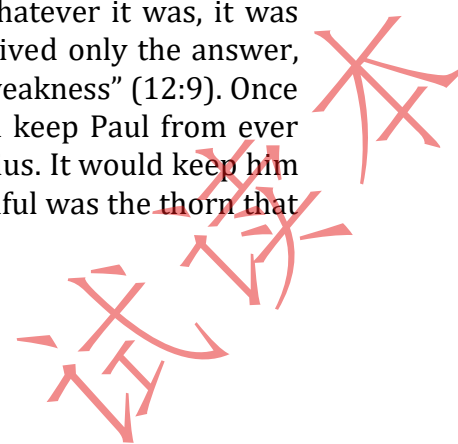
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绝望的处境，之后，他唱响了一首凯旋之歌：“感谢上帝，靠着我们的主耶稣基督就能”（罗 7:25）。

There is no better example of one who kept to the narrow middle road than Paul. Few knew more from experience about these two ditches than Paul. But Jesus knew well how to keep Paul on the narrow middle road. He did it not least by making Paul fully aware of the ditches on both sides of that road. Jesus let Paul remember how little he deserved of God's grace and mercy. A return to the carnal security in which Paul had lived before his conversion was ruled out for Paul by the memory of the monstrous crimes he had committed: "I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God" (1 Corinthians 15:9). By God's grace and in spite of his past, Paul became an apostle. Indeed, as he himself testified, he worked harder and more effectively than all the other apostles. But it was grace, not success, that saved him from the abyss of despair. Paul acknowledged the same when he declared, "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10). There's the middle road. With eyes that saw clearly the desperate need of forgiveness and saw just as clearly grace heaped upon grace in Christ, Paul did not fall into the ditch of despair because of his sin.

对于持守在狭窄的中路之上，没有比保罗更好的例子了。对于这两条沟壑，很少有人比保罗有更多的经验。但是耶稣格外知道怎么使保罗持守在这狭窄的中路上。尤其是借着让保罗充分地了解中路这两侧的沟壑，他做到了这一点。耶稣让保罗记住他多么地不配得上帝的恩典和怜悯。在保罗归信前，他活在肉体安全感中，借着对他犯过的弥天大罪的提醒，让保罗不能回到这样的安全感之中：“我原是使徒中最小的，不配称为使徒，因为我曾迫害过上帝的教会”（林前 15:9）。上帝的恩典并不计较他的过去，让他成为了一名使徒。确实，正如他自己所见证的，他比众使徒都格外劳苦并更有功效。但把他从绝望的深渊中拯救出来的，是恩典，不是成功。保罗同样承认这个，他宣称：“然而，由于上帝的恩典，我才成了今日的我，并且他所赐给我的恩典不是徒然的。我比众使徒格外劳苦；其实不是我，而是上帝的恩典与我同在”（林前 15:10）。这就是那中路。保罗的眼睛清晰地看到他对赦免迫切的需要，他也同样清晰地看到在基督里恩典堆叠着恩典，因此，他并没有因为他的罪掉入这绝望的沟壑。

Could, however, Paul's labor and his sufferings for the sake of the gospel end up still putting him back again in the ditch of carnal security? Jesus saw to it that that did not happen. Paul tells us about it in 2 Corinthians 11,12. Matching the greatness of God's gifts to Paul in the ministry was the gift, yes the gift, of what Paul called his "thorn in my flesh" (12:7). He doesn't tell us exactly what the thorn was. Whatever it was, it was exceedingly painful. His pleas that God would take it away received only the answer, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (12:9). Once again, there is the narrow middle. The pain of the thorn would keep Paul from ever thinking that his "success" was due to his own hard work or genius. It would keep him out of the ditch of carnal security when things went well. So painful was the thorn that





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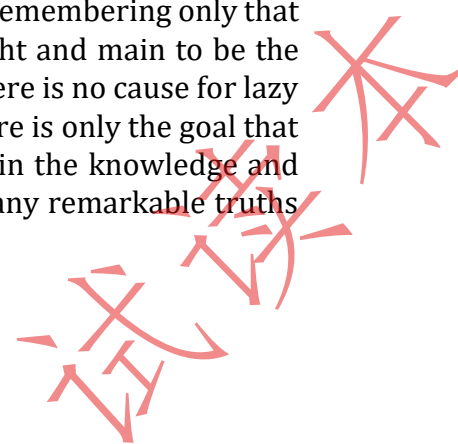
only the grace and mercy of God could enable him to survive it. And that grace and mercy was always sufficient.

然而，保罗为福音的缘故所作的苦工和所受的苦难，最终会不会使他再次回到肉体安全感的沟壑呢？耶稣确保了这事不会发生。在哥林多后书 11, 12 章就此保罗告诉我们，与上帝给保罗在服事上伟大的恩赐相称的，是保罗称之为他“身上有根刺”（林后 12:7）的恩赐，是的，恩赐。他并没有精确地告诉我们这根刺是什么。无论它是什么，它都是及其痛苦的。他祈求上帝将它拿开，只得到了这样的回答：“我的恩典是够你用的，因为我的能力是在人的软弱上显得完全”（林后 12:9）。再次地，这就是狭窄的中路。刺的痛苦让保罗不能想象他的“成功”是由于他自己的辛苦工作或天才。这将使他在事情进展顺利时远离肉体安全感的沟壑。那根刺是如此之痛，以至于唯有上帝的恩典和怜悯才能够使他存活下来。而恩典和怜悯总是够用的。

Paul, therefore, is someone we would want to listen to as we struggle to avoid the ditches of carnal security and despair. Just what advice does he have for us? He gives us brilliant and divinely inspired advice in Philippians 3. Those in the ditch of carnal security should listen as Paul describes all of his own virtues and good deeds. But what does he declare of all of it? He says that his works apart from Christ are nothing but rubbish (3:8). The only thing that matters is gaining the Christ who gives himself freely in the message of his death and resurrection. The only thing that counts is the Christ who gives his own righteousness to those who have nothing but rubbish for merit. And that perfect righteousness Christ gives through faith alone.

因此，当我们努力躲避肉体安全感的沟壑和绝望的沟壑时，保罗会是我们想要去倾听的人。他对我们有什么建议呢？在腓力比书 3 章，他给了我们绝妙的来自圣灵启示的建议。那些在肉体安全感的沟壑的人，应该听听保罗是如何描述他自身一切的功德和好行为的。但保罗是如何描述这一切的呢？他说他的工作，离开基督，都是粪土（腓 3:8）。唯一重要的事是赢得基督——他在他死亡和复活的信息里白白地舍弃了他自己。唯一有价值的事是基督——他把他自己的义赐给那些没有任何功德只有粪土的人。而这完美的义基督唯独借着信心赐下。

Then Paul follows with words of special encouragement for those struggling with the temptation to despair. When the demons grab us by the throat and are ready to drag us into that ditch, we do well to answer with Paul: “I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it [i.e., perfection in my life of faith]. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (3:13,14). A perfect narrow middle road! Let go of the imperfection and the sin of yesterday, remembering only that Christ has fully paid for it. And then press on, striving with might and main to be the redeemed child of God that you are. There is no license to sin. There is no cause for lazy security. There is no reason for despair. There is only Christ. There is only the goal that he has set before us. There is only a striving to reach that goal in the knowledge and assurance that he has already won it for us. That’s one of the many remarkable truths



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about the gospel: *we lose every battle to at least some extent because of the sin that always stains us, but we win the war because Christ has won it for us!*

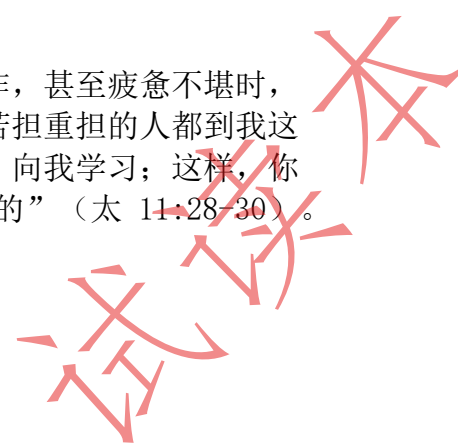
然后保罗接下来的话，特别鼓励那些努力与绝望的试探作斗争的人。当魔鬼掐住我们的喉咙，准备把我们拖到那个沟壑中时，我们最好和保罗一起回答说：“我不是以为自己已经得着了（比如，在我生命中完美的信心）；我只有一件事，就是忘记背后，努力面前的，向着标竿直跑，要得上帝在基督耶稣里从上面召我来得的奖赏”（腓 3:13,14）。一条完美的狭窄中路！忘记昨天的不完美和罪，唯独记住耶稣已经为它付出了完全的赎价。然后继续前进，作为上帝救赎的孩子，努力成为你所是的样式。这里没有罪的许可证。这里没有怠慢的安全感的借口。这里没有绝望的原因。这里只有基督。这里只有他摆在我们面前的标杆。这里只有在知道并确信他已经为我们赢得了这标杆之中，努力地向它直跑。这是关于福音很多令人瞩目的真理之一：我们因为一直在搅扰我们的罪，在每一场战役上都失败了——至少在某种程度上，但是我们赢了整场战争，因为基督已经为我们赢了它。

To Dame Reason, all this is nonsense. It just doesn't fit the way she looks at things. Either we should boast of our goodness or sin with reckless abandon; either we should arrogantly wallow in our self-righteous pride or despair in our guilt. But Paul shows us the way that God looks at it. Ultimately, God's reasoning is the only reasoning that counts. It is God's reasoning that puts us on the narrow middle road. It is God's reasoning that rejects Dame Reason's sweet mincing from the ditch of carnal security as well as her ugly demons grabbing at our throats from the ditch of despair.

对理性女士来说，这一切都是无稽之谈。它实在是不适合她看待事情的方式。我们要么在夸耀自己的良善，要么在恣意妄为地犯罪；我们要么在我们自以为义的骄傲中傲慢地打滚，要么在我们的罪疚中绝望。但是保罗向我们展示了上帝看待它的方式。最终，上帝的论证是唯一有价值的论证。是上帝的论证让我们走在狭窄的中路上。是上帝的论证拒绝理性女士从肉体安全感的沟壑里发出的甜言蜜语，同样也拒绝她从绝望的沟壑中抓住我们喉咙的恶魔。

As we labor and even grow weary in the effort to recognize and shun both ditches, we are cheered on by the compassionate and inviting voice of Jesus our Savior: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). Exhaustion is in the ditch, whether the one or the other. Refreshment and new strength, strength sufficient for the day, is under the yoke of Christ made easy by his presence, by his carrying it with and for us.

在我们努力地辨认并回避这两条沟壑的过程中，当我们辛勤劳作，甚至疲惫不堪时，借着耶稣我们救主怜悯和邀请的声音，我们重新得力：“凡劳苦担重担的人都到我这里来，我要使你们得安息。我心里柔和谦卑，你们当负我的轭，向我学习；这样，你们的心灵就必得安息。因为我的轭是容易的，我的担子是轻省的”（太 11:28-30）。



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在沟壑里是精疲力竭的，无论是在这一个沟壑还是在那一个。但在上帝的轭之下，借着他的同在，借着他和我们一起并为我们背负着它，我们每一天都是充足的新的力量。

For further instruction on the narrow middle road between these two ditches, we can but encourage the reading of the epistles. Read them, and you will see in every one of them strong and clear warnings against both ditches. In Paul's epistles, the antidote to despair is usually found in the earlier chapters and the warnings against carnal security in the later ones; that's easiest to see in Galatians and Ephesians. In John's first epistle, the warnings against both ditches are close together, woven tightly, especially in chapters 1-3. The same is true in Peter's first epistle, especially in chapter 1.

对于这两条沟壑中间狭窄的中路进一步的指引，我们只能鼓励你去阅读使徒书信。读读他们，你将会发现，他们中每一个，对这两个沟壑都发出了强烈而清晰的警告。在保罗书信中，对绝望的解药通常出现在开头的几章，对肉体安全感的警告出现在之后的几章；这一点在加拉太书和以弗所书中最容易看到。在约翰的第一封书信中，对这两条沟壑的警告紧紧的交织在一起，特别是在 1-3 章。在彼得的第一封书信中，同样如此，特别是在第一章。

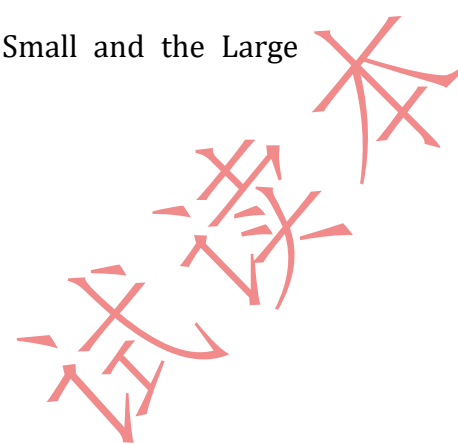
Those who walk blindly or with eyes closed along the narrow road that leads to life eternal will stumble and fall into the ditches and never reach the goal. Those who walk in the light that comes alone from the Word of God and Christ its center will recognize the ditches and their danger. Let us then walk wisely as in the day as we press toward the goal that Christ has prepared and won for us at the end of the day. He has put us on the road by bringing us to faith in and through his Word. And he will keep his Word of promise to bring us safely to the end of the journey through that same Word and not apart from it. Yes, he will remain faithful to his Word and keep calling us back by it even when in our folly we have stumbled into the ditch. Through it all, there will be no doubt about it at the end of our traveling days: Jesus Christ alone was our Savior yesterday, is our Savior today, and will receive all the praise and glory for our salvation in heaven forever!

那些在通往永生的狭窄中路上，盲目或闭着眼睛行走的人，将会跌入这些沟壑里，并永远到达不了目的。那些行走在光——这光唯独来自于上帝的道，而基督是它的中心——里的人，将会认出这沟壑和他们所处的危险。那么，让我们像在白天一样明智地行走，朝着基督为我们预备并最终为我们赢得的标杆直跑。

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luther's comments on the Fourth Petition in both the Small and the Large Catechisms.

<sup>1</sup> 参见路德大问答或小问答中，他对第四祷告的解释



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<sup>2</sup> The Large Catechism, *The Book of Concord*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2000), pp. 474, 475. Cf. also “Personal Preparation for Holy Communion,” *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>大问答，协同式

<sup>3</sup> Luther’s translation of Isaiah 28:19 is particularly interesting on this point: *Denn alleine die Anfechtung lehret aufs Wort merken* (“For only tribulation/testing [which is always of the most severe kind] teaches one to pay attention to the Word”).

<sup>3</sup>路德翻译的以赛亚书 28:19 在这一点上特别有趣：*Denn alleine die Anfechtung lehret aufs Wort merken* 【因为唯有患难/试炼（并总是最严峻的那种）指教一个人重视圣道】。

敬啟者

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## 4. The Narrow Lutheran Middle Between an Exclusive Emphasis on God's Providence or on God's Promises Concerning Prayer 在对唯独上帝眷顾的强调和上帝对祷告的应许之间狭窄的路德宗中路

We enter now onto a very beautiful and interesting stretch of the narrow middle road. One side of the road affords rich comfort and sweet refreshment for the weary traveler. On this side of the road, we see and hear a beautiful doctrine from God's Word, the doctrine of the *providence of God*. Of the pleasure in the sunshine and shade of this doctrine, there is no end. In the sweet refreshment from its fruit, there is constant delight.

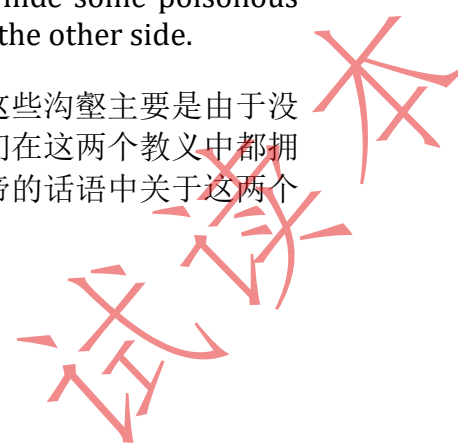
我们现在进入了这狭窄的中路上非常美丽和有趣的一段路。路的一边为疲倦的旅客提供了丰富的安慰和甘甜的提神。在路的这一边，我们从上帝的道中看到和听到一条美丽的教义：上帝眷顾的教义。在这条教义的光照和遮盖下的喜乐是没有止境的。从它的果子而来的甘甜的提神中，是恒久的快乐。

The opposite side of the road, likewise, is so attractive and appealing that to leave it would seem a shame indeed. On that side we hear the gracious voice of Jesus inviting us to pray and promising to hear us. So pleasing is his voice in those promises, so enchanting is the prospect of kneeling before him in prayer, that for all the world we could not imagine ever wanting to leave this side of the road either.

同样，路的另一边是如此地有魅力和吸引人，以至于离开它看上去实在是一种羞耻。在这一边我们听到了耶稣仁慈的声音：他邀请我们祷告并应许垂听我们。他在这些应许中的声音是多么令人愉快，跪在他面前祷告的景象是多么令人欢喜，我们无论如何都没法想象我们想要离开路的这一边。

On this stretch of the road, the ditches on either side lie hidden behind the evident beauty at the edge of the road. The ditches consist chiefly in a failure to pay due attention to the promises of God found on *both* sides of the road. God wants us to have in rich measure the blessings he offers in both doctrines. But as we should expect, Satan is ever busy in his efforts to spoil the beauty and the blessings of God's Word concerning these two doctrines. The devil uses his dear agent, Dame Reason, to hide some poisonous fruits on one side and to stick thorns in the midst of the roses on the other side.

在这一段路上，两边的沟壑都隐藏在路边缘明显的美好后面。这些沟壑主要是由于没有对存在于路的两边上帝的应许给予足够的重视。上帝想要我们在这两个教义中都拥有丰富的祝福。但是正如我们所预料的，撒旦总是急于破坏上帝的话语中关于这两个





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教义的美好和祝福。魔鬼使用它亲爱的代理人，理性女士，在路的一边藏起有毒的果子，又在路另一边的玫瑰里插上荆棘。

So then, let us consider on this beautiful stretch of the narrow middle road the delights that God offers in both doctrines without overemphasizing one or neglecting the other. Let us consider in each their turn what God has to say in his Word about his providence and then what he has to say about prayer.

那么，让我们在狭窄的中路这一段美丽的路程上，思考上帝在这两个教义中给予的喜悦，而不过分强调某一个或忽视另外一个。让我们依次思考，上帝在他的道里关于他的眷顾说了什么，关于祷告他又说了什么。

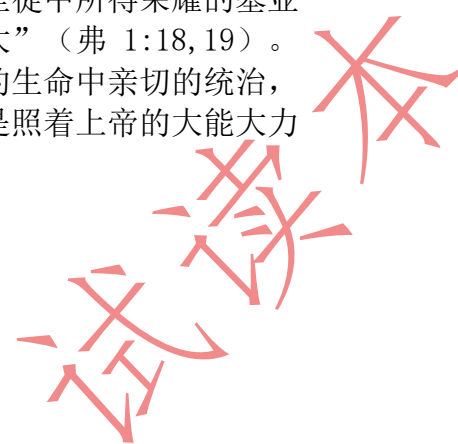
## The providence of God 上帝的眷顾

The doctrine of the providence of God deals with what the Bible says about God's gracious rule over history for the benefit of his children. It covers his protection of the church and of his Word and sacraments for the creation and preservation of faith. It covers as well and in detail the life, the history, of each individual Christian who trusts in Jesus for salvation and eternal life. It is a doctrine rich in comfort and endless in its application to the life of the church and to the life of each Christian.

上帝眷顾的教义，指的是圣经所说的，上帝为了他儿女的益处而对历史恩慈的统治。它包括他对教会的保护，和对创造并坚固信心的他的圣道和圣礼的保护。它也包括对每一个相信基督的救恩和永生的基督徒个体，在他们生命和历史上详细周到的保护。这是一个充满安慰的教义，在教会生命和每一个基督徒生命中都有无止境的应用。

Eloquent and beautiful indeed are the passages in the Bible that speak of God's providence. St. Paul, for example, sings the praises of Jesus our ascended King in Ephesians 1. He glories in this truth that all of our lives are in the hands of our ascended Savior. He prays that each person may "know the hope to which [God] has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe" (1:18,19). That hope is a sure and confident hope both for our ultimate salvation in heaven and also for God's ever-gracious rule over our lives in the here and now. Our hope is sure and secure because of the almighty power of God,

圣经谈到上帝眷顾的章节确实是雄辩而美丽的。比如，圣保罗在以弗所书 1 章歌颂耶稣我们升为至高的王。他以我们生命的一切都在我们升天的救主手里这一真理为荣。他祈祷每一个人都“知道他呼召你们来得的指望是什么，他在圣徒中所得荣耀的基业是何等丰盛，并知道他向我们这些信的人所显的能力是何等浩大”（弗 1:18, 19）。无论是对我们在天堂最终的救恩，还是对上帝在我们此时此刻的生命中亲切的统治，这盼望都是确定无疑的。我们的盼望是确定和安全的，因为这是照着上帝的大能大力运行的：



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which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.* (1:20-23)

这大能曾运行在基督身上，使他从死人中复活，又使他在天上坐在自己的右边，远超越一切执政的、掌权的、有权能的、统治的和一切有名号的；不但是今世的，连来世的也都超越了。上帝使万有服在他的脚下，又使他为了教会作万有之首；教会是他的身体，是那充满万有者所充满的。（弗 1:20-23）

Could there be a more rich and comforting assurance of Christ's care for us than that?

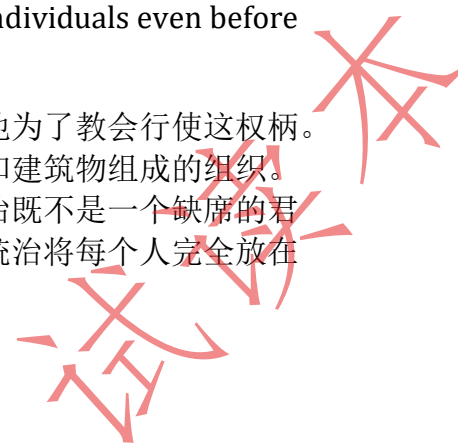
对于基督对我们的看护，还有什么比这更富有安慰的保证呢？

*Christus pro nobis!* Christ for us! That has ever been the great and jubilant cry of the church as she contemplates the *providence of God*. God's providence is his gracious rule over everything, rule that he has handed over to Christ our Savior. Christ is exalted on high. Total, complete, and full is his rule over time, over history, over governments, over sickness and death and hell itself.

*Christus pro nobis!* 基督为了我们！这是教会在她深思上帝的眷顾时最伟大的欢呼。上帝的眷顾是他对万有恩慈的统治——这统治他已经交托到基督我们救主的手里了。基督已经被升为至高。他对时间、历史、政府、疾病、死亡和地狱本身的统治是完全和彻底的。

And the authority that he has over everything in this world and the next he exercises, as Paul says, *for the church*. The church is not merely an organization with clergy and laity, officer holders, managers, and buildings. No, the church is "his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way." His rule is not that of an absent monarch or a distant and disinterested governor. Rather, his rule has each individual fully in his sight as a member of his own mystical body. His attention and his care are not divided into fractions so that you and I have perhaps a billionth part of his attention, and that only for a moment. No, it is his undivided attention that we enjoy every moment of our lives. Indeed, the apostle reminds us in an earlier part of the chapter (1:4) that Christ's eye and his mind, his heart and his attention were devoted to us as individuals even before the world began, in eternity!

并且，他拥有对这个世界和来世万有的权柄，正如保罗所说，他为了教会行使这权柄。教会不仅仅是一个由神职人员、平信徒、行政人员、管理人员和建筑物组成的组织。不，教会是“他的身体，是那充满万有者所充满的。”他的统治既不是一个缺席的君王，也不是一个疏远冷漠的统治者所施行的统治。相反，他的统治将每个人完全放在



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他目光之下，作为他自己奥妙身体里的一员。他的注意力和关心并没有被分割成片，以至于你和我可能只拥有他几十亿分之一的注意力，即只有一瞬间。不，我们在我们生命的每一瞬间都喜悦于他全心全意的关注。事实上，使徒在这一章的开头部分（弗 1:4）提醒我们，基督的眼睛和他的思想，他的心和他的注意力，甚至在创世以先，在永恒里，就放在我们每一个人身上。

Jesus himself tells us the same thing in his parting words to the disciples shortly before his ascension to this exalted position at God's right hand. He, the almighty and risen Lord, spoke words that echo down through the centuries. They are words directed to us collectively as his church; but just as much, they are words addressed to each individual believer: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. . . . And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18,20). Again, Jesus does not dole out his attention in fractions. When he promises that he is with you, with me, always, to the very end of the age, that promise is absolute. He is with me; he is with you according to both his divine and human natures. He is with you; he is with me with all of his attention, with all of his power, with all of his love and grace and protecting care!

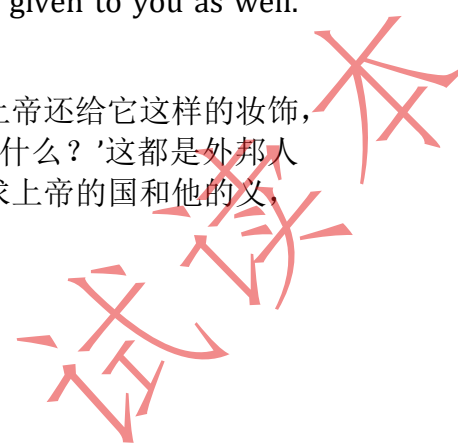
在耶稣升天坐在上帝右边前不久，在他给门徒的临别赠言中，他亲自告诉了我们同样的事。他，全能和复活的主，所说的话回荡在之后的世纪里。这些话是对我们作为他教会的整体说的；但同样，这些话也是对每一个信徒个体说的：“天上地下所有的权柄都赐给我了……看啊，我天天与你们同在，直到世代的终结”（太 28:18, 20）。再次地，耶稣并没有将他的注意力分散成片。当他应许他一直和你我同在，直到世代的终结时，这应许是绝对的。他与你同在；他按照他的神性和人性与你同在。他与你我同在；他用他全部的注意力，他全部的能力，他全部的爱、恩典和呵护与你我同在。

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus underscores the truth that these promises of his providence are meant for each of us as individuals. After reminding us that God provides for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field without their worry or concern, he tells us:

在登山宝训中，耶稣强调了真理：这些他眷顾的应许是为我们每一个人预备的。他提醒我们，上帝供应天上的飞鸟和田野的百合花，不用它们担心和忧虑，之后，他告诉我们：

Will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:30-33)

你们这小信的人哪！野地里的草今天还在，明天就丢在炉里，上帝还给它这样的妆饰，何况你们呢？所以，不要忧虑，说：‘我们吃什么？喝什么？穿什么？’这都是外邦人所求的。你们需要这一切东西，你们的天父都知道。你们要先求上帝的国和他的义，这些东西都要加给你们了。（太 6:30-33）



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Could there be a more complete, more generous, more reassuring promise of his providence than that? He knows and he provides for our greatest need, the need for forgiveness and eternal life. He knows and provides as well for the smallest need, our need for our next meal and change of clothes.

还有比这更完全、更慷慨、更可靠的关于他眷顾的应许吗？他知道并供应我们最大的需要：对赦免和永生的需要。他同样知道并供应我们最小的需要：我们下一顿饭和穿衣的需要。

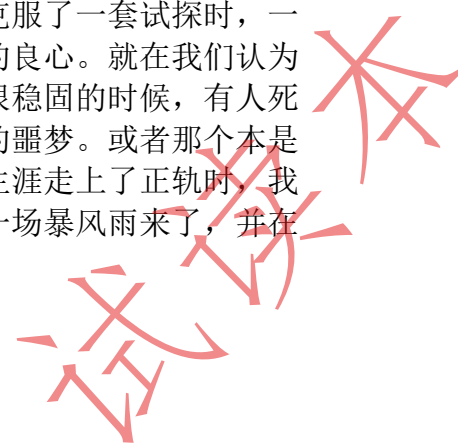
## The providence of God is not always obvious 上帝眷顾的应许不总是显然的

The doctrine of the providence of God clearly is not some abstract notion without any real or practical benefit for us as we travel the road from here to heaven. Quite the contrary; it is a doctrine that is especially useful to us as we stumble along on that road under the painful realities of a life stained by our own sin and marred by the sins of others. As a result of our sinful condition, we suffer in body and soul. We get sick. We endure the frustration of disappointed hopes for health and wealth, for family and friends. We, even in our life of faith, march one step forward only to fall back two steps a day later.

上帝眷顾的教义显然不是一个抽象的概念，在我们从这儿到天堂的路途上对我们没有任何真正的或实际的好处。恰恰相反；当我们蹒跚地走在被我们自己和别人的罪所沾污的痛苦的现实生命中时，这个教义对我们格外有用。由于我们的罪性，我们在身体和灵魂上受苦。我们生病。我们忍受着健康、财富、家庭和友谊，希望破灭后的沮丧。我们甚至在我们信仰的生命中，前进了一步，一天后却又后退了两步。

Who isn't acquainted with these facts of life? Just when we thought we had conquered one set of temptations, a new set rises to torment our souls and, when we fall, to torture our consciences. Just when we thought all was going well, we get sick. Just when we thought our family lives were stable, someone dies. Or the marriage that was supposed be a dream come true turns into a sin-stained nightmare. Or the child who was the apple of the eye instead fills the eye with tears. Just when we thought our professional lives were on the right track, we get laid off. Just when we thought our finances were finally in order, a storm comes and rips a hole in the roof that insurance will not cover. Just when we thought that friends were worthy and true, one of them betrays us and leaves.

谁不对生命中的这些事实分外熟悉呢？就在我们认为我们已经克服了一套试探时，一套新的试探开始折磨我们的灵魂，并在我们跌倒时，折磨我们的良心。就在我们认为一切都很顺利时，我们病倒了。就在我们认为我们的家庭生活很稳固的时候，有人死了。或者那个起先以为美梦成真的婚姻，变成了一个沾满罪恶的噩梦。或者那个本是掌上明珠的孩子，却让人涕泗横流。就在我们认为我们的职业生涯走上了正轨时，我们被开除了。就在我们认为我们的财务状况终于运转良好时，一场暴风雨来了，并在



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屋顶开了一个保险并不覆盖的洞。就在我们认为朋友们是值得的和忠诚的时，其中一个背叛我们并离开了。

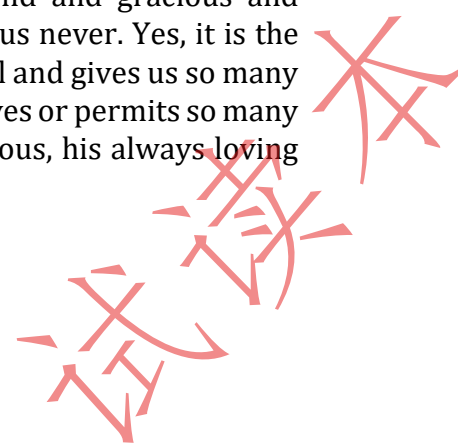
Whose life has not been touched by at least some of these plagues and so many others that the number is beyond counting? Yes, how many times are there in our lives when this thought creeps in: “Oh God, I thought you loved me and would take care of me. Where are you now when I seem so hopeless, helpless, and alone? Where is the promise of your providence?”

谁的生命没有至少被这些灾难的其中一些所触及呢？而对很多别的人来说，触及他们的灾难不可胜数。是的，在我们生命中有多少次这样的想法悄然出现：“哦，上帝啊，我以为你爱我，并且会照顾我。现在，在我看上去如此地绝望、无助和孤单时，你在哪里呢？你眷顾的应许在哪里呢？”

We seem to spend much of life in what seems to be little more than an endless cycle of ups and downs on the yo-yo of some mindless *fate*. So too the church seems one day strong and secure and the next, about to perish. In fact, in every age of her history, the church has seemed to be on the brink of complete destruction. Persecution from the outside has threatened her ruin when violent governments raised the sword against her. At other times the godless philosophy of the world wedded to nothing greater than personal fulfillment and the pleasure of the moment has threatened to seduce entire generations away from her doors. At still other times the moral or doctrinal corruption within her own walls has become so pervasive that any thought of her survival has seemed naïve at best.

我们似乎把大部分生命都耗费在看上去不过是无止境的循环中，在某种无意识的宿命里，如同悠悠球一般上去下来。教会似乎也是如此，今天强大而安全，明天就几乎要毁灭。事实上，在她历史的每一个时代，教会似乎都处在完全灭亡的边缘。当强暴的政府兴起刀剑反对她时，从外部来的迫害威胁到她的存亡。另一些时候，这个世界无神的哲学，专心于个人的满足和一时的欢愉，威胁着要引诱整个世代的人远离她的大门。还有些时候，在她自己的高墙里面，道德或教义的腐败已经变得如此普遍，以至于任何对于她能幸存下来的想法，都显得太过天真了。

It is at just such times, times of suffering—whether it be the suffering of the individual or of the church as a whole—that the doctrine of the providence of God is most comforting and reassuring. God’s Word reminds us again and again that we are not in heaven yet and that in this life we must, because of sin, expect suffering (Psalm 90:10; John 15:18–16:9; Acts 14:22). But God assures us that his kind and gracious and providential hand is stretched over us each moment and leaves us never. Yes, it is the hand of Christ our Savior, who is our head, that remains in control and gives us so many days of gladness. And it is the same Christ who is in control and gives or permits so many days of distress and sadness. Both come from his kind, his gracious, his always loving heart and remain ever under his providential control.





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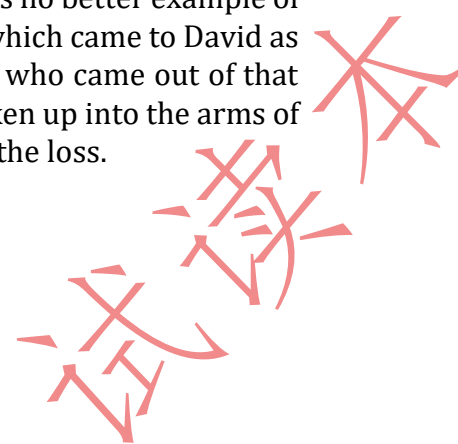
正是在这样的时刻，受苦的时刻——无论是个人的受苦还是教会整体的受苦——上帝眷顾的教义是最安慰人和让人安心的。上帝的道一次又一次提醒我们，我们还没有到天堂，在今生，我们必定，因为我们的罪，会有苦难（诗 90:10；约 15:18-16:9；徒 14:22）。但上帝向我们保证，他良善、仁慈和眷顾的手每时每刻都在保护着我们，并永不离开。是的，这是基督我们救主的手，他是我们的头，他依然在掌权并给我们如此多快乐的日子。并且，这正在掌权的同一位基督，给予或许可了如此多痛苦或悲哀的日子。这两者都来自于他的良善，他的仁慈，他总是充满爱的心，并永远在他眷顾的掌管之下。

It is only in his Word that we can make any sense of this truth, that it is in grace that he both sends joy and also permits suffering. That he is kind and gracious to us when we prosper may indeed be easier for us to understand, especially since we know that we deserve none of his blessings. But how will we find the sense in suffering? How will we trust that suffering too is an evidence of his love, even of his providence, of his divine rule over all things for our benefit? We will not learn that from Dame Reason. Nor will our own feelings and emotions bring us to understanding. And certainly the world's philosophy will be of no help at all. Only in God's own mighty Word will the Christian soul gain peace from God himself and even joy in suffering. In his Word, God explains suffering to us and then also gives us the grace and courage to see his kindness and goodness in it.

只有在他的道里我们才能明白这个真理，他在他的恩典里既赐下喜乐也允许了受苦。他对我们是仁慈亲切的，当我们成功的时候，这一点对我们确实可能更容易去理解，尤其是我们知道我们对他的祝福什么都不配得以后。但是在痛苦中我们怎么理解它呢？我们怎么能相信受苦同样是他爱的证据，甚至是他的眷顾，他为了我们的益处神圣地统领万有的证据呢？我们不可能从理性女士那里学到这一点。我们自己的感觉和情绪也不可能带领我们去理解它。当然，这个世界的哲学压根不会有任何帮助。唯有在上帝自己强有力的道里，基督徒的灵魂才能获得从上帝本身来的平安，以及甚至是在患难中的喜乐。在他的道里，上帝向我们阐明了苦难，然后赐我们恩典和勇气去看在这苦难里他的仁慈和良善。

## God's providence in suffering 在苦难中上帝的眷顾

A good deal, though not all, of the suffering we endure comes to us as a result of our own sin. When suffering is the result of our own sin, God sends the suffering to us to warn us against continuing in sin. To continue in deliberate sin is to bring eternal ruin to our own souls and often great harm to others as well. There is perhaps no better example of the kind of suffering that is the result of one's own sin than that which came to David as a result of his affair with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11,12). The child who came out of that adultery died; though the child was rescued by that death and taken up into the arms of his heavenly Father, David and Bathsheba certainly never forgot the loss.



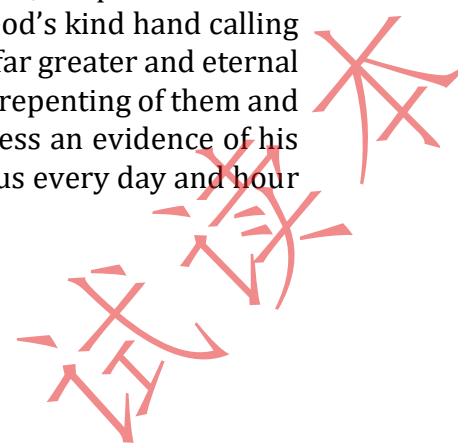
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许多，虽然不是所有的，我们所经历的苦难，都源于我们自己的罪。当苦难源于我们自己的罪时，上帝赐下苦难给我们，警告我们不要继续活在罪中。继续蓄意地犯罪会对我们自己的灵魂带来永恒的灭亡，也通常会给其他人带来极大的伤害。这种因一个人自己的罪而遭受的苦难，最好的例子莫过于大卫因他与拔示巴的奸淫所遭受的（撒下 11, 12）。从这场奸淫所生的孩子死了；虽然这个孩子借着这场死亡而得救，并被带到他天父的怀里，大卫和拔示巴必定永远不曾忘记这个失去的孩子。

And God did not allow David to forget the seriousness of his sin. The loss of the child was followed by a succession of tragedies in David's family. But that suffering was necessary. It was even an evidence of God's loving providence. It was necessary as a reminder to David and to us as well that God takes sin seriously. It was necessary as a reminder that forgiveness is not a license to sin. Yes, the suffering was necessary, most important, as a demonstration of how great God's grace is: The suffering was a constant reminder that the eternal suffering was gone because the sin was forgiven. How strange that must sound to fallen reason: Present suffering is a reminder of forgiveness; present suffering reminds us to give thanks for our release from eternal suffering; present suffering is a warning sign against the danger of future sin. Had there been no consequence for his sin, David could have become bold in sinning even further and that to his eternal ruin. That David got all of these points is evident in many of the psalms that he authored, for example, in Psalms 6, 51, 130, 139, 143, to mention just a few. God in grace gave David the strength to endure and the wisdom to recognize God's gracious hand, no matter how deep the pain of the moment.

并且，上帝不允许大卫忘记他罪的严重性。失去孩子后，紧随着的是在大卫家庭里一系列的悲剧。但这样的受苦是必要的。它同样是上帝亲爱眷顾的证据。作为对大卫也是对我们的提醒，提醒我们上帝严肃地对待罪，它是必要的。作为对赦免并不是犯罪的许可证的提醒，它是必要的。是的，更重要的是，作为对上帝恩典是多么浩大的证明，受苦是必要的——受苦是一个恒久的提醒，它提醒着我们，因为罪得赦免，永恒的苦难已经没有了。对堕落的理性来说，这听起来必定相当奇怪：当下的苦难是对赦免的提醒；当下的苦难提醒我们感谢我们从永恒的苦难中得了释放；当下的苦难是一个警告的记号，警告我们未来罪恶的危险。如果大卫的罪没有后果，他就会大胆地变本加厉地犯罪，并导致他永恒的毁灭。大卫明白了这所有的一切，这在他写的很多诗篇里都很明显，在诗篇 6 章、51 章、130 章、139 章和 143 章，提到了一小部分。上帝在恩典中赐大卫力量去忍耐，并赐他智慧去认识上帝恩慈的手，无论当下的痛苦是多么严重。

David, therefore, had good reason, and so too do we, to give thanks, deep and heartfelt thanks for the suffering that we endure. Suffering is sometimes God's kind hand calling us back from our sins, calling us to repentance, warning us of the far greater and eternal suffering that comes to those who embrace their sins rather than repenting of them and struggling against them. The chastening hand of the Lord is no less an evidence of his providence than the hand that pours out obvious blessings over us every day and hour of our lives.



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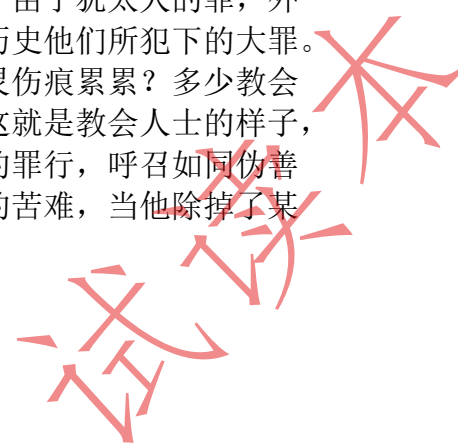
因此，大卫有充分的理由，对他所经历的苦难给予深切和衷心的感谢——我们也同样如此。苦难有时是上帝仁慈的手，呼召我们转离我们的罪，呼召我们悔改，警告我们远离更大和永恒的苦难，这苦难会临到那些拥抱他们的罪，却不悔改和与罪恶相争的人。上帝管教的手是他眷顾的证据，相比他在我们生命的每时每刻，赐我们明显祝福的手，这证据一点也不少。

As was the case with David, so too with us: If God ignores our sins and sends us no chastening hand to call us back from them, we will harm ourselves eternally and perhaps harm others as well. David didn't just hurt himself by his sin; he also hurt God's people by the horrible example that he had set. If he had suffered no consequences for his sin, then people would have thought that God doesn't care about sin, that we have a license to do just as our corrupt nature pleases. Such an attitude and life can have the effect of turning others away from the Word of God and making the church an object of ridicule. Nathan, David's pastor, says as much to David: "By doing this you have made the enemies of the Lord show utter contempt" (2 Samuel 12:14).

正如大卫的情况那样，我们也一样：如果上帝忽视我们的罪，不给我们任何管教呼召我们远离它们，我们将永远地伤害我们自己，并可能同样伤害其他人。大卫的罪不仅仅伤害了他自己；借着竖立的可怕的榜样，他同样伤害了上帝的子民。如果他没有为他的罪承担任何后果，那么，人们将会认为上帝并不在乎罪，我们有了按照我们堕落的本性随心所欲去做的许可证。这样的一种态度和生命，可能会使其他人远离上帝的道，并让教会成为被嘲笑的对象。拿单，大卫的牧师，对大卫说了同样的话：“你行这事，叫耶和华的仇敌大得亵渎的机会”（撒下 12:14）。

St. Paul says (Romans 2:24), and he is quoting the prophets (Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:22,23), that this was the great crime of the Jews through so much of their history, that because of their sins the Gentiles mocked God and were not interested in listening to the Word of God. The souls of how many children are scarred beyond healing when parents pretend at being Christians but live like heathens? How many neighbors of church members never darken the door of a church because they can say, "If that's what church members are like, I want nothing to do with the church." But if God sends suffering that causes such offenses to cease, that calls back the one acting the part of a hypocrite, there will be eternal thanksgiving for such suffering! Such suffering will certainly be an evidence of the providence of God, of his kind and gracious rule over history, over our history, if it removes one of the many obstacles that keeps people from hearing the saving message of the gospel.

圣保罗引用先知的的话（赛 52:5；结 36:22, 23）说（罗 2:24），由于犹太人的罪，外邦人轻慢上帝，且对听上帝的话毫无兴趣，这是遍及犹太人的历史他们所犯下的大罪。当父母们假装是一个基督徒却活得像异教徒时，多少孩子的心灵伤痕累累？多少教会成员的邻居从来没有登过教会的门，因为他们可以说：“如果这就是教会人士的样子，我不想和教会有任何关系。”但是如果上帝赐下苦难停止这样的罪行，呼召如同伪善者那样行动的人回头，这样的苦难将会得到永远的感激！这样的苦难，当他除掉了某



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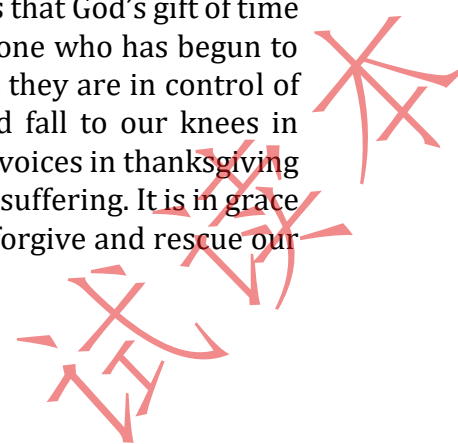
个阻碍人们听从福音拯救信息的障碍时，他当然会是上帝眷顾的明证，也是他良善仁慈地统治历史和统治我们的历史的明证。

It is in his providence that God sends both good days and bad 上帝赐下好的日子和坏的日子，这都是他的眷顾

Read the Old Testament. Read the history of Israel in Exodus, the book of Judges, and the rest of the history of Israel and Judah in 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles. It is an unbroken record of a loving and gracious God who poured out blessings on top of blessings. It is as well the record of his love and grace in sending suffering. In his providence he sends obvious blessings to move us to thanksgiving and grateful service. He sends suffering also from his providence to call back the sinner from his sin. He sends it in consequence of sin to remind the sinner of his seriousness in the law and of his surpassing grace in the gospel. So great is his ardor for our salvation! Read as a summary example Isaiah 9:8–10:19. Those verses are an eloquent testimony from the mouth and mind of God himself about his providence when he judges sin and then rescues those who suffer as the result of his judgment. Let men use their reason and their might as they will. It is God who rules and brings to nothing all of men's plots against his judgment. Let them try to rebuild what he tears down; he will tear it down again. He lets nations rise to punish the arrogance and the pride of his fallen people and then in his own good time destroys the destroyers for their pride and arrogance. Wondrous indeed are his ways as he judges in anger in order to rescue in grace!

阅读旧约，阅读出埃及记中以色列人的历史，士师记，以及从撒母耳记上到历代志下以色列和犹大之后的历史。这是一份关于一位亲爱仁慈的上帝，将祝福堆叠着祝福的完整记录。这同样是一份在他赐下的苦难中，他的爱和恩典的记录。在他的眷顾中，他赐下明显的祝福，感动我们去感恩和充满感激地服事。在他的眷顾中他同样赐下苦难呼召罪人离弃他的罪。他赐下这苦难，作为罪的结果，提醒罪人他在律法上的严肃性和他在福音上非凡的恩典。他对我们的拯救是如此地热切！阅读以赛亚书 9:8–10:19，这是一个总结。当上帝审判罪并拯救那些因着他的审判而受苦之人时，他就在眷顾着我们，这段上帝亲口所说和亲身所想的经文就是他眷顾的明证。让人们按他们的意愿使用他们的理性和他们的力量吧。是上帝在掌权并废去人们一切抵挡他审判的计谋。让他们试着去重建他所拆毁的吧，他会将其再次拆毁。他使国兴起，来摧毁他堕落地民的傲慢和骄傲，然后，他在他自己的时间里，因着这摧毁者的傲慢和骄傲而摧毁他们。当他在愤怒中审判以便于在恩典中拯救时，他的作为是多么奇妙啊！

So let the one chocked by greed suffer loss. Let the one who thinks that God's gift of time is his own to do with as he pleases experience sickness. Let the one who has begun to worship pleasure endure some pain. Let those who imagine that they are in control of their lives see unexpected tragedy. And then, let us with David fall to our knees in thanksgiving to the God who does not cast us off. Let us raise our voices in thanksgiving to the God who loves us enough to call us back to himself through suffering. It is in grace and love beyond measure that he sends suffering so that he can forgive and rescue our



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blood-bought souls for all eternity. The writer to the Hebrews put it well: “God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (12:10,11).

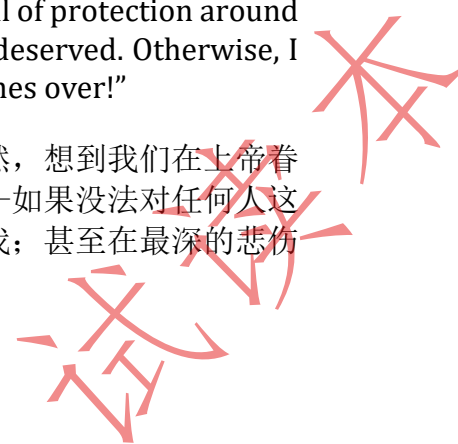
所以，让被贪婪蒙蔽了的人遭受损失吧。让认为上帝恩赐的时间是他自己的，他可以随心所欲地支配的人经历疾病吧。让开始崇拜快乐的人经历痛苦吧。让那些想象他们的生命在他们掌控之中的人，看到意想不到的悲剧吧。然后，让我们和大卫一起，屈膝赞美那从未抛弃我们的上帝。让我们扬声赞美那爱我们的上帝，他甚至透过苦难呼召我们回转向他。正是在无法胜数的恩典和爱中，他赐下苦难，好让他能够赦免并拯救我们被他以血买来的灵魂，直到永生。希伯来书的作者说的好：“灵性之父管教我们是要我们得益处，使我们在他的圣洁上有份。凡管教的事，当时不觉得快乐，反觉得痛苦；后来却为那经过锻炼的人结出平安的果子，就是义的果子”（来 12:10, 11）。

A point worth remembering, even when our suffering can be traced to our own sins, is that God in his providence limits the suffering he sends; it never reaches the measure of our desert. Even in the case of David, his pastor pointed that out to him. As soon as David confessed his sin, Nathan declared: “The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die” (2 Samuel 12:13). In his providence God disciplines us with a measure designed to accomplish his gracious purpose of calling us back to himself. Unlike the parent whose patience is finally exhausted and who then visits blows on his children in anger out of all proportion to their crimes, God measures all things carefully in justice that is always tempered with grace.

有一点值得谨记，即使我们的苦难能够追溯到我们自己的罪，上帝在他的眷顾里面限定了他所赐下的苦难；它从未到达我们配得的程度。甚至在大卫身上，他的牧师也向他指出了这一点。当大卫承认他的罪以后，拿单立刻宣告道：“耶和华已经除去你的罪，你必不至于死”（撒下 12:13）。上帝在他的眷顾中，用某个精心设计的方式来管教我们，为的是实现他恩典的目的：呼召我们回转向他。不像最终耐心耗尽的父母，在愤怒中击打他的孩子，与他们的罪行并不相称，上帝在公义里小心地平衡所有的事，并总是用恩典来调和。

Many a Christian could write the book on such evidences of God's providence. And certainly, in considering our lives under Christ's providential rule, each of us has reasons beyond counting for saying to God, if to no one else: “Yes, O Lord, it is true; never have you dealt with me as I deserved; even in deepest sorrow, even when I could not see it or fully appreciate it, your hand preserved me and put a wall of protection around me. You saved me from the full weight of crushing that my sins deserved. Otherwise, I would have perished in my sins and in my despair a thousand times over!”

关于上帝的眷顾，许多基督徒都可以写本书来证明这一点。当然，想到我们在上帝眷顾统治下的生命，我们每个人都有无法胜数的理由对上帝说——如果没法对任何人这样说：“是的，主啊，这是真的；你从来没有按我应得的对待我；甚至在最深的悲伤





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中，甚至当我不能看到它或完全地领会它，你的手支持着我，在我周围筑起保护我的墙。你救我脱离我所配得的，毁灭的重担。若不是这样，我早就在我的罪里和我的绝望里毁灭千千万万了！”

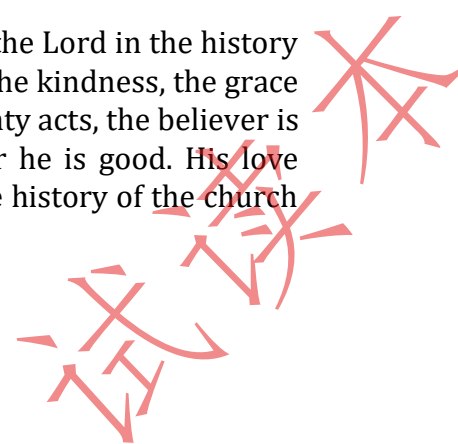
It is in the book of Psalms, the Bible's hymnal, that we hear the song of the church and of each believer in endless praise to God for his providence in ruling over all of history for the benefit of his own. Just to consider three of the many psalms that confess and praise God for his providence, for the triumph of grace over deserved justice, look at Psalms 66, 103, and 136.

在诗篇，圣经的赞美诗里，我们听到教会和每一个信徒的歌声，他们不断地赞美上帝，感谢他为他子民的益处眷顾地统治一切的历史。诗篇中很多章节都为着上帝的眷顾，为着那恩典的凯歌，宣认并赞美他，我们只需要想想其中的三章——诗篇 66、103 和 136 章。

In Psalms 66 and 103 the believing child of God looks with wonder and awe at all the goodness of God. He shows his goodness day by day in permitting trouble and sickness that come without explanation; and he shows it no less in the suffering and sorrow that come as a result of the believer's own sins. And what does God seek and accomplish in all of it? He rescues. He redeems. He restores. He gives songs of gladness and shouts of thanksgiving. These psalms are not just giddy and shallow expressions of happiness on good days. They are filled with deep thanksgiving precisely because the believer knows that in all his days, both the easy and the difficult, the merry and the painful, God rules. God gives all in love and kindness, in his infinite grace, not according to our miserable merit. And so the soul rests in the arms of the Savior and is content to sum it all up in this way: "Praise the Lord, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the Lord, O my soul!" (103:22).

在诗篇 66 和 103 章，上帝有信心的儿女，充满惊奇和敬畏地注视着上帝的良善。在上帝允许麻烦和疾病无端来到时，他日复一日地显明着他的良善；在苦难和悲伤由于信徒自己的罪而来到时，他同样显明了这一点。在这一切之中上帝在寻找和成就什么呢？他拯救。他赎回。他修复。他赐下欢乐的歌声和感激的呐喊。这些诗篇不仅仅是在好日子里的快乐，轻佻而肤浅的表达。它们充满了深深的感激，恰恰是因为信徒知道，在他一切的日子，无论是顺境还是逆境，是喜乐还是痛苦，上帝都在掌权。上帝在爱和仁慈里，在他无尽的恩典里，赐下这一切，而不是按照我们可悲的功德。因此，我们的灵魂安歇在救主的怀里，满足于这样的总结：“你们一切被他造的，在他所治理的各处，都要称颂耶和华！我的心哪，你要称颂耶和华！”（诗 103:22）。

Likewise in Psalm 136, the child of God looks at all the works of the Lord in the history of his people. And what does he see? Nothing but the goodness, the kindness, the grace of God. Over and over again at the consideration of all God's mighty acts, the believer is moved to raise his voice in song: "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever." And in everything that he does, whether in the history of the church



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or of the individual believer, God proves it. His providence is ever active in crowning our lives with days of joys and in blessing us with days of sadness.

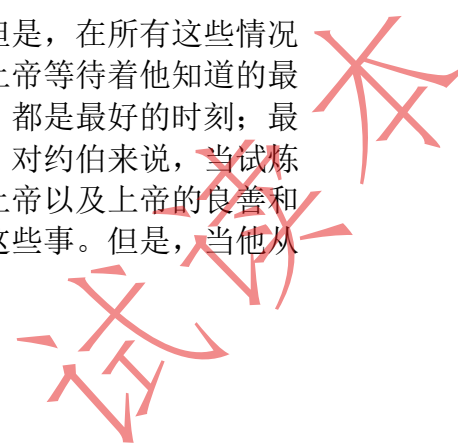
同样地，在诗篇 136 篇，上帝的子民查看上帝在他们的历史中一切的工作。他看到了什么呢？除了上帝的良善、仁慈和恩典，什么都没有。当信徒一遍又一遍思想上帝一切大能的行动时，他就在感动中高唱到：“你们要称谢耶和华，因他本为善；他的慈爱永远长存。”上帝在他所做的一切事上，无论是在教会还是在信徒个人的历史上，他都证明了这一点。无论是用喜乐的日子为我们的生活加冕，还是用悲伤的日子祝福我们，他的眷顾总是积极有效的。

When suffering comes without any obvious connection to our sins, when it comes straight out of the malice and sins of others, even then God's providence rules over all for our good. Isaac was richly blessed by God in crops and flocks; he dug wells to water his flocks; but his neighbors, envious of the Lord's blessings to Isaac, destroyed the wells (Genesis 26:12-22). David was anointed by Samuel to be king in Israel instead of Saul, but he had to endure years of persecution and suffering at the hands of Saul before God installed him on the promised throne of Israel (1 Samuel 16, 18-26). Job had done nothing to bring down God's anger on him; nevertheless, he suffered a time of severe testing.

当苦难与我们的罪没有任何明显的联系时，当它直接来自于别人的恶意和罪时，即使这样，上帝的眷顾依然为着我们的益处统治着这一切。以撒在耕种和放牧上蒙了上帝丰盛的祝福；他挖井去喂养他的羊群；但是他的邻居嫉妒上帝对他的祝福，毁坏了这些井（创 26:12-22）。大卫被撒母耳膏立为以色列的王来代替扫罗，但是在上帝成就他的应许，让大卫登上以色列的王座之前，大卫不得不在扫罗手里忍受多年的迫害和苦难（撒下 16, 18-26）。约伯没有做任何事导致上帝的愤怒降临于他；然而，他经受着一段时间严峻的考验。

But in all of these instances where people suffered without it being the direct cause of their own suffering, God ruled over history. He replaced again and again the lost wells of Isaac. God waited for the time he considered best to bring David to his throne—best both for David and for his people; in the end God kept his promise and gave even more than he promised. For Job too the time of testing came to an end; when it was over, Job acknowledged what he had learned about God and his goodness, God and his might. Perhaps earlier he had known those things more in his head than in his heart. But once he was rescued from all his misery and even blessed as never before, he worshiped with a different level of gratitude than he had known previously.

有些时候，受苦的人并不是他们自身遭受的苦难的直接原因，但是，在所有这些情况下，上帝在历史中掌权。他一次又一次为以撒补上失去的井。上帝等待着他知道的最好的时刻带领大卫登上王座——无论是对大卫还是对他的子民，都是最好的时刻；最终，上帝保守了他的应许，给大卫的甚至比他所应许的还要多。对约伯来说，当试炼的时刻终结时，也是如此；当它结束时，约伯承认他认识到了上帝以及上帝的良善和大能。可能之前，他更多地在他的脑里而不是在他的心里认识这些事。但是，当他从



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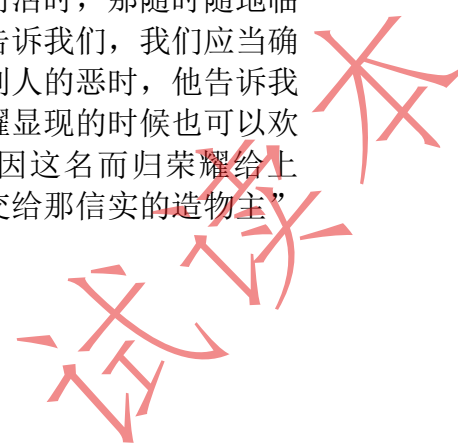
他一切的不幸中被拯救出来，甚至得到了前所未有的祝福以后，他就以一种不同以往的感激之情敬拜上帝。

In the book of Acts in the New Testament, we read of one persecution after another that resulted in suffering and even death for innocent believers. St. Paul describes his own suffering at the hands of unbelievers and, yes, his suffering even from the malice of those who considered themselves Christians. According to tradition, all of the apostles except for St. John died as martyrs. Eusebius (d. 339) wrote *The History of the Church From Christ to Constantine*; in it he recounts in graphic detail much of what the church endured in the years from Pentecost to a.d. 324. The church suffered from all the bloodthirsty tyrants in government. She suffered as well from false teachers who arose within her own ranks. In his first letter, St. Peter told the church of his day what remains forever true: “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you” (1 Peter 4:12).

在新约的使徒行传中，我们看到了一个接一个的迫害，这为无辜的信徒带来了苦难甚至是死亡。圣保罗描述了他自己在不信者手中所受的苦难，是的，他的苦难甚至是来自于那些认为他们自己是基督徒者的恶意。按照传统的说法，除了圣约翰，所有的使徒都死于殉道。优西比乌（Eusebius，死于公元 339 年）写了《教会史——从基督到君士坦丁》；在其中他以生动的细节叙述了教会从圣灵降临日到公元 324 年这期间经历的事。教会遭受到政府里所有嗜血暴君的迫害。她同样遭受到从她自己队伍中出来的假教师的折磨。圣彼得在他的第一封信中，告诉他那个时代的教会一个永恒真相：“亲爱的，有火一般的考验临到你们，不要奇怪，似乎是遭遇非常的事”（彼前 4:12）。

But what do Peter and Paul have to say about the trials and tribulations that come as the result of the sins of others? What do they say of the persecution that happens whenever and wherever Christians faithfully hold to the truth of God’s Word and strive to live according to it? The apostles point us to the providence of God! Peter tells us that we should just be sure that our suffering is not the result of our own wrongdoing; when it has the evil of others as its source, he tells us: “Rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. . . . If you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. . . . So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good” (1 Peter 4:13-19).

但是，对于因为别人的罪而来的试炼和患难，彼得和保罗是怎么说的呢？他们是如何看待，当基督徒忠信地持守上帝话语的真理，并努力地按照它而活时，那随时随地临到他们的逼迫呢？使徒们向我们指出，这是上帝的眷顾！彼得告诉我们，我们应当确保，我们的受难并不是我们自身不法之物的结果；当它来自于别人的恶时，他告诉我们：“倒要欢喜，因为你们是与基督一同受苦，使你们在他荣耀显现的时候也可以欢喜快乐……若有人因是基督徒而受苦，不要引以为耻，倒要因这名而归荣耀给上帝……所以，照上帝旨意受苦的人要一心为善，将自己的灵魂交给那信实的造物主”（彼前 4:13-19）。



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Innocent suffering at the hands of others points us always to the saving hand of God and to a renewed confidence that we are in his ever-gracious care—that we do not see that in the moment does not change the fact. The fact is rooted and grounded in God’s Word and promise. St. Paul sums up his attitude toward all that he endured at the hands of enemies of the truth beautifully:

在别人手里的无辜受苦，总是向我们指明了上帝的救恩之手，并让我们重新确信，我们在他永远恩慈的看顾之下——我们在某一刻没有看到这一点并不改变这个事实。这个事实扎根于上帝的道和他的应许里。对于在敌人手里经历的这一切，圣保罗用优美的真理，总结了的态度：

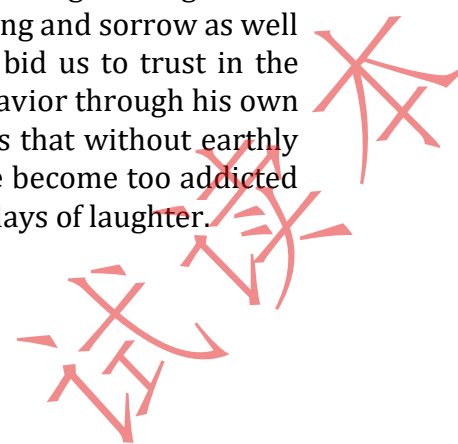
We do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

所以，我们不丧胆。虽然我们外在的人日渐朽坏，内在的人却日日更新。我们这短暂而轻微的苦楚要为我们成就极重、无比、永远的荣耀。因为我们不是顾念看得见的，而是顾念看不见的；原来看得见的是暂时的，看不见的才是永远的。（林后 4:16-18）

Thus, even when sorrow seems unjust and when Dame Reason loudly objects that evil has triumphed over God and the devil has won out over Christ, even then God is ruling. Even then Christ is head over all things for the benefit of the church. Even then God’s providence holds sway over the life of each of the members of Christ’s mystical body, the church. In it all the Christian has the assurance from God’s Word that the sufferings of the moment, no matter what their source, point us away from excessive love for the world.

因此，即使当不幸的事看起来是不公平的，当理性女士大声叫嚣，邪恶胜过了上帝，魔鬼战胜了基督，即使那样，上帝依然在掌权。即使那样，基督依然为了教会的益处统管万有。即使那样，上帝的眷顾依然统管着基督教会每一个成员的生命，这教会是他奥秘的身体。在其中，所有基督徒都从上帝的道里得了保证：当下的苦难，无论它来自于什么，都帮助我们远离对这个世界狂热的爱。

Yes, such suffering even keeps us from becoming too attached to the earthly blessings that God himself has given us to enjoy in this world. The momentary loss of some of God’s earthly blessings can remind us again of the far greater blessings of forgiveness and the promised help of the Savior in every hour of need. Suffering and sorrow as well point us to the never-ending glory of heaven. Sorrow and loss bid us to trust in the providence of God promised in his Word and won for us by the Savior through his own innocent suffering in our place. The simple truth of the matter is that without earthly loss, we fall too much in love with earthly gain; without pain, we become too addicted to pleasure; without days of sorrow, we never really appreciate days of laughter.



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是的，这样的苦难，甚至让我们不去迷恋，上帝自己给我们在这个世界去享受的属世的祝福。暂时地失去一些上帝属世的祝福，能够再次提醒我们更大的赦免的祝福，以及救主在每一个缺乏的时刻应许了的帮助。苦难和悲伤，同样向我们指明了天堂里永不止息的荣耀。悲伤和亏损让我们相信上帝在他的道里应许了的眷顾，这眷顾是救主透过他自身代替我们无辜受死而为我们赢得的。一个简单的事实是：没有属世的亏损，我们会狂热迷恋属世的收获；没有痛苦，我们会沉溺于享乐；没有悲伤的日子，我们从不会欣赏欢笑的日子。

Thus, the providence of God is made manifest as he rules over history, the history of the world and our own personal history. It takes time to appreciate that truth. A couple of examples from the Scriptures may serve to encourage our patience. Consider the life of Joseph in the Old Testament. His brothers wanted to kill him. Their evil was held in check by the providence of God, so that Joseph was *only* sold into slavery. What providence was there in that? In slavery Joseph's condition went from bad to worse. He was falsely accused of rape and imprisoned. For years he endured one humiliation after another. But in time it all became clear: His suffering was preparation for a great work of rescue for his family, as undeserving as his brothers were of rescue.

因此，随着上帝对历史的统治——无论是对这个世界的历史还是对我们自己个人的历史，上帝的眷顾就显明出来。理解这个真理需要时间。圣经中的两个例子可能有助于激励我们更有耐心。想想旧约中约瑟的一生。他的兄弟想要去杀他。借着上帝的眷顾，他们的邪恶被抑制了，因此约瑟仅仅是被卖为奴隶。在这儿有什么眷顾呢？在奴隶生涯中约瑟的处境越来越糟。他被诬告犯有强奸并被关入监狱。多年来他忍耐着一遍又一遍的羞辱。但最后这一切都变得清晰起来：他的苦难是为了一项伟大的，拯救他的家庭的工作做预备——这工作是何等地伟大，正如他的兄弟是何等不配被拯救一样。

Yes, and the famine in Palestine that caused such suffering to his brothers and their families, what a blessing that was! The famine brought them down to Egypt, where Joseph could save them. It brought them down to humble repentance, where Joseph and God could forgive them. Would anyone say that the sufferings of Joseph and his family were pointless? They were *providential* acts of God, who limits the evil that men can do and uses it in his own ways for his own *ever-providential purposes*. It took time for those lessons to become evident and to sink in. But Joseph certainly got the point and made the point clear to his family (Genesis 50:15-21).

是的，巴勒斯坦地区的饥荒为他的兄弟和他的家庭带来了如此大的痛苦，这是多么大的祝福啊！这饥荒使他们下到埃及，在那儿约瑟可以拯救他们。这饥荒使他们卑微地悔改，在那儿约瑟和上帝可以原谅他们。有人会说约瑟和他家庭所受的苦难毫无意义吗？它们是上帝眷顾的行动，他限制了人所能做的恶事，并为了他自己永恒眷顾的目的，按他自己的方式使用它们。这些功课需要经过一段时间才能变得明显并被人理解。但是约瑟确实明白了这一点，并把这一点清楚地告诉了他的家庭（创 50:15-21）。

Or consider the flood at the time of Noah (Genesis 6-9). What misery it caused—a misery occasioned by the great wickedness of men. They wanted so much to be rid of



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God and his rule that God finally in just judgment rid himself of them. Where was the providence of God in all that destruction and woe beyond measure? God's providence was abundant in the flood; by it the church was rescued. Had there been no destruction, the wickedness of unbelief would have grown so powerful that the church would have perished. Indeed, it had almost perished as it was. After all, Noah preached law and gospel for over one hundred years. He called out the message of God's providence, of God's yearning to forgive and reclaim the fallen human race. What did he have for all of his preaching? Only the souls of his own immediate family!

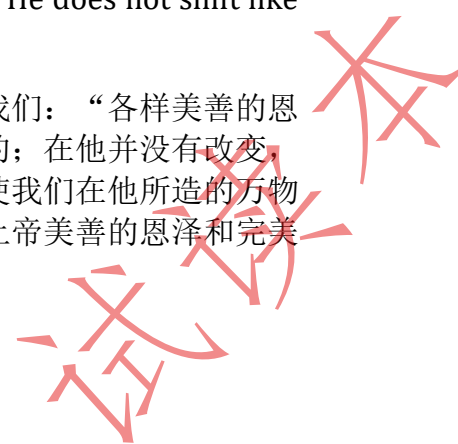
或者，想想挪亚时代的大洪水（创 6-9）。它造成了多大的不幸啊——一场由人类极端的邪恶而引发的不幸。他们如此渴望摆脱上帝和他的统治，以至于上帝最终在公义的审判中使他自己摆脱了他们。在这一切无可估量的毁灭和灾难中，上帝的眷顾在哪儿呢？上帝的眷顾在大洪水中是丰盛的；教会因此得救了。如果没有毁灭，不信的恶者将变得极端强大，教会也会因此而灭亡。事实上，她几乎已经灭亡了。毕竟，挪亚传讲律法和福音已经一百多年了。他大声呼喊上帝眷顾的信息，上帝渴望赦免和恢复堕落人类的信息。他一切的宣道让他获得了什么呢？只有他自己直系亲人的灵魂。

Small as it was, the church was saved by the destruction of the flood. St. Peter makes the point in such an interesting way when he uses the waters of the flood as a point of comparison for the Sacrament of Baptism: Just as the flood of Noah's day saved the church, so now the water of Baptism saves us (1 Peter 3:20,21). What an intriguing way God has of pointing us to his providence. He promised Noah that he would never again destroy the world by such a flood; and so, instead, he saves people by the mini-flood of the water in Baptism!

虽然教会很小，借着毁灭的洪水，它得救了。圣彼得以一种非常有趣的方式指出了这一点，他使用大洪水的水作为喻点，将其与圣洗礼相比：正如挪亚时代的洪水拯救教会一样，现在这洗礼的水也同样拯救我们（彼前 3:20, 21）。上帝以多么有趣的方式向我们指明他的眷顾啊。他向挪亚应许他再也不会借着这样的洪水毁灭这个世界了；那么，他就反而借着洗礼中的小洪水来拯救人。

The epistle of James makes the point also in an especially interesting way. St. James tells us: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created" (1:17,18). Look at the passage carefully. What are God's good and perfect gifts? Why, everything that he sends us! It is all sent in his providence. There is no change in his sacred heart that always loves us and looks for ways to prove it. He does not shift like the shadows.

雅各书同样以一种特别有趣的方式阐明了这一点。圣雅各告诉我们：“各样美善的恩泽和各样完美的赏赐都是从上头来的，从众光之父那里降下来的；在他并没有改变，也没有转动的影儿。他按自己的旨意，用真理的道生了我们，使我们在他所造的万物中成为初熟的果子”（雅 1:17, 18）。仔细看这段话。什么是上帝美善的恩泽和完美



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的赏赐？他赐给我们的一切事！这一切都是在他的眷顾中赐下的。他神圣的心并没有改变，总是爱着我们并寻找方法来证明他的爱。他不像转动的影儿。

Since there is no change in him, good and perfect gifts are the only kinds of gifts that he knows how to give! Whatever he sends is a good and perfect gift that matches his love and fits our need. When we need health and wealth and family and friends and such other joys as may for a time delight us, he gives them. When we need peace for a troubled mind and a happy conscience, he gives that too—and most generously through Word and sacraments. Yes, and when we need chastening to bring us back from our sins, that too he sends as a good and perfect gift appropriate to his love and our need. For, again, with him there is no change.

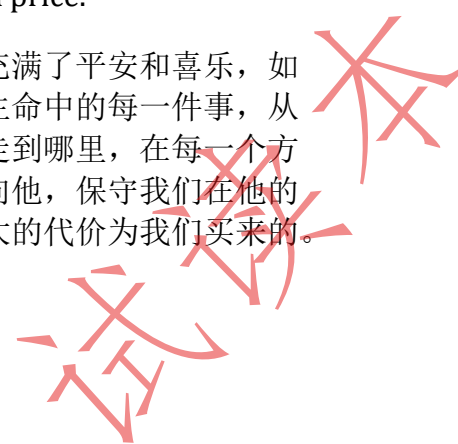
因为他并没有改变，他知道将如何赐给我们的唯一的礼物，是美善的恩泽和完美的赏赐！无论他赐下什么，那都是与他的爱和我们需要相称的美善和完美的赏赐。当我们需要健康、财富、家庭、朋友以及其它的乐事，能够在一段时间愉悦我们时，他就赐下它们。当我们烦躁的思想需要平安并问心无愧时，他同样赐下它们——并且透过圣道和圣礼最丰盛地赐下。是的，当我们需要管教带领我们离弃我们的罪时，他同样赐下它们，作为与他的爱和我们需要相称的美善和完美的赏赐。再一次地，在他并没有改变。

His providence extends over all our days. He proves it by giving us the new birth, by giving us the faith that trusts in him in days both good and ill. That new birth came at Baptism, and it is nourished and sustained by the Water of Life, by Christ in his Word and in the Sacrament of the Altar. He does it all so that all our days we may bear the fruit of thanksgiving and service to him who in his kind providence does all things well for us.

他的眷顾遍及我们所有的岁月。他赐我们重生，赐我们信心，让我们无论是在顺境还是逆境都信靠他，借此他证明了这一点。这重生来自于洗礼，并由生命之水，由圣道和圣礼中的基督滋养和维护。他做了这一切，使得我们可以在我们全部的日子，都结出感恩的果子，并服事他——那个在他良善的眷顾中为我们成就了一切的上帝。

So pleasant is this side of the road, the consideration of the providence of God, so full of peace and joy, so instructive for every day of our lives, that it is difficult to leave off thinking about it. Every event of life, from the most beautiful to the most painful, has the providence of God stretching over it. Every facet and phase, wherever we turn, has God's protecting hand blessing us, drawing us to himself, keeping us in his care, so that we reach the goal of eternal life purchased for us by him at so great a price.

中路的这一边，即，上帝的眷顾，是如此地令人愉悦，如此地充满了平安和喜乐，如此地有益于我们生命的每一天，以至于我们很难不去思考它。生命中的每一件事，从最美丽的到最痛苦的，都有上帝的眷顾覆盖于其上。无论我们走到哪里，在每一个方面和每一个阶段，都有上帝护卫的手为我们祝福，吸引我们归向他，保守我们在他的照料之下，使得我们能到达永生的目标——这永生是他用如此大的代价为我们买来的。



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St. Paul best summed it all up in Romans 8. Read the whole chapter. From beginning to end, it is a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to God for his providence; in his providence, God triumphs over the perversity of man, whether that is perversity in our own sinful flesh or in the wicked actions of others. Paul sums it all up so perfectly in the middle of his hymn of praise to God for his providence: “We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (8:28). Those who love him do so because he first loved them (1 John 4:19). In the gospel he has called them to life and for life eternal. They bask in the sunshine of this assurance that he rules over all things for their benefit, as Paul declares from the beginning to the end of Romans 8.

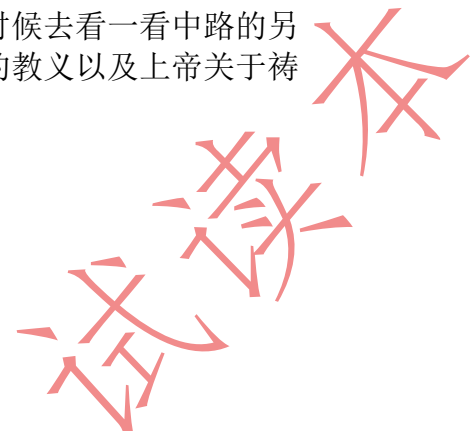
圣保罗在罗马书 8 章就此做了最好的总结。通读整章。从始至终，它是一首为上帝的眷顾赞美和感谢他的圣诗；在他的眷顾之下，上帝战胜了人的邪恶，无论是我们自己罪性里的邪恶，还是别人恶毒的行为。在保罗为着上帝的眷顾赞美上帝的圣诗中，他如此完美地总结了这一切：“我们知道，万事都互相效力，叫爱上帝的人得益处，就是按他旨意被召的人”（罗 8:28）。那些爱他的人之所以如此，是因为他首先爱了他们（约一 4:19）。在福音中他呼召他们得生命和永生。他保证为了他们的益处掌管一切的事，而他们，沐浴在这个保证的光辉之下，正如圣保罗在罗马书 8 章自始至终宣称的那样。

And so Paul concludes his great hymn of praise: “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (8:38,39). It cannot be said any better. All praise and thanks to God for this wonderful truth of his Word, for all that his Word has to say to us about his providence!

因此，保罗总结他伟大的赞美诗说：“我深信，无论是死，是活，是天使，是掌权的，是有权能的，是现在的事，是将来的事，是高大的，是深处的，是别的受造之物，都不能使我们与上帝的爱隔绝，这爱是在我们的主基督耶稣里的”（罗 8:38, 39）。不可能说的比这更好了。为着上帝的道里这美好的真理，为着他的道里关于他的眷顾向我们所说的这一切，一切赞美和感谢都归给他。

The doctrine of God’s providence is indeed a beautiful and most comforting one. But it is time to look at the other side of the road. There we find another beautiful and comforting doctrine: the doctrine of prayer and the promises that God has made with respect to prayer.

上帝眷顾的教义确实是一个美丽而最安慰人的教义。但现在是时候去看一看中路的另一边了。在那儿我们会发现另一个美丽和安慰人的教义：祷告的教义以及上帝关于祷告的应许。



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## God's promises concerning prayer 上帝关于祷告的应许

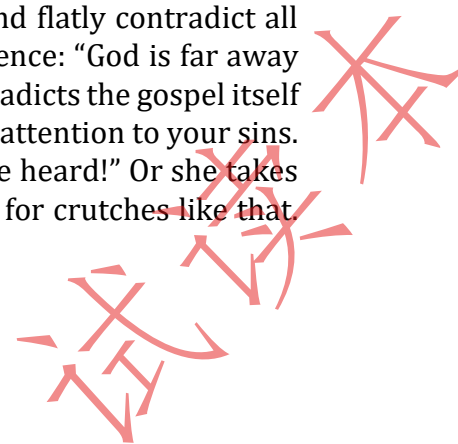
But wait just a minute. Why leave the doctrine of God's providence to talk about prayer? This is the right place to begin talking about prayer precisely because all that God has to tell us about his providence raises an question. In the question we can see Dame Reason again throwing off the maid's dress and sneaking out from behind her mop and pail. The question is this: If everything that God does is for our good, if he has designed and planned and rules over all of our history for our benefit, then what's the point in praying? It would seem (do you hear Dame Reason moving in to push the Word aside?) that if all things happen under God's providence, there would be no need to pray. After all, no matter what, it is all going to come out according to God's plan for our good and his glory. Isn't that the whole point of what we heard concerning the providence of God?

但等一等，为什么离开上帝眷顾的教义去谈祷告呢？这恰恰是我们开始去谈祷告的好地方，因为上帝告诉我们的关于他的眷顾的这一切，浮现出一个问题。在这个问题里面，我们可以看到理性女士再次扔掉女佣的衣服，从她的拖把和拖把桶后面溜了出来。这个问题是：如果上帝做的一切事都是为了我们好，如果他为了我们的益处设计、计划和统治我们一切的历史，那么祷告的意义在哪儿呢？看上去（你听到理性女士将圣道弃于一旁的声音了吗？）如果所有事情的发生都是在上帝的眷顾之下，那就没必要祷告了。毕竟，无论如何，这一切都是按照上帝为我们的好处和他的荣耀而发生的。这难道不是我们听到的关于上帝的眷顾的全部要点吗？

Why then ask him for anything? Why ask for help in trouble if the trouble is for our good? Why even ask for help in temptation if by temptations we learn all the more that both the strength to stand as well as our ultimate rescue in heaven are by grace alone? Yes, it would even seem that there is not much point in planning or in thinking about what we should do with our lives if it is all going to come out under his providence anyway.

那为什么还要向他祈求什么呢？如果麻烦是为了我们的好处，为什么在麻烦中要祈求帮助呢？如果借着试探我们越发认识到，无论是站立得稳的能力，还是我们在天堂最终的拯救，都唯独靠着恩典，为什么在试探中要祈求帮助呢？是的，如果不管怎样，我们生命中的一切都在上帝的眷顾之下发生，看上去，计划或思考我们应该如何度过我们的一生就没有多大意义了。

So Dame Reason throws a whole host of obstacles in the way of prayer and reasons why we should not bother much about it. She starts, as we have just noted, with, "Since God rules over everything and does as he pleases, prayer will accomplish nothing." If that doesn't deter us from prayer, she will go in another direction and flatly contradict all that God's Word says both about prayer and about God's providence: "God is far away and cannot be bothered about your trivial concerns." Or she contradicts the gospel itself with the thought: "Don't you dare pray! You will only draw God's attention to your sins. At the very least, wait until you are better and more worthy to be heard!" Or she takes the opposite course: "Why should you pray? Only the weak look for crutches like that.



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You're strong enough to handle whatever life throws your way. Prayer for you is an unnecessary waste of time."

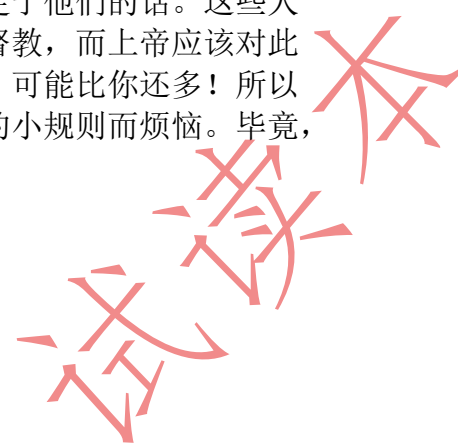
因此，理性女士在祷告的道路上设置了一大堆障碍，并试图说服我们，为什么我们不应该为此操心太多。正如我们刚才所说的，它以这样的话作为开始：“由于上帝统管万有，并随他的心意而行，祷告不成就任何事。”如果这尚不能阻止我们祷告，它就会转向另一个方向，断然否定上帝之道关于祷告和上帝的眷顾所说的一切：“上帝离你太远了，他不可能为你的琐事操心。”或者它用这样的想法反对福音本身：“你竟敢祷告！你只会让上帝注意到你的罪。至少，等到你变得更好并更值得被倾听再说！”或者它采用相反的思路：“你为什么还要祷告？只有弱者才会寻求这样的拐杖。你有足够的力量来处理生命中遇到的任何事。对你而言，祷告是白白地浪费时间。”

If those obstacles do not turn us away from prayer, the devil and Dame Reason, the devil's favorite preacher, have a long list of other obstacles to toss our way that distort and pervert God's promises concerning prayer. The devil may set up in our minds his own doctrine of prayer. He may suggest that prayer is really a means of grace, that as long as we pray, God is happy with us and we need not bother about doctrine or lives that conform to his Word.

如果这些障碍并没有使我们远离祷告，魔鬼和理性女士——魔鬼最喜爱的传道者，还有长长一堆其它的障碍拦在我们的路上，混淆和歪曲上帝关于祷告的应许。魔鬼可能在我们心里建立他自己的对于祷告的教义。他可能会说，祷告其实是一种施恩具，只要我们祷告，上帝就会对我们满意，我们不需要对我们的教义和生命是否符合他的道而操心。

We hear thoughts like that expressed quite often these days. Some people want to consider themselves Christians without the bother of either biblical doctrine or Christian lives. They pray without any notion of repentance for sin. They pray with no intention of listening or submitting to anything in God's Word that doesn't suit them. Such people foolishly imagine that they can define faith and Christianity any way that they please and that God should be satisfied with it: "See, I believe in God, just like you do. See, I even pray, maybe more than you do! So surely God is satisfied and won't be upset just because I don't carry out all the little rules that you bother yourself with. After all, I'm not some sort of fanatic!"

目前我们经常听到这样的想法。一些人认为他们自己是基督徒，但却既不需要为属圣经的教义操心，也不需要为属基督徒的生命操心。他们的祷告一点都没有为罪悔改的概念。他们祷告，却并不打算聆听或顺服上帝的道中任何不满足于他们的话。这些人愚蠢地幻想，他们能够以他们喜欢的任何方式来定义信仰和基督教，而上帝应该对此感到满意：“看，我相信上帝，和你一样。看，我甚至会祷告，可能比你还多！所以上帝肯定会满意的，不会仅仅是因为我没有执行这些你所操心的小规则而烦恼。毕竟，我不是什么宗教狂热分子！”





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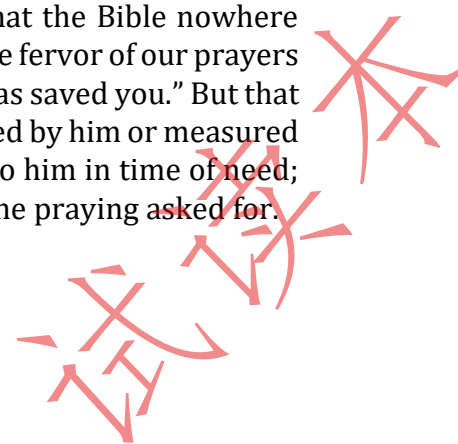
Others in their prayers imagine that God somehow owes them his help when they deign to seek it. In the day of trouble, their prayers go something like this: "O God, I know that I haven't spoken to you much lately or thought much about you. But see here! Now I'm in trouble. Show me that you are really a God of love, and do what I ask!" They may even add this threat: "If you don't do what I want, how can you expect me to go on believing in you?" Some might even add a little bribe to help God decide matters in their favor: "If you just do thus and such, I promise I'll be a better person; I might even go to church!" The petition of the Lord's Prayer "Thy will be done" is as far from their thoughts as the earth is from the moon.

其他一些人在祷告时幻想，当他们决定去寻求上帝的帮助时，上帝在某种程度上对此亏欠了他们。在患难之日，他们的祷告是这样的：“哦，上帝，我知道我最近不怎么和你说话，也不怎么想到你。但是你看！现在我有麻烦了。让我看看你真的是一个慈爱的上帝吧，照我求的去做吧！”他们甚至可能加上这样的威胁：“如果你并不成就我想要的，你怎么能指望我能继续相信你呢？”一些人甚至可能加上一点贿赂，来帮助上帝去做让他们青睐的决定：“如果你这样做，我保证我会成为一个更好的人；我甚至可以去教会！”主祷文里的祷词“愿你的旨意成就”，与他们的想法的距离，如同地球与月亮的距离一样遥远。

What unimaginable gall! What arrogance that we who are dust and ashes should think God's happiness depends on our believing in him. What folly that sinful man should approach God and make demands of him, as though man were the almighty and God some dim-witted servant, easily intimidated and easily manipulated to fallen man's purposes. Here Dame Reason really shows her weakness and fallen man the depth of his corruption that he could hold to such utter nonsense!

多么不可思议的胆量啊！多么傲慢啊，我们这些微尘和灰烬竟敢认为上帝的幸福感取决于我们相信他。多么愚蠢啊，罪人竟然靠近上帝去命令他，仿佛人是全能者，上帝是某个缺心眼的仆人，很容易被恐吓和操纵来满足堕落之人的目的。在这里，理性女士真正地显明了她的软弱和堕落的人类腐败的程度——他竟然可以坚持这样的胡说八道！

More subtle, but likewise damaging, are errors that may ensnare even well-intentioned Christians: "I really did pray as a Christian should. But no help came. I don't understand it. Does God really hear and answer?" When troubled by such thoughts, the devil or a heretic may suggest one of two false solutions to the problem. The doubter may be driven to despair by this counsel: "You just didn't believe enough or pray hard enough; if you had, then you would have gotten what you asked for." That the Bible nowhere suggests that God's answers depend on the depth of our faith or the fervor of our prayers is not mentioned. To be sure, many times Jesus says, "Your faith has saved you." But that is a faith which he himself provided in his Word, a faith not weighed by him or measured by some divine or human scale. It is the simple trust that called to him in time of need; and from the same grace that gave the faith, God gave what the one praying asked for.



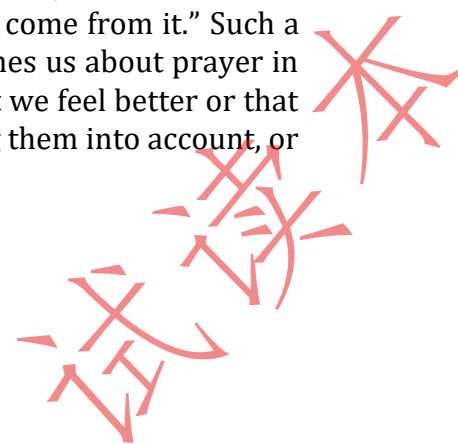
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更微妙，但同样具有破坏性的，是一些甚至可能使出于善意的基督徒陷入罗网的错误：“我确实如同一个基督徒那样祷告了。但是并没有帮助。我不明白。上帝真的听到并回应了吗？”当被这样的想法困扰时，魔鬼或异教徒可能会对这个问题提出两种错误的解决方案。怀疑论者可能会被这个说法推向绝望：“你并没有足够相信，或足够认真地祷告；如果你有，那么你将得到你祈求的一切。”圣经没有地方提到，上帝的回应取决于我们信心的深度，或我们祷告的热情。确实，很多次耶稣说：“你的信救了你。”但这是他自己在他的道里提供的信心，这信心并不被他权衡，也不被某种属神或属人的天平去测量。这是一种简单的，在缺乏的时候向他呼求的信心；上帝在他的恩典里赐下这信心，并在同样的恩典中将祷告者所求的东西赐给他们。

Still others seem to think that if they just get enough people praying for the same thing in a prayer chain and they all “pray really hard,” then God will give what they are praying for. To be sure, the Bible encourages us to pray for one another. We do that both privately and together in the intercessory prayers offered in church. But the notion that God is counting the number of prayers and weighing their intensity before he decides to answer is very much a mistaken notion. The one who cries out alone in the dark of the night and in the solitude of his closet should not fear that his prayer is of less importance to God than the common or public prayer of the many. Nor should the many imagine that their joint prayer weighs more than that of the individual. It’s really a matter of both/and, not of either/or; that is, the private prayer of the individual and the public prayer of many are both heard by God. When offered trusting in his mercy and in the merit of Christ, the one is as good as the other; neither kind of prayer should be discouraged.

还有一些人似乎认为，如果他们有足够多的人在一个连锁祷告中祈求同样的事，而且他们都“特别认真地祷告”，那么上帝就会给他们所祈求的。当然，圣经鼓励我们彼此祷告。我们在私下和在教会大家一起的代祷中，都是这样的。但是，认为上帝在决定回应祷告前，会计算祷告者的数量和权衡他们的热切程度的观点，是一个非常错误的观点。一个人在漆黑的夜晚和在孤寂的密室独自呼求，他不应该害怕他的祷告对上帝的来说，相比很多人共同或公开的祷告，没那么重要。许多人也不应该想象，他们的联合祷告比独自祷告更重要。这是一件与/并的事，而不是一件二者择一的事；也就是说，个人的私下祷告和很多人的公开祷告，都能够被上帝听见。当一个人相信基督的怜悯和功德时，他就和其他人一样，任何一种祷告都不应该被阻止。

Another false solution for the problem of prayers that *seem* to go unanswered goes something like this: “Prayer really is chiefly for our psychological benefit; we pray, and then we feel better because we have unloaded our troubles on God; that should be a good enough reason for praying, but don’t expect much more to come from it.” Such a solution casts aside everything that God promises when he teaches us about prayer in his Word. Never does he suggest that we should just pray so that we feel better or that ultimately he has no intention of dealing with our prayers, taking them into account, or answering them.



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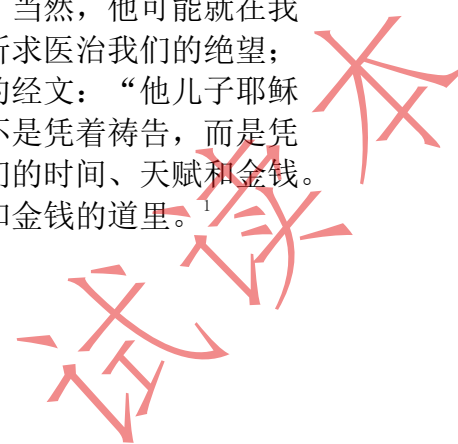
对于祷告似乎没有得到回应的问题，另一个错误的解决方法是：“祷告主要是为了我们心理上的好处；我们祷告，然后我们就会感觉更好，因为我们把我们的烦恼卸给了上帝；这就已经是一个足够好的祷告的理由了，但不要期待它能带来更多的东西。”这样一种解决方案，将上帝在他的道里关于祷告教导我们的，他应许要给我们的一切，都抛诸脑后。上帝从未暗示说，我们应该祷告仅仅是为了让我们感觉更好，或最终他并不打算处理我们的祷告，考虑它们，或回应它们。

Finally, there is the ever-popular error by which well-intentioned but deluded Christians make prayer a sort of second bible. “I pray, and God speaks to me in my prayers and tells me what I should do; I ask him if I should marry this person/get a divorce/take this job/buy this house; then I listen for his answer as I pray.” The sad truth of the matter is that prayer as a second bible always ends up pushing the first and only Bible to the side. Where people imagine that God is whispering in their ears, they soon see little need of listening to him speak where alone he has promised to speak: in the Word, in the sacraments. God nowhere promises to speak to us in our prayers. We are the ones who speak in our prayers; that’s what prayer is by definition: talking to God.

最后，还有一个特别流行的错误，就是出于好意但轻信的基督徒使祷告成为某种类型的第二本圣经。“我祷告，并且上帝在我的祷告中对我说话，告诉我我应该做什么；我向他询问，是否我应该和这个人结婚/离婚/接受这个工作/买这个房子；然后我祷告听从他的回应。”可悲的事实是，作为第二本圣经的祷告，最终总是会把第一本以及唯一的一本圣经置于一旁。当人们幻想上帝在他们的耳边低语时，他们很快就不需要听他在他唯一应许了说话的地方——在圣道和圣礼中——说话了。上帝并没有应许在我们祷告中向我们说话。在我们的祷告中，我们是说话的那个人；这就是祷告的定义：向上帝说话。

So, we pray for wisdom, and he answers us and gives it in the Word. We pray for direction about marriage and listen to what his Word says about marriage; that’s where he answers such a prayer. To be sure, he may answer our prayer even as we are praying it—but not apart from his Word. We may, for example, pray for a cure for our despair; as we pray, he may call to our minds passages like 1 John 1:7: “The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” But even then, it is not the prayer as such that is God speaking but his Word. So we ask for wisdom in deciding matters of vocation and the stewardship of our time, talents, and treasure. It is not in the prayer itself that God answers but in what his Word says about time, talents, and treasure.<sup>1</sup>

因此，我们祈求智慧，他回应我们并在圣道中赐给我们。我们祈求对婚姻的指引，并听从他的道关于婚姻说了什么；这就是他回应这些祷告的地方。当然，他可能就在我们祷告的时候回应它——但并不离开他的道。比如，我们可能祈求医治我们的绝望；在我们祷告的时候，他可能呼召我们想起如约翰一书 1:7 这样的经文：“他儿子耶稣的血洁净我们脱离一切罪。”但即使是这样，上帝说这些话并不是凭着祷告，而是凭着他的道。因此，我们祈求智慧，去决定我们的召命和管理我们的时间、天赋和金钱。上帝并不是在祷告本身回应它，而是在他说的关于时间、天赋和金钱的道里。<sup>1</sup>



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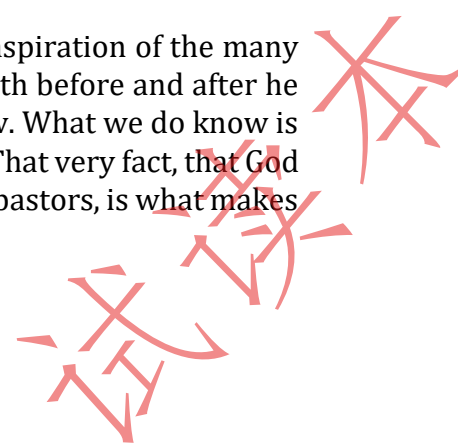
As already noted, too often those who imagine that God answers prayers by blowing in their ears or whispering (apart from his Word) into their inmost beings end up pushing aside the Word and sacraments. It is so much easier to wait for an inner voice and call it God's voice than to search the Scriptures and ask God to bless our search as we apply passages to our particular situations in life. Besides, inner voices are often much more agreeable to our fallen nature than God's Word is. Our fallen nature might not really want to know what God actually says in his Word. The attitude of those who want God to speak to them directly and apart from the Word is not unlike the attitude of the Pharisees that Jesus rebuked in Matthew 12:38-40. They too wanted signs from Jesus, outward and visible and measurable demonstrations of his deity. And they wanted it on their own terms, for their own purposes, according to their own wishes. But what did Jesus say in answer? He called them a "wicked and adulterous generation" and then pointed them to the Word, specifically to the promise of his own resurrection.

正如之前所说的，那些幻想上帝借着在他们耳边吹气或向他们最深处的存在窃语（在他的道之外）的人，往往会将圣道和圣礼置于一旁。等待一个内在的声音并称其为上帝的声音，比研读圣经并祈求上帝祝福我们将圣经经文应用于我们生命中的特定情况，要容易得多。另外，内在的声音比上帝的道往往更另我们堕落的本性感到愉快。我们堕落的本性可能并不真的想知道，上帝在他的道中实际上说了什么。那些想要上帝离开圣道直接和他们说话的人，和耶稣在马太福音 12:38-40 斥责的法利赛人的态度，一模一样。他们也想要来自耶稣的记号，他神性外在的、可见的、可测量的展示。他们想要这记号按照他们自己的方式，为了他们自己的目的，符合他们自己的意愿。但是耶稣是怎么回答的呢？他称他们“邪恶淫乱的世代”，并把他们指向了圣道，特别是他自身复活的应许。

But didn't God speak directly to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, and so many others in Bible times? Yes, he did. But we need to remember that the Bible, that book in which God promises to speak to all of us, had not yet been completed at that time. We need to remember as well that the times when God spoke even to these great saints of old were rare, not everyday occurrences. And God did not speak to everyone that way or ever promise to speak to anyone that way.

但是在圣经时代，难道上帝没有直接向亚伯拉罕、以撒、雅各、摩西、以赛亚和许多其他人说话吗？是的，他说了。但是我们需要知道，圣经，这本上帝应许在其中向我们所有人说话的书，在那个时候还没有完成。我们也要知道，上帝对古时那些伟大的圣徒说话的时候也是稀少的，并不是每一天都会发生。上帝并没有以这种方式对每个人说话，也没有应许向某个人这样说话。

David is a good case in point: God spoke to him directly in the inspiration of the many psalms that he wrote. But otherwise, in the conduct of his life both before and after he became king, God did not speak to him directly, as far as we know. What we do know is that God spoke to him through the prophets Samuel and Nathan. That very fact, that God did not speak directly to David but through his prophets, David's pastors, is what makes



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it so remarkable that God did speak directly to David's son Solomon. But again, that was a rare occurrence indeed.

在这一点上，大卫是个很好的例子：在他写下的很多圣灵默示的诗篇中，上帝直接向他说话。但除此之外，据我们所知，无论是在他成为国王之前还是之后的生命中，上帝并没有直接地向他说话。我们所知道的是，上帝借着先知撒母耳和拿单向他说话。上帝并没有直接向大卫说话，而是透过上帝的先知，大卫的牧师向他说话，这样的事实，让上帝直接向大卫的儿子所罗门说话，显得不同寻常。但再次地，这种情况确实是稀少的。

Now that we have God's Word in the Bible, we have a sure and certain, a constant and infallible message from God to us. There is no need to look for him where he has not promised to be but every reason to bend heart and ear to where he has promised to be, to his written Word. Those not satisfied with that Word, who look for him elsewhere, lean on broken reeds which provide only the illusion of support. They end up listening not to God but to their own imaginations and relying on their own will rather than on his revealed Word.

现在我们有圣经中上帝的道，我们就有了一个从神而来的确实可靠、恒定无误的信息。我们没必要在上帝并没有应许存在的地方去寻找他，却有充足的理由在他应许存在的地方，在他写下来的圣道里，竭尽全力去寻找他。那些不满足于这道的人，他们在别处寻找他，靠在压伤的芦苇上，这芦苇给他们一种支撑他们的假象。他们最终不是听从上帝而是他们自己的幻想，并依赖他们自己的意愿而不是上帝启示的道。

When considering the matter of prayer, one can scarcely help but call to mind this old German proverb: *Wo Gott eine Kirche baut, baut der Teufel eine Kapelle daneben!* ("Where God builds a church, the devil builds a chapel next to it!") Many and frequent are the attacks that the devil and Dame Reason make on the doctrine of prayer and the Christian's practice of prayer! What threads tie together all the previously mentioned temptations and delusions about prayer, be they coarse or subtle?

一想到祷告，人们就会不由自主地想起这句古老的德国谚语：*Wo Gott eine Kirche baut, baut der Teufel eine Kapelle daneben!*（“上帝在哪儿建立教堂，魔鬼就在它旁边建立一座小敬拜堂！”）魔鬼和理性女士对祷告的教义和基督徒祷告的实践，进行了多次和频繁的攻击！是什么样的线将前面提到的所有关于祷告的试探和迷惑捆绑在一起，这些线是粗糙的还是精细的？

1They all contradict the Scriptures.

1、它们都与圣经相矛盾。

2They all detract from the glory of Christ.

2、它们都贬低了基督的荣耀。





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3 They all encourage the impenitent to remain as he is while robbing the penitent of the assured consolations of God's promises in the gospel.

3、它们都鼓励不悔改的人保持他的状况，同时剥夺了悔改之人在福音里上帝的应许确凿的安慰。

Those are the three characteristics of all false doctrine and certainly of the many false doctrines that cloud the beauty of God's promises concerning prayer. But we want to bring our every thought into subjection to the Word of Christ. Instructed by the Word of God, we can put Dame Reason back behind the mop pail and use her in the role assigned to her. In his Word, God has attached rich and beautiful promises to his command that we should pray. And those promises make it very clear indeed that prayer matters. God's Word makes it clear that prayer is not just a fruitless babbling which perhaps makes us feel better and which ultimately doesn't really accomplish anything.

这是一切假教义的三个特点，当然也包括很多遮蔽上帝关于祷告的美好应许的假教义。但我们想要使我们的每一个心思意念都顺服于基督的道。在上帝之道的教导下，我们能够将理性女士放在抹布桶的后面，并让她做分配给她的工作。在他的道里，上帝为他给我们我们应当祷告的命令，添加了丰富美丽的应许。这些应许很清楚的表明，祷告的确很重要。上帝的道清楚地表明，祷告并不是没有结果的唠叨不休，即，它可能会让我们感觉更好，但最终并不成就任何事。

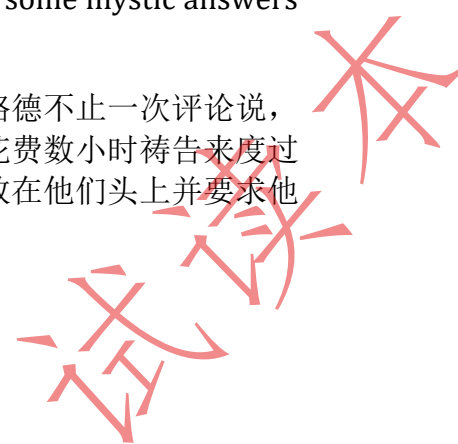
We will consider first God's commands to pray and his promises to hear and bless our prayers. And then we will look at some of the many striking examples in the Bible of times when prayer made a difference.

我们将首先思考上帝对祷告的命令，和他应许倾听并祝福我们的祷告。然后我们将看看圣经中很多显著的，祷告发挥了作用的例子。

## Commands and promises 命令与应许

All of the saints of the Old Testament and the New, all of the great church fathers too, were men of prayer. Luther commented more than once that sometimes he was so busy with so many problems that he had to spend hours in prayer just to get through the day. These believers of old did not pray simply because God held a stick over their heads and demanded that they pray. Nor were they merely looking for some psychological relief. Far less were they sitting around all day waiting for God to blow some mystic answers into their ears. Oh no, never that!

旧约和新约中所有的圣徒，所有伟大的教父，都是祷告的人。路德不止一次评论说，有些时候他是如此之忙，有太多的事情要办，以至于他不得不花费数小时祷告来度过这一天。这些旧时的信徒祷告，不仅仅是因为上帝将一根鞭子放在他们头上并要求他



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们祷告。他们也不仅仅是寻求一些心理上的解脱。他们更不是整天坐着等待上帝将一些神秘的回应放入他们耳中。哦，不，从来不是这样！

They prayed because God not only commands it but as well adds rich promises to hear and answer our prayers. He puts the command and the promise so simply and yet so richly, for example, in Psalm 50:15: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me." The command and the promise put the child of God in a never-ending circle of listening to God in his Word—speaking to God in prayer—awaiting God's rescue—giving God honor—and then starting the circle all over again with listening to him in his Word.

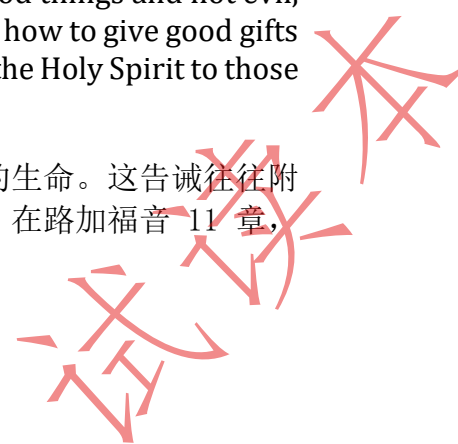
他们祷告，因为上帝不仅仅命令如此，他也添加了倾听和回应我们祷告的丰盛的应许。他的命令和应许是如此简单却又如此丰富，比如，在诗篇 50:15：“要在患难之日求告我，我必搭救你，你也要荣耀我。”这命令和应许将上帝的儿女放在一个永不结束的循环中：在上帝的道中倾听他的话——在祷告中向上帝说话——等待上帝的拯救——归荣耀给上帝——然后，在倾听上帝的道中重新开始这个循环。

Read the whole of the psalm. It is a beautiful blending of God's providence and the promises he attaches to prayer. It is a fulsome answer to many of the obstacles to genuine prayer discussed earlier. The command assumes that we have troubles in this life and needs that we cannot meet by ourselves. The command has behind it the love of God that delights in speaking to us in his Word and answering our prayers in every time of need. The command has the promise of an answer that will move us to wonder, to awe and adoration, as we go back to listening yet again to God in his Word.

通读诗篇。这是上帝的眷顾和他附加在祷告上的应许的完美结合。它有力的回应了前面讨论的许多对真诚祷告的阻碍。这命令基于我们在此生有很多麻烦，以及我们有很多自己不能满足的缺乏。这命令背后是上帝的爱，他喜悦于在他的道里向我们说话，并在每一个缺乏的日子回应我们的祷告。这命令应许了回应，当我们再次回到上帝的道里倾听他时，这回应会让我们惊奇、敬畏和赞叹。

Or think of Jesus' own and oft-repeated exhortations to us that ours should be a life of prayer. So often the exhortation has attached to it the most abundant promises of God's gracious and speedy answers of help and rescue. In Luke 11, Jesus draws the comparison between God and a friend inconvenienced by a request for help in the middle of the night. The friend will help because of the very boldness of an inconvenient request. Will God be less provident in answer to the cries of his friends? Then he adds the comparison of God to a good father who gives his children good things and not evil, making this striking point: "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13).

或者想想耶稣自己反复告诫我们，我们的生命应该是一个祷告的生命。这告诫往往附上最丰富的应许——上帝会最仁慈和迅速的回应帮助和拯救。在路加福音 11 章，



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耶稣把上帝和一个在半夜被请求帮助而感到不便的朋友做对比。这个朋友会因为这个人不顾面子的直求而帮助他。上帝在回应他朋友的哭泣时，对这个朋友的眷顾会更少吗？然后他又将上帝比作一个给他儿女好东西而不是坏东西的父亲，阐明了这样一个引人注目的观点：“你们虽然不好，尚且知道拿好东西给儿女，何况天父，他岂不更要把圣灵赐给求他的人吗？”（路 11:13）。

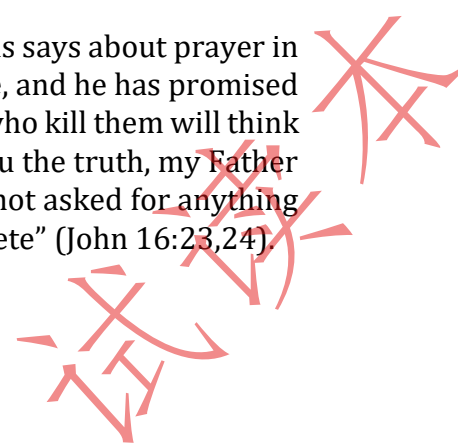
Note Jesus' assumption here: He assumes that we understand that our greatest need is for the gifts which the Holy Spirit gives, that is, for forgiveness and faith in time of temptation, need, and struggle. And where does the Holy Spirit give those gifts? Where else but in the Word and the sacraments! At the same time we may conclude this from all that the Bible says about prayer: Jesus is making an argument known as an argument from the greater to the lesser; that is, if the Father is eager to grant the greatest gifts, those the Spirit gives in Word and sacraments, why should we doubt that he will give us all the other gifts that we need for this body and life?

请注意耶稣在这里的假设：他假设我们知道我们最大的需要，是对圣灵赐下的恩赐的需要，那就是，在试探、缺乏和挣扎的日子里对赦免和信心的需要。圣灵在哪儿赐下这些恩赐呢？除了圣道和圣礼，没有别的地方了！同时，我们可以从圣经一切谈到祷告的地方得出这样的结论：耶稣正在进行一场被称为由大到小的论证；那就是，如果天父乐意赐给我们最大的，即圣灵在圣道和圣礼中赐下的恩赐，为什么我们要怀疑，他会赐给我们我们身体和此生所需要的其他一切恩赐呢？

In Luke 18:1-8 Jesus tells the story of the unjust judge who finally gives justice to a widow just to get rid of her. And then, again in such a striking way, Jesus makes his point about God and our prayers: “Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly” (18:7,8). But notice that little phrase “who cry out to him day and night.” Now we are getting to it! That little phrase neatly sums up what we find in almost everything that the Bible has to say about prayer: *We are always in need, needs that only God can satisfy, needs that he promises to satisfy in answer to our prayers!*

在路加福音 18:1-8 节，耶稣讲了一个故事，一个不公正的官最终只是为了摆脱一个寡妇，而给她伸冤。然后，耶稣再次以一种引人注目的方式，阐明了他对上帝和我们的祷告的观点：“上帝的选民昼夜呼吁他，他岂会延迟不给他们伸冤吗？我告诉你们，他很快就要给他们伸冤”（路 18:7,8）。但注意这样的短语“昼夜呼求他”。现在我们触及到重点了。这个短语巧妙地总结了圣经中关于祷告说过的几乎每一件事：我们总是在缺乏中，这缺乏唯有上帝能够满足，这缺乏他应许在回应我们祷告中去满足！

Perhaps that point is made in the most stunning way in what Jesus says about prayer in his discourse just before his Passion. He is about to suffer and die, and he has promised the disciples that they too will suffer persecution and that those who kill them will think that they are doing God a favor! In that context, he says: “I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete” (John 16:23,24).



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在耶稣受难之前的谈话中，当他说到祷告时，以最引人注目的方式阐明了这一点。他就要受苦和死亡，他向他的门徒应许了他们同样要遭受迫害，那些杀害他们的人会认为自己是帮助上帝！在这样的情况下，他说：“我实实在在地告诉你们，你们奉我的名无论向父求什么，他会赐给你们。直到现在，你们没有奉我的名求什么，如今你们求就必得着，使你们的喜乐得以满足”（约 16:23, 24）。

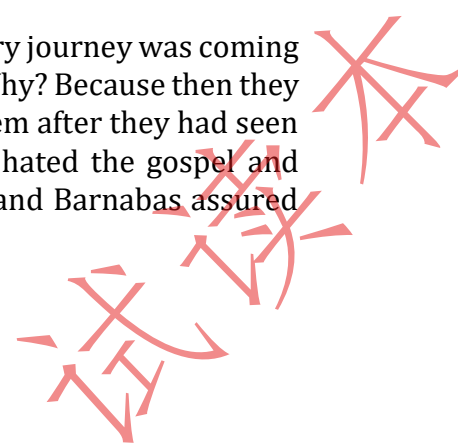
The point could not be more striking: Prayer is not some magic bullet by which we instruct God to make sure that our lives are trouble free, without pain, without temptation, without suffering. What Jesus says about prayer assumes that in our lives we will have troubles aplenty, temptation on every hand, suffering this today and that tomorrow. What Jesus says about prayer makes it very clear that our trust in the providence of God will always be put to the test by what we experience in our bodily and in our spiritual/religious lives from day-to-day.

这一点再明显不过了：祷告并不是某种灵丹妙药，借此我们指示上帝确保我们的生命摆脱麻烦，没有痛苦、试探和苦难。耶稣关于祷告所说的，已经假定了在我们的生命中我们会有充足的麻烦，四面八方的试探，今天遭受这样的苦难，明天遭受那样的。耶稣关于祷告的说法非常清楚的表明，我们对上帝眷顾的信心总是受到我们每日所经历的身体和属灵/宗教生活的试炼。

The disciples in all of the promised suffering should constantly hear his Word and should without ceasing trust that in good days and in bad, in life and in death, they are safe and secure in his hands. That's how, as Jesus promised, their joy will be complete. Whatever they experience, the experience will not be a proof that God has abandoned them. Rather, in everything they will have the assurance of his Word, yes, of his promised providence, that they are safe and secure. And trusting in his promised providence, they should pray for him to fulfill the promise. Do you see how it works? *The providence of God and the promises he attaches to prayer are like two hands folded together; they are different but always together.*

在一切受苦的应许中，门徒都该持续地听他的道，永不止息地相信，无论是顺境还是逆境，是活着还是死亡，他们在他手中都是安全稳固的。这就是为什么，正如耶稣所应许的，他们的喜乐是完全的。无论他们经历了什么，这些经历都不能证明上帝抛弃了他们。相反，在任何事上，他们都能从他的道里，是的，从他应许的眷顾里，得着安全稳固的保障。相信上帝应许了的眷顾，他们就能为他实现这应许祷告。你看出这是怎么回事了吗？上帝的眷顾和他附加在祷告上的应许就像两只手合拢在一起；它们是不同的，但却总是在一起。

Paul showed that he got the point. In Acts 14, as his first missionary journey was coming to an end, Paul encouraged the converts to hold fast to the faith. Why? Because then they would have a soft life? Hardly! He gave the encouragement to them after they had seen Paul kicked out of their cities and almost killed by those who hated the gospel and wanted to prevent its proclamation. In the face of all that, Paul and Barnabas assured



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their members that “we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God” (14:22).

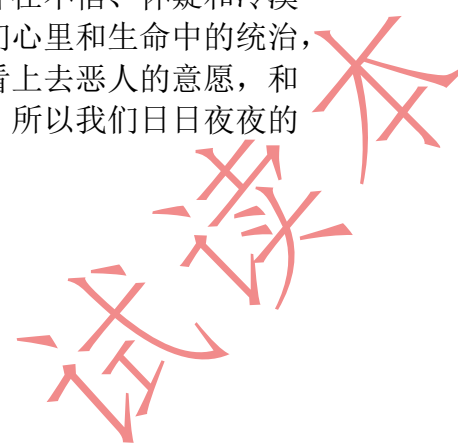
保罗表明他明白了这一点。在使徒行传 14 章，当他第一次传道旅程即将结束时，保罗鼓励新信徒持守信仰。为什么？因为之后他们会生活轻松些吗？完全不是！他们看到保罗被那些恨恶福音并想要阻止其传讲的人，赶出他们的城市并几乎杀了他，之后，保罗鼓励他们。面对这一切，保罗和巴拿巴向他们的会友保证说：“我们进入上帝的国，必须经历许多艰难”（徒 14:22）。

That believers of every age also get that point is demonstrated in the ancient prayer that we sing at Matins, the *Te Deum Laudamus*. Note this line in the prayer: “The noble army of martyrs praise you!” Not: “The noble army of martyrs demand an explanation for unanswered prayers seeking rescue from martyrdom.” That line in the *Te Deum* no doubt traces its origins to the question and then the song of the martyrs and all the saints in heaven recorded in Revelation 6:9-11 and 7:9-17.

每一个时代的信徒都明白这一点，这在我们晨祷时使用的古代祷文《the *Te Deum Laudamus*（赞美颂）》中得到了证明。注意祷文的这一段：“殉道者高尚的军队赞美你！”而不是：“殉道者高尚的军队，对从殉道中获得拯救的祷告未得到回应，要求一个解释。”毫无疑问，赞美颂这一段的源头，可以追溯到这个问题，然后追溯到在启示录 6:9-11 和 7:9-17 中记录的，所有在天上的殉道者和圣徒的欢歌。

The Lord’s Prayer, that most perfect and beautiful of all prayers, makes exactly the same point. Why do we need to beg God that his name be hallowed, his kingdom come, and his will be done? Because on every side, in the world and in the church, in my life and my flesh, God’s name is always under attack. Judged by outward appearance, it always seems that God’s name, his revelation of himself in his Word, is being thrown aside and under the bus in favor of unbelief, doubt, and indifference. It seems that his kingdom, that is, his rule in our hearts and lives by his Word, is always on the brink of being overtaken by the rule of the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. It always appears as though the will of evil men and of the evil that lurks within the shrine of my own heart and soul is about to win the total victory. So day and night we cry, “Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done!”

主祷文，最完美和美丽的祷文，正确地阐明了同样的要点。为什么我们需要恳求上帝，愿他的名为圣，愿他的国度降临，愿他的旨意成就？因为在这个世界上，在教会里，在我的生命和肉体中的每一个方面，上帝的名总是受到攻击。从外表来判断，上帝的名——他在他圣道里对自己的启示，看上去总是被置之一旁，并在不信、怀疑和冷漠的支持下被赶了出去。看上去他的国，就是他借着他的道在我们心里和生命中的统治，总是处于被魔鬼、这个世界和我们自己的罪性所压倒的边缘。看上去恶人的意愿，和潜伏在我自己内心和灵魂里的邪恶，总是即将赢得完全的胜利。所以我们日夜夜的呼喊，“愿你的名为圣，愿你的国度降临，愿你的旨意成就！”





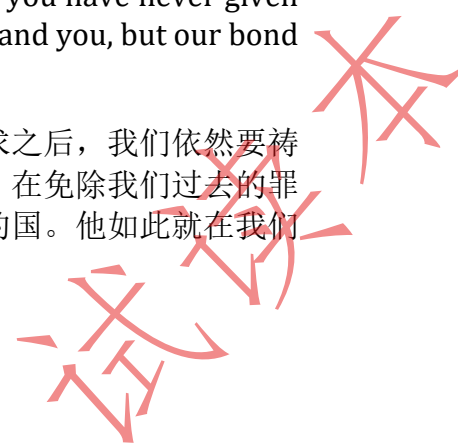
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Then in recognition of the fact that the devil threatens to rob us of even a crust of bread and to destroy all order in family, in church, and in state, we beg without ceasing: "Give us this day our daily bread." It is sad that so often we let these petitions fall mindlessly from our lips. That we are not starving to death, that we still believe the gospel, that the Word and sacraments are still in our midst, all of that is proof that God answers prayer. Without his answer to this, his own prayer, we would have perished long ago. That he answers the prayer so richly, even when we mindlessly pray it, even when we have forgotten to pray it, is yet further testimony to the richness of his grace—yes, and of his providence.

然后，魔鬼威胁我们说，要夺走我们哪怕是最后一片面包，摧毁家庭、教会和国家的一切秩序，为了表彰这威胁，我们不停歇的祷告：“我们日用的饮食，今日赐给我们。”可悲的是，我们常常让这些请求从我们的嘴唇边毫不用心的溜过。我们并没有饿死，我们依然相信福音，圣道和圣礼依然在我们中间，所有的这些都证明了上帝回应祷告。若他不回应这些他亲自告诉我们的祷告，我们早就灭亡了。他如此丰盛地回应祷告，即使当我们毫不用心地祷告，即使当我们已经忘记了祷告，这又进一步证明了他丰盛的恩典——是的，以及他的眷顾。

Then, wonder of all wonders, after God has answered those first four petitions, we still have to pray "*Forgive us!*" God in his providence, in answer to our prayers, and in spite of our past sins, preserves his Word among us; thus, he hallows his name and preserves his kingdom. Thereby he accomplishes richly his good and gracious will among us. In answer to our prayers and in spite of our past ingratitude, he also gives daily bread and a measure of order in family, church, and state. Since he has answered those four petitions so richly, how can it be that we still sin and that we still, therefore, need to pray this petition? All of the excuses we might have for sin are gone! Will we sin through doctrinal error or perversion? Not where God's Word is preserved by him in its truth and purity and we cherish that gift of his Word and grace. Will we sin by greed or envy or worry about tomorrow and the day after? How silly, no, how perverse that would be. We know that our heavenly Father answers the prayer Jesus taught us to pray and has rescued us from war and famine, from terror by day and calamity by night. We need not fear the devil or his hosts. We need not worry about tomorrow. We have no reason to complain about anything in the present or dread anything in the future. But still, after God has done all of that, we still cry day and night: "Forgive us; we have not treasured your gift of the gospel nor your preservation of it in our midst. Forgive us; we have neither appreciated your abundant gift of daily bread, of peace in our land, of order in your church; nor have we permitted your gift of these treasures to so capture our minds that we trust you for them; instead, we worry and fret as though you have never given us anything; instead, we grab and gripe as though we were lords and you, but our bond servant!"

然后，在一切惊奇中更惊奇的是，在上帝回应了先前的四个请求之后，我们依然要祷告“免我们的罪！”上帝在他的眷顾里，在回应我们的祷告里，在免除我们过去的罪里，在我们中间保守他的道；因此，他使他的名为圣并保守他的国。他如此就在我们



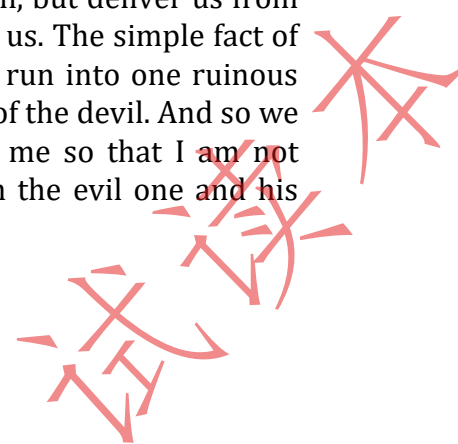
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中间丰盛的成就了他的良善和旨意。在回应我们的祷告和免除我们过去的忘恩负义中，他同样赐下日用的饮食，以及家庭、教会和国家某种程度的秩序。由于他如此丰富地回应了那四个请求，我们怎么会仍然犯罪，并且因此我们仍然需要为这个请求祷告呢？所有我们可能有的犯罪的借口都消失了！我们会因为教义的错误或曲解而犯罪吗？不是哪儿上帝的道被他真实而纯粹地保存，我们就会珍惜他的道和恩典的礼物吗？我们会因着贪婪、嫉妒、担心明天或以后的生活而犯罪吗？这是多么地愚蠢，不，多么地有悖常理啊。我们知道天父回应耶稣教导我们的这祷告，并已经从战争和饥荒、从白日的恐惧和黑夜的灾难中拯救了我们。我们不必害怕魔鬼和它的主人。我们不必为明天忧虑。我们没有理由抱怨当下的任何事或恐惧未来的任何事。但是，在上帝做了这一切之后，我们依然日夜呼求：“免我们的罪；我们既没有珍惜你丰富的恩赐：日用的饮食、我们土地上的平安、你教会的秩序；我们也没有让你这些珍贵的恩赐抓住我们的思想，以至于我们因着它们就相信你；相反，我们忧虑而焦急，仿佛你从未给我们任何东西一样；相反，我们攫取和抱怨，仿佛我们是主人，而你，不过是我们的奴隶！”

That petition and its place in the Lord's Prayer is a most humbling recognition of the depth of our need. In spite of all he does in his Word, in his Sacraments, out of his providence, and in answer to our prayers, there will never be a moment in our lives when that cry for forgiveness is out of place. But even more than an acknowledgment of our constant need, it is an evidence of his far greater grace. Jesus knew when he gave that petition that perfection in us would always be a distant and an illusive goal which we would reach only in heaven. Nevertheless, he bids us to pray "*Forgive us!*" And by inviting us to pray such a petition, he promises that he will hear, that he will answer, and that, yes, he will still forgive! And again, he promises those things even after he has taken away any possible excuse in us for sin by answering the first four petitions!

这个请求和它的主祷文中的位置，是对我们深深的缺乏最让人羞愧的认识。尽管上帝在他的圣道里，在他的圣礼里，出于他的眷顾，在回应我们的祷告中，做了一切的事，在我们生命中从来没有哪一刻，呼求赦免是不合时宜的。但是这远不仅是一种对我们恒久的缺乏的承认，它是他更大的恩典的证据。耶稣知道当他赐下这个请求时，在我们里面的完美一直是一个遥远而虚幻的目标，这目标我们只能在天堂达到。尽管如此，他吩咐我们祷告，“免我们的罪！”借着邀请我们这样祷告，他应许他会听，会回应，并且，是的，他依然会赦免！再次地，他应许了这些事情，即使是借着回应前四个请求，他已经拿走了我们犯罪的任何可能的借口。

Lest we forget that our whole lives, each hour and every moment, depend on him and his grace, he further bids us to pray "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!" He knows us so well and, nevertheless, loves and cares for us. The simple fact of the matter is that without his answer to our prayer, we would run into one ruinous temptation after another and finally fall totally into the clutches of the devil. And so we cry in expectation of his gracious answer: "Put a wall around me so that I am not tempted beyond all possibility of rescue; then, deliver me from the evil one and his



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snare, snare that I am too weak and foolish to escape on my own; and finally, in the hour of death, rescue me from every peril and all evil and take me to yourself in heaven.”

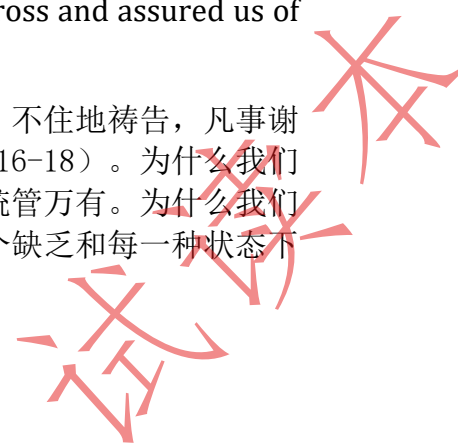
为免我们忘记我们全部的一生，每一时每一刻，都倚赖于他和他的恩典，他进一步吩咐我们祷告说：“不叫我们陷入试探，救我们脱离那恶者！”他如此了解我们的同时，又爱着和关心着我们。有一个简单的事实是，如果他不回应我们的祷告，我们就会奔向一个又一个毁灭性的试探，最终完全落入魔鬼的手掌。因此我们期待着他恩慈的回应，呼求道：“求你在我周围围墙环绕我，使得我不至于被试探到无药可救；然后，求你救我脱离那恶者和他的罗网，就是我如此软弱和愚昧，以至于想要靠我自己逃脱的罗网；最后，在死亡的那一刻，求你救我脱离所有的危险和一切的邪恶，把我带到天堂归向你自己。”

In recognition of the fact that what we ask for in his prayer is high and holy and utterly beyond our reach, we close it in worship and adoration: “For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever!” We will leave it to others to argue about the canonicity of that line. The truth it expresses is, however the argument comes out, fitting and sublime: Only God is big enough, mighty enough, and gracious enough to satisfy these needs of ours that surround us our whole life long. And as we sigh “Amen,” we call to mind again the promise implied in the fact that Jesus himself has taught us so to pray: If God were not willing, even eager, to answer this prayer, Jesus would not have told us to pray it; God does not joke with us in his Word or play mind games with us.

在认识到我们在主祷文里祈求的，是如此崇高、圣洁，远远超过我们所能企及的事实后，我们在敬拜和爱慕中结束它：“因为国度、权柄、荣耀全是你的，直到永远！”让其他人去争论这句话是否属于正典吧。无论这个争论结果如何，它表达的事实是恰当而卓越的：唯有上帝足够大，足够有能力，足够亲切，来满足我们整个生命中环绕着我们的这些需要。当我们感叹“阿门”时，我们再一次想到这个应许里暗含着的事实，即，是耶稣自己教导我们如此祷告：如果上帝不乐意——甚至可以说，热切地回应这个祷告的话，耶稣就不会告诉我们这样祷告；上帝在他的道里不和我们开玩笑，或是和我们玩心理游戏。

St. Paul sums up the matter so succinctly when he tells us, “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Why should we always be joyful? Because God in his providence has promised to rule over all things for our eternal good. Why should we always be joyful? Because God has commanded us to pray always in every circumstance, need, and condition of life and has promised to hear and answer us. See! It is God’s will. See! It is God’s will in Christ Jesus, who proved his love on the cross and assured us of his eagerness to answer prayer by himself teaching us to pray.

圣保罗如此简洁地总结了这一切，他告诉我们：“要常常喜乐，不住地祷告，凡事谢恩，因为这是上帝在基督耶稣里向你们所定的旨意”（帖前 5:16-18）。为什么我们要常常喜乐？因为上帝在他的眷顾中应许为了我们永恒的益处统管万有。为什么我们要常常喜乐？因为上帝命令我们在生命中的每一种处境、每一个缺乏和每一种状态下



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都不住祷告，并应许倾听和回应我们。看！这就是上帝的旨意。看！这就是上帝在基督耶稣里的旨意，他在十字架上证明了他的爱，并借着亲自教导我们祷告，向我们保证他渴望回应这祷告。

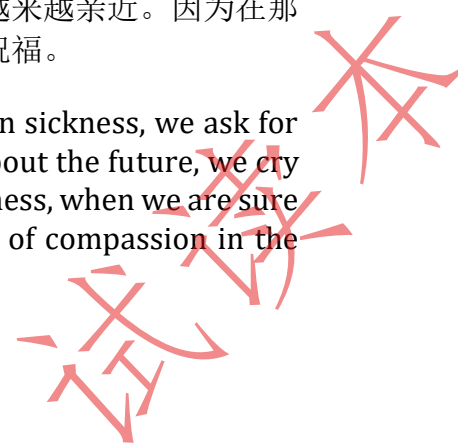
Notice that this passage together with all of the other passages in God's Word which teach us about prayer see no contradiction or conflict between God's providence and the command to pray. Again, they are like two hands folded together—each distinct, but always together.

注意这段经文，和其它所有上帝的道中教导我们关于祷告的经文一样，在上帝的眷顾和对祷告的命令之间，并没有矛盾和冲突。再次地，它们就像两只手掌合并在一起——彼此不同，但总是在一起。

And so, we pray. We pray for spiritual blessings, for true repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, for a more confident faith, for help in resisting temptation. To these prayers God always says an unconditional "Yes!" He does it in the gospel in general as we hear that gospel applied in the absolution pronounced each week in the liturgy. He does it as we ponder the life and death of Christ for us in our private devotions. He does it as we call to mind his promises to us in our baptisms: the promises to adopt us as his children, to forgive all our sins, and to keep us members of his own family. He does it in the Sacrament of the Altar as he feeds us with himself to assure us again and again of our forgiveness and of his real and substantial presence in our bodies, in our lives. He does it as he in Word and sacraments heaps upon us his love and grace to give us the incentive of his love to grow in love and devotion to him and to his Word. In short, let those who want spiritual blessings draw ever closer to him as he speaks those blessings to us in his Word and sacraments. For there and there alone he has promised to give such blessings, and that in richest measure.

因此，我们祷告。我们为属灵的祝福，为真实的悔改，为罪的赦免，为一个更确定的信心，为帮助我们抵挡试探祷告。对这样的祷告上帝总是会无条件的说，“好！”在每周敬拜礼仪里当我们听到赦罪宣告中的福音时，他如此做了。当我们在我们的个人灵修中深思基督为我们的生命和死亡时，他如此做了。当我们想起在我们的洗礼中他对我们的应许——接纳我们为他的儿女、赦免我们一切的罪、保守我们成为他自己家庭的一员——时，他如此做了。在圣餐中，当他用他自己喂养我们，一次又一次向我们保证我们的赦免，以及他在我们身体和我们生命中真实和实体的临在时，他如此做了。当他在圣道和圣礼中，将他的爱和恩典堆积在我们身上，让我们在他的爱的激励下，在爱里成长并忠心于他和他的道时，他如此做了。总之，让那些想要属灵祝福的人，在他在他的圣道和圣礼中向我们谈论的这些祝福中，与他越来越亲近。因为在那儿并唯有在那儿，他应许给我们这样的祝福，并且是最丰盛的祝福。

And so, we pray. In every time of need, we call to him for help. In sickness, we ask for health. In poverty or its threat, we beg him for relief. In worry about the future, we cry to him to save us from despair and needless depression. In loneliness, when we are sure that no one understands or cares, we ask him to send an angel of compassion in the



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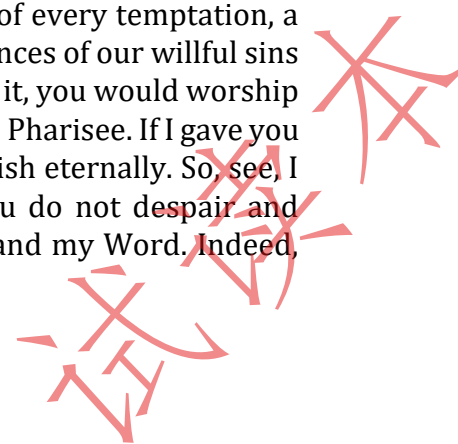
person of someone near to us. Or we ask that he fill us with the assurance that his companionship and that of the holy angels is sufficient until such a time as he may be pleased to provide us with someone who will help us carry our load. When we feel useless, we ask him to show us opportunities to serve him by serving those around us. In days of toil that exhaust us but seem to afford little reward, we ask that he give us contentment in the knowledge that in our work we are really serving him. In days of helplessness when we have to rely on others to help and serve us, we pray for gratitude to replace grumpiness, for patience to endure without complaint.

因此，我们祷告。在每一个缺乏的时刻，我们呼求他的帮助。在疾病中，我们祈求健康。在贫困及其威胁下，我们乞求他的救助。在对未来的忧虑中，我们呼求他从绝望和无用的抑郁中拯救我们。在孤独中，当我们确信没有人理解或关心我们，我们祈求他差派某个人，代表怜悯的天使来到我们身边。或者我们祈求他使我们确信，他和圣天使给我们的陪伴是足够的，直到某个时刻他乐于为我们提供一个人，来帮助我们承担我们的担子。当我们感到无用时，我们祈求他给我们机会，借着服事那些在我们身边的人而去服事他。在辛劳的日子，我们疲惫不堪却看上去没有得到什么回报，我们祈求他，因为知道在我们的工作中我们确实是在服事他，从而赐我们满足。在无助的日子，当我们不得不依赖于别人的帮助和服事时，我们乞求感激来代替暴躁，耐心忍耐而不是抱怨。

All these and so many other prayers he answers by giving us what serves our true and best interests. Maybe he lets us wait a while for his answer, but that is also an answer: "Not just yet; learn patience; learn to trust me; learn to marvel at my generosity when I do give you your heart's desire!" Maybe his answer to a specific request will be this: "I have something better in mind for you; look for it! No prayer comes to me in vain, and no cry from my dear child goes unheard or unanswered." Yes, and who cannot recount times when God gave what we asked for, gave even more than what we asked for or could have imagined possible.

借着给我们最真实和最有益的东西，他回应了这一切以及许多其它的祷告。也许他让我们对他的回应等一会儿，但这同样是一个回应：“还不是时候；学会耐心点儿；学会相信我；当我将你心里所渴望的给你时，学会惊叹我的慷慨！”也许他对某个具体的请求是这样回应的：“在我心里有更好的东西要给你；寻求它吧！向我的祷告没有徒然的，来自于我亲爱儿女的呼求没有不被听见或不被回应的。”是的，谁都无法计算有多少次，上帝赐下我们所求的，甚至赐下远超过我们所求的，或我们所能想象到的。

The prayers, of course, that ask for a life of ease and a soul free of every temptation, a successful outcome to our greed, or an escape from the consequences of our willful sins he answers like this: "That is never what I promised you; if I gave it, you would worship ease; and without temptations you would become a self-righteous Pharisee. If I gave you success in your favorite sins, you would wallow in them and perish eternally. So, see, I have something better for you: enough good things so that you do not despair and enough troubles and temptations so that you do not forget me and my Word. Indeed,





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the greater the blessings that you consider good, the greater too shall be the troubles and the temptations, so in all things you may remember my grace that matches your weakness, my forgiveness that covers your sin, my help that humbles the proud and raises up the fallen.” Jesus said it all when he told us not to worry: “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33). And St. Paul understood it too when he prayed for relief from his thorn in the flesh and received something better: Grace to endure, and with that grace the reminder for himself and for those he served that everything comes from God as a gift of grace (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

当然，祈求一个安逸的生命，一个没有任何试探的心灵，一个成功的结果来满足我的贪婪，或者逃脱我们故意犯罪的后果，对于这样的祷告者，他的回应可能如此：

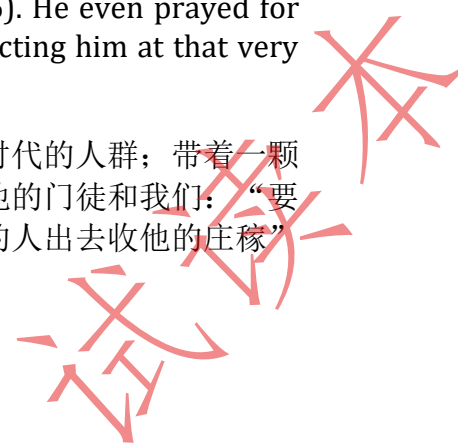
“我从来没有应许你这个；如果我将它给你，你就会崇拜安逸；没有试探你将会变成一个自义的法利赛人。如果我在你喜悦的罪上赐你成功，你将会沉溺其中，直到永恒的毁灭。因此，看啊，我有更好的东西给你：足够多的好东西，以至于你不会绝望；足够多的麻烦和试探，以至于你不会忘记我和我的道。确实，你认为好的祝福越大，麻烦和试探也同样越大，这样在一切事上你都能记住，我的恩典配得上你的软弱，我的赦免覆盖了你的罪，我的帮助使骄傲者降卑，使跌倒者升高。”耶稣在他告诉我们不要忧虑时说了这一切：“你们要先求上帝的国和他的义，这些东西都要加给你们了”（太 6:33）。圣保罗同样明白这一点，当他为从他肉身的刺中得释放祷告时，他得到了更好的东西：忍耐的恩典，这恩典提醒他自己和他所服事的人，一切事都是作为一个恩典的礼物从上帝而来（林后 12:7-10）。

And so, we pray. We pray not just for our own spiritual and temporal needs. We pray as well for others. It is as impossible to overstate the value of these prayers, as it is to overstate the value of the other prayers we have considered.

因此，我们祷告。我们不仅仅为我们自己属灵和现世的需要祷告。我们也为其他人祷告。这些祷告的价值怎么高估也不为过，它们和别的经过我们深思熟虑的祷告是一样的。

Jesus himself urges us to pray for the church. He looked out over the crowds of his day and the multitudes in our day; with a heart overflowing with the compassion that soon would take him to the cross, he told his disciples and he tells us: “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:37,38). He himself prayed for the church, for its growth, for its steadfastness, and for its purity in doctrine. Think of it: He was praying *for us*, only hours before his death, and prays for us still (John 17:6-26). He even prayed for individuals; for example, he prayed for Peter, who was contradicting him at that very moment and was about to deny him (Luke 22:31,32).

耶稣亲自督促我们为教会祷告。他环顾他那个时代和我们这个时代的人群；带着一颗满溢着怜悯的心——这怜悯将很快带他走到十字架上，他告诉他的门徒和我们：“要收的庄稼多，做工的人少。所以，你们要求庄稼的主差遣做工的人出去收他的庄稼”



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（太 9:37, 38）。他亲自为教会祷告，为它的增长，为它的坚定不移，为它纯全的教义祷告。想想这个：在他临死前几个小时，他在为我们祷告，并且现在他依然在为我们祷告（约 17:6-26）。他甚至为个人祷告；比如，他为彼得祷告，在那个时候，彼得正在反对他并将要否认他（路 22:31, 32）。

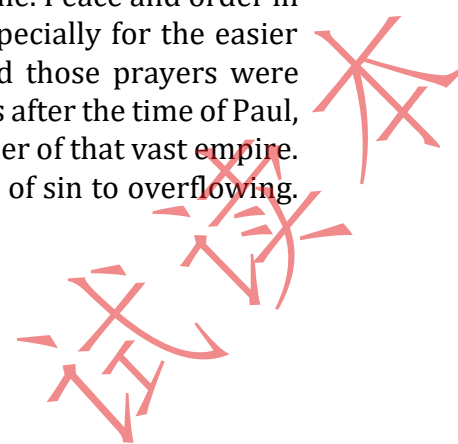
Mindful of the value of others' prayers, St. Paul often asked that his members pray for him and for the work he was doing in preaching the gospel. In 2 Thessalonians 3, for example, he urges the Thessalonians: "Pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith" (3:1,2).

圣保罗牢记着他人的祷告的价值，他常常请求他的会友为他和他所做的福音工作祷告。比如，在帖撒罗尼迦后书 3 章中，他督促帖撒罗尼迦人：“请你们为我们祷告，好让主的道快快传开，得着荣耀，正如在你们中间一样，也让我们能脱离无理和邪恶人的手，因为不是人人都有信仰”（帖 3:1, 2）。

Are these not remarkable prayers, both those of the apostle and of Jesus himself? They bear witness to the value and the power promised to prayer, even prayer for the church, which is always God's great concern. Again we have to note it: There is in the mind of God no contradiction between his providence and prayer. In prayer we trust the promise and count on God's providence. Dame Reason will just have to scratch her head in wonder while the Christian smiles and abandons himself to what God promises, to what God says.

无论是使徒的还是耶稣自己的祷告，不都是卓越的祷告吗？它们都见证了应许给祷告的价值和力量，甚至是为教会的祷告也是如此，而教会，总是上帝最关心的。我们必须再次注意到：在上帝心里，在他的眷顾和祷告之间并没有矛盾。在祷告中，我们相信上帝的应许并倚赖他的眷顾。当基督徒欢笑着将他自己完全交托给上帝的应许和上帝的话语时，理性女士只会惊讶地挠着她的头。

But there is still more. The Bible encourages us to believe that our prayers even make a difference in the course and direction of history. On one occasion Jesus encouraged his disciples to pray that the destruction of Judea and Jerusalem would not come during the winter or on the Sabbath, lest the suffering of those fleeing be even greater than it would be as the result of the destruction itself (Matthew 24:19-21). Paul urges us to pray for the government and its officials (1 Timothy 2:1-4). He knew full well that the rulers of his day were godless tyrants, ripe for God's judgment. But he urged prayer that God's hand of judgment on them may be delayed and held back for a time. Peace and order in society was useful to God's people in their daily lives, useful especially for the easier carrying of the gospel throughout the vast Roman Empire. And those prayers were effective! The Roman Empire lasted for almost four hundred years after the time of Paul, by which time the gospel had been preached in almost every corner of that vast empire. By that time the wickedness of that empire had filled up the cup of sin to overflowing. And so the ailing, corrupt, violence-plagued empire perished.



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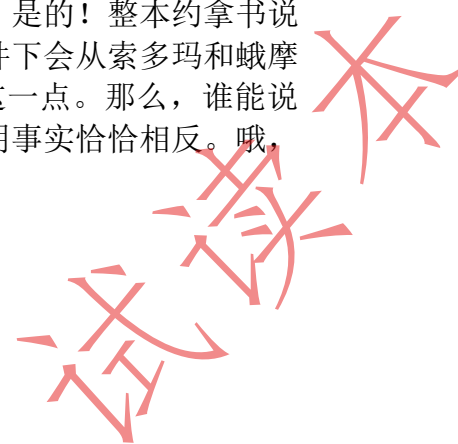
除此之外，还有更多。圣经鼓励我们相信我们的祷告甚至能改变历史的进程和方向。有一次，耶稣鼓励他的门徒祷告，祈求耶路撒冷和犹太的毁灭不会发生在冬天或安息日，免得那些逃走的人，遭受比这毁灭本身所带来的更大的痛苦（太 24:19-21）。保罗督促我们为政府及其官员祷告（提前 2:1-4）。他完全知道，他那个时代的统治者都是亵渎神的暴君，等候着上帝的审判。但他催促我们祷告，求上帝对他们审判的手延缓和推迟片时。社会的平安和秩序对上帝的子民的日常生活是有用的，特别是对于福音在广阔的罗马帝国更容易地传播是有用的。这些祷告都是有功效的！罗马帝国在保罗的时代之后延续了将近四百年，借着这段时间，福音被传扬在这广阔帝国的几乎每一个角落。在这段时间里，这个帝国的邪恶将罪恶之杯灌满，直至溢出。因此，这个病态、腐败、暴力横行的帝国灭亡了。

We too pray for the state, for rulers whose lives or whose agendas may flatly contradict the clear Word of God. To this day, in spite of the growing godlessness of the world, God hears the prayers of his people. Peace, sometimes a troubled peace, prevails where the gospel can still be preached. In sum, it is for the sake of the church and for those who pray that God restrains his judging hand and holds back his wrath for a time.

我们同样为这个国家祷告，为那些生活及其计划可能完全与上帝清晰的道相违背的统治者祷告。直到今天，尽管这个世界越来越亵渎神，上帝听到了他子民的祷告。和平，有时是一个动荡不安的和平，存在于福音依然能够被传扬之处。总之，正是为了教会的缘故和为了那些祷告者的缘故，上帝对他审判的手和他的愤怒延缓了片时。

What an astonishing thing! Does the immovable, unchangeable God permit himself to be moved by the cries of simple mortals, as Jesus implied when he told the disciples to pray that the destruction of Jerusalem not happen in winter or on the Sabbath? Does he who rules the great moments of history according to his pleasure allow himself to be turned in answer to our cries for peace and order when the nation has turned its back on him and his Word? Oh yes! The whole of the book of Jonah says so. The promise to turn aside his wrath even from Sodom and Gomorrah under set conditions and at the prayer of Abraham says so (Genesis 19). And our own experience to this very day argues the same. Who then will say that prayer is just a psychological crutch that accomplishes nothing? The Bible and all of history testify to the contrary. On your knees, O Christian! God waits for your prayer and is eager to answer it!

多么惊奇的事情啊！那坚定的，不改变的上帝，竟然准许他自己被区区凡人的呼喊摇动，正如当耶稣告诉门徒祷告，祈求耶路撒冷的毁灭不会发生在冬天或安息日时，他所暗示的那样。那根据自己的意愿来统治重大历史时刻的人，当这个国家背弃了他和他的道时，竟允许自己转头回应我们对和平和秩序的呼求。哦，是的！整本约拿书说的都是这个。在亚伯拉罕的祷告之下，他甚至应许在特定的条件下会从索多玛和蛾摩拉收回他的愤怒（创 19）。我们今天自身的经验同样证明了这一点。那么，谁能说祷告只是一个心理支撑却不成就任何事呢？圣经和一切历史证明事实恰恰相反。哦，基督徒，屈膝跪拜！上帝等候着你的祷告并热切地回应着它！



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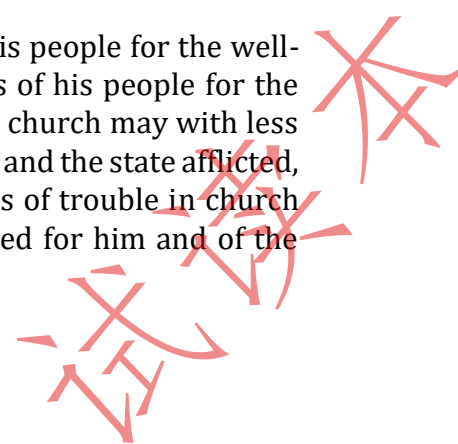
And so, we pray. We pray for all sorts and conditions of men. We pray for help in our own need. We pray for the church and for the state. We pray for friends and family. We pray, trusting in the promise of God to hear and answer. We pray, trusting God to so order affairs in things both great and small in his providence and in answer to our prayers.

因此，我们祷告。我们为各种各样的人祷告。我们为我们自己的缺乏获得帮助祷告。我们为教会和国家祷告。我们为朋友和家人祷告。我们祷告，相信上帝会倾听并回应祷告的应许。我们祷告，相信上帝在他的应许和他对我们祷告的回应里，安排一切的大事小事。

As an interesting side note, it is worth observing that often God answers our prayers by using us to accomplish that for which we pray. We pray, for example, for good order in the state and in society. Then God moves us to obey the laws of the land; that serves the peace and order of society in our small corner of the world. We pray for the success of the gospel as it is proclaimed in our midst and throughout the world. Then we faithfully share it in our own homes, in our parish lives, in society in general as the Lord himself gives us opportunities to do so. And we support as well the work of our congregations and our churches as collectively we preach and teach his Word when and where he gives us such additional opportunities. Clearly the one who prays for the success of the gospel but then hides it under a bushel basket, never defends or tries to share it, or never supports its proclamation through the work of the church is not serious with his prayer. Or we pray for those around us in need. Then God gives us the means and the opportunity to help those in need. Is it not a good day when at its end we can say or see that God has used us as part of his answer to our prayers?

作为一个有趣的旁注，值得注意的是，上帝通常使用我们来实现我们所祈求的，并借此回应我们的祷告。比如，我们为国家和社会好的秩序祷告。然后上帝让我们遵守这片土地的法律；这有利于这个世界我们这个小角落的平安和秩序。我们为福音在我们中间和全世界的广传祷告。然后我们在我们自己的家庭，在我们的教会生活，在整个社会中，依照着主亲自给我们的种种机会，忠信地分享它。我们也支持我们会众和教会的工作，在上帝给我们这样的额外机会时，和他们一起去宣传和教导福音。很显然，一个人为福音的广传祷告，却将它藏在斗底下，从不护卫或试着分享它，从不支持它透过教会的工作发出的宣告，他的祷告是不认真的。同样，我们为那些在我们身边有需要的人祷告。然后上帝给我们方式和机会去帮助那些有需要的人。当这一天结束的时候，我们能够说或能够看到，上帝使用我们作为他回应我们祷告的一部分，这不是很好的一天吗？

It is clear that God has over centuries answered the prayers of his people for the well-being of the church. It is clear that he has answered the prayers of his people for the well-being of the state so that we may live peaceful lives and the church may with less difficulty proclaim the gospel. When the church has been troubled and the state afflicted, was it because Christians failed to pray? Could it be that in times of trouble in church and state, God shows his providence by reminding us of our need for him and of the



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usefulness of being more on our knees? Is it not a blessing in the end when we learn that lesson, though painful it may be, and come anew to find in him our all in all, our only real help in time of need?

很显然，这么多世纪以来，上帝回应了他子民为教会的益处的祷告。很显然，他回应了他子民为国家的益处的祷告，以至于我们可以过和平的生活，教会可以更容易地宣传福音。当教会陷入困境，国家处于痛苦中时，这是因为基督徒没有祷告吗？当教会和国家遭遇患难的日子，上帝是在提醒我们我们对他的需要，提醒我们更多的屈膝敬拜，并借此显明他的眷顾吗？最终，当我们透过痛苦学到了这门功课，并重新在他里面找到了我们的一切，我们在缺乏的日子唯一真正的帮助，这不正是一个祝福吗？

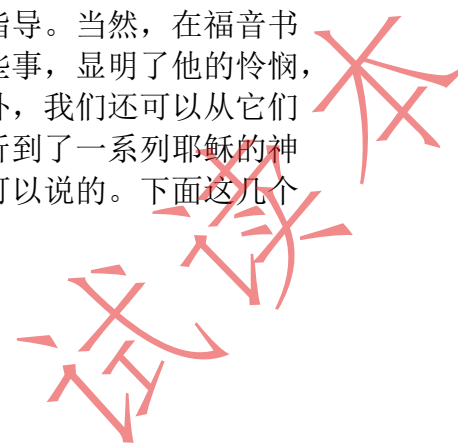
And could not the same point be made with reference to our own private lives? When we prosper and things go well, it is evidence of God's providence and his answers to our prayers. When we are in trouble and afraid, could it at least some of the time be the result of ingratitude for his earlier answers to our prayers when we were in trouble or in need? Could it be because we came to think that we were entitled to his providential answers to those earlier supplications? Could it be that he is teaching us again, and that in his providence, that all our help is in him alone?

当涉及到我们自己个人生活时，我们不也能得出同样的结论吗？当我们兴旺，事情顺利时，这是上帝眷顾和他回应我们祷告的证据。当我们陷入麻烦和恐惧中时，这是否是至少在某些麻烦或缺乏中，他如此轻易地回应我们的祷告以至于我们不知感恩的结果？这是否是因为对于之前他对我们祈祷眷顾的回应，我们开始认为我们是配得的？这是否是他又一次在他的眷顾之下教导我们，我们一切的帮助都唯独在他那里？

## Further encouragement to a life of prayer from the miracles of Jesus 耶稣的神迹进一步鼓励了一个祷告的生命

In the gospels many of the miracles of Jesus provide a wealth of encouragement and instruction about prayer. To be sure, the miracles of our Lord in the gospels have a purpose beyond giving answer to prayer; Jesus performed them as demonstrations of his compassion and especially also to prove that he is indeed the Son of God, the promised Messiah. But there are a few things to be learned from them besides that. Consider for example Luke 8. There we hear of a number of Jesus' miracles, each with its special point. Much could be said about each of them. We will content ourselves with the following:

在福音书中，耶稣的很多神迹，对于祷告提供了丰富的鼓励和指导。当然，在福音书中我们主所行的神迹，有着远超过回应祷告的目的；耶稣做这些事，显明了他的怜悯，尤其证明了他确实是上帝的儿子，所应许的弥赛亚。但除此之外，我们还可以从它们中学到一些其它东西。比如，想想路加福音 8 章。在那里我们听到了一系列耶稣的神迹，每一个都有它特殊的目的。对于它们每一个我们都有很多可以说的。下面这几个足以使我们得到满足：





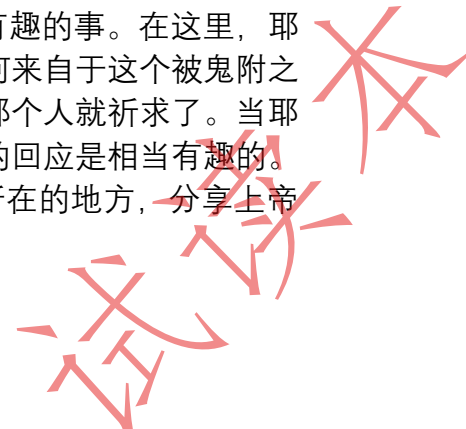
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1. Jesus calmed the storm (verses 22-25). The disciples prayed and knew in their prayer that without Jesus' rescue they would perish. But Jesus rebuked them for their lack of faith, for a prayer that was offered more in fear than in trust, more in despair than in confidence. It's comforting to know that he does not cast off our prayers when, through lack of attention to his Word, we too sometimes cry out in weakness, fear, and doubt. He looks instead on his own providence, not on the depth of our faith, as the cause of his rescue. He answers the prayer and wants thereby to pull us back again to trust in his Word and thereby to heal the weakness that he rebukes.

1、耶稣平静风浪（22-25 节）。门徒们祷告着，在他们的祷告中他们知道没有耶稣的拯救他们将会灭亡。但是耶稣责备了他们他们缺乏信心，因为他们的祷告更多出于恐惧而不是信心，更多出于绝望而不是确信。值得安慰的是，当某些时候，我们同样由于没有留意他的道，在软弱、害怕和怀疑中呼喊时，他并没有丢弃我们的祷告。他将他自己的眷顾，而不是我们信心的深度，看作他拯救的原因。他回应了我们的祷告，并希望借此将我们拉回，去相信他的道，从而医治他所责备的软弱中的人。

2. Jesus healed the demon possessed (verses 26-39). There are so many interesting things in this account. Here Jesus first rescued a man possessed, and that out of his providence alone, without any prayer or possibility of a prayer from the man possessed. But after the miracle of expelling the demons, the man did pray. When Jesus was about to leave, he asked that he may go with Jesus. Jesus' answer to the man's prayer was most interesting. In essence it was this: "No, I have something better in mind for you; stay where you are, and share the good news of what *God* has done for you." That was an especially interesting answer to the man's prayer; Jesus answered thus in the context of another prayer, the prayer of those who witnessed the miracle in the first place. They had asked Jesus to go away! What grace, what astonishing grace, there was in Jesus' answers both to the request of the multitude and the prayer of the man healed! He went away, as the crowd had asked, instead of striking them down for their pernicious unbelief. But he left behind an apostle to the obstinate: this man who had been possessed body and soul by the devil and now was free. This man went about and told everyone, whether they would hear or not, of what *Jesus* had done for him—he got the point that Jesus is God and the additional point that Jesus' will was better than his own. So, Jesus rescues at times without our prayer, rescues even those in the clutches of the devil so that they will hear his Word. His answer to the prayer of the man formerly demon possessed might well be kept in mind by the pastor who prays for a different call, the spouse who prays for a different mate, and any who complain about their station in life. "Stay where you are, and tell what great things God has done for you."

2、耶稣医治被鬼附的人（26-39 节）。在这个记载上有很多有趣的事。在这里，耶稣首先医治了一个被鬼附的人，这唯独出于他的眷顾，没有任何来自于这个被鬼附之人的祈求，他也不可能祈求。但是在赶出污鬼的神迹发生后，那个人就祈求了。当耶稣要离开时，他恳求 he 可以和耶稣一起走。耶稣对这个人祈求的回应是相当有趣的。实际上这回应是这样的：“不，我想要给你更好的事；留在你所在的地方，分享上帝

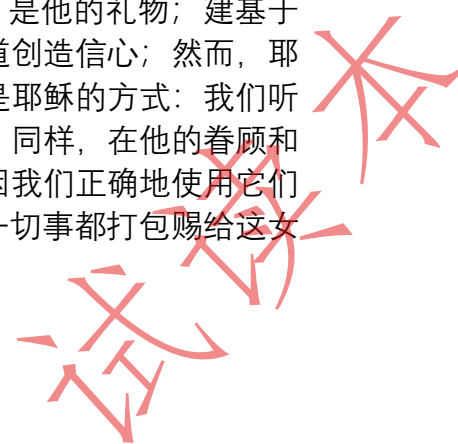


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为你做了什么的好消息。”对这个人的祈求，这是一个特别有趣的回应；耶稣是在其他人祈求的背景下如此回应的，就是那些首先见证了这神迹之人的祈求。他们请求耶稣离开这儿！何等恩典，何等奇异的恩典，存在于耶稣回应众人的要求和被医好之人的祈求中。他没有因人们邪恶的不信而将他们击倒在地，反而如同他们所要求的那样离开了。但是他给这顽固的人群留下了一个使徒：这个人从前身心都被鬼附着，但现在却自由了。这个人要去告诉每一个人耶稣为他所做的一切，不管他们会不会听——他明白了耶稣就是上帝，而且明白了耶稣的意思比他自己的意思更好。所以，耶稣不时不经过我们的祷告就施行拯救，甚至拯救那些在魔鬼掌心的人，以至于他们可以听从他的道。他对这个从前被鬼附之人祈求的回应，可能会被祈求一个不同呼召的牧师，祈求一个不同伴侣的配偶，任何抱怨他们人生处境的人所牢记。“留在你所在的地方，传说上帝为你做了多么伟大的事。”

3. Jesus healed the woman with the issue of blood (verses 43-48). Notice her humility, her lowliness. Notice Jesus' superabundant love and grace. He raised her up and gave her far more than she asked for. All she wanted was a physical healing. But he called her "daughter" and bid her to think of herself not as the outcast her sickness had made her but as a dear child of God, the object of his tender affection. She had counted herself unworthy to pray to him openly. He healed her and then said, "Your faith has healed [better translation: helped, saved] you" (8:48). How so? Her faith, after all, was his gift; on the basis of what she had heard about Jesus, she trusted in both his power and his kindness. The Word created faith; however, Jesus here as so often elsewhere praised faith! In short, that is Jesus' way: We hear his Word, he gives faith to believe, and then he praises the act of believing for which he alone deserves the credit. No less, in his providence and in answer to our prayers he gives health and time and wealth and then praises us on the Last Day when we use them aright (Luke 19:11-19; Matthew 25:34-40). And then to seal and crown the whole matter for this woman, he bid her to go in peace, tormented no more by her sickness or by her overwhelming sense of unworthiness: She had been made worthy by the touch of the Savior! Let all take note who think themselves too lowly or unworthy to pray. Let them touch the hem of his garment and see in his Word and in his answer how he loves best the lowliest and the most unworthy! See how it is?

3、耶稣医治得血漏的女人（43-48 节）。注意她的卑贱，她的低微。注意耶稣丰盛的爱和恩典。他将她高举，给她远超过她所求的。她想要的只是物理上的医治。但他称她“女儿”，并吩咐她不要因着她的病看她自己为被抛弃者，而是看她自己为上帝亲爱的孩子，是他爱怜的对象。她曾认为她不配公开地向他祈求。他医治了她并说，“你的信救了你”（8:48）。这是怎么回事呢？毕竟，她的信心，是他的礼物；建基于她所听到的关于耶稣的事，她相信了他的能力和他的慈爱。圣道创造信心；然而，耶稣在这里称赞信心，正如他常常在其它地方一样！总之，这就是耶稣的方式：我们听到了他的道，他赐下信心去相信，然后他称赞我们信心的行动。同样，在他的眷顾和对我们祷告的回应中，他赐下健康、时间和财富，然后在末日因我们正确地使用它们而称赞我们（路 19:11-19；太 25:34-40）。然后，为了将这一切事都打包赐给这女



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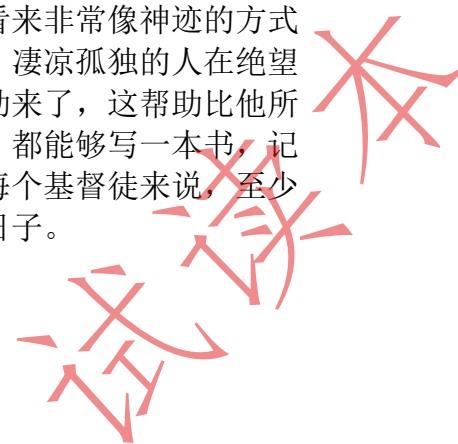
人，他吩咐她平平安安地去吧，不再受她的疾病或那压倒她的无价值感所折磨：她已经借着触摸救主而变得有价值了！让所有认为自己太卑贱太不配祷告之人都注意到这个故事吧。让他们触摸他的衣襟，从他的道和他的回应中看到他是多么爱那最卑贱和最不配之人的吧！你明白了吗？

4. Jesus raised Jairus' daughter (verses 49-56). He did that in answer to Jairus' pleading, without which, of course, the miracle would not have taken place. But notice again how Jesus gave more than was asked of him. After he had raised her from the dead, he told her parents to give her something to eat. Couldn't they have figured that out by themselves and done it without Jesus telling them to do it? Of course. But the point is that Jesus takes note of our needs down to the smallest, even the most self-evident detail. What a beautiful encouragement for us in our prayers! He hears what we ask for and is eager to provide what we didn't think to ask for.

4、耶稣使睚鲁的女儿复活（49-56 节）。他在对睚鲁恳求的回应中如此做了，当然，没有睚鲁的恳求，这个神迹将不会发生。但请注意，耶稣给睚鲁的比他恳求的更多。在耶稣使她从死亡中复活后，他告诉她的父母给她一些东西吃。难道他们自己不能想到这个，不需要耶稣告诉他们就能如此去做吗？当然可以。但关键是，耶稣注意到了我们最小的需要，甚至是最明显的细节。这对我们的祷告是多么美好的鼓励啊！他听到了我们的祈求，并热切供应我们都没有想到去祈求的。

Of course it is true that Jesus has not promised to raise the dead at our prayers. Nor has he promised that he would give us miraculous healing for all our sicknesses. Normally he answers our prayers through very ordinary means. Our sickness he heals through physicians and medicines. Or else, he in his good time, the time best for us, takes us to himself in heaven. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that he does at times still heal and help with what to our eyes may seem very much like miracles. The sick patient thought incurable and at the point of death lives for ten more years. The desolate and the lonely cry in despair, beyond all hope of help. Then, unnoticed by any but the one who prayed, help comes, help better than that hoped for. It may well be that each Christian, at least in his own heart, could write a diary of times that God rescued when rescue seemed impossible. It may be that each Christian, at least on his knees in prayer, should recount times when God gave more than what was asked for.

当然，耶稣并没有应许在我们的祷告中叫死人复活。他也没有应许他会给我们神迹医治我们一切的疾病。通常他透过非常普通的方式回应我们的祷告。他透过医生和药物来医治我们的疾病。或者，他在合适的时间，对我们最好的时间，带我们到天堂他自己那里。尽管如此，不可否认的是，他有时依然用那些在我们看来非常像神迹的方式医治和帮助。认为无药可救的病人在死亡的关头又活了十几年。凄凉孤独的人在绝望中哭泣，毫无得到帮助的希望，然后，在无人注意的时候，帮助来了，这帮助比他所希望的更好。很可能对每个基督徒来说，至少在他自己的心里，都能够写一本书，记录上帝在看起来不可能有拯救的时候，对他的拯救。很可能对每个基督徒来说，至少在他跪下祷告的时候，都会数算上帝赐下的比他所求的更多的日子。



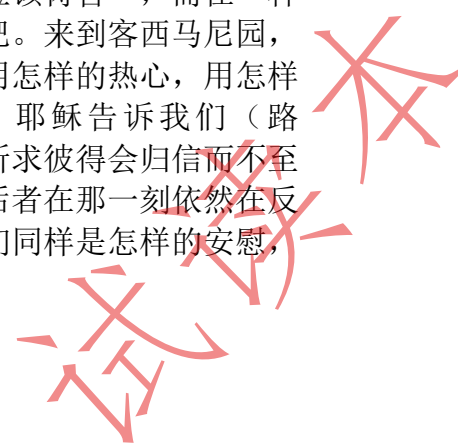
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Would things have turned out differently had our prayers not come before the throne of the Almighty? That's what St. James implies when he speaks of blessings that people do not receive. He says: "You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:2,3). Then (5:13-15) he urges us to pray for God's help in every need, for things spiritual and for things temporal; he tells us to trust in the providence of God to answer in accordance with his good and gracious will (cf. 1:5-7). Lest we think that such prayers are really of no effect, he points to the example of the prophet Elijah. Elijah's prayers prevented rain for three years and then brought it again. It's a remarkable example, but one that James uses for our encouragement nonetheless.

如果我们的祷告没有来到全能者的宝座面前，事情会有不同的结果吗？这就是圣雅各在谈到那些得不到祝福之人时所暗含的。他说：“你们得不着，是因为你们不求。你们求也得不着，是因为你们妄求，要浪费在你们的宴乐中”（雅 4:2,3）。然后（5:13-15），他督促我们在一切需要中，为属灵和属世的事情祈求上帝的帮助；他告诉我们相信上帝的眷顾，上帝必按照他良善和恩慈的旨意来回应（参看 1:5-7）。为免我们以为这样的祷告是没有用的，他指出了先知以利亚的例子。以利亚的祷告使雨三年不降落地上，然后又使天降下雨来。这是一个很引人注目的例子，但雅各依然使用它来鼓励我们。

Finally, let those who still doubt the value of prayer or who merely mumble prayers in a mindless mechanical repetition because "we're supposed to pray" make a pilgrimage. Go to the Garden of Gethsemane, and learn there about prayer! There we see with what fervor, with what inexpressible ardor, Jesus teaches us about prayer by his own example. Just before entering the garden, Jesus tells us (Luke 22:31,32) that he had prayed for Peter, who was about to deny him. He had prayed that Peter would be converted and not perish. He had prayed that Peter, who even at that moment was contradicting his God and Savior, would finally get it right and then strengthen his fellow disciples. What love! What grace! What a consolation for us too, that Jesus prays for us even when we have abandoned the narrow middle road and are falling into a ditch. He prays and, as with his prayer for Peter, he is heard so that we do not perish. He prays so that we too have our times when we "get it right" and can strengthen our brothers and sisters. Yes, and his prayer for us continues to this day. In heaven he pleads for us. He serves as our defense attorney and holds before God's justice the price that he has paid for our forgiveness (1 John 2:1,2). How can anyone hear of such a thing and then still think that prayer is a waste of time or in vain?

最后，让那些依然怀疑祷告的人，或者是那些仅仅因为“我们应该祷告”，而在一种无意识的呆板的复述中咕噜不清地祷告的人，来一场朝圣之旅吧。来到客西马尼园，来那儿学习祷告吧！在那儿我们看到，耶稣以他自己为例子，用怎样的热心，用怎样无可言喻的激情，教导我们祷告。就在进入这园子之前，耶稣告诉我们（路 22:31, 32），他已经为彼得祷告，而后者就要拒绝他。他祷告祈求彼得会归信而不至灭亡。他祷告彼得最终会彻底地明白，并坚固他的弟兄，尽管后者在那一刻依然在反驳他的上帝和救主。这是怎样的爱！这是怎样的恩典！这对我们同样是怎样的安慰，





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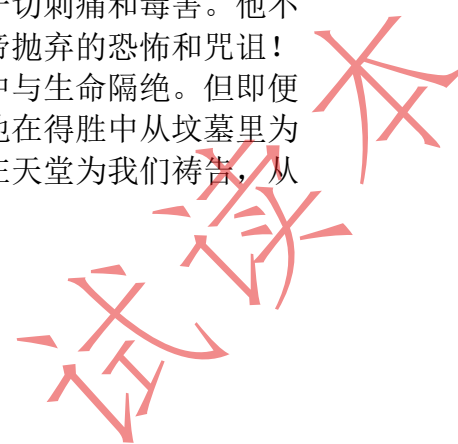
甚至当我们抛弃了这狭窄的中路，掉入某个沟壑，耶稣依然在为我们祷告。他的祷告正如他为彼得的祷告一样，蒙了垂听，因此我们不至灭亡。他祷告以至于我们同样可以在我们的日子里“彻底明白”，并能够坚固我们的弟兄姐妹。是的，他一直在为我们祷告，直到今日。他在天堂里为我们祈求。作为我们的辩护律师，他在上帝的审判台前，持守着他为赦免我们而付出的代价（约一 2:1,2）。有谁能听到这样的事，并依然认为祷告是浪费时间或是徒然的呢？

But back to Gethsemane. Watch and see with wonder and in awe: The most holy Son of God, “God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,” fell on his face. He cried. He begged. He pleaded with sweat falling from his sacred face as great drops of blood. He, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily (Colossians 2:9), was praying. Seeing all the agony of that night and of the next day that he would experience in body and soul, in the utter lowliness of his human nature, he prayed that the cup of hellish suffering may pass from him.

但回到客西马尼园。用惊奇敬畏的心观看：上帝至圣的独生子，“从上帝而出的上帝，从光而出的光，从真神而出的真神，”俯伏在地。他哭泣。他乞求。他恳切祷告，汗珠如大血点一样从他圣洁的脸上落下。他，那上帝本性一切的丰盛都住在他里面的那一位（西 2:9），正在祷告。看着那一晚和第二天他将会在身体和灵魂上，在他人性彻底的降卑中，经历的一切痛苦，他乞求这地狱般的苦杯能从他身上拿去。

What answer did he receive? It was not possible for our salvation to be accomplished unless he drank the cup of suffering to the very bottom of the cup. And so, his ultimate prayer, the prayer “Your will be done!” was answered at once. God’s will would be done, and that for us. And that will was also now Jesus’ own will. He had to drink the cup, drink it in all its bitterness and woe, drink it until in his inmost being he had felt all the sting and poison of the whole world’s sin. He had to drink it until his sacred person had endured the unendurable—the horror, the curse of being forsaken by God! He had to drink it until he had tasted sin’s ultimate consequence of separation from life in death and the grave. But even then his prayer that the cup may pass from him did not go unanswered. The cup did pass from him three days later when he rose in triumph from the grave for us and for our salvation, so that now and forever in heaven he still prays for us (Hebrews 5:1-10)!

他得到的回应是什么呢？除非他喝净了这苦杯，一滴不剩，我们的救恩不可能完成。因此，他最终的祷告，“愿你的意愿成就”的祷告，立刻就得到了回应。上帝的意愿将会成就，为我们而成就，这意愿现在也是耶稣自己的意愿。他不得不喝这杯，饮净它一切的苦味和痛苦，直到他内心深处感受到这整个世界罪的一切刺痛和毒害。他不得不喝净它，直到他神圣的人性忍受了这无法忍受的——被上帝抛弃的恐怖和咒诅！他不得不喝净它，直到他品尝了罪最终的后果：在死亡和坟墓中与生命隔绝。但即便如此，他让这杯离开他的祷告，并非没有被回应。三天后，当他在得胜中从坟墓里为我们和我们的救恩复活时，这杯确实离开了他，以至于他依然在天堂为我们祷告，从今时直到永远（希 5:1-10）！





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In Gethsemane he urged his disciples to pray. Because they had not been paying attention either to what Jesus had said earlier or to his prayers, they were unaware of the peril that soon would threaten their own souls. So Jesus urged them to pray (Luke 22:40), lest they fall into the temptations soon to come. How differently things would have turned out for them had they listened to his Word earlier. How differently things still could have turned out for them had they listened to Jesus in Gethsemane and prayed with heart and soul for rescue in the hour of temptation. They would have conquered over the despair of Good Friday, the desolation of Holy Saturday, even the doubt of most of Easter Sunday. But they didn't listen to the Word. They didn't pray either. And so they afflicted themselves deeply, and as needlessly as deeply.

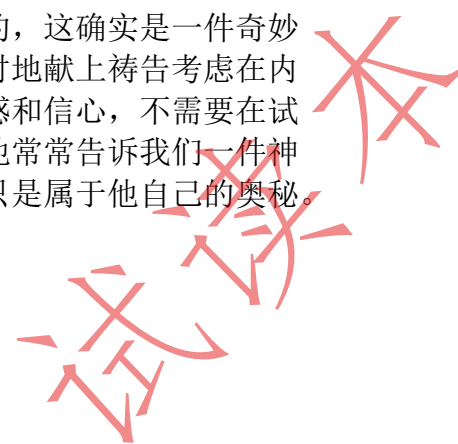
在客西马尼园，耶稣催促他的门徒祷告。因为他们既没有注意耶稣先前所说的，也没有注意耶稣的祷告，他们并没有意识到，这危险将很快威胁到他们自己的灵魂。因此耶稣催促他们祷告（路 22:40），免得他们陷入即将到来的试探中。如果他们先前听了他的道，事情的结果对他们将会有多么不同啊。如果他们在客西马尼园听从了耶稣，并在试探的时刻全心全意地为拯救祷告，事情的结果又会有多么不同啊。他们本可以战胜受难日那天的绝望，圣周六的凄凉，甚至是周天复活日大多数时间里的怀疑。但是他们并没有听圣道。他们也没有祷告。因此，他们深深地徒劳地折磨着他们自己。

*Verbum sapiens satis est!* ("A word to the wise is enough!") Those who will learn nothing of the importance, the value, the effectiveness of prayer from a pilgrimage to Gethsemane will never learn it. Those who make the pilgrimage often will not have to be taught much more about prayer than they can learn in that holy place, that place of prayer, stained with the blood-filled sweat of the Savior!

*Verbum sapiens satis est!* ( “对聪明的人一句话就够了！” ) 那些在客西马尼做朝圣之旅，却从不学习它的人，对祷告的重要性、价值和效力将一无所知。那些经常在这圣洁之地，这祷告之地，这沾满着救主如大血点一般的汗水之地，做朝圣之旅的人，关于祷告将会学到很多，远超过我们所能教导的。

To conclude, it is a wondrous and mysterious thing indeed how God's providence and his promises to answer our prayers fit together. Could it be that already in eternity God's providence has taken into account the prayers that we will offer in time? Perhaps that's how it works. But the mind and soul, the heart and the faith of the Christian need not break themselves in trying to unravel the mystery. God never asks us to do that. As so often, he tells us *the what* of a mystery but not *the how*; the how he often reserves to himself.

总之，上帝的眷顾和他回应我们祷告的应许，是如何相辅相成的，这确实是一件奇妙而不可思议的事。难道上帝的眷顾在永恒中就已经将我们会及时地献上祷告考虑在内吗？也许这就是它的运行方式。但是基督徒的思想和灵魂，情感和信心，不需要在试着解开这个奥秘之中自我分裂。上帝从未要求我们如此去做。他常常告诉我们一件神迹发生了什么却没有告诉我们它是怎样发生的；怎样发生通常只是属于他自己的奥秘。



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So the Christian with humble heart and mind bends rejoicing and bows with a smile before the always greater mind of his Maker and Redeemer. In his simplicity he may ask this question: How do these things fit together? But when God's Word is silent, then the Christian accepts the answer implicit in God's silence: "O child of God, that's my problem, not yours; your concern is to hear my Word and trust it." And so we do. He tells us that in his providence, he rules all things for our good. He promises at the same time to hear our prayers and to answer them. We rejoice on both sides of the narrow middle road. We delight to rest in the sunshine and the shade of his providence. We rejoice as we enjoy the fruit of his promise to hear our prayers and answer them. We see his grace in abundance on both sides of the narrow middle road. But we will not give up any of the blessings from either side by trying to put the two sides together. Instead, we will trust in his always good and gracious rule while we pray without ceasing.

因此，基督徒怀着谦卑的情感和思想，在他创造者和拯救者始终更大的思想面前，欢喜地屈身敬拜。在他愚笨的心里他可能会问这样的问题：这些事是如何相辅相成的呢？但是当上帝的道对此沉默的时候，基督徒接受在上帝的沉默中隐含着的回应：“上帝的孩子啊，这是我的问题，不是你的；你应该关注的是听我的道并相信它。”因此我们如此做了。他告诉我们在他的眷顾中，他为我们的益处治理一切的事。同时，他应许了倾听我们的祷告并回应它们。在这狭窄中路的两边，我们都充满欢喜。我们喜欢安歇在他眷顾的光照和遮盖之下。他应许倾听我们的祷告并回应它们，当我们享受这应许的果子时，我们满心喜乐。在这狭窄中路的两边，我们都看到他丰盛的恩典。但是我们不会试着将这两边混合在一起，并借此放弃这两边任何一边的祝福。相反，当我们不停祷告时，我们相信他始终良善恩慈的统治。

That's the narrow middle road between what God says about his providence and what he says about prayer. Thank God for it!<sup>2</sup>

这就是上帝所说的关于他的眷顾和关于祷告之间，狭窄的中路。为此我们感谢上帝！

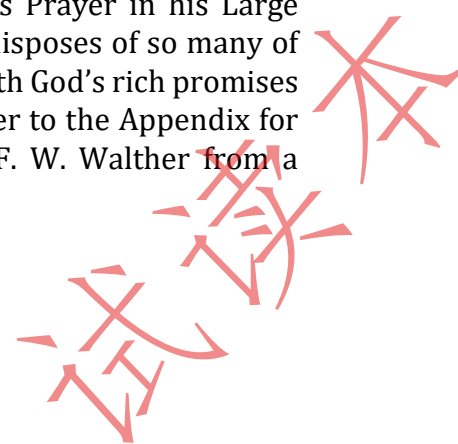
<sup>2</sup>

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> We will consider this point further in the next chapter.

<sup>1</sup> 我们将会在下章进一步思考这一点。

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent example of the many things that Luther has to say about prayer, we refer the reader especially to Luther's comments on the Lord's Prayer in his Large Catechism. There, in a very succinct and engaging way, Luther disposes of so many of the reasons people have for not praying, while encouraging us with God's rich promises to hear and answer our prayers. Additionally, we refer the reader to the Appendix for our translation of some especially appropriate remarks of C. F. W. Walther from a sermon that he wrote for Rogate Sunday.



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<sup>2</sup> 一个极好的例子是路德所说的关于祷告的很多事，特别推荐读者的是路德在他的大问答中对主祷文的解释。在那儿，路德用一种非常简洁和迷人的方式，处理了很多人不祷告的理由，同时用上帝丰富的倾听并回应我们祷告的应许，来鼓励我们祷告。此外，我们请读者参阅附录中我们翻译的，C. F. W. 华达在他为罗格日（**Rogate Sunday**，西方教会传统中的祷告日）所写的一篇讲道中的一段特别合适的话。

试读本

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## 5. A Pause Beside a Pool 一个池子旁边短暂的停留

We need to take a slight detour before we continue along the narrow middle road. It's a detour to look into a pool beside the road. The pool is at first glance not at all clear but cloudy. It is a pool with questions swirling around in it, questions provoked by the last stretch of the narrow middle road. It's not so much the questions that make the pool murky; rather, it is the many and popular wrong answers to the questions that make it so cloudy and confused. Among the questions are these:

在我们继续沿着这条狭窄的中路前行之前，我们需要绕一个小弯。绕到路旁边去看看一个池子。这个池子乍眼一看特别浑浊。它是一个有很多问题在其中打转的池子，这些问题是这狭窄中路的最后一段所引起的。并不是如此多的问题让这个池子变得浑浊；让它变得如此浑浊混乱的反倒是对这些问题众多且流行的错误回答。这些问题包括：

•If God works all things for our good in his kind providence, does that mean that everything which happens in our lives is preordained or predestined?

如果上帝在他慈爱的眷顾中，为我们的益处做了一切事，这是否意味着在我们生命中发生的每一件事，都是注定的或命定的呢？

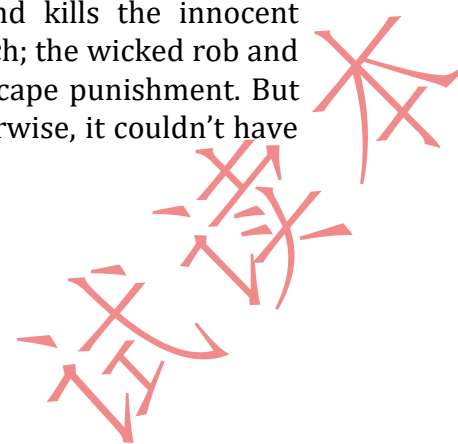
•Is it right to say that since God is almighty as he exercises his providence, nothing happens except what God wills?

既然上帝是全能的，当他运行他的眷顾时，除了他旨意里的事什么都不会发生，这么说对吗？

•If everything that God does is for the best, does that mean that nothing could have happened in history or in our lives differently than it did?

如果上帝做的每一件事都是最好的，这是否意味着，在历史上或在我们的生命中，除了已经发生的，不会再有任何其它可能呢？

Even Dame Reason hides out when these questions come up. She too finds the pool made murky by a host of answers that conform no better to reason than they do to the Word of God. And so, she is inclined to leave the scene and let people mutter mindless clichés in answer to the questions. We hear such answers often these days. A man-caused disaster occurs; a drunk driver has an "accident" and kills the innocent passengers of the other car while he walks away without a scratch; the wicked rob and cheat the innocent; the vile slay the hapless bystanders and escape punishment. But someone will say, "Well, it must have been the will of God; otherwise, it couldn't have happened."



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当这些问题出现时，即使理性女士也躲了起来。她同样发现这个池子被一大堆回答弄得浑浊不堪，这些回答既不符合理性，也不符合上帝的道。因此，她总想离开这样的场景，让人们在无意识地陈词滥调唠唠叨叨中回答这些问题。这些日子我们经常听到这样的回答。一场人为的灾难发生时；一个醉酒的司机导致了一场“意外”，他毫发无伤地离开却杀死了另一辆车上无辜的乘客时；恶人欺压无辜时；卑鄙小人杀害不幸的群众并逃脱惩罚时。有人就会说，“嗯，这必定是上帝的旨意；否则，它不可能发生。”

Such an answer betrays an unwillingness to examine either the Bible or reason. If everything that happens happens because God willed it, then sin too must be the fruit of God's will. Sin happens. That it could be the result of God's will is on the face of it utter nonsense. Indeed, it is a monstrous notion that recalls the ancient heresy of the Manicheans. They taught that there are two principles at war in the universe, one good and one evil. To the Manicheans, these two principles often appeared to be of equal strength, sometimes one gaining the upper hand and sometimes the other. In effect, Manichean thinking makes God and the devil equals.<sup>1</sup>

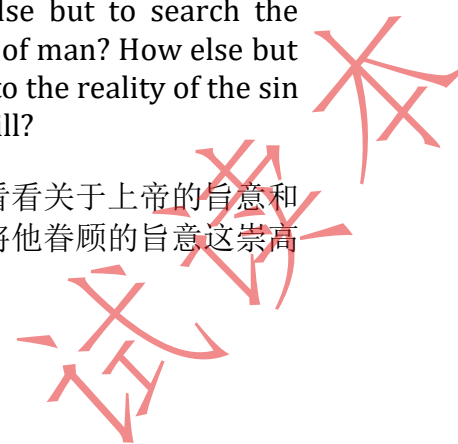
这样的回答透露出一种既不愿意考察圣经也不愿意考察理性的态度。如果一切事的发生都是上帝愿意它如此，那么罪必定也是上帝旨意的果子。罪恶发生了。它可能是上帝旨意的结果，在表面上这完全是一派胡言。确实，这样一种荒谬的想法让人回想起了古代异端摩尼教。他们教导说在宇宙中有两种法则在争战，一种是良善的一种是邪恶的。对摩尼教来说，这两种法则往往看上去有同样的力量，有时是其中一种占了上风，有时是另外一种。事实上，摩尼教的思想使上帝和魔鬼成了同等的。<sup>1</sup>

Others try to clear the murkiness from the pool by saying instead, "Well, then, everything that happens, except sin, is the will of God; otherwise, it couldn't have happened." That answer is likewise nonsense on the face of it. There is nothing in this life, at least nothing that man wills or does, that is not stained or affected somehow by sin. Since that is the case, to say that only things untouched by sin are the result of God's will is to say that nothing is the result of God's will except perhaps the weather.

另一些试着使这浑浊的池子变得清澈的人说，“嗯，那么，一切事的发生，除了罪，都是上帝的旨意；否则，它就不会发生。”这样的回答在表面上同样很荒唐。在此生中，没有任何事，至少没有任何人想要做或已经做了的任何事，在某种程度上没有被罪所沾污或影响。既然如此，说只有没有被罪触及的事才是上帝旨意的结果，等于说没有事情是上帝旨意的结果——除了天气可能是例外。

How then shall we clear away the cloud in the pool? How else but to search the Scriptures to see what God has to say about his will and the will of man? How else but to see how God relates the sublime truth of his providential will to the reality of the sin in man that is by definition a contradiction, a defiance of God's will?

那么，我们应该怎样清除这池中的污团呢？除了考察圣经，去看看关于上帝的旨意和人的意志他说了什么，我们还能做什么呢？除了看看上帝怎样将他眷顾的旨意这崇高





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的真理，与在人里面罪——这罪，就定义而言，是一种矛盾，一种对上帝旨意的反抗——的现实联系起来，我们还能做什么呢？

## The will of God 上帝的旨意

Moses sings in Psalm 90: “Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night” (verses 2,4). God lives in eternity. Before anything happens, he already knows its end. When a thousand years have passed by, nothing has been added or taken away from his might or his knowledge.

在诗篇 90，摩西唱道：“诸山未曾生出，地与世界你未曾造成，从亘古到永远，你是上帝。在你看来，千年如已过的昨日，又如夜间的一更”（90:2,4）。上帝活在永恒里面，在任何事发生之前，他已经知道了它的结局。当千年已过，他的力量和知识并没有增加，也没有任何减少。

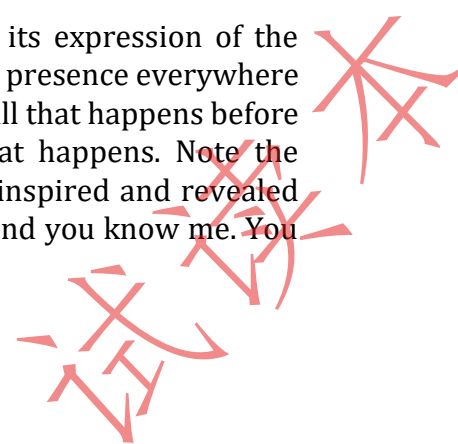
St. Paul sings his great hymn of praise to the all-wise rule and will of God in Romans 11:33-36: “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ‘Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?’ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever!”

在罗马书 11:33-36，圣保罗唱着他伟大的赞美诗，称颂上帝全智的统治和旨意：“深哉，上帝的丰富、智慧和知识！他的判断何其难测！他的踪迹何其难寻！谁知道主的心？谁作过他的谋士？谁先给了他，使他后来偿还呢？因为万有都是本于他，倚靠他，归于他。愿荣耀归给他，直到永远。阿们！”

His hymn is an echo and a summary of Isaiah’s beautiful hymn in Isaiah 40:12-31. Again Paul bears witness to God that he “alone is immortal and [he] lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever” (1 Timothy 6:16).

他的赞美诗是对以赛亚在以赛亚书 40:12-31 美丽的赞美诗的呼应和总结。保罗再一次见证上帝是那“独一不死、住在人不能靠近的光里，是人未曾看见，也是不能看见的。愿尊贵和永远的权能都归给他”（提前 6:16）。

Psalm 139 is one of the most beautiful hymns in the Bible in its expression of the greatness of the mind and will of God. The psalmist sings of God’s presence everywhere at the same time and of his complete and detailed knowledge of all that happens before it happens. Yes, the psalm exults in God’s control over all that happens. Note the exquisite detail of the psalm, bearing in mind that God himself inspired and revealed these things to the holy writer: “O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You



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know when I sit and when I rise. . . . You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways” (139:1-3). What an amazing thing, not just that God should be so completely present but that he should care one way or the other about even the most trivial details of my life!

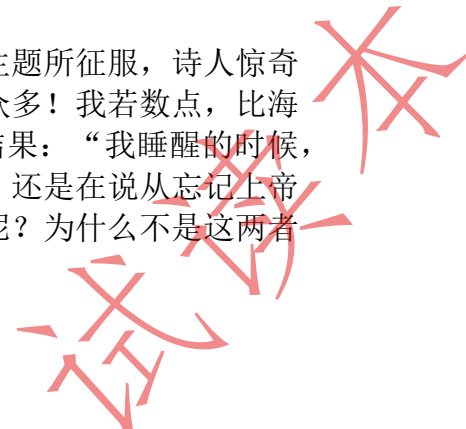
诗篇 139 是圣经中最美丽的赞美诗之一，它表达了上帝伟大的思想和旨意。诗人歌颂上帝随时随地的存在，和他对一切要发生的事在发生之前完全而详尽的知识。是的，诗篇因上帝掌管一切事情的发生而欢欣鼓舞。注意诗篇优美的细节，请记住，是上帝自己将这些事灵感并启示给圣作者：“耶和華啊，你已经鉴察我，认识我。我坐下，我起来，你都晓得……我行路，我躺卧，你都细察；你也深知我一切所行的”（139:1-3）。这是一件多么神奇的事，不仅仅是因为上帝如此完全的存在，也是因为他以这样或那样的方式，关心我生命中甚至最琐碎的细节。

But there’s more: “You perceive my thoughts from afar. . . . Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord” (139:2,4). Lest anyone miss the point that God’s knowledge encompasses every corner of creation and every detail of life, that God knows always the end of a thing before its beginning, the psalmist goes on: “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” (139:15,16).

除此之外，还有更多：“你从远处知道我的意念……耶和華啊，我舌头上的话，你没有一句不知道的”（139:2,4）。为了避免任何人错过这一点，即上帝的知识包括造物界的每个角落和生命的每个细节，上帝总是在一件事开始之前就已经知道事情的结局，诗人继续说道：“我在暗中受造，在地的深处被塑造；那时，我的形体并不向你隐藏。我未成形的体质，你的眼早已看见了；你所定的日子，我尚未度一日，都在你的册子写上了”（139:15,16）。

Then, overwhelmed by the whole subject of God’s knowledge, of his wisdom and the connection of these with the individual, the psalmist sings in wonder and in awe: “How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand” (139:17,18). And then the blessed, the most happy result of God’s thoughts: “When I awake, I am still with you” (139:18). Is he talking about waking up from sleep in the morning? Or is he talking about waking up from the sleep of forgetting the constant presence of God and God’s care for him every moment of his life? Why not both? After all, whatever we do or think or say that is unaware or ignorant of God’s gracious presence is a work, a word, a thought akin to that done by the sleepwalker.

然后，被上帝的知识、他的智慧，及其与个人的联系这所有的主题所征服，诗人惊奇而敬畏地唱道：“上帝啊，你的意念向我何等宝贵！其数何等众多！我若数点，比海沙更多”（139:17,18）。随后是上帝意念最蒙福和最开心的结果：“我睡醒的时候，仍和你同在”（139:18）。诗人说的是在早上从沉睡中醒来吗？还是在说从忘记上帝恒常的存在和忘记上帝正在照顾他生命的每一刻的沉睡中醒来呢？为什么不是这两者



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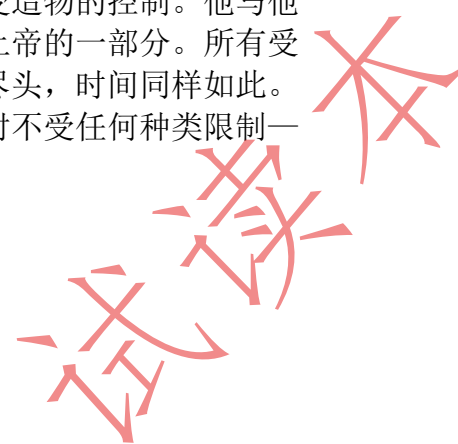
呢？毕竟，无论我们做什么，思考什么，或是说什么，若我们忽视或不理解上帝恩慈的存在，都如同一个梦游者所做的，所说的和所想的。

In a certain sense, all of these passages and so many others like them are inspired commentaries and reflections on the creation account in Genesis 1. God gave these reflections to mere mortals that they might be forever in awe of their almighty and all-wise Maker. Genesis 1 states the facts in such a matter-of-fact manner: “In the beginning God.” There never was time when God was not. Before there was a *there*, before there was a *before*, God was. Nor since creation has there ever been a place where God is not. In the creation account, we hear that God spoke and it was done. Wherever his voice went out to say, “Let there be . . .,” there God was; God cannot be separated from his voice. In response to his word, all that is came into being. Matter and energy; sun, moon, and stars; all the plants and animals exist in their wholeness and in their detail in response to God’s speaking. Where they are, there his voice is and has been; there he is, not in fractions but wholly and entirely. God cannot be broken up into fractions or parts.

从某种意义上说，所有这些经文和所有其它类似的经文，都是在圣灵默示下，对创世记 1 章创造的叙述的评论和反思。上帝把这些反思赐给区区凡人，使他们可以永远敬畏他们全能全智的创造者。创世记 1 章以如此实事求是的方式陈述了这个事实：“起初，上帝。”从未有一刻上帝是不存在的。上帝是存在以先的存在，是存在以先的以先。从创世以来没有一个地方上帝不在。在创世的叙述中，我们听到上帝说有就有。无论在哪儿他的声音说，“要有……”上帝就在那儿；上帝与他的声音是不能分开的。所有的一切都在对他话语的回应中形成了。物质和能量；太阳、月亮和星星；一切的植物和动物；它们的整体和它们的细枝末节都在对上帝的话语的回应中存在着。它们在哪里，他的声音就在那里；他就在那里，不是某一小部分，而是整体和全部都在那里。上帝不能被割裂成一个个片段或部分。

And so, there we have it: God is so great that he is in everything, while nothing holds or limits him. He is in time and space but not limited by time or space. He is present in all that is created but beyond the control of anything created. He is separate and distinct from all that he has created. Creation is not, as the pantheists imagine, a part of God. All created things have time and space and limits in time and space. Way out there, somewhere in space, space ends and so too does time. But not God. God is above all space and beyond all time, absolutely without limits of any kind—totally other and unique.

因此，我们知道了：上帝如此伟大，他在一切中存在，没有任何东西能束缚或限制他。他在时空中却不受时空限制。他存在于一切受造中却不受任何受造物的控制。他与他所造的一切是不同的。受造物不是，如同泛神论者想的那样，上帝的一部分。所有受造物都有时间和空间并被时空限制。空间在其某个地方存在着尽头，时间同样如此。但是上帝没有尽头。上帝在一切空间之上并超越一切时间，绝对不受任何种类限制——完全地例外和独一无二。



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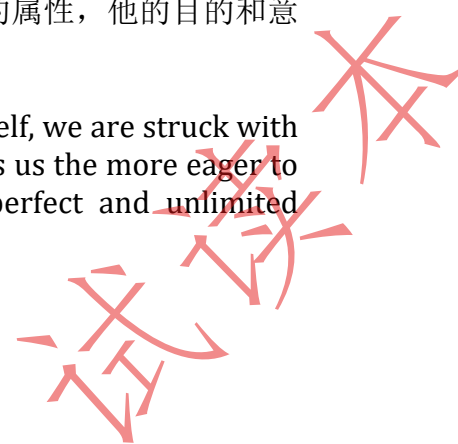
As great as his creating power is, just as great and beyond limit is his wisdom and knowledge. God is so great that he knows all things perfectly, down to the smallest detail, and knew it already in eternity before anything except God even existed. Jesus says that God knows the number of hairs on our heads and when a sparrow falls. He knows and feeds the birds and clothes the lilies of the field (Matthew 6:25-34). And it is all present to him in what we call *the eternal now*. As the psalmist said, it is all too wonderful for us. For mere mortals to completely comprehend the mind of God is on the face of it impossible. The psalmist put it so simply and so completely: "Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him" (Psalm 115:3).

正如他的创造力何其伟大，他的智慧和知识同样何其伟大并不可限量。上帝如此伟大，以至于他完美地知道一切的事，甚至是那最微小的细节，在永恒中除上帝以外什么都不存在的时候，上帝就已经知道它了。耶稣说上帝知道我们头上头发的数目和麻雀掉在地上的时刻。他认识并养活飞鸟，给田野的百合花戴上装饰（太 6:25-34）。对他这都存在于我们称之为“永恒的现在”里。正如诗人所说，这对我来说太过奇妙。对区区凡人来说，完全理解上帝的心意是不可能的。诗人如此简单又如此完全地说道：“我们的上帝在天上，万事都随自己的旨意而行”（诗 115:3）。

*But, even though it is impossible for us to fully comprehend the mind of God, what he has revealed about himself and as much as he has revealed we can know with certainty, precisely because he is the one who has revealed it. Obviously, God knows himself; and we know of him what he has been pleased to reveal of himself in his Word. His creation, nature, and all its wonders tell us some things about God. They testify to his might and wisdom as the psalmist declares in Psalm 19. Conscience too bears witness to God's existence and to his justice as Paul tells us in Romans 1. But it is in his Word that God makes himself known to a far higher degree than nature alone could ever show us. In nature and in our conscience we but poke after him in the dark. It is in his Word that we have his own voice, his infallible revelation of himself, of his attributes, of his purposes and intentions, and yes, of his sacred and saving heart and will.*

然而，对于我们来说，尽管完全地理解上帝的思想是不可能的，他所揭示的关于他自己的事，我们都可以确定地知道，并一直到达他所揭示的程度——因为正是他揭示了它。显然，上帝知道他自己；我们知道他在他的话语里揭示他自己的事。他创造的自然以及它一切的奇妙都告诉我们某些关于上帝的事。它们见证着他的力量和智慧，正如诗人在诗篇 19 宣告的那样。良心同样在为上帝的存在和审判做见证，正如保罗在罗马书 1 章告诉我们的那样。但是在他的话语里，上帝让他自己被知晓的程度，远比大自然单独向我们显明的，要多的多。在自然和我们的良心里，我们只能在黑暗里摸索他。在他的话语里，我们有他自己的声音，他对他自己，他的属性，他的目的和意图，是的，还有他神圣拯救的心肠和旨意完全无误的启示。

When we examine his Word and peer into his revelation of himself, we are struck with wonder and awe at who and how he is. What he shows us makes us the more eager to search out and discover what his almighty power and his perfect and unlimited knowledge have to do with us.



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当我们审查他的话语，凝视他对他自己的启示时，我们就会对他是谁和他是怎样的充满惊奇和敬畏。他向我们所显明的这一切，让我们更加渴望探索和发现他的全能、他的完美和他无限的知识——而这些都与我们息息相关的。

To put it another way: Given his unlimited power, perfect wisdom, and complete knowledge of everything, how much happens because he knows and wants it to happen? How much happens that he knows will happen but not because he wanted it to happen? Just knowing that something will happen doesn't by itself mean that the one knowing caused it. For the sake of simple and admittedly imperfect analogies: The teacher knows that lazy Fritz will fail the course, but the teacher's knowledge doesn't cause the failure. You know that your spendthrift and wayward son is on the brink of ruin, but your knowing it doesn't cause it. So then, how much of what God knows does God make happen or will to happen?

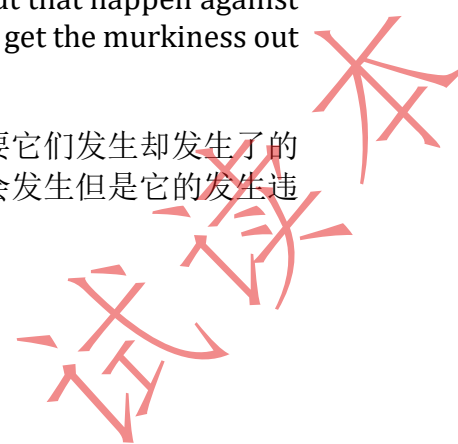
换句话说：由于他有无限的力量、完美的智慧和对一切事完全的知识，多少事情的发生是因为他知道并想要它发生呢？多少事情的发生是因为他知道将会发生而不是因为他想要它发生呢？仅仅知道某事将会发生并不意味着那个知道的人导致了它。有一个简单而无可否认的不完美的类比：老师知道懒惰的弗里茨会挂科，但是老师的知识并不导致他挂科。你知道你那挥霍无度任意妄为的儿子在毁灭的边缘，但是你的知道并不是导致它的原因。有多少上帝知道的事是上帝让他发生的还是将要发生的呢？

Already in Psalm 139, cited previously, there is a hint of the distinction between what God knows and what God's knowing causes. The psalmist says that God knows of his sitting down and his getting up, of his coming and going, even of his thoughts before he thinks them. But he does not say that God caused him to sit down or to get up, to come or to go, to think this rather than to think that or not to think at all. And still he declares that God has ordained the days of his life, each one from beginning to end. So then, some things God wills and causes and some things not.

在之前引用的诗篇 139 中，已经存在着上帝知道什么和上帝的知道导致了什么的区别。诗人说上帝知道他（诗人）坐下他起来，他来他去，甚至是他的思想——在他想到它们之前。但是诗人并没有说上帝导致了他坐下他起来，他来他去，他思考这个而不是思考那个或是根本什么都不思考。然而，诗人依然宣告，上帝已经命定了他生命的日子，从头到尾的每一天。这样看来，有些事是上帝愿意并导致的，有些事不是。

What then does God tell us about the difference between the things that he wills and causes and the other things that happen even though God did not cause and did not want them to happen? Are there things that God knows will happen but that happen against his will—in spite of the fact that God is almighty? Can God's Word get the murkiness out of the pool for us?

那么，对于上帝愿意并导致的事，和别的上帝没有导致并不想要它们发生却发生了的事，上帝告诉我们这两者有何不同呢？有什么事是上帝知道它会发生但是它的发生违





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背了他的旨意呢——尽管事实上上帝是全能的？上帝的话语能为我们除去这池子的黑暗吗？

## Things that God wants to happen and that, therefore, must happen 上帝想要发生的事，因此必定会发生

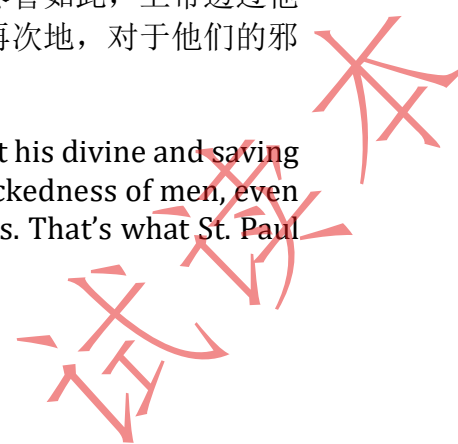
We can sum up much in this category in one word: *gospel*. Everything that has to do with your salvation and mine God willed and God brought to pass. That is clear already in Genesis 3:15. There God promised a Savior who would crush the head of the serpent and thus rescue fallen mankind from the dread consequences of sin. God willed the redemption of the world. And the redemption of the world, therefore, had to take place in just the way that God said it would in all of the promises of the Savior in the Old Testament. Read Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53, the most complete of the many pictures of the Savior's work in the Old Testament. They are written in the past tense, as though the work of Jesus had already taken place! They and other promises of the Savior are written in the past tense because his work described there *must* take place; God willed it, and it could not fail to take place just as he said.

这个范畴我们可以用一个词来概括：福音。一切与你我救恩有关的事，上帝都愿意去做，并且都实现了。这在创世记 3:15 已经很清晰了。在那儿上帝应许了一位救主，他将打碎蛇的头，并因此将堕落的人类从罪可怕的结果中拯救出来。上帝想要拯救这个世界。这个世界的拯救，也因此必定按照上帝在旧约中一切应许所说的方式那样发生。阅读诗篇 22 和以赛亚书 53，它们是旧约很多关于救主的工作的画面中最完整的。它们都是以过去时态写的，仿佛耶稣的工作已经发生了！它们和其它救主的应许都是用过去时态写的，因为在那儿描述的救主的工作必定会发生；上帝愿意如此，它就不可能不发生，正如上帝所说的那样。

To be sure, the events described in Psalm 22 and in Isaiah 53 are inseparably connected to the acts of sinful men: Wicked men counted his bones on the cross and mocked him; wicked men despised and rejected him. Their wickedness, however, was their own; God did not will or force those individuals to behave as they did. But, nevertheless, his intent of redeeming the world through the suffering of his Son at the hands of the wicked was accomplished—and again, that without God being responsible for their wickedness.

诚然，在诗篇 22 和以赛亚书 53 所描述的事件，与罪人的行动是不可分割的：恶人在十字架上数算着他的骨头并嘲笑他；恶人藐视并拒绝他。然而，他们的邪恶属于他们自己；上帝并不愿意或强迫那些人去做他们所做之事。但是，尽管如此，上帝透过他的儿子在恶人手中受难，从而拯救这个世界的目的实现了——再次地，对于他们的邪恶上帝并没有责任。

The point is that God would rule over all of history to see to it that his divine and saving purpose was carried out. He would carry it out in spite of the wickedness of men, even if that meant turning the wickedness of men to his own purposes. That's what St. Paul



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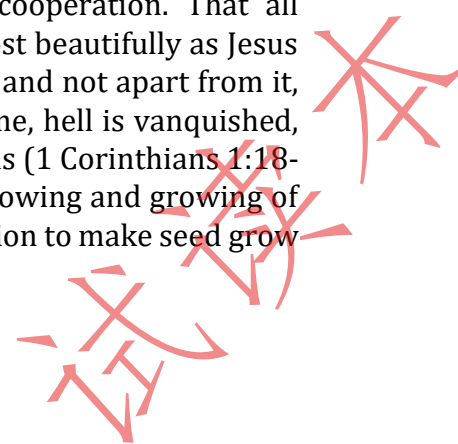
is telling us too when in Galatians 4:4 he speaks of the coming of the Savior and of his work taking place “when the time had fully come,” i.e., just when God willed it, just when God had so ruled over history that the timing was perfect; the place was just right; the way the world was governed suited his purposes; the language in common use; the prevailing philosophy in the world and thinking in the Jewish world—all of it would suit and serve God’s purpose in the work of redemption.

重点是，上帝统治一切历史，细心关照他神圣救恩的目的得以实现。他会不顾人的邪恶去实现它，这甚至意味着他将人的邪恶转化为他自己的目的。这也是圣保罗在加拉太书 4:4 告诉我们的，他说，这即将到来的救主和他的工作实现在“等到时候成熟”的日子。也就是，正是在上帝愿意它的时候；正是在上帝统治着历史，使得时机是完美的；地方恰到好处；这个世界统治的方式满足他的目的；有普遍使用的语言；这个世界盛行的哲学和犹太世界的思想——所有这一切都适合于并服务于上帝救赎工作的计划。

Likewise, the preservation of faith, of the church, is something that God wills and causes, something that must take place and cannot fail to take place. Jesus himself assures us of that. He tells Peter in response to Peter’s great confession of faith that even the gates of hell cannot overcome the church (Matthew 16:18). His descriptions of his coming on the Last Day assure us as well that he will keep his promise to preserve the church until he returns (Matthew 25). Let the world rage against it, let men mock and scorn to their hearts’ content; God laughs (Psalm 2). Let heretics come and go and do their worst, as indeed they always will (1 Timothy 4:1-3); God’s mighty power will still accompany his Word and sacraments for the preservation and extension of the church.

同样，对信仰和教会的持守，是上帝愿意并导致的事，是必定会实现并绝不失败的事。耶稣亲自向我们如此保证。在对彼得伟大的信仰宣告的回应中，他告诉彼得，即使地狱的门也不能胜过教会（太 16:18）。他在对他末日降临的描述中，同样向我们保证，他将信守他保护教会的应许，直等到他来（太 25）。让这个世界愤怒地反对它，让人们尽情地嘲笑藐视它；上帝嗤笑他们（诗 2）。让异教徒来来回回做他们极恶的事，正如他们一直想做的那样（提前 4:1-3）；上帝大能的旨意依然与他的圣道和圣礼同在，使得教会得以保存和扩展。

God does not leave us in any doubt about the way in which the church is and must be created and preserved. He wills it, and he sees to it that it all takes place through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments and not apart from them. He ruled history so that the redemption of the world was accomplished and completed by Jesus Christ alone, without anyone’s help or cooperation. That all happened just as he had promised already in Isaiah 63:3 and most beautifully as Jesus himself had promised it in John 3:16. And through that message and not apart from it, sin is forgiven, saving faith is created, sin and death are overcome, hell is vanquished, and heaven is filled with the company of the saints, as Paul tells us (1 Corinthians 1:18-31). Jesus so often compares the preaching of the gospel to the sowing and growing of seed: God’s power was present and powerful in his Word at creation to make seed grow



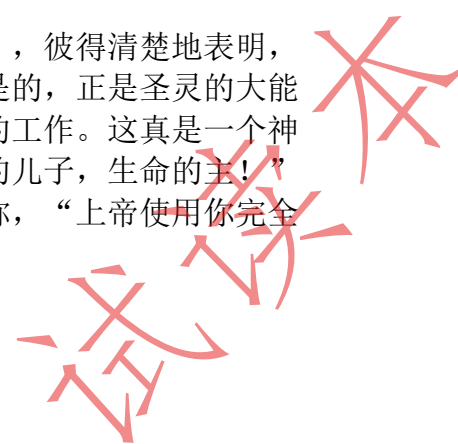
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and produce after its kind (Genesis 1:11-13); just so, God's power to create faith rests in the seed of his Word proclaimed to one individual at a time (Mark 4:1-20,30-32). The only difference would be that the seed in the ground grows as a result of his almighty command; the seed of the Word in the gospel prospers as a result of his powerful grace. Shortly before his ascension, Jesus told us that that is the way it would be (Matthew 28:18-20); because he has all power in heaven and in earth, he would see to it that disciples would be made until the end of time through Baptism and the teaching of his saving work for the world.

对于教会必定会建立和保存，上帝并没有为我们留下任何怀疑的空间。他愿意这样做，他留心透过宣讲福音和施行圣礼来实现这一切，并且不与它们分离。他统治历史使得这个世界的救恩得以完成，并唯独借着耶稣基督成就，不需要任何人的帮助或合作。这一切的发生，正如他在以赛亚书 63:3 所应许的那样，且如耶稣亲自在约翰福音 3:16 应许的那样美好。透过这个信息并且不与这个信息分离，罪被赦免了，救恩的信心被创造了，罪和死亡被打败了，地狱被征服了，天堂充满了圣徒的团契，正如保罗告诉我们的那样（林前 1:18-31）。耶稣经常将福音的宣讲比作种子的播撒和生长：在创造中，上帝的存在与他大能的话语，让种子各从其类地生长和结果（创 1:11-13）；同样，上帝创造信心的大能倚赖于他话语的种子，在某个时刻向一个人宣讲（可 4:1-20, 30-32）。唯一的不同可能是，地上的种子因他全能的命令而生长；福音中他话语的种子，因他大能的恩典而兴旺。在耶稣升天前不久，他告诉我们事情将会这样发生（太 28:18-20）；他有天上地下一切的权柄，透过洗礼和向世界教导他救恩的工作，他确保了门徒将会被建立，直到世界的末了。

The apostles understood that. In Peter's great Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:14-41), Peter made it clear that it is God's will that we should repent, be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, and believe the gospel. Yes, and it is the power of the Holy Spirit working in that gospel message that moves people to repent and trust in the Savior's work for their salvation. What a miracle! Peter didn't mince any words: "You killed the Son of God, the Lord of life!" Who could help but despair when faced with his own guilt over such a monstrous crime? But, Peter declared, "God used your utter wickedness to accomplish his purpose and now wants to forgive you and claim you for his own dear children." What power there was in the gospel he preached! Who would dare to hope for such a thing or believe such a message? The message itself, the Holy Spirit working through it, had to overcome the guilty and utterly rational despair of those who tortured and murdered God's own Son! And so it did. The gospel message accomplished God's will and purpose as thousands repented, believed the gospel, and were baptized. God's will was done! God saw to it! God caused it!

使徒们明白这一点。在彼得伟大的五旬节讲道中（徒 2:14-41），彼得清楚地表明，上帝的旨意是要我们悔改，受洗领受罪得赦免，并相信福音。是的，正是圣灵的大能在福音信息中工作，让人们悔改、相信救主为他们所做的救恩的工作。这真是一个神迹！彼得并没有闪烁其词，他直截了当的说：“你们杀了上帝的儿子，生命的主！”面对自己犯下的滔天罪行，谁能不感到绝望呢？然而，彼得宣称，“上帝使用你完全



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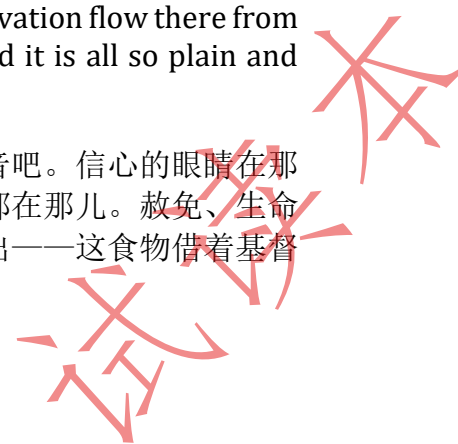
的邪恶来完成他的目的，现在，他想要赦免你并宣告你是他自己亲爱的儿女。”彼得所传的福音是何等有力啊！谁敢期待这样一件事或相信这样一个信息呢？这信息本身，圣灵透过它工作，必须胜过那些折磨并杀害上帝儿子的人的罪疚和他们理性上彻底的绝望。并且它确实这样发生了。福音信息实现了上帝的旨意和目的，上千人悔改，信福音，并领受洗礼。上帝的旨意成就了！上帝看到了它！上帝导致了它！

Paul too tells us that it is God's will to create faith through the Word (Romans 10:17) and that apart from the Holy Spirit's working through that Word, no one will believe it (1 Corinthians 12:3). The same holds true of the sacraments. It is God's will that Baptism forgives sins and creates faith and so it does, as Paul declares in Romans 6:1-14. Yes, Paul tells us (Ephesians 5:25,26) that it is God's will that the Sacrament of Baptism works for the perfect and perpetual cleansing of the church from all sin. That's what Peter had proclaimed already in his Pentecost sermon when he urged that the people repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. And that's what he tells us as well in his first letter (1 Peter 3:21). It is God's will that Baptism be a saving means of grace, and so it is. The same holds for the Sacrament of the Altar. It is God's will that by the power of his Word, Christ is really and truly present with the elements of bread and wine. And that substantial and, therefore, powerful presence of Christ in the Sacrament is mighty and effective to forgive sins, and thus, to give life and salvation. It is so because God wills it, because God promises it, because God through his Word in the Sacrament brings it to pass.

保罗同样告诉我们，透过圣道创造信心是上帝的旨意（罗 10:17），离开圣灵借着圣道的工作，没有人会相信它（林前 12:3）。圣礼同样适用于此。洗礼赦免罪并创造信心是上帝的旨意，并且事实就是如此，正如保罗在罗马书 6:1-14 宣讲的那样。是的，保罗告诉我们（弗 5:25, 26），上帝的旨意是要借着洗礼的工作将教会从一切罪里完美地永久地洗净。这是彼得在他的五旬节讲道中已经宣告了的，他督促人们悔改并为他们罪得赦免受洗。这也是他在他的第一封书信（彼一 3:21）里告诉我们的。让洗礼成为拯救的施恩具是上帝的旨意，并且事实就是如此。圣餐同样适用于此。借着话语的大能，基督真真正正地临在酒和饼的元素中，这是上帝的旨意。因此，基督在圣餐中实质和大能的临在，对于赦免罪并因此而赐下生命和拯救，是强大并有效的。它是这样是因为上帝愿意它如此，因为上帝应许了如此，因为上帝透过他的圣道和圣礼如此成就。

Let those who wish that God still performed miracles listen to the gospel in Word and sacraments. What mighty miracles the eyes of faith will there behold! Forgiveness, life, and salvation are there by the power of words. Forgiveness, life, and salvation are hidden there in the water with the Word! Forgiveness, life, and salvation flow there from the food made sacred by the presence of Christ in his Word. And it is all so plain and clear to the eyes of faith opened by that same Word.

让那些依然希望上帝施行神迹的人，去聆听圣道和圣礼中的福音吧。信心的眼睛在那里会看到多大的神迹啊！借着话语的大能，赦免、生命和救恩都在那儿。赦免、生命和救恩与圣道一起隐藏在水里！赦免、生命和拯救从食物中流出——这食物借着基督



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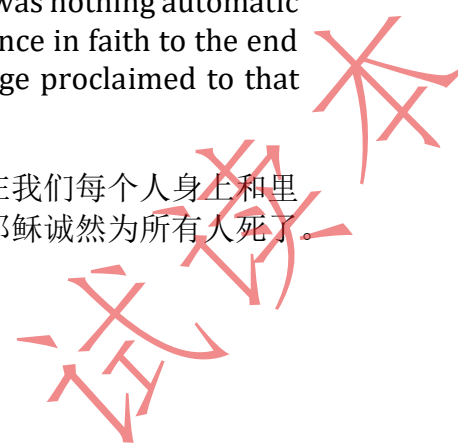
在他圣道里的临在而成为圣。在那些借着同样的道而开启的信心之眼里，这一切都是何等朴实和清晰。

God's effective and effecting will and working through the gospel in Word and sacraments, however, is not merely a mechanical, mindless, or automatic thing. It is not like a rule of nature that works without any interest in the individuals affected by it. The law of gravity, for example, applies to the apple falling from the tree and no less to the little boy jumping from its branches without caring about either one. Not so with God's will and work through the gospel! Just the opposite is the case. When the gospel creates and preserves faith, it is because God chooses not to be separated from it and its effect. It is because God is intimately and personally concerned with each individual who hears it and who, because of the gospel's power, believes it. It is mind-boggling to us that such is the case. We are, after all, but dust and ashes. How much attention do you pay to dust? How much care do you exercise over each ash in the hearth? But God, the Almighty, who is sublimely independent, who needs nothing and no one, nevertheless is mightily exercised over each of us. He was so in eternity; he is so now; he will be so forever.

然而，上帝透过圣道圣礼中的福音有效和有影响的旨意和工作，不只是机械性的、无意识的或自动的事。它不像自然规则那样，对受其作用的人毫无兴趣。比如，引力的规则，适用于从树上掉下的苹果，也适用于从树枝上跳下来的小男孩，对这两者是谁它并不关心。上帝透过福音的旨意和工作却不是这样！情况恰恰相反。福音创造并持守信心，是因为上帝选择不与它及它的作用分离。是因为上帝亲切地亲自关心每一个听到它，并因着福音的大能相信它的人。这对我们是一种多么难以置信的情况。我们只不过是尘埃和灰烬。你会在尘埃上花多大的注意力呢？你对管理炉壁上的每一粒灰烬有多关心呢？但是上帝，这位全能者，崇高而独立，不需要任何人和任何事，却强有力地管理着我们每一个人。他在永恒中如此；他现在就是如此；他将永远如此。

We need to ponder this matter of how in the gospel God is concerned with each individual and accomplishes his good and gracious will on and in us personally. The Bible clearly teaches in so many passages that, to be sure, Christ died for all. St. John the Baptist said it so simply and clearly: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Paul likewise makes it clear that God wills, God wants, all people to receive the saving benefit of Jesus' redemptive work for the world. He tells us that "[God] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). Peter says the same thing: "[The Lord] is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). But beyond that, God also declares in his Word that each and every one who believes the gospel message has God's personal choice to thank for it—it was no coincidence, and there was nothing automatic or mechanical about it. The faith of the individual and perseverance in faith to the end are the result of God's will and God's work in the gospel message proclaimed to that individual.

我们需要沉思这个问题：在福音里上帝如何关心每一个人，并在我们每个人身上和里面完成他良善仁慈的旨意。在很多经文中圣经都清晰地教导，耶稣诚然为所有人死了。





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施洗约翰如此直白清晰地说道：“看哪，上帝的羔羊，除去世人的罪的”（约 1:29）。保罗同样清晰地表明，上帝愿意、上帝想要所有人都来领受上帝对这个世界救赎工作的益处。他告诉我们：上帝“愿意人人得救，并得以认识真理”（提前 2:4）。彼得说了同样的事：主“是宽容你们，不愿一人沉沦，而是人人都来悔改”（彼后 3:9）。除此之外，上帝同样在他的话语里宣告，每一个相信福音的人，都是上帝亲自拣选的——它并不是巧合，也不是某种自动或机械的事。个人的信心和在心心里持守到底，都是上帝的旨意和上帝在向这个人宣告的福音信息里工作的结果。

Of the many places where the Bible speaks of this concern of God and the effectiveness of his will in the faith of the individual, we will note just a few of the most striking ones. St. Paul sings the praises of God's will in effectively choosing each one who believes:

圣经中很多地方都谈到上帝的这种关注，以及他的旨意在人们信心中的效力，我们只会涉及其中几个最引人注目的地方。圣保罗歌颂上帝的旨意有效地拣选了每一个相信他的人。

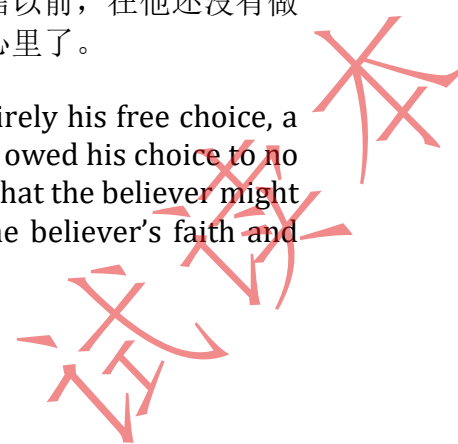
Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. (Ephesians 1:3-6)

愿颂赞归给我们主耶稣基督的父上帝。他在基督里曾把天上各样属灵的福气赐给我们。因为他从创世以前，在基督里拣选了我们，使我们在他面前成为圣洁，没有瑕疵，满有爱心。他按着自己旨意所喜悦的，预定我们藉着耶稣基督得儿子的名分，使他荣耀的恩典得到称赞；这恩典是他在爱子里白白赐给我们的。（弗 1:3-6）

Could the point be made more emphatically, more powerfully? God knew each one who would believe and persevere in faith to the end. And why would they believe? Why would they persevere? It is because God chose each one of them already before the world began, in eternity! Each one who believes and perseveres was in God's mind and heart before he or she ever came to be, before he or she ever had done anything to merit God's attention or choice.

还有什么比保罗说的更强烈，更有力呢？上帝知道每一个相信他并在心心里持守到底的人。为什么他们会相信呢？为什么他们会持守呢？因为上帝在创世以前，在永恒中就已经拣选了他们每一个人！每一个相信并持守的人，在他相信以前，在他还没有做任何事去配得上帝的关注或拣选以前，就已经在上帝的思想和心里了。

Paul underscores the great truth that the choice of God was entirely his free choice, a choice made in grace according to his purpose and pleasure. God owed his choice to no one, not to the believer's future faith and not to any future merit that the believer might have. It had nothing to do with anything in the one chosen. The believer's faith and



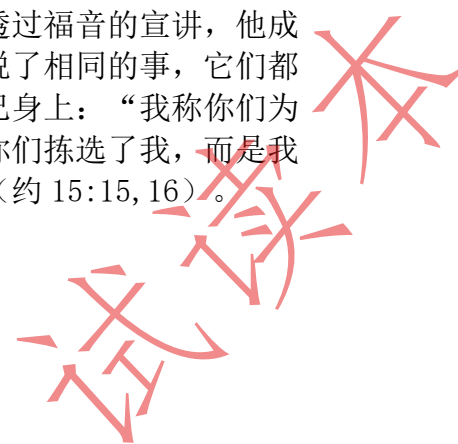
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subsequent good works have God's choice as their cause, not the other way around. There is one exclamation point after another under the truth that God's will was done, that it was carried out and accomplished for the praise of his own name—not the praise of the one chosen—and that the choice is entirely tied up with the saving work of Jesus. Paul makes and underscores the same point in Romans 1–11. Over and over again he says it in all of his epistles: Our salvation is the result of Christ's work alone; our faith is the result of God's choice made personal in the proclamation of the gospel to each one who believes individually. Again, God's choice is an entirely free choice, an entirely gracious choice.

保罗强调了上述事实，上帝的拣选是他全然自由的拣选，按照他的目的和乐意的心在恩典中的拣选。上帝的拣选不亏欠任何人，既不亏欠信徒将来的信心，也不亏欠信徒将来可能拥有的功德。一个人在他的拣选中他不能做任何事。上帝的拣选是信徒的信心和他们随后好行为的原因，而不是与之相反。在上帝旨意的真理下，存在着一个又一个惊叹，这一切的实施和成就都是为着他自己的名得着称赞——不是被拣选的人得着称赞——并且这拣选永远与耶稣救恩的工作绑定在一起。保罗在罗马书 1-11 陈述并强调了同样的观点。在他全部的书信中他反反复复地说道：我们的救恩唯独是基督工作的结果；我们的信心是，在福音向每一个信徒的宣讲中，上帝拣选成就的结果。再次地，上帝的拣选是全然自由的拣选，全然恩慈的拣选。

St. Luke tells us the same thing in Acts 13:48: "All who were appointed for eternal life believed." They believed because they were chosen—not they were chosen because they believed. Likewise, St. James declares, "[God] chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created" (James 1:18). The analogy is perfect: No one chooses to be born; physical birth is the result of choices made by others. Just so our birth as children of God. It is the result of God's will. He becomes our Father, and the church, so to speak, becomes our mother through the proclamation of the gospel. These and so many other passages that say the same thing bid us to apply Jesus' words to the disciples also to ourselves individually, personally: "I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last" (John 15:15,16).

在使徒行传 13:48 圣路加告诉了我们同样的事：“凡被指定得永生的人都信了。”他们因为被拣选而相信——不是因为相信而被拣选。同样，圣雅各宣称，上帝“按自己的旨意，用真理的道生了我们，使我们在他所造的万物中成为初熟的果子”（雅 1:18）。这个类比很贴切：没有人选择出生，生理上的出生是他人选择的结果。我们生为上帝的儿女，也是如此。它是上帝旨意的结果。可以说，透过福音的宣讲，他成为我们的父，教会成为我们的母。这些经文和很多其它经文都说了相同的事，它们都吩咐我们将耶稣的话运用在门徒身上，也亲自地应用在我们自己身上：“我称你们为朋友，因为我从我父所听见的一切都已经让你们知道了。不是你们拣选了我，而是我拣选了你们，并且派你们去结果子，让你们的果子得以长存”（约 15:15, 16）。



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It is simply impossible to exhaust the comfort for each penitent sinner that comes from this truth. Am I good enough for God to choose me? Is my faith strong enough for God to elect me? Away with all such questions! They have nothing to do with God's choice. Your faith is neither your own work nor the result of your own merit nor the consequence of a coincidental birth in a Christian family or near a Christian church. No, it is all God's arrangement. It is all the result of his will in eternity, worked out in time, reaching its blessed fruition in you in the here and now. Have you been baptized? God arranged all of history so that you would be baptized. Do you at least in your mind's eye fall down before the altar of God in church on Sunday to confess that you deserve nothing but wrath and punishment? It is God's effective ruling over history that you hear in the voice of the pastor, Jesus' own voice: "Be of good cheer! Your sins are forgiven! The one who comes to me, I will never cast out!" And it is the result of God's will that this precious, life-giving gospel proclamation creates faith in your heart; that faith sighs with joy and relief that God has not lied; that just for you, even for you, Christ died and rose again.

对每一个痛悔的罪人来说，从这个真理中获得的安慰永远也不会耗尽。我有足够好到让上帝拣选我吗？我的信心足够强到让上帝选择我吗？让这些问题都滚开吧！它们与上帝的拣选毫无关系。你的信心既不是你自己的工作，也不是你自己功德的结果，也不是碰巧出生在一个基督徒家庭或一间基督教堂附近的结果。不，这一切都是上帝的安排。这一切都是他在永恒中的旨意，在时间里的实现，并在此时此刻将他的祝福成就在你身上的结果。你受洗了吗？上帝安排一切的历史使得你可以受洗。周天在教会上帝的圣餐台面前，是否至少在你的脑海里，你承认你只配得到愤怒和惩罚？这是上帝对历史有效的统治，使得你听到了牧师的声音，那是耶稣自己的声音：“欢呼吧！你的罪得赦了！到我这里来的人，我必不丢弃！”这宝贵的，赐生命福音的宣讲，在你心里创造信心，这是上帝旨意的结果；这信心用喜乐和安慰述说着上帝并不说谎；单单是为你，甚至是为你，基督死了又复活了。

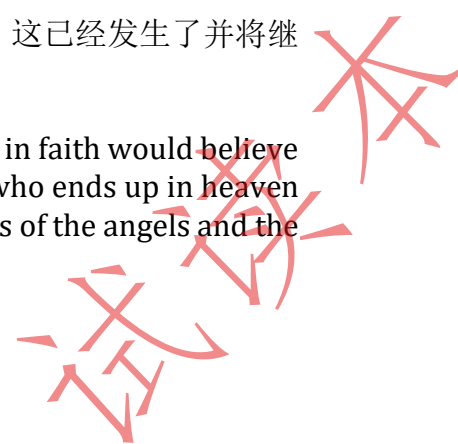
So then, God wanted to redeem the world and to do it by the sacrificial and substitutionary death of his virgin-born Son. And that happened because God willed it and caused it to happen.

因此，上帝想要拯救这个世界，借着祂由童女所生的儿子的献祭和替代性的死亡，上帝实现了它。这一切的发生是因为上帝愿意如此并导致了它的发生。

God willed to create and preserve the church through the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. And that happened and happens still because God wills it and causes it to happen.

上帝愿意透过福音的宣讲和圣礼的施行，创造教会并持守教会。这已经发生了并将继续发生，因为上帝愿意如此并导致了它的发生。

And no less, God willed that those who believe the gospel and die in faith would believe the gospel and die in faith. It happens thus with each individual who ends up in heaven because God willed it and caused it to happen. Listen to the hymns of the angels and the



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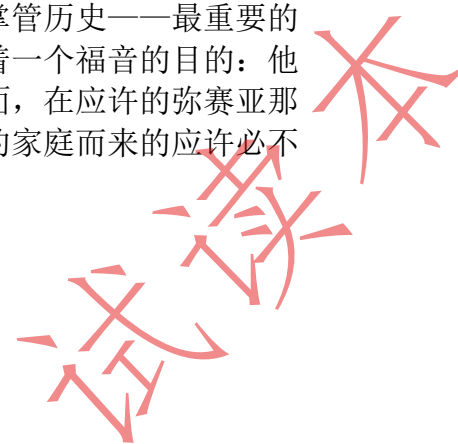
saints in heaven in Revelation 7:9-12 and 19:1-9; all praise goes to God and to the Lamb; there is not a hint or a word of, "Well, at least I had the sense to decide to believe and the virtue to obey!"<sup>2</sup>

同样，上帝愿意那些相信福音并在信心里死去的人，会相信福音并在信心里死去。它的发生是因为上帝愿意如此并导致了它的发生，这使得他们每一个人最终都能在天堂。听启示录 7:9-12 和 19:1-9，这是天使和圣徒在天堂的赞歌；一切赞美都归给上帝和羔羊；那里并没有任何暗示或任何一个字说：“嗯，至少我有决定去相信的意识和去顺从的美德！”<sup>2</sup>

## Things that God wills and causes to happen that are not directly connected to the gospel 上帝愿意并导致它发生，却与福音没有直接关系的事

Are there other things in history that happen as they do because God willed them and caused them to happen just as they did? Our knowledge here is much less complete because God does not give us a complete answer to that question. In the Old Testament, we do have instances of specific events in history that God arranged. They are always events that have some bearing on his will for the church. Thus, for example, God raised up enemies of Israel to chasten his people when they fell into idolatry. He raised up the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon to destroy the obstinate and apostate kingdoms of Israel and Judah. And then he raised up the Medes and the Persians to end the Babylonian Captivity of Judah. He did it all just as he had promised and just in the amount of time that he had promised. It all happened as a result of his will and of his rule over history and, most important, as part of salvation history. It all happened with the gospel goal that his people should recognize their sins, repent, and flee to his grace and mercy in the promised Messiah for forgiveness. It all happened so that the promise that the Savior would come through the family of Abraham and the house of David would not be lost.

在历史上，是否还有其它事情的发生，是上帝愿意它们如此并导致了它们如此发生？我们在这儿的知识是特别有限的，因为对这个问题上帝并没有给我们一个完全的答案。在旧约中，我们确实有一些实例，它们属于上帝安排的特殊历史事件。这些事件总是与他对教会的旨意有关系。比如，当以色列人陷入偶像崇拜时，上帝兴起他们的仇敌去管教他的子民。他兴起亚述和巴比伦国，去摧毁以色列和犹太顽固悖逆的国。然后，他兴起玛代和波斯人，终结巴比伦对犹太的俘掳。他按照他所应许的那样并在他所应许的时间里做了这一切。这一切的发生都是因着他的旨意和他掌管历史——最重要的是，作为救赎历史的一部分——的结果。这一切的发生都伴随着一个福音的目的：他的子民能够意识到他们的罪，悔改，并逃到他的恩典和怜悯里面，在应许的弥赛亚那里得蒙赦免。这一切的发生导致了救主将透过亚伯拉罕和大卫的家庭而来的应许必不落空。



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But did God will that Napoleon invade Russia and that his empire perish in the snows of Moscow? Was it his unalterable will that caused The French Revolution or the American Revolution? Did his will force the rise of other kingdoms and nations and ultimately author their success or failure? That he rules over all of history for the benefit of the church and so that those he has chosen will in history hear the gospel and believe it is certain. But could so many of the things that happened in history have happened differently? Did they have to occur just as they did? The answer is hidden in the mind of God, and he has not chosen to tell us how much of history had to happen just the way it did and how much of it could have happened other than it did. He tells us only that nothing in history can destroy the church or prevent those whom he has chosen from hearing the gospel, from believing it, and from finally entering into eternal glory. He tells us only that his ultimate goal must be reached, but not necessarily the details of the road taken on the way to that goal.

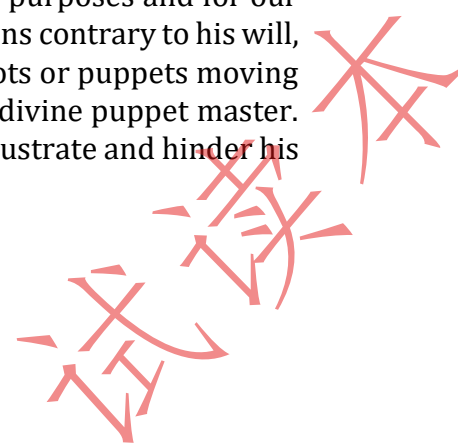
但是是上帝的旨意让拿破仑入侵德国，并让他的帝国在莫斯科的暴风雪中灭亡吗？是他不可更改的旨意导致了法国大革命或美国革命吗？是他的旨意迫使别的王国和民族兴起，并最终书写出它们的成功或失败吗？他为了教会的益处统治历史的一切，使得那些他所拣选的人在历史中会听到福音并相信这福音，这是确定无疑的。但是在历史中发生的这么多事情，会以不同的方式发生吗？它们必定按照它们所出现的出现吗？答案隐藏在上帝的心里，他没有选择告诉我们，有多少历史必定按照它所发生的那样发生，有多少历史与它已经发生的相比可以有所不同。他唯独告诉我们，历史上没有任何事能够摧毁教会，或拦阻他所拣选的人听到福音、相信它，并最终进入永恒的荣耀里。他唯独告诉我们他最终的目标必定会实现，但成就目标的道路的细节并不一定。

To put it most simply, we rejoice in the certainty that he controls and directs what he wants to for the preservation of the church and for the gathering of those he has chosen. He bids us focus on that blessed truth because that's the one he has made clear in his Word.

简单来说，我们确信他为了持守教会并为了聚集那些他所拣选的人而掌控并引导他想要的事，我们为此而欢喜。他让我们聚焦在这蒙福的真理上，因为这是他在他的话中阐明的真理。

What role is there for man's will, and what does man control or cause?人的意志有什么作用，人控制或导致了什么？

As clear as it is that God rules and controls all things for his own purposes and for our salvation, it is just as clear that there is much in history that happens contrary to his will, in spite of the fact that he is almighty. Human beings are not robots or puppets moving on the ends of strings, irresistibly moving at the impulses of the divine puppet master. Already at creation he implanted in Adam and Eve a capacity to frustrate and hinder his will. Is that not an amazing thing?





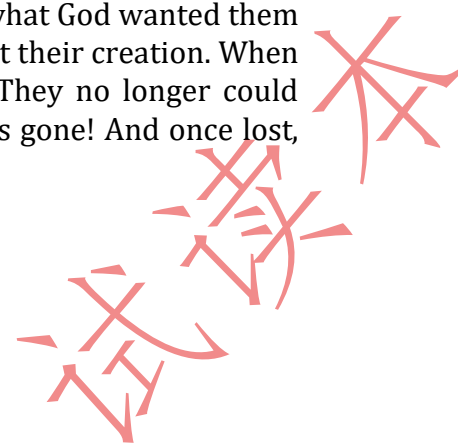
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很明显，上帝为了他自己的目的和我们的救恩，统治并掌管一切的事，同样明显的是，历史中发生的很多事都违背他的旨意，尽管事实上他是全能的。人类不是机器人或被丝线操纵的木偶，在神圣的木偶大师的刺激下不可抗拒地移动。早在创世的时候，他就在亚当夏娃里面植入了一种阻扰和拦阻他旨意的能力。这难道不是一件神奇的事吗？

We can even be so bold as to put it this way: God had such respect for humanity that from the very beginning he did not choose to force us to carry out his will. God wanted Adam and Eve and their descendents to live in the Garden of Eden in blissful communion with him. But that didn't happen. Adam and Eve used their capacity to frustrate the will of God, and God did not prevent it. They exchanged freedom for slavery to sin. They threw away peace in exchange for fear; love from and for God in exchange for hatred of God, contempt for one another, and the hostility of nature. They gave away the freedom to live and then to live forever in exchange for death. None of that was the will of God. None of that was caused by God. For all the misery that they brought on themselves and that ever since all mankind brings on itself, mankind has only itself to blame. In spite of the fact that we should know from experience that sin never gives what we think it will, we nevertheless fall for the blandishments of the world and the seductive voice of the tempter again and again, day by day, all the way to the cemetery. None of that is the will of God. None of it is caused by God.

我们甚至可以如此大胆地说：上帝是如此地尊重人，以至于从起初他就没有选择强迫我们执行他的旨意。上帝想要亚当夏娃和他们的后裔在伊甸园里和他一起活在极乐的联合中。但是这并没有发生。亚当和夏娃使用他们的能力阻碍上帝的旨意，而上帝并没有阻止它。他们把自由变为罪的奴隶。他们抛弃和平换来恐惧；抛弃来自上帝且对上帝的爱，换来对上帝的憎恶，彼此的羞辱和对自然的敌视。他们放弃了自由并永恒地活着，换来了死亡。这一切都不是上帝的旨意。这一切都不是来自于上帝。由于他们带给自己的一切不幸，以及从此之后所有人在此之上发生的一切，人类唯独能够责备的是他们自己。尽管我们从经验中就应该知道这一事实：罪从来不会给我们我们认为它会给我们的，我们依然落入这个世界的奉承和那试探者诱惑的声音中，一次又一次，一日复一日，直到我们进入坟墓。这一切都不是上帝的旨意。这一切都不是来自于上帝。

So perverse is mankind that even the very concept and the word *freedom* have been woefully corrupted. Ask anyone what the word *freedom* means. The answer you get will be this: The ability to do whatever you want, be it good or evil or somewhere in-between. But that wasn't God's definition of freedom when he created man, and it isn't his definition of freedom now either. God's definition of freedom is quite different. God's gift of freedom to Adam and Eve was the ability to choose to do what God wanted them to do, to choose to continue in the perfection that he gave them at their creation. When they threw it all away, they lost freedom and became slaves. They no longer could choose even to return to fellowship with God; their freedom was gone! And once lost, they had no capacity—no freedom—in themselves to regain it.



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人类是如此的堕落，以至于甚至自由这个词和概念都被可悲的败坏了。问问大家自由是什么意思。你将获得这样的答案：有能力去做你想做的任何事，无论是好是坏还是介于这两者之间的某事。但这不是上帝在他创造人的时候对自由的定义，也不是他现在对自由的定义。上帝对自由的定义完全不同。上帝给亚当夏娃自由的恩赐，是有能力选择去做上帝想要他们去做的事，选择一直在上帝在创造中赐给他们的完美中。当他们将它抛诸脑后时，他们失去了自由并成为了奴隶。他们甚至再也不能选择回到与上帝的团契中；他们的自由消失了！并且，一旦失去，他们自己就不再有能力——自由——重新获得它。

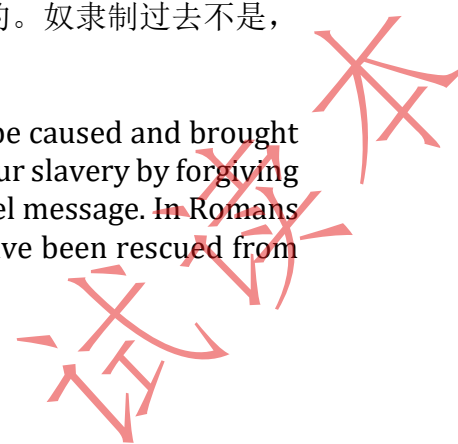
To be sure, Adam and Eve had and their descendents now have a certain amount of what we might label “wobble room” in their slavery. They may choose to commit this sin rather than that. They may even choose to lead what on the outside appears to be virtuous lives. But that alters not in the least their fundamental condition of slavery. The master over the cotton fields might have told the slave, “Choose for yourself whether you want to work in this field today or in that one.” But would you say that the slave must, therefore, be free? Hardly! He is still a slave. And so it is with us. It is so, not because God willed it or caused it but because Adam and Eve exchanged freedom for slavery when they sinned in the garden quite contrary to God’s will. And it is so to this day in each of us as we are by nature.

当然，亚当和夏娃，以及他们现在的后裔，在他们的奴隶制中，拥有某些我们可能称之为“回旋空间”的地方。他们可以选择去犯这个罪而不是那个罪。他们甚至可以选择去过一种表面上看起来相当高尚的生活。但是这丝毫不改变他们是奴隶的基本状态。棉花田的主人可能会对他的奴隶说，“你自己选择今天你是在这个田里工作还是在那个田里工作。”可是你能因此说，这个奴隶是自由的吗？不可能！他依然是一个奴隶。我们同样如此。它之所以如此，不是因为上帝想要它或导致了它如此，而是因为亚当和夏娃在伊甸园违背上帝的旨意犯了罪，将自由变为奴隶。直到今天，我们每个人在本性上依然如此。

Indeed, man daily confirms his loss of freedom and his bondage whenever he sins. That’s what Jesus said in his own great discourse on freedom in John 8:34: “Everyone who sins is a slave to sin.” That’s what Paul says too in Romans 6 and 7 where he speaks of the difference between freedom and slavery. The slavery was not and is not God’s will, and God does not cause it.

确实，人每天都在确定他自由的丧失和他时刻被他的罪捆绑。这就是约翰福音 8:34，耶稣在他自己伟大的关于罪的讲论中说：“所有犯罪的人就是罪的奴隶。”这也是保罗在罗马书 6、7 章，当他谈到自由和奴隶之间的不同时所说的。奴隶制过去不是，现在也不是上帝的旨意，上帝并没有导致如此。

God’s will is for us again to be free. But that will of God can only be caused and brought about by God. And it is caused by him when he liberates us from our slavery by forgiving us and creating faith in the gospel message by means of the gospel message. In Romans 6 and 7, Paul speaks of the freedom that only those have who have been rescued from



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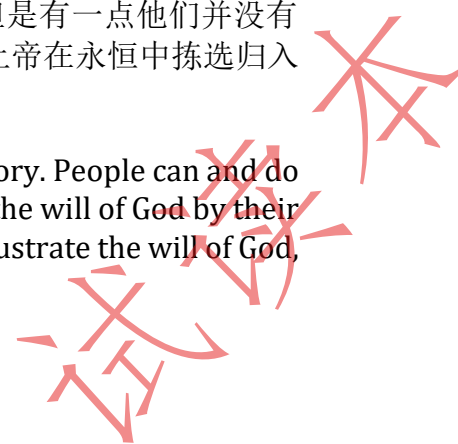
slavery by the redeeming work of Christ, by the washing of Baptism, and by faith in the gospel message. Jesus too tells us in John 8 that only when he has made us free are we really free. And that freedom is a freedom given and then exercised in the ongoing fellowship with God through the gospel. Or do you want to call it freedom when you choose to continue in unbelief? That freedom, again as Paul says so forcefully in Romans 6 and 7, is the freedom to be ashamed, the freedom to die. Some freedom! Let all those ponder that point who insist, "I'm free to do what I want! Neither you nor even God has the right to limit my freedom!"

上帝的旨意是让我们重得自由。但上帝的这旨意只能由上帝自己导致并带来。当他借着赦免我们将我们从奴隶中释放出来，并借着福音信息的工具使我们相信这福音时，他就导致了这旨意。在罗马书 6、7 章，保罗说道，只有那些借着基督救赎的工作、借着洗礼、借着相信福音的信息，而从奴隶中获救的人，才是自由的。耶稣在约翰福音 8 章同样告诉我们，唯有当他使我们自由时，我们才是真正自由了。这自由是在上帝透过福音与我们持续的团契中，被赋予并得以行使的。或者，当你选择持续的不信时，你想称其为自由吗？这自由，正如保罗在罗马书 6、7 章强有力的说道，是导致羞耻和死亡的自由。这叫做自由？让所有那些坚持“我有自由做我想做的事！不仅是你，即使是上帝也没有权利限制我的自由！”这种观点的人，仔细想想吧。

But let us return to the question of whether everything that has happened in history had to happen the way it did or could it have happened differently. Let us consider how that question is connected to the will of man and his ability to frustrate the will of God. The best that we can say is this: Just as the individual has what we called a certain amount of wiggle room in his condition of slavery without any natural ability to become free, so in history in general there is all kinds of wiggle room for people to act according to their own fallen wills. This ruler could have done other than he did; this people could have followed that path instead of the one they followed.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing in the Bible that says they were all puppets on a string. But this much they were not "free" to do: They could not destroy the church; they could not prevent the gospel from being proclaimed and believed by those whom God had chosen for himself already in eternity.

但是，让我们回到这个问题：历史上所发生的每件事，是否必须以他所发生的方式发生，还是它可以以不同的方式发生。让我们思考这个问题，是如何与人的意志，和他挫败上帝旨意的能力联系在一起的。我们能够说的最好的回答是：正如个人在他奴隶状态下一——这状态天然没有任何变得自由的能力，有我们所谓的一定程度的摇摆空间。因此，在历史中，通常存在各种各样的摇摆空间，让人们按照他们自身堕落的意愿去行动。这位统治者本可以做的比他做过的更好；这群人本可以走另一条路，而不是他们走过的那条。<sup>3</sup> 圣经从未说他们是一群由绳子牵着的木偶。但是有一点他们并没有“自由”去做：他们不能够摧毁教会；他们不能够阻止，那些上帝在永恒中拣选归入他自己的人，传扬并相信福音。

That's a lot of wiggle room for people, a lot of wiggle room in history. People can and do choose things that are not the will of God, and they can frustrate the will of God by their choices. It is clear in many places in the Bible that when people frustrate the will of God,



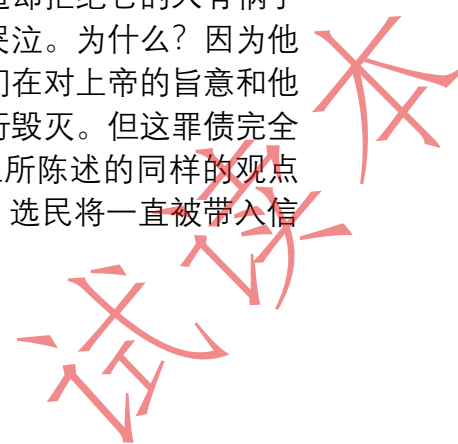
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God is not the cause. The blame, the cause of the evil, is always laid squarely at the door of the one who does evil. That is true also and especially of those who heard the gospel but, in spite of God's desire to create faith in them, perished under the wrath of God and in unbelief. Consider for example the Bible's description of the destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 2 Kings 17:7-18. Then read of the fall of Jerusalem in 2 Chronicles 36:11-19. Listen in on the prayer of Daniel in Daniel 9:4-19. What is the recurring theme? It is this: Yes, God brought about the destruction of Israel and Judah, but it was caused by the sins of the people, sins they chose to live in, sins altogether against the will and Word of God. God had caused their earlier prosperity; they caused their own ruin.

人们有很大的摇摆空间，历史也有很大的摇摆空间。人们能够也确实选择了并不符合上帝旨意的事，他们能借着他们的选择挫败上帝的旨意。圣经上很多地方清楚的表明，当人们挫败上帝的旨意时，上帝并不是其原因。这责任，这邪恶的原因，总是直接的指向那作恶的人。这也是真的，特别是那些听到福音，却不顾上帝渴望在他们里面创造信心，从而在上帝的愤怒和不信之中灭亡的人。例如，想想在列王记下 17:7-18，圣经对北国以色列毁灭的描述。然后阅读历代志下 36:11-19 耶路撒冷的陷落。听听但以理书 9:4-19 但以理的祷告。重复出现的主题是什么？它就是：是的，上帝带来了以色列和犹大的灭亡，但是它是由人民的罪导致的，他们选择活在罪中，完全反对上帝的旨意和他的道。上帝导致了他们早期的兴旺；他们导致了他们自己的毁灭。

Jesus makes the same point in that dread chapter, Matthew 23, when he pronounces woe over those who had his Word but rejected it. He wept over Jerusalem in anticipation of its destruction. And why? Because he wanted people to despise his Word and Jerusalem to slay the prophets? Certainly not! The people did it in spite of God's will and in spite of his desire to rescue and to save. He would keep his Word and destroy. But the blame would be entirely theirs, not his. That's the same point that St. Stephen makes in his great sermon before his martyrdom (Acts 7:51-53). Thus, the church will always survive and the gospel will always be preached and the elect will always be brought in. That's God's will, and he will certainly bring it to pass. But he gives no guarantee that the church will always prosper in this place, or even in this church body. It lies within the wiggle room of fallen men to reject the gospel, to drive the church underground, to make it all but disappear. God will preserve a remnant of his church to manifest his power and his grace in preserving her and calling even those who have rejected him back again. We see that in Palestine, in Turkey, in Europe. In short, we see that everywhere where the gospel was once so successful but now is all but absent.

在马太福音 23 这令人恐惧的一章里，当耶稣宣告那些有他的道却拒绝它的人有祸了的时候，他表达了同样的观点。他为预料中耶路撒冷的毁灭而哭泣。为什么？因为他想让人们蔑视他的道，让耶路撒冷杀害先知吗？当然不是！人们在对上帝的旨意和他渴望拯救他们的不管不顾中，做了这事。他会持守他的道并施行毁灭。但这罪债完全属于他们，而不是他。这也是司提反在他殉道前伟大的讲道里所陈述的同样的观点（徒 7:51-53）。因此，教会将一直存活，福音将一直被传扬，选民将一直被带入信



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心。这是上帝的旨意，他必定会实现这旨意。但是他并未保证教会将总是在这个地方，甚至在这个教会团体中兴旺。它存在于堕落之人的摇摆空间中——他们拒绝福音，将教会推倒在地，让它几乎消失不见。上帝将保守教会的余数，保全它并呼召那些甚至曾拒绝他的人归回，并借此彰显他的大能和恩典。在巴勒斯坦、在土耳其、在欧洲，我们都看到了这样的情况。总之，我们看到在福音一度如此兴盛的每一个地方，现在几乎绝迹了。

So then we have this paradox: When one believes the gospel and perseveres in faith to the end, that one has God's choice to thank for it, God's grace to thank for it, God's power in the gospel to thank for it, Christ's work in the redemption of the world to thank for it. Such a one deserves not the least, not one shred of personal credit for it. He cannot even congratulate himself that at least he had the good sense to believe. No, his faith was entirely God's gift in the gospel, the result of God's choice in eternity.

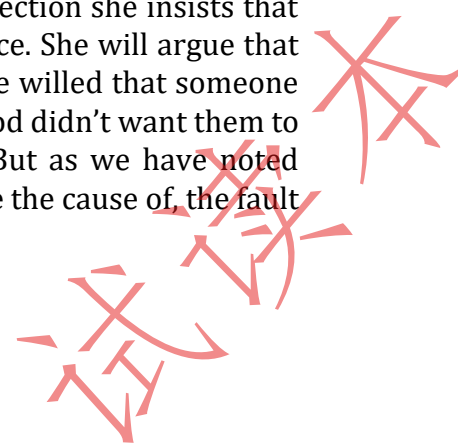
所以我们有这样一个悖论：当一个人相信福音并持守在信心里直到末了时，这个人有上帝的拣选、有上帝的恩典、有上帝在福音里的大能、有基督对世人救赎的工作，去为此献上感谢。这样的人为此不应得一丝一毫个人的功绩。他甚至不能庆幸自己至少有良好的判断力去相信。不，他的信心完全是上帝在福音里的恩赐，是上帝在永恒里拣选的结果。

On the other hand, when one sins, he has only his own evil nature and will to blame for it. And when one rejects the gospel message, he does so of himself; it was not God's will. He exercised his—can we put it that way?—negative capacity to frustrate and hinder the will of God.

另一方面，当一个人犯罪时，他为此唯独能够归咎于他自己邪恶的本性和意愿。当一个人拒绝福音信息时，他是自己这样做的；它并不是上帝的旨意。他运用了他否定的能力去挫败并阻碍上帝的旨意。

Enter Dame Reason with her objections! 理性女士带着她的反对登场了!

As shy as Dame Reason may have been at the beginning of our look into this pool, she has never been shy about contradicting the answers from God's Word here given to the question of why some believe and not others. She wants to insist that if only those believe whom God has chosen, then God must not have wanted the rest to believe and must have predestined them to damnation. Indeed, with her objection she insists that she is merely defending God's honor, his attribute of omnipotence. She will argue that since God is almighty, his will cannot be resisted. Therefore, if he willed that someone believe, they *must* believe, and the rest *cannot* believe because God didn't want them to believe and, therefore, prevented them from coming to faith. But as we have noted previously, that's not what the Scriptures teach. In every instance the cause of the fault





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for, unbelief is laid squarely at the door of the unbeliever. Or do we want to accuse Jesus of crying “crocodile” tears over Jerusalem? May such a thing never be!

尽管在我们开始观察这池子时，理性女士是畏缩的，但是对于为什么有人信而其他人不信的问题，她从未畏缩于对上帝的道在这儿给出的答案提出反对意见。她试图坚称，如果唯独那些上帝拣选了的人相信，那么上帝必定不想要其余的人相信，并必定预定了他们受审判。事实上，她坚称，她的这样的反对，只是在捍卫上帝的荣耀和他全能的属性。她争辩说，由于上帝是全能的，他的旨意不能被抗拒。因此，如果他想要某些人相信，他们必定会相信，而其余的人不能够相信，因为上帝不想要他们相信，并因此，阻止他们进入信心。但正如我们之前提到的，这不是圣经的教导。在每一个例子中，不信的原因和罪责都直接指向那不信者。或者，我们想要指控耶稣对耶路撒冷的哭泣是“鳄鱼眼泪”吗？但愿这样的事永远不会发生！

At other times Dame Reason has argued that God must have chosen the ones going to heaven because they were somehow worthy or more worthy than those not chosen. God, she argues, knew in eternity that they would believe, or they would want to believe, or they would act virtuously once they did believe. Therefore, he chose them. Or this: God presented fallen man with a choice, to believe or not to believe. Those who decided to believe, he chose. But as we have seen, that is not what the Scriptures say. In point of fact, these arguments confuse and reverse cause and effect. The scriptural truth is this: People believe the gospel because God chose them, not the other way around. Indeed, if God chose people because he foresaw that they would believe, then he chose nothing. His choice would be meaningless and without effect. But finally, God does not ask us to answer Dame Reason with anything other than beating her over the head with the mop that she is using in order to muddy the water in the pool. We merely note some of the objections that reason raises to demonstrate the point that often her reasonable-sounding arguments are not only contrary to the Scriptures but contrary to sound reason as well.

在其它时刻，理性女士争辩说，上帝拣选了某些人上天堂，必定是因为他们比那些未被拣选的人有一定的价值或更有价值。她争辩说，上帝在永恒中知道他们会相信，或者他们会愿意相信，或者一旦他们相信了，他们将做出高尚的行为。因此，他拣选了他们。或者这么说：上帝给了堕落之人一个选择，相信或不信。那些决定去相信的人，他拣选了。但是正如我们看到的，这并不是圣经所说的。事实上，这样的论点混淆并颠倒了原因和结果。圣经真理是：人们相信福音是因为上帝拣选了他们，而不是相反。确实，如果上帝拣选人是因为他预见他们会相信，那他什么都没拣选。他的拣选是毫无意义并毫无效果的。但最终，上帝并没有要我们用任何东西来回答理性女士，除了用她试图用来将这池子里的水弄脏的拖把来敲打她的头。这儿，我们只是提到理性提出的一些反对意见，来展示这样的观点，即，通常她听起来很合理的论点，不仅与圣经相违背，也与健全的理性相违背。

But what should I do if I am worried about God's choice? The Formula of Concord in Article XI beautifully sums up the answer of the Scriptures: search for your election in Christ! Focus not on your own feelings and fears, not on past sins and falls, not on still

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present weaknesses and temptations. Focus rather on what Christ has done and on the will of God revealed in his Word. It is in Christ's wounds and in his Word that you will see how he earnestly desires your salvation; you will see how he has accomplished everything in his grace and with his powerful Word to bring you to faith and preserve you in faith. Do not fall into despair because of your admitted unworthiness and ever present weakness and temptation. Likewise, do not plunge into that arrogance which concludes that since Christ died for all my sins, now I can sin without repentance and with reckless abandon, as though I have been saved *for* my sins rather than *from* them. (We considered this point at some length in chapter 3.)

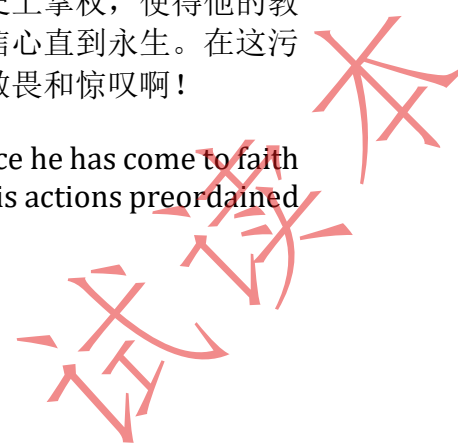
但是，如果我担心上帝的拣选，我该怎么办呢？协同式第 11 条款美丽的总结了圣经的答案：在基督里搜寻你的拣选！不是聚集于你自己的感觉和恐惧，你过去的罪和跌倒，你依然存在的软弱和试探。而是聚焦于基督为你做了什么，和上帝在他的道里显明的旨意。在基督的伤痕和他的道里，你将会看到他多么热切的渴望你得救；你将会看到他如何在他的恩典里并用他强有力的道，为你完成了一切，带领你进入信心并为你持守信心。不要因为你公认的不配和持续存在的软弱和试探，而陷入绝望。同样，不要跳入这样的傲慢中，以至于得出结论说，既然耶稣为我所有的罪死了，现在我可以毫不悔改的恣情的犯罪，好像我是因为我的罪而得救，而不是脱离它们而得救。（我们在第 3 章详细地讨论了这一点。）

## What about the will of God and the will of the Christian?那么上帝的旨意和基督徒的意志呢？

Again, it is a wondrous thing to note that God has such respect, if we can put it that way, for humans that he has given them the capacity to frustrate and hinder even God's own good and gracious will. It is a wondrous thing to note that natural man in his lost freedom nevertheless has a lot of wiggle room for doing his own will in opposition to the will of God. It is a wondrous thing to note that even with all that wiggle room, God nevertheless remains in control of history to this extent that his church is preserved and those he has chosen are called to faith, come to faith, and persevere in faith until the end. What awe and wonder these clear truths at the bottom of the muddy pool should provoke in us!

再次地，注意到上帝是如此尊重——如果可以这样说的话——人，给他们能力去挫败和阻碍他自己良善和恩慈的旨意，这是一件多么奇妙的事。注意到自然的人在他失去的自由中，依然有很多摇摆空间去遵循他自己的意志来反对上帝的旨意，这是一件多么奇妙的事。注意到即便有这一切的摇摆空间，上帝依然在历史上掌权，使得他的教会得以保全，他所拣选的人被呼召去相信、进入信心，并保守信心直到永生。在这污浊池子的底部这些清晰的真理，本应在我们里面激起何等大的敬畏和惊叹啊！

But is there still more at which to wonder? Does the Christian, once he has come to faith and is striving to live his faith, also have wiggle room? Or are all his actions preordained



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and predestined so that whatever he does or does not do is outside of the realm of choice? Is the Christian a puppet?

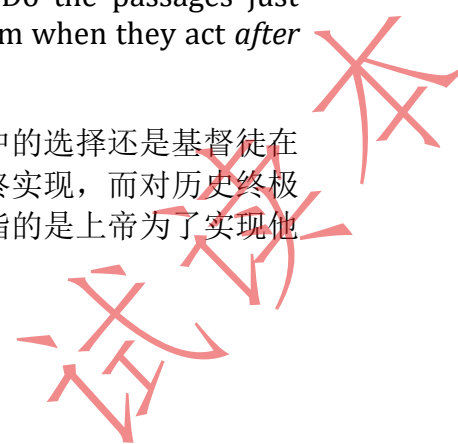
但是，在这里还有什么可疑惑的吗？当基督徒进入信心并努力活出信心时，他依然有摆动空间吗？或者他一切的行动都是被预定的和注定的，以至于他做什么和不做什么都不在他能选择的范围内吗？基督徒是一个木偶吗？

It would seem strange indeed to assert that once God has restored the freedom we lost because of sin by forgiving it, that then there would be no wiggle room, no choices for the Christian to make. But that is nevertheless what some assert. In fact, they allow for no wiggle room in anyone, Christian or not. They even quote some passages from the Bible to try and prove their point. They especially like Proverbs 16:1,9,33. There the holy writer under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit says, "To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the Lord comes the reply of the tongue." And, "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps." And, "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." They cite as well the words of Jeremiah: "I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).

确实，声称一旦上帝借着赦免，恢复了我們因着罪而失去的自由，那么基督徒就没有摇摆空间，没有选择的机会，这听起来相当奇怪。但是依然有人这样声称。事实上，他们不允许任何人，甚至基督徒有摇摆空间。他们甚至引用一些圣经经文试图去证明他们的观点。他们特别喜欢箴言 16:1, 9, 33。在那里作者在圣灵默示之下写道：“心中的筹谋在乎人，舌头的应对出于耶和华。”“人心筹算自己的道路；惟耶和华指引他的脚步。”“人虽可掷签在膝上，定事却由耶和华。”他们也引用耶利米的话：“耶和华啊，我知道人的道路不由自己，行路的人也不能定自己的脚步”（耶10:23）。

The question is, however, do these passages speak of a total lack of choice, whether that be choices in slavery for the unbeliever or choices in freedom for the Christian? Or do they speak of God's ultimate control over history for the ultimate accomplishment of his purposes? It should be clear from what follows that the answer is that these passages refer to God's ultimate control over history for the accomplishment of his purposes. To find that answer and to clear the mud from the pool, we need to look at *all* that the Scriptures say about man's will and his ability to accomplish it. We need to see if there are places in the Bible where God clearly gives people a choice. We have already noted that it is the unbeliever's own choice when he rejects the gospel and acts wickedly counter to God's Word and will. But what about Christians? Do the passages just mentioned deprive them of any wiggle room, any kind of freedom when they act *after* the gospel has brought them to faith?

然而，这些经文说的是完全不能选择——无论是不信者在奴隶中的选择还是基督徒在自由中的选择——吗？或者，它们说的是上帝为了他的目的最终实现，而对历史终极的掌管呢？这些经文下面的经文，清楚的表明，答案是，它们指的是上帝为了实现他



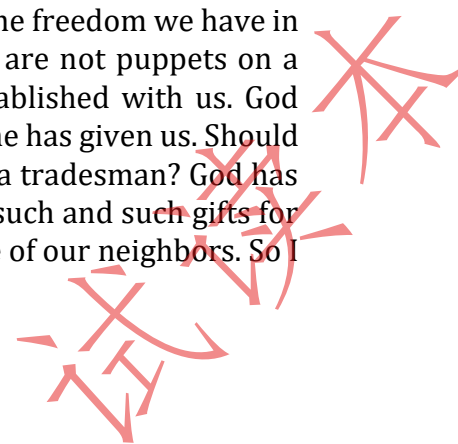
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的目的，而对历史终极的掌管。为了找到这个答案，为了将池子里的淤泥清理干净，我们需要考察一切圣经所说的关于人的意志和人实现其意志的能力。我们需要看看在圣经中是否有地方上帝清楚的给了人选择。我们已经谈到，当不信者拒绝福音，并做恶违背上帝的道和旨意时，它是不信者自己的选择。但基督徒呢？当基督徒在福音将他们带入信心后，刚刚谈到的经文是否剥夺了他们任何摇摆的空间，任何行动的自由？

The whole of what God says about our lives in Christ and with Christ in faith demonstrates that the Christian has countless opportunities to exercise the restored freedom that he has in Christ. While the Christian's faith is entirely God's work through the gospel in Word and sacraments, the Christian's life is a cooperative work between himself and the Savior. On his side, God gives the Christian abundant gifts and blessings. Then he gives countless opportunities, more than we can ever take full advantage of, for using those gifts and blessings to his glory and in the service of one another. He especially implants in the Christian the earnest desire to live in accordance with God's Word and his will as expressed in that Word. And with all of that he gives us a blessed freedom to make choices every day and choices beyond counting. We see it already in Adam before the fall, in Genesis 2:19,20. God brought the animals to Adam for him to name. He gave Adam wisdom to choose a name appropriate to each; God did not pick the names himself. While in the garden, God told Adam and Eve to tend it; but he did not give a detailed set of instructions of how they were to do that and when each task should be done. That was for them to figure out.

上帝关于我们这些相信的人在基督里并与基督同在的生命，所说的一切，都表明，基督徒有数不尽的机会来行使他在基督里恢复了的自由。基督徒的信心完全是上帝透过圣道和圣礼中的福音的工作，与此同时，基督徒的生命是他自己和救主联合的工作。在上帝这边，他给了基督徒丰盛的恩赐和祝福。然后，他赐下数不尽的机会——远超过我们能充分利用的，使用这些恩赐和祝福来荣耀他并彼此服事。他特别在基督徒里面植入了真挚的渴望，去按照上帝的道和他在这道里表明旨意而活。与此同时，他赐给我们蒙福的自由去做每日的决定，并且这些决定是不可胜数的。在创世记 2:19, 20，我们在堕落之前的亚当身上看到了它。上帝将动物带到亚当前面，让他给它们取名字。他给亚当智慧去为它们每一个选择合适的名字；上帝并没有直接挑选名字。在伊甸园，上帝吩咐亚当和夏娃照料这园子；但是他并没有给他们一系列详细的指令，说明他们要如何去做，以及每项任务应该什么时候去做。这是留给他们自己去规划的事。

After the fall, to be sure, the choices that even Christians make in their restored freedom are bound to be stained and flawed. We are still sinners, and what we do is always stained by that fundamental fact of our existence. Nevertheless, the freedom we have in Christ, the wiggle room, the choices we can make, are real. We are not puppets on a string. God chooses to respect the relationship that he has established with us. God chooses to give us choices that show his respect for the freedom he has given us. Should I be a pastor or a teacher, a carpenter or a plumber, a farmer or a tradesman? God has not decided that for us. He has left it to our choice. He has given such and such gifts for our use and bids us use those gifts to his glory and for the service of our neighbors. So I



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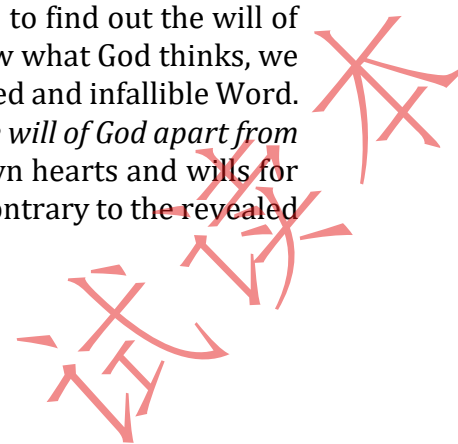
examine as best I can his gifts. Then I determine, and that perhaps with the advice of others, how best to use them. But the choice of how I will offer back to God the gifts he has given for service to a considerable extent remains mine.<sup>4</sup>

可以肯定的是，在堕落之后，甚至是基督徒在他们恢复了的自由里所作的选择，都受到了沾污和破坏。我们依然是罪人，我们所做的事，都被这一基本事实所沾污。然而，我们在基督里所拥有的自由，我们能够做出选择的摇摆空间，这都是真实的。我们不是被绳子牵着的木偶。上帝选择尊重他所建立的和我们的关系。上帝尊重他给我们的自由，他选择给我们选择。我应该是一名牧师或一名教师，一个木匠或一个水工，一个农民或一个商人？上帝并没有为我们做决定，他将其留给我们去选择。他赐给我们这样或那样的恩赐去使用，吩咐我们使用这些恩赐去荣耀他并服事我们的邻舍。因此我尽我所能查考他的恩赐。然后我决定——并可能是在别人的建议之下，如何最好的去使用它们。但是，我将如何回应上帝赐我服事的恩赐，在很大程度上，这依然是我的选择。<sup>4</sup>

In that choice the Christian offers up to God his service in whatever arena he has chosen to serve. If someone becomes a pastor or a teacher, it should never be because he thought that God would be angry or disappointed with him if he did not. No, such service is a gift from the pastor or teacher to God, a gift for which God gave the ability, the desire, and then the opportunity. It is not something extorted from the servant of the church against his will. So too the factory worker, the manager, the carpenter, the plumber, the farmer, the doctor, the nurse, the secretary—all of them have gifts that God has given and opportunities to use them for service. Often they have gifts enough that they could choose other than they did. God lets them use the gifts he has given as they choose to use them. They exercise freedom in his service. Paul encourages us to think thus in 1 Corinthians 12,13 and in Ephesians 4.

在这样的选择中，无论基督徒选择了在哪个领域去服事，他都向上帝献上了他的服事。如果某人成为了一个牧师或教师，绝不应该是因为他认为如果他不这样做，上帝将会对他生气或失望。不，这样的服事是这个牧师或教师对上帝的摆上，为此上帝赐下能力、渴望和机会。它不是上帝违背教会仆人的意愿从他那里的勒索。工厂工人、管理人员、木工、水工、农民、医生、护士、秘书，都是如此——他们都有上帝赐下的恩赐，并有机会使用它们去服事。他们通常有足够的恩赐，让他们可以选择和他们所做的不一样的工作。上帝让他们根据他们的选择来使用他所赐下的恩赐。他们在上帝的服事中行使自由。在哥林多前书 12, 13 章和以弗所书 4 章，保罗鼓励我们这样想。

So we will not look into our imaginations, our feelings uninformed by the Scriptures, our reason, or even our prayers (as we noted in the last chapter) to find out the will of God. He has revealed his will in the Scriptures. If we want to know what God thinks, we should go where he has clearly spoken, to his own verbally inspired and infallible Word. We follow this rule: *We can know nothing with certainty about the will of God apart from the Scriptures.* To do as so many do these days, to consult our own hearts and wills for the will of God, can lead to devilish delusions that easily end up contrary to the revealed





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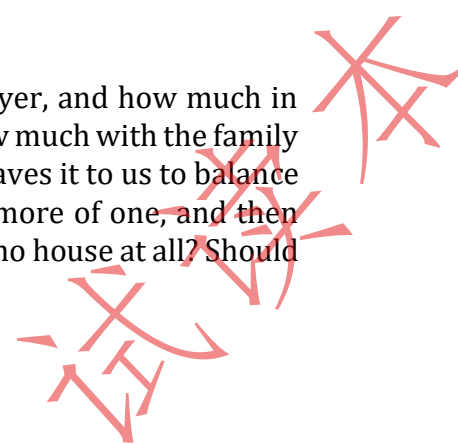
and sure Word of God: “Well, I just really feel that God won’t send anybody to hell.” Or, “But we love each other, and so I can’t imagine that God should have any problem with...”

因此，我们不去探究我们的想象，我们对圣经无知的感受，我们的理性，甚至是我们的祷告（正如我们在上一章提过的），去寻求上帝的旨意。他在圣经中显明了他的旨意。如果我们想知道上帝在想什么，我们应该去他明确说过的地方，去他自己逐字默示的无误的道里。我们遵循着这个规则：除了圣经，我们不能确切知道任何关于上帝旨意的事。去做现在很多人所做的事——向自己的心和意志去咨询上帝的旨意，只会导致恶魔般的幻想，并轻易的与上帝的启示和确切的道相违背：“嗯，我就是觉得上帝不会让任何人下地狱。”或者，“但是我们就是彼此相爱啊，因此我不能想象上帝会不认同……”

Thus, in so many things we are free to choose between this and that and need not torment ourselves with trying to guess what God has chosen for us. God lets us choose, for example, to be married or single, and if married, whom to select for a spouse. Paul says of himself that he chose to remain single because of his particular circumstances in his apostolic service (1 Corinthians 9:5). He urges others to make the choice to be married or single likewise on the basis of God’s gifts and their circumstances in life (1 Corinthians 7). He bids us to examine what God says about marriage and the family in his Word. But then he leaves it to us to apply that to our specific situations in life. Often the advice of others and, yes, the choices that others make will play a part. And certainly we will pray for God’s blessing on our choices and as we make those choices. But the point is that the choices we make are real choices. God neither asks nor expects us to climb up into his mind in an attempt to figure out which choice he wants us to make. Again, he gives us a good deal of wiggle room, of freedom to serve now in this way, now in that, and to delight in both the freedom and the service.

因此，在许多事情上，我们自由的在这件事和那件事之间做选择，而不需要试图猜测上帝为我们的选择是什么，并就此折磨自己。比如，上帝让我们选择结婚或单身，如果结婚，我们可以选择谁做配偶。保罗谈到他自己说，因为他在他使徒服事中的特殊境况，他选择单身（林前 9:5）。他督促其他人同样基于上帝的恩赐和他们生命中的境况，选择结婚或单身（林前 7）。他吩咐我们去考察，上帝在他的道里关于婚姻和家庭说了什么。但之后，对于如何在我们生命中具体的状况下应用它，他将其留给了我们。往往别人的建议，是的，别人所做的选择，会发挥一定的作用。在我们做选择时，我们当然也会祈求上帝祝福我们的这些选择。但重点是，我们所做的选择是真正的选择。上帝既不要求也不期望我们爬到他的脑海里，试图弄清楚他想要我们去做哪个选择。再次地，他给了我们很多摇摆空间、很多自由，在今生以这种方式或那种方式去服事他，并喜悦于这自由和这服事。

And so on and on it goes. How much time should I spend in prayer, and how much in reading the Bible? How much time should I spend in work and how much with the family and how much in rest? He tells us to do all these things. But he leaves it to us to balance all of the things he has given us to do. Some days there will be more of one, and then another day, more of the other. Should I buy this house or that or no house at all? Should



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I take this job or that or find another line of work altogether? Should we have chicken or a roast for Sunday dinner? Should I join in another worthwhile activity at church, or do I need to spend more time with my family right now? All these things are matters of choice that God gives the Christian freedom to make.

以此类推。我应该花多少时间祷告，花多少时间读圣经？我应该花多少时间在工作上，多少时间和家人在一起，多少时间休息呢？他告诉我们去做这一切事。但是如何平衡他赐给我们去做的这一切事，他将其留给了我们。某些日子，某件事会做的更多，而在别的日子，另一件事会做的更多。我应该买这个房子还是那个房子——还是根本不买房子？我应该接受这份工作还是那份工作，还是干脆换一个行业？我们周日聚餐是吃火锅还是吃烤肉？我应该参加教会里的另一项有意义的活动，还是我此刻需要花更多的时间与我的家人一起？所有这些事都是上帝给基督徒自由去选择的事。

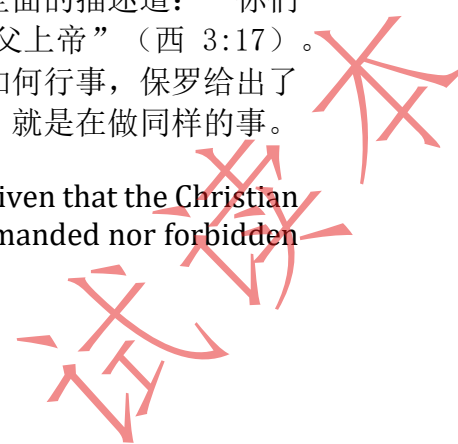
At the same time, as the Christian recognizes and gives thanks for his freedom to make choices in response to God's gifts and to God-given opportunities, he also thanks God for the results of those choices. We do that almost automatically. We thank God for our meals in our table prayers: God gave every bite we eat. But we do not suppose that God picked the chicken over the roast. We thank God for our spouses. But we need not imagine that God picked this one over that one. We thank God for our work and for rest. But we need not think that God determined this job over that one or that he has decreed what time we should go to bed.

与此同时，当基督徒认识到他可以根据上帝的恩赐和上帝赐下的机会自由的做出选择，并为此感谢上帝时，他也为这些选择的结果感谢上帝。我们几乎是自发如此。我们在饭前祷告时，为我们的食物感谢上帝：他赐下我们所吃的每一份食物。但是我们不会假想是上帝挑选了火锅而不是烤肉。我们为我们的配偶感谢上帝。但是我们不需要假设是上帝挑选了这一个而不是那一个。我们为我们的工作和休息感谢上帝。但是我们不需要认为是上帝决定了这一份工作而不是那一份工作，或者他注定了什么时间我们应该上床睡觉。

In it all we listen to the Word of God, as, for example, St. Paul expressed so simply yet so comprehensively: "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17). Paul then goes on to give the general rules of thumb for each of us in our varied walks of life for how we ought to conduct ourselves. Luther's Small Catechism does much the same in the Table of Duties at the end of the Catechism.

在这一切中，我们都听从上帝的道，例如，圣保罗如此简单而全面的描述道：“你们无论做什么，或说话或行事，都要奉主耶稣的名，藉着他感谢父上帝”（西 3:17）。接着，对于我们每个人，在我们人生中的不同领域，我们应该如何行事，保罗给出了一些通常的经验性法则。路德小问题在教理问答后面的职责表，就是在做同样的事。

In 1 Corinthians 10, especially in verses 31-33, Paul takes it as a given that the Christian is free to make many choices among things that are neither commanded nor forbidden



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in God's Word. And then he tells us how to use our freedom in making those choices: always to the glory of God for the benefit of those around us. In 1 Corinthians 12, he describes the rich generosity of God in giving Christians so very many gifts with which to serve. In it all, he says, let each use those gifts for service.

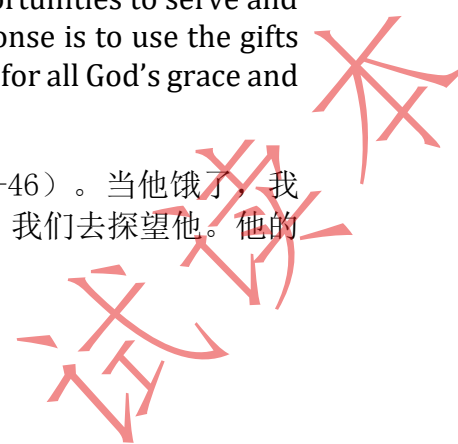
在哥林多前书 10 章，特别是在 31-33 节，保罗理所当然的认为，对于在上帝的道中并没有命令或禁止的事，基督徒有自由去做决定。然后他告诉我们如何使用我们的自由去做这些选择：总是为了我们身边之人的益处去荣耀上帝。在哥林多前书 12 章，保罗描述了上帝丰盛的恩惠，和上帝给基督徒如此多的恩赐，并用此来服事他们。在这一切中，他说，让我们每个人都为服事去使用这些恩赐。

In Ephesians 2:8-10, the apostle gives us the always blessed and needed reminder that our salvation and our faith are entirely the gift of God. And then he concludes by telling us the result of that gift: "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Just what are those works? They are all those works that God commands in the law, in the Ten Commandments. And how are they prepared in advance for us to do? God so rules over history in things both great and small that he places in our paths each day opportunities to serve him, yes, so many opportunities that we cannot possibly take advantage of all of them. And then he is pleased with our service to him through our service to one another, service that we render in freedom.

在以弗所书 2:8-10，使徒给了我们一直蒙福也一直需要的提醒：我们的救恩和我们的信心完全是上帝的恩赐。然后，他告诉我们这恩赐的结果：“我们是他所造之物，在基督耶稣里创造的，为要使我们行善，就是上帝早已预备好要我们做的。”这些善行是什么呢？它们是上帝在律法——摩西十诫中，命令我们去做的所有事。它们是如何预备好要我们去做的呢？上帝掌管着历史上大大小小所有的事情，他在我们每日的道路上安排机会去服事他，是的，太多的机会以至于我们不可能完全利用它们。然后，他就喜悦于我们，透过在自由中彼此服事，来服事他。

We cannot help but remember the words that Jesus tells us he will speak on the Last Day (Matthew 25:31-46). When he was hungry, we fed him; when he was thirsty, we gave him something to drink. When he was sick and in prison, we visited him. He will praise the elect for the choices they made in serving him by serving one another. Notice that he does not say, "At least you figured out exactly what I wanted in a moment in time and had the good sense to do it." Notice as well that the saints do not say in response to his praise of their works, "Well, what else could we do? You preordained it all!" No, the response rather is the response of believers who looked for opportunities to serve and found that God gave such opportunities in abundance. The response is to use the gifts God gave, not least the gift of a desire to serve, in gratitude to God for all God's grace and mercy.

我们不禁想起耶稣告诉我们的，他将在末日说的话（太 25:31-46）。当他饿了，我们给他吃；当他渴了，我们给东西他喝。当他生病和在监狱里，我们去探望他。他的



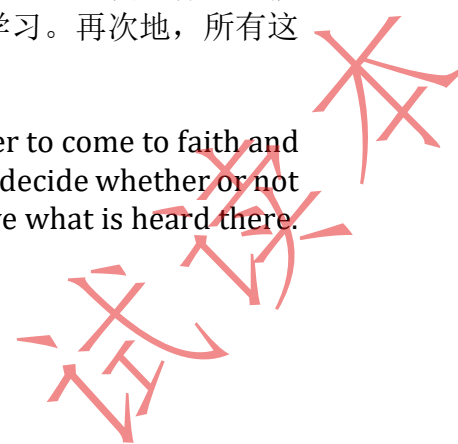
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选民会借着彼此服事来服事他，而他将会为他们这样的服事称赞他们。注意他并没有说：“至少你正确的想通了在某时某刻我想要什么，并有很好的意识去完成它。”同样注意圣徒不会这样回应他们对他们行为的称赞：“好吧，我们还能做什么？你预定了一切！”不，信徒的回应是寻找机会来服事，并且他们能找到上帝赐下的如此丰富的机会。信徒的回应是使用上帝赐下的恩赐，尤其是渴望去服事的恩赐，来为上帝一切的恩慈和怜悯感谢他。

To put it another way, the way that the Lutheran Confessions most often put it,<sup>5</sup> we have a free will to choose “in those things that are subject to reason.” That is, we can decide for ourselves all of those day-to-day things that belong to our lives in this world, those things just discussed. God does not force us into this occupation or that, to outwardly avoid this vice and nurture that virtue, to read this and eat that. All these things, for believers and unbelievers alike, are subject to reason. Thomas Edison figured out how to harness electricity. Henry Ford devised a way for mass-producing automobiles. Aristotle searched for definitions of virtue and vice in common life. Mendel figured out rules of genetics by experimenting with peas. Jefferson and John Adams devised a constitution for a nation. All these things were subject to reason. The Christian participates in many of them and then adds his own exercise of his renewed and restored free will in carrying out much of his Christian life. He figures out how much to contribute to his parish and to missions. He decides how best to raise his children in accordance with the Word of God. He devises a family budget that reflects his appreciation for God’s gifts to him for the support of his family, to help the poor, and to prosper the work of the church. He decides when to pray, when to read his Bible, whether to go to church this Sunday, whether to attend Bible class. Again, all these outward acts are subject to reason.

换个说法，用路德宗认信文最常见的说法来说，<sup>5</sup> 我们有自由意志去选择“那些受理性支配的事。”也就是说，我们可以自己决定属于我们此世生活中的日常事务，那些我们刚刚讨论的事。上帝不会强迫我们从事这个职业或那个职业，在外表上避免这个恶习和培养那个美德，阅读这个或吃喝那个。所有这些事，对信徒和不信者都是一样的，它们都受理性支配。托马斯·爱迪生找到了利用电力的方法。亨利·福特设计出一种大规模生产汽车的方法。亚里士多德寻找在日常生活中对美德的定义。孟德尔通过对豌豆的研究找到了遗传的规律。杰斐逊和约翰·亚当斯为一个国家设定了宪法。所有这些事都受理性支配。基督徒参与其中的很多活动，除此之外，他也运用他更新和恢复了的自由意志，来开展他基督徒的生活。他计划奉献多少给教会和传教事工。他决定如何最好的按照上帝的道抚养他的孩子。他设计一个家庭预算，帮助穷人，促进教会的工作，来反映他对上帝赐他恩赐支持他的家庭的感激之情。他决定什么时候祷告，什么时候阅读圣经，这周天是否去教会，是否参加圣经学习。再次地，所有这些外在的行为都由理性支配。

In the chief matters of the First Commandment, however, whether to come to faith and persevere in faith, free will has no role to play. To be sure, we can decide whether or not to go to church, but we have no natural ability to decide to believe what is heard there.



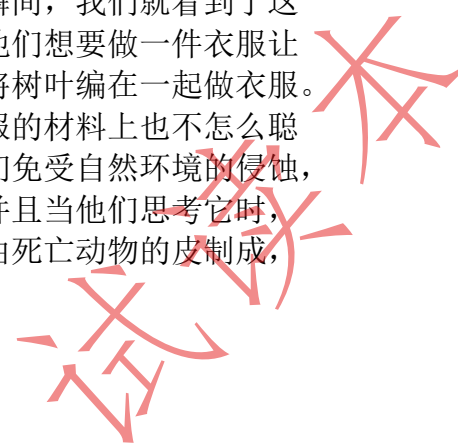
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The outward act of going to church or even reading the Bible is subject to reason. But the inward obedience of faith is not. As we have noted previously, everything that has to do with trusting Jesus as our only Savior is a gift of God in the gospel. God overcomes our fallen will with the gospel and apart from our will gives us faith and, yes, in the Scriptures the content of faith as well. Once he has created in us another and new will by the gospel, that is, once he has created faith, our new will, our faith, delights in his gift of grace. It wants to persevere. It wants to remain with Christ for time and for eternity. To paraphrase St. Augustine: In the matter of coming to faith, God comes to the unwilling (for that is what we are by nature), makes us willing (by the gospel), and then dwells in the willing.

然而，在第一诫这首要的问题上，是否相信并持守信心，自由意志不扮演任何角色。当然，我们能够决定是否去教会，但是我们天生没有能力去决定是否相信在那里听到的东西。去教会，甚至是读圣经，这样外在的行为，是受理性支配的事。但是信心内在的顺服却不是。正如我们前面提到的，与相信耶稣为我们唯一的救主有关的一切事，都是上帝在福音里的恩赐。上帝用福音战胜我们堕落的意志，并在我们的意志之外赐我们信心，是的，在圣经中也有信心的内容。一旦他在我们里面用福音创造了另一个新的意志，也就是说，一旦他创造了信心，我们的意志，我们的信心，就会喜悦于他恩典的礼物。它要坚持到底。它想要与基督同在，从今时到永远。用圣奥古斯丁的话来说：在归信的问题上，上帝临到不乐意的灵（这就是我们的本性），使我们变得乐意（借着福音），然后住在乐意的灵里。

To be sure, with all of the wiggle room that God has given to believers and unbelievers alike in those things subject to reason, we can sometimes make a terrible mess of things. We see that already immediately after the fall in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve used their reason in a matter subject to reason. They wanted to make clothes so that they could hide from God. What a mess they made of it; they put leaves together for clothes. Apart from the fact that they were altogether foolish in reasoning that they could hide from God, they were not very clever in their choice of materials for clothing. When God expelled them from the garden, he showed his mercy by making clothes for them that would protect them from the elements and hide their shame from one another. Yes, and if they thought about it, the clothes God made could even remind them of the dread consequences of sin: their clothes were made from the skins of dead animals, a death in which they would share. Then he left them their reason to function as best it could in their new state as fallen but redeemed children of God.

可以肯定的是，在那些上帝赐给信徒和非信徒一样的，由理性支配的摇摆空间里，我们有些时候会将事情搞得一团糟。几乎在伊甸园堕落之后的一瞬间，我们就看到了这一点。亚当和夏娃在一件由理性支配的事上使用他们的理性。他们想要做一件衣服让他们可以躲避上帝。他们在这件事上做的是多么糟糕啊，他们将树叶编在一起做衣服。除了他们愚蠢的认为他们可以躲避上帝之外，他们在选择做衣服的材料上也不怎么聪明。当上帝将他们逐出伊甸园时，他为他们做了衣服，保护他们免受自然环境的侵蚀，并遮盖他们彼此的羞耻，借此，上帝显明了他的怜悯。是的，并且当他们思考它时，上帝所做的衣服甚至能提醒他们罪的可怕后果：他们的衣服是由死亡动物的皮制成，





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在其中他们也将分享这份死亡。然后，上帝将他们的理性留给他们，在他们作为上帝堕落但蒙救赎的儿女这新的状态下，尽其所能地发挥作用。

Just so, God leaves us free to make choices in those things that are subject to reason. But often (though not always) in our lives and in history in general, he will intervene to limit the damage that we do in our exercise of the wiggle room we have. So, for example, the violent and the wicked persecute the church. But God limits their ability to do her harm and intervenes to prevent the destruction of the church. It is an observation made often in many languages that *Man denkt, Gott lenkt* (“Man proposes, but God disposes”).

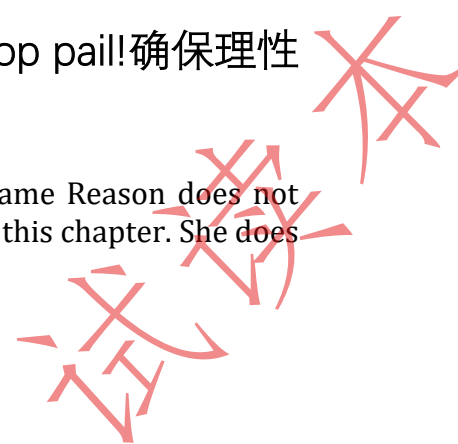
就这样，在那些由理性支配的事情上，上帝让我们自由的选择。但在我们的生命和历史中，他也常常（虽然不总是）介入来限制我们在行使摇摆空间时造成的伤害。例如，残暴和邪恶的人迫害教会。但上帝限制了他们伤害她的能力，介入其中阻碍对教会的毁坏。*Man denkt, Gott lenkt*（谋事在人，成事在天），这句话在很多语言里都能被找到。

So, to cap it all off, God in his might and in his wisdom so rules over time and eternity that it all turns out for our best (Romans 8:28). Could we have decided many things differently than we did? Yes. But still God took all of our decisions into account and so ruled over them all that all things ended up in our best interest. What an absolutely amazing thing! To sum it up most briefly: *God stays God*—in ultimate and absolute control, a control that he exercises in grace for our benefit—and *man stays man*—a creature with wiggle room when he is a slave and freedom to exercise his sanctified will when he is a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Yes, an amazing thing indeed! How well the psalmist put it in his words already noted: “How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you” (Psalm 139:17,18).

最后，更进一步说，上帝在他的大能和智慧里统管时间和永恒，而这一切都是为了我们最大的益处（罗 8:28）。我们可以做很多不同于我们所做的决定吗？是的。但上帝依然会考虑我们所有的决定，并因此统管这一切，以至于让所有事都会为了我们最大的益处而终结。这是何等奇妙的事啊！简单总结来说：上帝就是上帝——终极而绝对的掌控一切，并在恩典中为我们的益处施行这掌控——而人就是人——在他是奴隶的时候，他是一个拥有摇摆空间的受造物，当他借着相信耶稣基督是上帝的儿女时，他有自由去施行他成圣的意志。是的，这确实是一件奇妙的事！诗人说的多好啊：“上帝啊，你的意念向我何等宝贵！其数何等众多！我若数点，比海沙更多；我睡醒的时候，仍和你同在”（诗 139:17, 18）。

**Make sure that Dame Reason stays behind the mop pail! 确保理性女士呆在拖把桶后面！**

We noted at the beginning of our visit to the pool that even Dame Reason does not venture answers to the difficult questions we have considered in this chapter. She does



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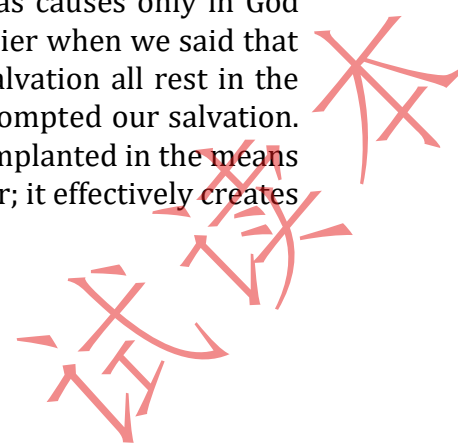
not venture answers, that is, until God's Word has given the answers; the answers in his Word clear up the muddy water as much as it can be cleared up, given our limited ability to fully grasp the mind of God. After God has spoken, Dame Reason is, however, quick to reemerge and to presume to criticize God's answers, or at least to suggest "improvements" on his answers. So, as we bring our stay beside the pool to a close and get ready to resume our journey along the narrow middle road, we want to be sure that reason is used only in service as a handmaid and not allowed to take the role of queen. We want to be assured that as best we can we follow the example of St. Paul. He demonstrates the right use of reason and makes it clear that reason is servant, Christ is Lord. Therefore he, and we along with him, want to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

在我们参观这池子的一开始，我们就注意到：甚至理性女士也没有冒险回答我们在本章考虑的这个困难的问题。也就是说，她不会冒险回答，直到上帝的道给出了答案；考虑到我们有限的理解力没法完全抓住上帝的思想，圣道中的回答尽其所能的澄清了这潭污水。然而，在上帝说话后，理性女士很快出现并擅自批评上帝的答案，或至少建议对他的答案做出些“改进”。因此，当我们结束在这池子边的逗留，并预备好沿着这狭窄的中路继续我们的旅程时，我们想要确定理性只被用于作为一个女佣来服事，而不允许她去扮演女王的角色。我们想要确保，我们会尽最大努力跟随圣保罗的榜样。他展示了理性正确的用法，并清楚表明理性是仆人，基督是主。借此，保罗，以及跟着他的我们，盼望“夺回人心来顺服基督”（林后 10:5）。

Some of the greatest of the church fathers followed this dictum of the inspired apostle when they wrestled with the matter of God's will and man's will. Using reason as a handmaid, not as queen, they made some useful distinctions that are in harmony with the Word of God. We will note them briefly and in summary in the hope that their thoughts will contribute to the clearing away of the mud in the water.

一些最伟大的教父，当他们努力处理上帝的旨意和人的意志这件事时，都遵循着受默示的使徒的这条格言。他们做出了一些有用的，与上帝的道和谐一致的区别——使用理性作为一个女佣，而不是一个女王。我们将会简单的概括一下他们，希望他们的思想有助于清除这潭水里的污泥。

The fathers, for example, in defending both God's control and man's humanity—man's God-given wiggle room—distinguished between the *antecedent will of God* and the *consequent will of God*. The antecedent will of God is his will that comes *before (ante-)* man does or wills anything at all. It is that will in God that takes no note of any causes in man, a will that acts altogether in freedom. It is his will that has causes only in God himself. We summed up much of this antecedent will of God earlier when we said that it can be summed up by one word: *gospel*. The causes of our salvation all rest in the gospel, all rest in this antecedent will of God. His grace alone prompted our salvation. The sacrifice of his Son alone merited our salvation. The power implanted in the means of grace, in the gospel in Word and sacraments, alone is his power; it effectively creates



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faith when and where God wills it because that is what God wills and what he brings to pass.

例如，教父们在捍卫上帝的掌权和人类的人性——上帝赋予人的摇摆空间——时，区分了上帝的先在旨意和上帝的后续旨意。上帝的先在旨意是，在人做任何事或有任何意愿之前上帝的旨意。它是上帝不顾及人里面任何原因的旨意，上帝完全自由行动的旨意。它是唯独由上帝自己引发的旨意。我们在先前就总结了这一先在旨意，我们说它可以被总结为一个词：福音。我们救恩的原因完全倚赖于福音，完全倚赖于上帝这先在的旨意。他的恩典独自促成了我们的救恩。我们的救恩唯独归功于他儿子的牺牲。根植于施恩具——圣道和圣礼中的福音——里的能力，唯独是他的能力；它在上帝旨意所在的时间和地方有力的创造信心，因为这就是上帝的旨意，也是他所成就的事。

Dame Reason might want to stick her mop into the pool to muddy the waters by pointing out that without sin there would be no salvation; thus, she might want to conclude that sin too is a cause of salvation. In this argument reason is again unreasonable. To say that sin is a cause of our salvation is like saying that sickness is the cause of healing; after all, without sickness there wouldn't be any healing. Who would be so foolish as to raise such an argument? No, sickness does not cause healing; it shows the need for healing. So too, sin does not cause salvation; it shows the need, a desperate need to be sure, for salvation. Just as sickness too cannot bring about healing, so sin and the man it infects cannot bring about salvation. The healing for sin must come from outside of sin's cause, sin's victim. Sin did not in any way force God to save us. Rather, it was in God's own grace and mercy that Jesus became man and paid for our sin by his life and his sacrifice for us on the cross. That plan and its execution has God's own will, his *antecedent* will, as the cause.

理性女士也许想将她的拖把插入池子搅浑这水，她指出，没有罪就不会有救恩；因此，她可能想要推论说，罪也是救恩的一个原因。在这个争论中，理性又一次是不合理的。说罪是我们救恩的一个原因，正如说生病是我们医治的一个原因；毕竟，没有生病就不会有任何医治。谁会愚蠢到提出这样一个争论呢？不，疾病并不是医治的原因；它显明了对医治的需要。因此，同样的，罪并不是得救的原因；它显明了对得救的需要——一种诚然迫切的需要。正如疾病不能带来医治，罪和由罪感染的人，也不能带来得救。对罪的医治必定来自于罪的起因、罪的患者之外。罪无论如何都没法强迫上帝来救我们。相反，耶稣是在上帝自身的恩典和怜悯里，成为人，借着他的生命和他在十字架上为我们的献祭，偿还了我们的罪。这一计划和它的执行，其原因都是上帝自己的旨意——他的先在旨意。

But does man, and does sin, cause nothing in God? The church fathers answered with a consideration of the *consequent* will of God: when man willfully rejects the will of God for his salvation, then God in his justice damns such a wicked contempt for all of God's grace and Christ's suffering. God's justice, to be sure, was satisfied when Christ paid the penalty of the whole world's sin on the cross. That's how his grace and mercy were satisfied too. Grace and justice met on the cross. But should man through his own perverse will reject that perfect resolution of grace and justice, there is no other way in which that man can be saved. Jesus said that in John 3:16, in Mark 16:16, and in so many

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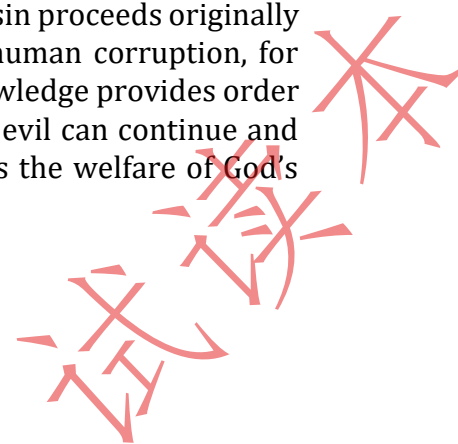
other places. And St. Peter said it too in Acts 4:12, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved," and in Acts 3:23, "Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people." Notice how absolute is the distinction between God's antecedent will and his consequent will: those saved have only God to thank for it; those damned have only themselves to blame for it. So again the formula: The ultimate salvation of any man is the result of God's antecedent will; the ultimate damnation of anyone comes from the man himself as a consequence of his own unbelief, a consequence that God wills for those who despise his grace and goodness in Christ.

但是是否人和罪在上帝那里并不导致任何事呢？教父用上帝的后续旨意来回答这一问题：当人故意拒绝上帝对他救恩的旨意时，上帝在他的公义中，咒诅对上帝的恩典和基督的受难一切这样邪恶的蔑视。可以肯定的是，当基督在十字架上为全人类的罪付上了赎价，上帝的公义就被满足了。他的恩典和怜悯也这样被满足了。恩典和公义在十字架上连接在一起。但是当人透过他自己刚愎的意志拒绝恩典和公义这完美的解决之道，那这个人就再没有别的方式可以得救了。耶稣在约翰福音 3:16、马可福音 16:16，和很多别的地方，都说到这个。圣彼得在使徒行传 4:12 “除他以外，别无拯救，因为在天下人间，没有赐下别的名，我们可以靠着得救”和使徒行传 3:23 “凡不听从那先知的，必将从民中灭绝”，也说到这个。注意上帝的先在旨意和他的后续旨意之间的区别是多么绝对：那些得救的人为此唯独能感谢上帝；那些定罪的人为此唯独能责备他们自己。因此再说一遍这个信式：任何人最终得救是上帝先在旨意的结果；任何人最终的定罪来自于他自己，作为他自身不信的结果，和上帝对那些藐视他在基督里恩典和良善之人旨意的结果。

Closely connected to this matter of the antecedent will and the consequent will of God is the matter of God's *foreknowledge* and God's *eternal election*. This latter distinction is to a certain extent just another way of considering the same thing. It boils down to this: God knows everything before it happens. But that doesn't mean that God wills everything that happens. The Formula of Concord makes the distinction very simply and very clearly in Article XI. It declares:

和上帝的先在旨意和后续旨意密切相关的，是上帝的预知和他永恒的拣选。后者的区别在某种程度上只是考虑同一件事的另一种方式。归根结底是：上帝在一切事发生之前就知道它。但是这并不意味着上帝愿意让一切事这样发生。协同式第十一条款对此做出了非常简单和明确的区分。它宣称：

[The] foreknowledge extends equally over godly people and evil people, but it is not a cause of evil. It is not the cause of sins, when people act wrongly (sin proceeds originally from the devil and the wicked, perverted human will), nor of human corruption, for which people are responsible themselves. Instead, God's foreknowledge provides order in the midst of evil and sets limits to it. It determines how long evil can continue and determines also that everything, even if it is evil in itself, serves the welfare of God's elect.



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上帝的预知同等的达到敬虔人和恶人身上，但是它并不是邪恶的原因。它并不是罪——人们做错误的事（罪从起初就来自于魔鬼和邪恶的变态的人类意志）——的原因，也不是人类堕落——人自己需要为这堕落负责——的原因。相反，上帝的预知在邪恶当中提供了秩序，并为其设立了界限。它决定了邪恶能够持续多久，也决定了一切事——即使本身是邪恶的事，为上帝选民的福祉而服务。

[Predestination] however, or God's eternal election, extends only to the righteous, God-pleasing children of God. It is a cause of their salvation, which God brings about. He has arranged everything that belongs to it. Our salvation is so firmly grounded on it [cf. John 10:26-29] that "the gates of hell will not prevail against it" [Matt. 16:18].<sup>6</sup>

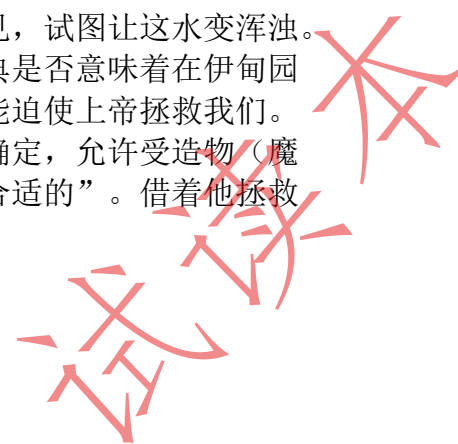
然而，预定，或者说上帝永恒的拣选，唯独达到义人——蒙上帝喜悦的儿女身上。它是他们得救——这是他所带来——的原因。他安排了属于这预定的一切事。我们的救恩如此稳固的建立在其上，“阴间的权柄不能胜过它”（太 16:18）。<sup>6</sup>

So God limits and even uses the wickedness of men, as he did most notably in our redemption when wicked men crucified the Lord of glory. But he is not the cause of evil, and he did not will it. Our redemption he did will; the election of those who finally end up in heaven he willed and brought also to pass in his grace and mercy and through the work of Christ for our salvation and the work of the Holy Spirit bringing us to faith through the gospel in Word and sacraments.

因此，上帝限制甚至使用人的邪恶，这在他赎回我们的事上做的最为显著，那时，邪恶的人将荣耀的主钉在十字架上。但是，他并不是邪恶的原因，邪恶也并不是他的旨意。我们的救赎是他的旨意；在他的恩典和怜悯里，透过基督为我们救恩的工作，以及圣灵借圣道和圣礼中的福音，将我们带入信心的工作，选民最终进入天堂，这是他的旨意，也是他所做成的事。

But Dame Reason is not yet through with her objections. Still one more objection she raises up to keep the waters muddy. She asks this: Did then God, because he is gracious, have to save man? Did grace mean that he was not free to damn the whole human race forever already in the Garden of Eden? The Fathers answered: nothing could force God to save us. He did it because he chose to do it in his grace. He did it because he determined that "it was not fitting" to allow creatures (the devil and the will of man) to ruin his creation and thus to appear more mighty than he is. By his determination to rescue us, he showed both the exceeding riches of his grace and the excellence of his power that he used it not to annihilate what he had made but to save it.<sup>7</sup>

但是理性女士还没有结束她的反对。她又提出了另一个反对意见，试图让这水变浑浊。她问道：那么上帝，是否因着他的慈爱，必须得拯救人呢？恩典是否意味着在伊甸园时，他并没有自由谴责整个人类呢？教父这样回答：没有什么能迫使上帝拯救我们。他这样做是因为在他的恩典里他选择如此。他这样做是因为他确定，允许受造物（魔鬼和人的意志）毁灭他的创造并因此显得比他更强大，是“不合适的”。借着他的拯救





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我们的决心，他显明了他的恩典何等丰盛，同时也显明了他卓越的能力，他使用这能力不是为了消灭他所创造的，而是为了拯救它。<sup>7</sup>

That's essentially the argument which Moses used in Exodus 32. He pleaded and prayed for the people who had fallen so soon into idolatry. God was ready to destroy them in his justice. But Moses made a two-pronged—and rational—argument in his prayer.

实质上，这就是摩西在出埃及记 32 章使用的论点。他为那些这么快就堕入偶像崇拜的人恳求和祷告。上帝准备好了在他的公义中毁灭他们。但摩西在他的祷告中提出了一个两方面的——并且合理的——论点。

1. God's honor would be destroyed among the heathen if he destroyed the people he had saved from slavery in Egypt.

1、如果上帝毁灭了他从埃及为奴之地拯救的人，他的荣耀在外邦人中就被毁灭了。

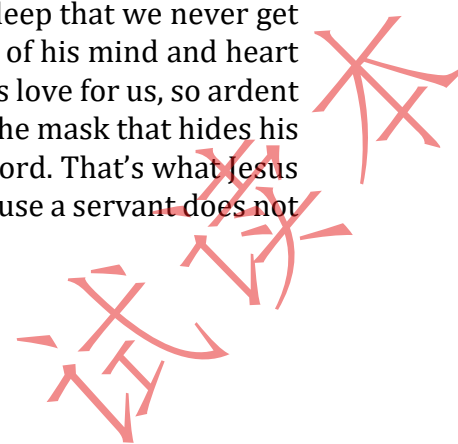
2. Then, and most important, he appealed to God's own free and gracious promise to give the land to the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

2、然后，也是最重要的，他诉诸于上帝自己白白的恩惠的应许，他应许赐这地给亚伯拉罕、以撒和雅各的后裔。

By extension, St. Anselm and others of the church fathers put the emphasis on the first of these when considering the question of the necessity of salvation. The necessity is not one imposed on God from outside of himself. It is the necessity only of "what is fitting" for the God who is in his essence not only just but also gracious. The great miracle is, again, that both his justice and his grace are satisfied and can only be satisfied on the cross of his only begotten Son.

推而广之，当圣安瑟伦和其他教父考虑救恩的必要性这一问题时，他们将重点放在了第一点上。这种必要性并不是某种从上帝自身外部强加在上帝身上的事。它是必要的，唯独因为对在本质上不仅仅是公义而且是慈爱的上帝而言，它是“合适的”。再次重复，这个伟大的神迹既满足了他的公义，也满足了他的恩典，它唯独能够在他独生子的十字架上被满足。

But we have lingered long enough at the pool. Muddy as its waters are apart from the Word of God, we will not deny that even with the Word of God the pool is deep indeed. And why should we expect it to be otherwise? We have been searching the holy, the all-wise mind of our Creator. The wonder is not that his mind is so deep that we never get to the bottom of it. The wonder is that we can fathom the depths of his mind and heart at all. Again, we are but dust and ashes. So great, however, is God's love for us, so ardent his desire for fellowship with us, that he comes out from behind the mask that hides his might and his wisdom; he delights to show himself to us in his Word. That's what Jesus said so shortly before he died: "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not



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know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15).

我们在这个池子旁已经逗留很久了。尽管这水的浑浊与上帝的道无关，我们没法否认，即使有了上帝的道，这池子依然很深。为什么我们要期待它不是这样呢？我们一直在寻求我们造物主圣洁和全智的思想。令人惊讶的并不是他的思想是如此的深，以至于我们绝不能到达其底部。令人惊讶的是，我们完全能够探测他思想和心灵的深度。再次地，我们不过是尘埃和灰烬。然而，上帝对我们的爱是如此的大，他对与我们相交的渴望是如此的热切，使得他从隐藏他全能和智慧的面具背后出来；他乐于在他的道里向我们展示他自己。这就是耶稣在他死前如此简短的说道：“以后我不再称你们为仆人，因为仆人不知道主人所做的事；但我称你们为朋友，因为我从我父所听见的一切都已经让你们知道了”（约 15:15）。

Let us then rejoice in his revelation of himself to us. Let us never tire of that Word by which he shows himself and brings us into such blessed communion with him by faith that our fellowship will last for all eternity. The closer we draw to that Word, the closer he draws to us in it. The greater our delight in what he has to say, the greater will be his delight in revealing ever more of his grace and goodness in that Word (a point, by the way, that St. Anselm never tires of making). We will never exhaust all that is in his Word or finish in our joy in learning of him through it!

那么，让我们在上帝向我们对他自己的启示中欢喜快乐吧。让我们永不厌烦这圣道，他借着这道显明了他自己，并带领我们进入与他如此蒙福的交通，使我们的团契借着信心永远长存。我们越靠近圣道，他越在这道里靠近我们。我们越是欢喜于他所说的话，他就越是欢喜于在这道里，将他的恩慈良善更多的向我们显明（顺便提一点，这是圣安瑟伦永不厌烦的强调的）。我们永不会用尽他的道，透过这道认识他而来的喜乐，也不会结束！

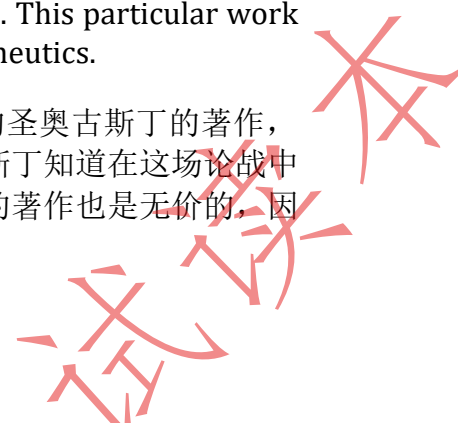
But it's time to get back to the road.

但是时候回到这中路上了。

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> Anyone interested in pursuing the battle against the Manicheans will want to reference the works of St. Augustine of Hippo, especially his *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean* written around the year 400; St. Augustine knows whereof he speaks in this battle, since he himself had at one time been associated with the Manicheans. This particular work is invaluable as well for its examination of early Christian hermeneutics.

<sup>1</sup> 任何对与摩尼教之间的论战感兴趣的人，都会想要参考波西的圣奥古斯丁的著作，特别是他写于公元 400 年左右的答摩尼教徒福斯国斯；圣奥古斯丁知道在这场论战中他说的是什么，因为他自己曾一度与摩尼教徒有关。这一特殊的著作也是无价的，因为它审查了早期基督教释经学。



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<sup>2</sup> We will return to the theme of God's election again in chapter 8, where we will consider the middle between God's election on the one hand and the Great Commission on the other hand.

<sup>2</sup> 我们将在第 8 章再次回到上帝的拣选这一主题，在那儿我们将思考上帝的拣选和大使命之间的中路。

<sup>3</sup> Among those who most famously—and unsuccessfully—wrestled with this problem of contingency in history, the question of whether things in history could have happened other than they did, was Tolstoy in his essay on history at the end of his novel *War and Peace*.

<sup>3</sup> 托尔斯泰在他小说战争与和平结尾的一篇关于历史的文章，是其中一个最著名——但并不成功——的关于历史偶发性这一问题的努力，也就是说，历史上的事是否能以不同的形式发生。

<sup>4</sup> We are not here considering the divine call of Christ through the church for pastors and teachers of the church. The point here is just that those who serve the church have on their part chosen to do so, that is, to prepare for such service and to continue in such service after Christ has called them through the voice of the church.

<sup>4</sup> 这里我们考虑的不是基督透过教会对教会牧师和教师神圣的呼召。这里的要点单单是，那些服事教会的人就他们自己而言选择如此去做，也就是，预备去这样服事，并在基督透过教会的声音呼召他们后，持续这样服事。

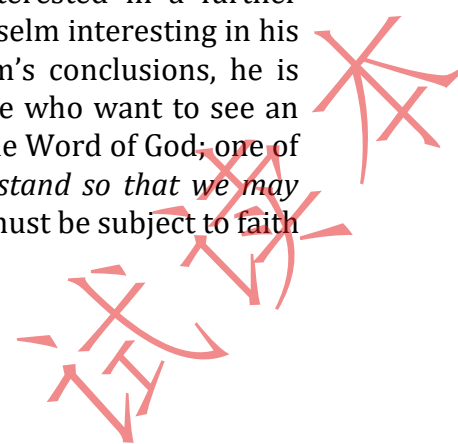
<sup>5</sup> Cf., for example, the Apology: Article XVIII, 4,7 and the Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration, IV, 80.

<sup>5</sup> 例如，参见辩护书：第 18 条款 4、7 条，和协同式正文第 4 条款 80 条。

<sup>6</sup> Formula of Concord, Epitome, Article XI, 3-4, Kolb-Wengert, p. 517.

<sup>6</sup> 协同式摘要第 6 条款 3-4 条。

<sup>7</sup> Anyone interested in a further and more complete consideration of these questions should refer especially to the Formula of Concord, Articles I, II, and XI. This last problem, the problem of whether God had to redeem the world, the question of the necessity of the work of redemption, is probably considered nowhere as thoroughly as it is in the works of St. Anselm, chiefly in *Cur Deus Homo*. Someone interested in a further exploration of the subject of human freedom will also find St. Anselm interesting in his *De Concordia*. While we might not agree with all of St. Anselm's conclusions, he is nevertheless among the most interesting of the fathers for those who want to see an example of someone who strove to use reason in subjection to the Word of God; one of Anselm's guiding principles was this: *We do not seek to understand so that we may believe; we believe so that we may understand*; his point: Reason must be subject to faith



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formed by the Word; the only real value that it has in theological argumentation is in apologetics, in showing the scoffer that the truths of God's Word are not really at variance with reason rightly used.

<sup>7</sup> 任何有兴趣进一步和更全面讨论这些问题的人，尤其应该参考协同式第 1、2 和 11 条款。这最后一个问题，上帝是否必须得拯救这个世界，即救赎事工必然性这一问题，很可能没有任何地方，比圣安塞伦的著作——主要是在上帝何以道成肉身（Cur Deus Homo）中，对它考虑得更为彻底的了。对进一步研究人类自由意志这一主题感兴趣的人，也会发现圣安塞伦的论和谐（De Concordia）格外有趣。虽然我们可能不同意圣安塞伦的所有结论，但对那些想要看到有人在对上帝之道的顺服中努力使用理性的人来说，他是最有趣的教父之一；安塞伦的一个指导原则是：我们不寻求去理解以至于我们可能会相信；我们相信以至于我们可能会理解；他的观点是：理性必须服从于由圣道塑造的信心；它在神学论证中唯一真正的价值是在辩证学中，向讥讽者表明，上帝之道的真理与正确使用的理性并不矛盾。

试读本

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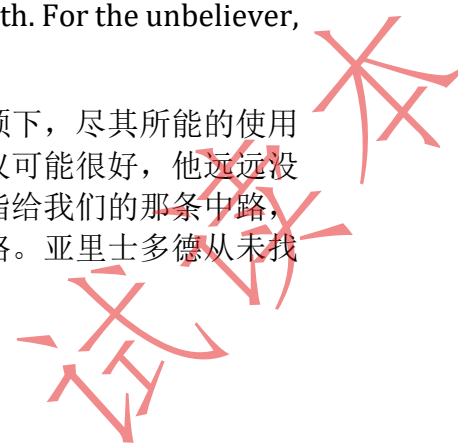
## 6. The Narrow Lutheran Middle Between *Good Good Works* and *Bad Good Works* 好的好行为和坏的好行为中间狭窄的路德宗中路

We noted earlier that Aristotle in the *Ethics* was looking for the middle road in the search for the virtuous life. In his search for the virtuous life, he noted that if a virtue is overemphasized, it can turn into a vice. Thus, for example, truthfulness is a virtue. But one's claim to being truthful can be exaggerated or minimized; in either case, the virtue has become a fault, a vice. The one who is too confident of his own truthfulness is a boaster, even if he is truthful. The one, on the other hand, who understates or undervalues the truth displays a mock modesty or a false humility. The real virtue of truthfulness lies somewhere in the middle between boastfulness and mock modesty. In behavior, he says that the person who has a ready wit needs to avoid the two opposite extremes of a ready wit: he needs to avoid excess that makes him a buffoon; and on the opposite side, he needs to avoid falling short of a ready wit lest he be a boor and a bore. Courage is the middle between cowardice and rashness. Liberality is the middle between stinginess and wasteful extravagance. Proper modesty is the middle between shamelessness and bashfulness. Friendliness is the middle between empty flattery and surly quarrelsomeness. So, to put it another way, a vice is often an exaggeration or an underestimation of a virtue.

我们先前提到，亚里士多德在他的伦理学中，寻找一条寻求美德生活的中路。在他对美德生活的寻求中，他指出，如果一个美德被过分强调，它能够变为一种恶习。举例来说，诚实是一种美德。但是关于诚实的说法可能会被夸大或被贬低；在任何一种情况下，这个美德都变为了错误，或恶习。一个对自己的诚实过于自信的人是一个吹嘘者，即使他是诚实的。另一方面，一个低估或轻视诚实的人，显出了假谦虚。诚实真正的美德位于自夸和假谦虚之间。

Aristotle was a very wise man. He took reason about as far as it can go without the bright light of the Word of God. Without that Word, as wise as Aristotle was and as good as his counsel may be, he fell far short of the wisdom hidden in the mind of God and revealed in God's own Word. The middle road to which Jesus points us in his Word is one that leads us to a God-pleasing life here and to heaven hereafter. Aristotle never found that road. The best he could do is show us a road that is personally satisfying for the one on it and perhaps useful for the society of this world that ends in death. For the unbeliever, that is sadly enough. But not for us.

亚里士多德是一个非常聪明的人。他在没有上帝圣道亮光的带领下，尽其所能的使用理性。然而，离开圣道，尽管亚里士多德很聪明，尽管他的建议可能很好，他远远没有隐藏在上帝思想并启示在他圣道里的智慧。耶稣在他的道里指给我们的那条中路，就是带领我们在此生过蒙上帝喜悦的生命，并在此后有永生的路。亚里士多德从未找





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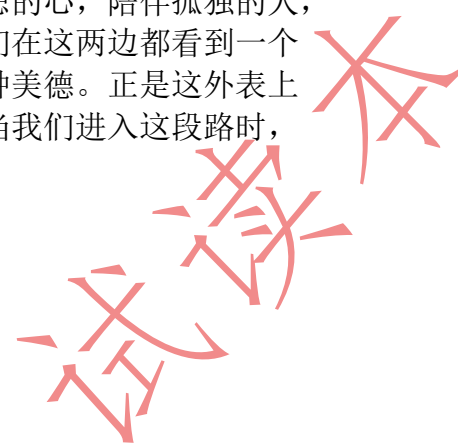
到这条路。他所能做的最好的事，是向我们显明这样一条路：它对走在其中的个人来说是满意的，并对这个以死亡告终的世界来说可能是有用的。这样的事实对不信者来说相当可悲。但对我们来说并不是。

It is perhaps on this next stretch of the narrow middle road that Aristotle would be most offended, even shocked, were we to tell him of it. On this stretch of the road, we seek not so much the middle as we seek a loathing and a fear of one side of the road and an eager holding close to the opposite side. There is a steep cliff on the wrong side, and it is as easy to fall over it as it is steep. What makes this stretch of the road so perilous is the simple fact that outwardly the two sides of the road appear to be identical. It takes a sharp eye, an eye of faith formed by the Word of God alone, to see the fence that would keep us from falling over the cliff on the wrong side of the road. It takes a sharp eye and a steady foot to keep to the one side and to dread and avoid the other.

也许正是在这下一段狭窄的中路上，亚里士多德会最受冒犯，甚至是气愤——当我们将这告诉他时。在路的这一段，我们寻求的与其说是中路，不如说，我们寻求对路的一边的厌恶和恐惧，以及对靠近路另一边的渴望。在路错误的一边有悬崖峭壁，由于其陡峭，因此很容易坠入其中。这段路之所以如此危险，是因为从外表来看，路的两边似乎是一样的。我们需要一双敏锐的眼睛，一双唯独由上帝之道构造的信心之眼，去看见那道防止我们跌入中路错误一侧悬崖里的护栏。我们需要敏锐的眼睛和坚定的脚步，保守我们走在正确的一侧，惧怕并躲避另一侧。

On this stretch of the road, the one side has on it *bad* good works and the other side has *good* good works. But they look so much alike. On both sides we see honesty and decency. We see charity and kindness. On both sides of the road are generosity and help for the needy, tenderness to the weak and the frail, food offered to the hungry and clothes for the naked, patience in suffering, cheerful words of comfort for the depressed, a forgiving spirit even for the depraved, companionship for the lonely, a shoulder for the weeping, a strong arm of protection for the helpless and the fearful. We see on both sides a disciplined life adorned with many of the virtues that Aristotle praised and that the Word of God urges. It is exactly the similarity in outward appearance that makes this stretch of the road so perilous to the incautious. Yes, immediately when we enter on this stretch of the road, we need to pay attention to a sign that marks the path:

在这段路上，其中一侧是坏的好行为，而另一侧是好的好行为。但是它们看起来是如此相同。在这两侧我们都看到诚实和正派。我们看到慈善和友好。路的两侧都是对穷人的慷慨和帮助，对弱者的温柔，给饥饿的人提供食物，给贫寒的人衣服，在苦难中忍耐，用使人愉悦的话安慰沮丧的人，对甚至是堕落的人有宽恕的心，陪伴孤独的人，为哭泣者提供肩膀，用有力的臂膀去保护无助和恐惧的人。我们在这两边都看到一个自律的生命，装饰着亚里士多德所称赞和上帝之道所督促的各种美德。正是这外表上的相似性，让这段路对粗心大意的人来说是如此危险。是的，当我们进入这段路时，我们需要立刻留意这段路的一个标志：



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## Warning!警告!

The warning sign reads: *Watch Out! Danger Ahead! Dame Reason with her cousin, Unbridled Emotion, threaten!* On no stretch of the road is Dame Reason's voice louder than on this one. And she takes to herself her friend and cousin, Unbridled Emotion. Together the two of them will push and shove and shout to get us off of the road and over the cliff. So take warning! We will need to give careful attention to the Word of God and exercise discipline over both Dame Reason and Unbridled Emotion if we are to stay safe and secure in Christ and his Word. In his Word, God has erected a fence to keep us from falling over the cliff on the wrong side of the road. With his Word we can see through the fence well enough to distinguish between the two sides and to see how perilous the wrong side of the road really is. Sadly, many who want to be Christians in both faith and life fail to take the warning seriously. They climb to the top of the fence with a ladder provided by Dame Reason, and then with a push from Unbridled Emotion, over the fence they go. They fall over the cliff and get stuck in the muck and mire below to the ruin of their faith.

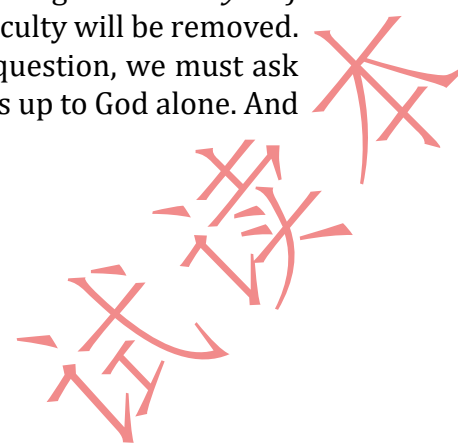
警告标志上写着：当心！前方危险！注意理性女士和她的表亲——无节制的情绪！在任何一段路上，理性女士的声音都没有这一段更响亮。她带来了她的朋友和表亲，无节制的情绪。她们两一起，推着，撞着，喊着，让我们离开这中路，坠入悬崖。因此，当心！如果我们要安全稳固的持守在基督和他的道里，我们需要仔细留意上帝的道，并管教理性女士和无节制的情绪。上帝在他的道里竖立了一道护栏，保护我们不跌入中路错误一侧的悬崖。有了他的道，我们就能很好的看透这护栏，分辨道路的两侧，并看到道路错误的一侧到底有多么危险。可悲的是，很多想要在信心和生命上做基督徒的人，没有认真的对待这警告。他们用理性女士提供的梯子爬上了这护栏的顶部，然后在无节制的情绪的推动下，越过了这栏杆。他们从悬崖上坠下来，跌入了毁灭他们信心的泥潭里。

Having heard the warning, let us consider first:

带着这个警告，让我们先思考一下：

### *Bad good works* 坏的好行为

When we consider *bad good works*, it is first of all of utmost importance that we remember that we are considering those works from *God's* standpoint, not our own. We are looking for the answer to this question: What works are bad and good *in the eyes of God*? If we can just get that straight in our minds, much of the difficulty will be removed. It should even be obvious to reason that for the answer to that question, we must ask God. It is not up to us to decide what is pleasing in his eyes. That is up to God alone. And he isn't the least interested in our advice on the subject.



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当我们思考坏的好行为时，最重要的是，我们需要记住，我们是从上帝的立场而不是我们自己的立场，来思考这些行为。我们正在寻求这一问题的答案：在上帝眼里什么行为是坏的和好的？如果我们心里能够理清这件事，很多难题都会不复存在。很明显，想要明白这个问题的答案，我们必须去问上帝。在上帝眼里他喜悦什么并不由我们来决定。它单单由上帝决定。在这个问题上，对于我们的建议，他一点都不感兴趣。

What then does God have to say about those works which are good and bad in his sight? That blatant sins against the Ten Commandments are bad in his sight needs little proof. Reason even agrees that stealing and murder, adultery, even disrespect to parents are bad. But what about their opposites? What about lives that are adorned with all of Aristotle's virtues? What about lives of hard work and honesty, chastity and reverence towards parents and the like? What about lives that even have the Word of God and prayer as important parts of the mind and the life?

那么，对于这些行为在上帝眼中，哪些是好的哪些是坏的，上帝会说什么呢？那些违反十诫的公然的罪，在他眼里是坏的，这不需要什么证明。甚至理性也认同偷窃、谋杀、奸淫和不尊重父母是坏的。但是那些与它们相反的事呢？那些被所有亚里士多德的美德装饰的生活呢？那些努力工作、诚实、贞洁和尊敬父母之类的生活呢？那些甚至将上帝的道和祷告，作为思想和生命中重要的一部分的生活呢？

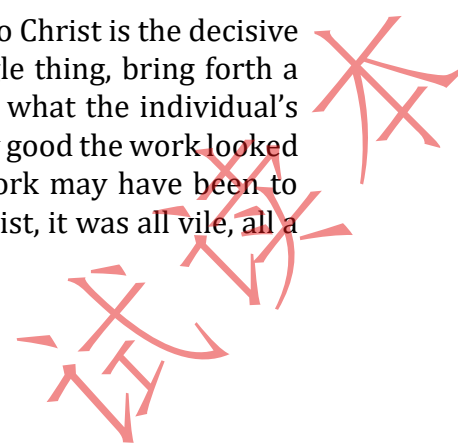
All of these seemingly good works are bad, are vile sins in the eyes of God, when they are done apart from Christ! That's the long and short of it. Jesus said it completely and simply in John 15:4-6:

所有这些表面上的好行为，当它们是离开基督做的时，它们都是坏的，在上帝眼里是可怕的罪！总而言之就是如此。耶稣在约翰福音 15:4-6 完整而简洁的说：

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; *apart from me you can do nothing*. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

你们要常在我里面，我也常在你们里面。枝子若不常在葡萄树上，自己就不能结果子；你们若不常在我里面，也是这样。我就是葡萄树，你们是枝子。常在我里面的，我也常在他里面，这人就多结果子，因为离了我，你们就不能做什么。人若不常在我里面，就像枝子被丢在外面，枯干了，人捡起来，扔进火里烧了。

Thus, for a work to be good or bad in God's eyes, the connection to Christ is the decisive factor. The one who is not connected to Christ cannot do a single thing, bring forth a single work, that will be pleasing in the eyes of God. No matter what the individual's intentions were; no matter how sincere he may be; no matter how good the work looked on the outside; yes, no matter how useful and beneficial the work may have been to family, friends, or society; if it was not done in connection to Christ, it was all vile, all a



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sin, in the eyes of God. Both the work and the one doing it are, as Jesus himself plainly said, fit for nothing but the fire.

因此，一个行为在上帝眼里是好是坏，连于基督是决定性因素。一个没有连于基督的人不能做一件事，产生一个行为，在上帝眼里可蒙悦纳。不论他个人的目的是什么，不论他可能多么真诚，不论这行为从外表看有多好；是的，不论这行为对家庭、朋友或社会有多么有用或有益；如果它不是连于基督而做的，它在上帝眼里都是邪恶的，都是罪。这行为和做这行为的人，正如耶稣自己清楚说过的，只配得地狱的烈火。

As we have noted elsewhere and repeatedly, our connection to Christ is a connection that God offers and gives, creates and preserves in the gospel. Those are connected to Christ as branches on a vine in whom Christ lives by faith in his work as our only and all-sufficient Savior. Apart from such a connection it is impossible to please God—again, no matter how glistening we with our works may appear on the outside.

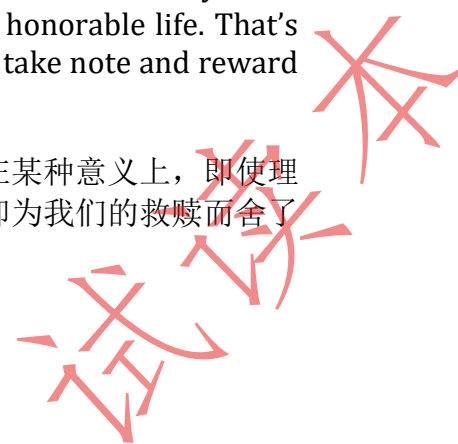
正如我们在别处反复指出的，我们与基督的连结是上帝在福音里提供、给予、创造并维系的连结。那些连于基督的人，正如枝子连于葡萄树上——借着相信耶稣作为我们唯一全能的救主所做的工作，基督正活在这葡萄树里。再次地，离开这样的连结是不可能蒙上帝喜悦的——无论我们和我们的工作表面上看上去是多么的耀眼。

Dame Reason is offended. Unbridled Emotion is shocked. They say: “People give to the poor. They help the needy. They have good and noble intentions when they strive to live decent and honorable lives. Some even pray, even read the Bible, even go to church. How dare you say that their works are an abomination to the Lord?”

理性女士被冒犯了。无节制的情绪被震惊了。她们说：“人们施舍穷人。他们帮助需要的人。他们带着良善和高贵的意图，努力活出一个体面高尚的生命。有些人甚至会祷告，甚至会阅读圣经，甚至会去教会。你怎么敢说他们的行为是上帝所憎恶的呢？”

But that is in fact the Lord’s own verdict, and he is unmoved by any contradiction on our side. In a certain sense, even reason should be able to understand that. After all, God did not spare his only begotten Son but gave him up for our redemption. His Son suffered the humiliation of taking on the form of a servant and then of suffering the agony of crucifixion. He endured the whole wrath of God against the sin of the world for us and for our salvation. He purchased our redemption from sin, death, the devil, and the torments of hell. But someone says: “Well, that’s all fine and good, but I want to contribute to my own salvation or earn it myself; his sacrifice just doesn’t do it for me! I really feel that I’m good enough to get to heaven on my own, or at least with only some help from Jesus. That’s why I do good things, lead a decent and honorable life. That’s why I read the Bible, go to church, and pray. And I expect God to take note and reward me according to my will, my work, my intentions.”

但事实上这是上帝自己的宣判，他不被我们的任何反驳动摇。在某种意义上，即使理性也能够理解这一点。别忘了，上帝并没有留下他的独生子，却为我们的救赎而舍了



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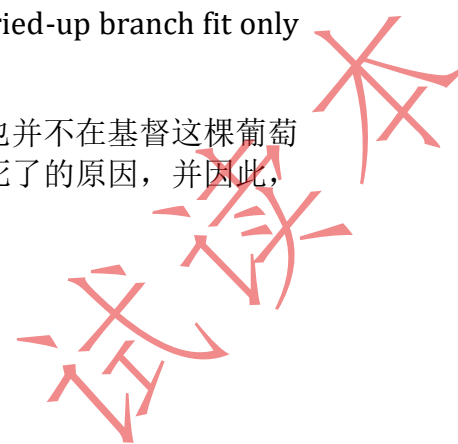
他。他的儿子遭受了成为仆人的样式的羞辱，而后又遭受了被钉十字架的痛苦。他为我们和我们的救恩，忍受了上帝对世人的罪全部的愤怒。他从罪、死亡、魔鬼和地狱的折磨中赎回我们。但有人说：“好吧，这都很好，但是我想要为我自己的救恩做点贡献并亲自赚得它；他的牺牲对我并不那么有用！我真的觉得我足以靠自己上天堂，或者最多只需要耶稣某种程度的帮助。这就是为什么我做好事，过体面高尚的生活。这就是为什么我阅读圣经，去教会，并祷告。我期待上帝注意到这些并根据我的意志、我的行为和我的意图来奖赏我。”

What should even reason conclude of such a person? What else but that such a one is guilty not only of contradicting the heart and core of the Word of God but is guilty of the most horrible ingratitude? Such a one dares to insult the Son of God and belittle the Savior's work. Such a one dares to put his own puny and imperfect works on par with those of the crucified. Such a mindset tramples underfoot the amazing grace and mercy of God by which God yearns to receive each sinner by grace alone, through faith alone. God even gives, works, and preserves that faith with his gospel in Word and sacraments. But that isn't good enough? But that someone rejects in favor of his own paltry efforts, his own opinions about them, and that, again, in flat contradiction of God's Word? Such a person calls God a liar and Christ's work inadequate! How could even reason imagine or dare to argue that such a one could please God? Such a person is more wicked than the foolish child: her mother told her to wash the dishes and that she would be happy if the child did so, but the wicked child said, "No, I prefer to smash the dishes and expect you to be happy about it when I do."

对这样的人，理性会得出什么结论呢？这样的人不仅否定上帝圣道的核心，还是最可怕的忘恩负义者，除此之外，还能有什么呢？这样的人竟敢侮辱上帝的儿子，并藐视救主的工作。这样的人竟敢将他自己渺小和不完美的工作，与耶稣钉十字架的工作相提并论。这样的心态将上帝奇妙的恩典和怜悯——上帝渴望借着这恩典和怜悯接纳每一个罪人，唯独本乎恩典，唯独透过信心——踏之于脚下。上帝甚至用他在圣道和圣礼中的福音，给予、工作并维持这信心。而这还不够好吗？有人会为了支持自己微不足道的努力和自己对这些努力的想法，而拒绝它们，并再一次完全否定上帝的道吗？这样的人称上帝是一个说谎者，并称基督的工作是不充分的！理性怎能臆断或敢于争辩说这样一个人可以蒙上帝喜悦？这样的人比下面的傻孩子更邪恶：她的母亲告诉她去洗碗，并告诉她，如果这个孩子这么做了，母亲会很开心，但是这个邪恶的孩子说：“不，我更愿意打碎这些碗，并期待你将会为我做的事开心。”

Such a person, even if he says that he believes in God, even if he goes to church and prays, is not in Christ the vine. Such a person has rejected the whole reason Christ came and lived among us and died for us and is, therefore, nothing but a dried-up branch fit only for the fire.

这样一个人，即使他说他相信上帝，即使他去教会并祷告，他也并不在基督这棵葡萄树上。这样一个人完全拒绝了基督来住在我们里面，并为我们死了的原因，并因此，是一根枯干的枝子，只配得地狱的烈火。



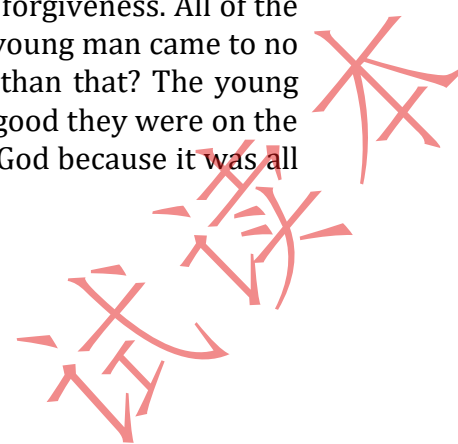


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Jesus demonstrated the point a number of times in the gospels. We want to look at a few of the more striking examples of this point that works are bad in the eyes of God when done apart from faith in Christ's redeeming work, no matter how good they look on the outside. Think, for example, of the two men who went up into the temple to pray (Luke 18:9-14). Luke tells us that Jesus addressed the parable particularly to those "who were confident of their own righteousness." Such neither yearned for grace nor longed for forgiveness. But they led noble and outwardly virtuous lives. They went to church. They prayed. In their daily lives, they did what the law required and even more than was required; and they worked hard at it. But what does Jesus say of the Pharisee who stood and thanked God that he was righteous in his own works? Jesus declared that he did not go down to his house justified. That is, he was not declared forgiven before God's judgment seat but remained with his sin and guilt. His virtue, his works, including those that were in accord with the law of God, were nothing but sin and vice and abominations in God's eyes.

耶稣在福音书中多次展示了这一点。离开相信基督救恩的工作，无论行为外表上看起来有多么的好，它们在上帝眼里都是坏的，对此，我们想要考察一些更为显著的例子。比如，想想那上圣殿祷告的两个人（路 18:9-14）。路加告诉我们，耶稣特别把这比喻讲给那些“自以为义”的人。这样的人既不渴望恩典也不渴望赦免。但是他们过着高贵和外表上很道德的生活。他们去教会。他们祷告。在他们日常生活中，他们做律法所要求的，甚至超过了律法所要求的；他们为此格外努力。但对于那站在圣殿，为他自己行为的义感谢上帝的法利赛人，耶稣说了什么呢？耶稣宣称他回家时并不是公义的。即是说，他在上帝的审判台前并未被宣告赦免，他的罪和罪债还在。他的道德，他的行为，包括那些符合上帝律法的道德和行为，在上帝眼里都不过是罪、恶习和可憎之事。

Or consider the rich young man who came to Jesus (Matthew 19:16-22). He really wanted to obey God. He was earnest and sincere in seeking after the truth. What parent would not be proud to have such a son? He could honestly say that he had kept the commandments from his youth. No doubt he did so with considerable effort. After all, the works he did do not come easily or naturally, especially when we are young. But what was the end of it all? He went away from Jesus sad. Jesus told him to do something that he just would not do. Jesus told him to give up his wealth and come and follow after the Lord. The young man's unwillingness to do such a thing, something that Jesus never asked of anyone else, should have shown the young man his real need: for all the good works that he had done, he had not kept the First Commandment; he put his wealth before God, treasuring it more than he treasured Jesus. That in turn should have brought him to see that he was in desperate need of a Savior, of grace, of forgiveness. All of the good works in the world cannot make up for idolatry. Sadly, the young man came to no such conclusion. Going away from Jesus! What could be worse than that? The young man's works could never atone for such a crime, no matter how good they were on the outside. All his works, his whole life—all was bad in the eyes of God because it was all done apart from Christ.



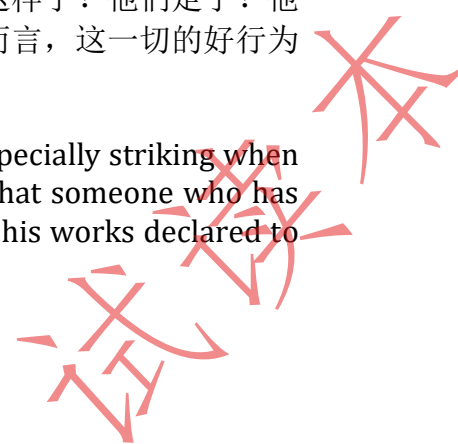
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或者，想想那个到耶稣那里的年轻的财主（太 19:16-22）。他真的想顺服上帝。他热心而真挚的寻求真理。哪个父母不会为有这样一个儿子而骄傲呢？他可以堂堂正正的说他从小就遵守了这些诫命。毋庸置疑，他对此做了相当大的努力。毕竟，他所做的这些行为来的并不容易，特别是当人们在年轻的时候。但这一切的结局是什么呢？他悲伤的离开了耶稣。耶稣告诉他去做一件他不会做的事。耶稣告诉他放弃他的财富，来跟随主。这个年轻人不愿意去做这样一件事，一件耶稣从未要求别人去做的事，这本该向这个年轻人显明他真正的需要：尽管他做了这些好行为，他并没有遵守第一诫命；他将他的财宝放在上帝之上，珍爱它超过珍爱耶稣。这反过来本该带领他看到，他对救主、恩典和赦免迫切的需要。这世上一切的好行为，都不能弥补偶像崇拜。不幸的是，这个年轻人没有得出这个结论。他离开了耶稣！还有什么比这更糟糕的吗？这个年轻人的行为永远无法弥补这一罪行，无论它们在外表上多么的好。他一切的行为，他整个一生——在上帝眼里都是坏的，因为它都是在基督之外做的。

Then we have the parable of the workers sent out into the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16). Jesus tells us that the kingdom of heaven is like this: God sends workers into his vineyard—some early in life, some later, some even at the last hour. But at the end, the workers called at the beginning, who worked longer and harder than the others, are rejected when he tells them to go their way. Why? Not because they didn't work and work hard. They are rejected because they did not see their works as a result and fruit of their connection to Christ. They are rejected because they thought their works merited God's favor and eternal reward. Thus, all of their good works, works done at the call and command of God himself, are deemed *bad*. The parable ends with these words: "Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go" (20:13,14). They had their reward in the time they spent in the vineyard. But that's it! They go! None of what they had done counts as an entry price into the kingdom of heaven. It all ends up, as far as getting into heaven is concerned, as good works gone bad.

然后，我们还有雇人进葡萄园做工的比喻（太 20:1-16）。耶稣告诉我们天国是这样的：上帝差派工人去他的葡萄园——有些是在生命的早期，有些是在之后，有些甚至是在临终的日子。但最终，那些在开始被呼召的工人，他们比别人工作的更久也更辛苦，他们却被摒弃了，上帝对他们说，离开吧。为什么？不是因为他们没有工作或不努力工作。他们被摒弃是因为他们没有看到，他们的行为是他们连于基督的结果和果子。他们被摒弃是因为他们认为他们的行为配得上帝的喜爱和永恒的奖赏。因此，他们一切的好行为，那在上帝亲自呼召和命令下所做的行为，都被视为坏的。这个比喻以这句话结束：朋友，<sup>1</sup>我没亏待你，你与我讲定的不是一个银币吗？拿你的钱走吧（20:13, 14）。他们有他们在葡萄园里这段时间的赏赐。但就这样了！他们走了！他们所做的一切，都不能被算为进入天国的入场费。就进入天国而言，这一切的好行为最终都变为坏的了。

These warnings of Jesus to guard against *bad* good works are especially striking when he issues them to those who serve in the church. It is possible that someone who has been called to serve in the public ministry could end up with all his works declared to



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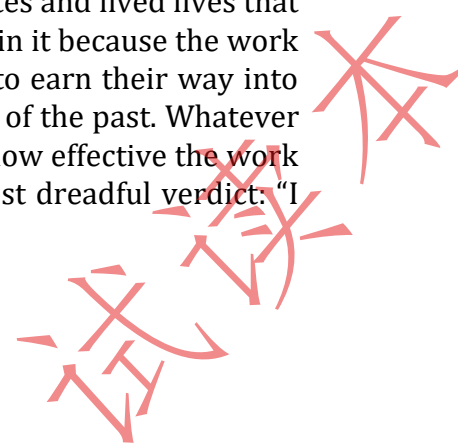
be *bad*. It is possible for those who preached and taught altogether in accord with the Word of God to end up cast out into outer darkness. What a dreadful thought! How it makes those of us called by Christ to serve as his ambassadors shudder! How it should cause us to heed with greatest care and earnestness the exhortation of St. Paul to Timothy: "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Timothy 4:16). St. Paul is, as the context certainly makes clear, not telling Timothy to earn his own salvation by his faithfulness. But he is warning against unfaithfulness by which salvation can be lost both in the preacher and in some of those who hear him. That's what Jesus said as well at the conclusion of his great Sermon on the Mount:

当耶稣将这些防备坏的好行为的警告，传达给那些在教会服事的人时，这些警告尤其引人注目。有可能一个被呼召在公共事工中服事的人，他一切的行为最终都被宣告为坏的。有可能那些完全按照上帝的道宣告和教导的人，最终却被丢到外面的黑暗里。这是多么可怕的想法！它是多么让我们这些被基督呼召，作为他的使者去服事的人战抖啊！它应该让我们带着最大的关注和热忱去留意圣保罗对提摩太的劝诫：“要谨慎自己和自己的教导，要在这些事上恒心，因为这样做，既能救自己，又能救听你的人”（提前 4: 16）。圣保罗，正如文中清晰阐明的，并不是告诉提摩太借着他的忠信来赢得他的救恩。但是他警告，借着不忠信，救恩能够在传道人和某些听他的人中间失去。这也是耶稣在他登山宝训的结尾所说的话：

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" (Matthew 7:21-23)

不是每一个称呼我“主啊，主啊”的人都能进天国；惟有遵行我天父旨意的人才能进去。在那日必有许多人对我说：“主啊，主啊，我们不是奉你的名传道，奉你的名赶鬼，奉你的名行许多异能吗？”我要向他们宣告：“我从来不认识你们，你们这些作恶的人，给我走开！”（太 7:21-23）

Oh, what a horrible prospect! All of the good work done in his name may well have done much good in the world and in the church. The work could have served to bring many into the kingdom of heaven as the Holy Spirit worked through the Word preached and the sacraments administered by such people. But in the end, as far as the one preaching and teaching is concerned, the good works were *bad* good works. They were done with what was ultimately an unbelieving attitude. Some were hypocrites and lived lives that were a denial of what they preached and taught. Some were just in it because the work afforded them a good living. Some tragically did what they did to earn their way into heaven, perhaps to atone—at least in their own minds—for sins of the past. Whatever the reason, no matter how powerful or even sincere, no matter how effective the work on the souls of others, such people hear for all eternity that most dreadful verdict: "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"



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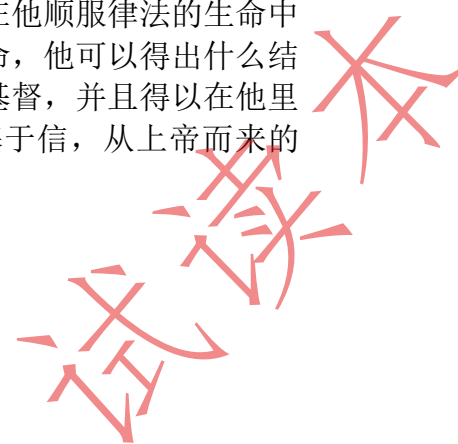
啊，多么可怕的情景啊！所有奉他的名而做的好行为，在这世上和在教会中很可能会带来很大的益处。当圣灵透过这些人宣讲的圣道和施行的圣礼做工，他们的这些行为可以带领很多人进入天国。但最终，就那宣讲和教导的人而言，这些好行为是坏的好行为。它们是带着一种最终不信的态度做的。有些人是伪善者，过着一种与其所宣讲和教导的背道而驰的生活。一些人在其中是因为这个工作为他们提供了一个良好的生活条件。一些人悲剧性的做了他们所做的，去赚得进入天堂的机会，或是为过去的罪做出补赎——至少在他们自己心里去补赎。不管什么原因，不管多么强大或真诚，不管这工作对别人的心灵多么有效果，这样的人永远都会听到那最可怕的判决：“我从来不认识你们，你们这些作恶的人，给我走开！”

With such a possibility and prospect in mind, the greatest of the apostles says of himself: “I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:26,27). Again, a work that to all outward appearances seems good, even very good, is a *bad good work in the eyes of God* if done apart from Christ; it is a *bad good work* if it is separated from trust in him as the only and all-sufficient Savior of sinners always in desperate need of grace and forgiveness.

心里带着这样一种可能性和景象，最伟大的使徒这样说他自己：“我奔跑，不像无目标的；我斗拳，不像打空气的。我克制己身，使它完全顺服，免得我传福音给别人，自己反而被淘汰了”（林前 9:26, 27）。再次地，一件对所有人在表面上看上去都是好的，甚至是非常好的行为，如果是离开基督做的，它在上帝眼里是坏的好行为；如果它与相信基督——他是迫切需要恩典和赦免的罪人唯一和全备的救主——是分离的，那它就是坏的好行为。

Paul knew and understood this point so well that he never tired of driving it home. In Philippians 3:7-9, for example, he speaks of all the good works that he had done before the Savior brought him to faith. They were works in accord with the law. He had been zealous and eager in his keeping of the law and could boast that he exceeded most in his life of obedience to the law. But what was his conclusion of his entire life apart from Christ the vine? He declared, “I consider [all of it] rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.”

保罗很好的知道和理解这一点，以至于他从未厌倦于将它解释到位。比如，在腓力比书 3:7-9，他谈到在救主带他进入信心之前，他所做的一切好行为。它们是符合律法的行为。他在遵守律法方面是热心和真诚的，并可以夸口说，在他顺服律法的生命中他超过了大多数人。但是，对于他离开基督这葡萄树的整个生命，他可以得出什么结论呢？他宣称：“我为他已经丢弃万事，看作粪土，为要赢得基督，并且得以在他里面，不是有自己因律法而得的义，而是有信基督的义，就是基于信，从上帝而来的义。”



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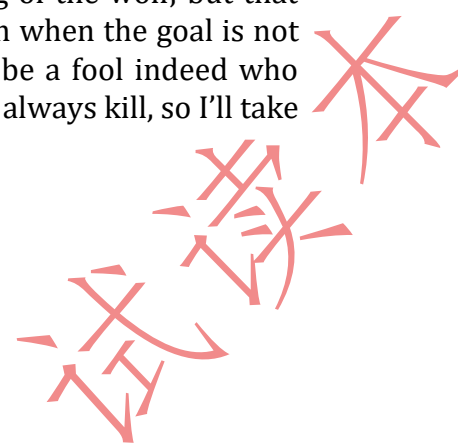
Read the epistle to the Galatians. It begins with the strongest possible condemnation of all the apparent good works that the Galatians had adopted from the law in order to contribute thereby to their own salvation. In words inspired by God himself, he has this to say of those who taught them and moved them to such *bad* good works: "If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!" (Galatians 1:9). And lest anyone was dozing when he said it the first time, he repeats it!

阅读加拉太书。从一开始，保罗就对加拉太人采纳的所有外表上的好行为发出了最强烈的谴责——他们从律法中采纳它们，为了对他们自己的救恩有所帮助。在上帝亲自默示的话里，保罗这样说那些教导他们，让他们去做这些坏的好行为的人：“若有人传福音给你们，与你们以往所领受的不同，他该受诅咒”（加 1:9）。为了防止他说第一遍的时候有人打盹儿，他又重复了一遍！

Indeed, as Jesus also makes very clear, the worst of all of the *bad* good works are those taught and done in the name of God but apart from trust in God alone for mercy and grace. Jesus quotes from the prophet Isaiah when he warns: "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men'" (Matthew 15:7-9).

确实，正如耶稣清楚阐明的，在一切坏的好行为中，最糟糕的是那些奉上帝的名所教导和所做，但却离开了唯独相信上帝的恩赐和怜悯的行为。耶稣引用先知以赛亚的话警告说：“假冒为善的人哪！以赛亚指着你们所预言的说得好：‘这百姓用嘴唇尊敬我，他们的心却远离我。他们把人的规条当作教义教导人；他们拜我也是枉然’”（太 15:7-9）。

Lumped together with those who were hypocrites even when they taught the truth are those who may not have been hypocrites but who taught false doctrine. Against all such, Jesus also gives warning, as do almost all of the writers of both the Old and New Testaments. Jesus puts it most succinctly: "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves" (Matthew 7:15). The sincerity of the wolf is not at issue; there is no doubt that the wolf is sincere when the wolf does what a wolf does. But what is the result for those caught by the sincere and hardworking wolf? The result of his false teaching is the point: teaching contrary to the Word of God always harms the connection of the branch to the vine, always damages, and may ultimately destroy faith. The work of the wolf may not always reach the goal the devil has in mind when he works through the false teaching of the wolf; but that doesn't alter his goal, nor does it do away with the damage, even when the goal is not fully reached. Therefore, Jesus warns, "Watch out!" One would be a fool indeed who would answer, "But the wolf is a beautiful animal; and he doesn't always kill, so I'll take my chances!"





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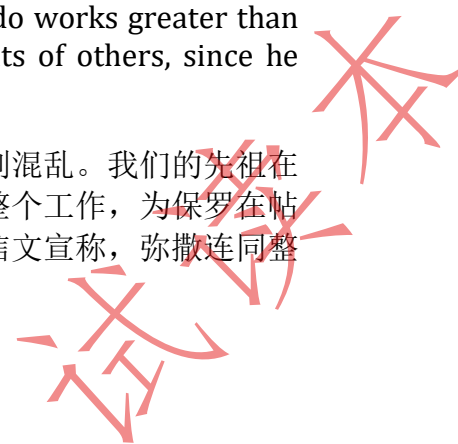
和那些即便教导真理但却是伪善者的人被放在一起的，是那些可能不是伪善者却教导假教义的人。对于所有这些人，耶稣也给出了警告，正如几乎所有旧约和新约作者一样。耶稣格外简洁的说道：“你们要防备假先知。他们到你们这里来，外面披着羊皮，里面却是残暴的狼”（太 7:15）。狼的真诚并不是一个问题；毋庸置疑，当狼在做一匹狼所做的事时，它是真诚的。但是对那些被这匹真诚而辛勤工作的狼所抓住的人，其结果如何呢？它的假教导的结果是：与上帝的道相违背的教导，总是损害枝子对葡萄树的连结，总是破坏，并可能最终摧毁信心。当狼透过其假教导工作时，狼的工作可能不总是会达成魔鬼心中的目的；但是这并不改变它的目的，它也并不消除其危害，即使这目的没有完全达成。因此，耶稣警告说：“当心！”如果某人回答说：“但是狼是一个美丽的动物；并且它不总是在杀害，所以我要试试看！”那他确实很愚蠢。

Thus, whether the teaching is true but done by hypocrites or whether the teaching is false but done in the name of God by heretics, it is all *bad*. The hypocrite, even if he is teaching correctly, loses his own soul; the false teacher damages and may ultimately also ruin his own soul and the souls of others. Therefore, in the church of God, let the teacher ever be on guard over his own soul lest in the end he be found wanting because, as good as the work appeared, he did it apart from Christ the vine. And let both teacher and learner ever be on guard that their teaching and works are always in accord with the Word of God, not a mish-mash of God's Word and their own.

因此，无论教导是真的却由伪善者来教导，还是教导是假的却由异端奉上帝的名教导，它都是坏的。伪善者，即使他的教导是正确的，他也丧失了他自己的灵魂；假教师损害并可能最终同样摧毁他自己和他人的灵魂。因此，在上帝的教会，教师要时刻警醒看守他自己的灵魂，恐怕最后他被发现是缺乏的，因为，尽管行为表面上很好，他却是在离开基督这葡萄树所做的。教师和学习者要时刻警醒，确保他们的教导和行为总是与上帝的道保持一致，不让上帝的道和他们自己的话混为一谈。

It is when this discussion of *bad* good works gets applied in the here and now that people get upset. Our forefathers in the Lutheran Confessions and Luther repeatedly in his writings condemned the works of the whole of the Roman papacy as works of the antichrist prophesied by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. Luther and the Lutheran Confessions declared the Mass to be an abomination together with the whole of monasticism and the enforced celibacy of the clergy. And why? Because all those in a monastery or convent were insincere? Because all who claimed to be celibate were liars? No, that wasn't it. Whether some in monasteries and convents were hypocrites or not, the real and fundamental objection was this: The whole work of the Mass and the whole and declared intention of monasticism and priestly celibacy was that by such works one can at least in part merit his own salvation; a person can even do works greater than those commanded in God's law and credit them to the accounts of others, since he doesn't need all of them for himself!

当对这些坏的好行为的讨论，在当下得到实施时，人们就会感到混乱。我们的先祖在路德宗认信里，以及路德反复在他的著作里，谴责罗马教皇的整个工作，为保罗在帖撒罗尼迦后书 2:1-12 预言的敌基督的工作。路德和路德宗认信文宣称，弥撒连同整



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个修道主义以及强迫神职人员独身制为可憎之事。为什么？因为所有在修道院和女修院里的人都是不真诚的吗？因为所有宣称独身的人都是骗子吗？不，并不是这样。无论修道院和女修院里的一些人是不是伪善者，真正和根本的反对意见是：弥撒的全部工作，以及修道主义和祭司独身制的目的，是借着这样的工作，一个人至少在某种程度上，对于他自己的救恩有某种功德；一个人甚至能够做比上帝在律法中要求的命令更伟大的工作，并将其算在他人头上，因为他自己所做的工作甚至超过了他需要做的。

Such teaching and all such works are monstrous in the eyes of God! They rob Christ of his glory as the only and all-sufficient Savior. They are works that are either condemned in the Scriptures or that in any case God never asked for. They give fallen human beings credit for work that only Christ can do. Yes, and they either make people self-righteous and proud when they do such works or drive people to despair of God's mercy when they fail. That should certainly be sufficient reason to condemn such works as *bad* good works—no matter how sincerely done, no matter how glistening and holy they appear on the outside.

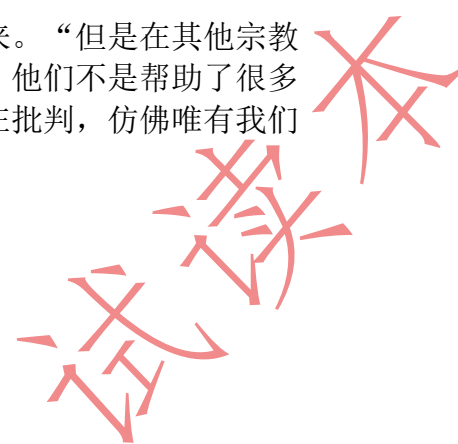
这样的教导和所有这样的行为在上帝眼里是荒谬的！它们夺取了基督作为唯一且全备的救主的荣耀。这样的行为要么是在圣经中被谴责的，要么是上帝在任何情况都未曾要求的。它们把唯有基督能做的工作归功于堕落的人类。是的，它们要么在人们做这些行为时，让他们自以为义和骄傲，要么在他们失败时让他们对上帝的恩慈感到绝望。这无疑是在谴责这样的行为为坏的好行为充分的理由——无论它们做得多么真诚，无论它们在表面上显得多么闪亮和神圣。

The same verdict falls on all of the teachings and works of those who teach and work apart from Christ in whatever religion they may be. Christ's words stand: "Apart from me, you can do nothing!" (John 15:5).

对于那些无论在哪个宗教中，其教导和行为与基督相分离的人，同样的判决落在他们的教导和行为头上。基督的话是确定的：“离了我，你们就不能做什么”（约15:5）。

Oh, but now Dame Reason protests and, together with Unbridled Emotion, gets angry. "But don't people in other religions do many fine things? Don't they help a lot of people when they teach and when they build hospitals and when they serve the poor? And don't we all basically worship the same God? Why do we always have to criticize as though we are the only ones who have the truth? Doesn't even Jesus say, 'Don't judge?'"

哦，但现在理性女士的抗议，带着无节制的情绪，变得愤怒起来。“但是在其他宗教的人没有做很多好事吗？当他们教导，建立医院，服事穷人时，他们不是帮助了很多人吗？我们不是基本上都敬拜同一位上帝吗？为什么我们总是在批判，仿佛唯有我们拥有真理呢？耶稣不也说过‘不要评断’吗？”



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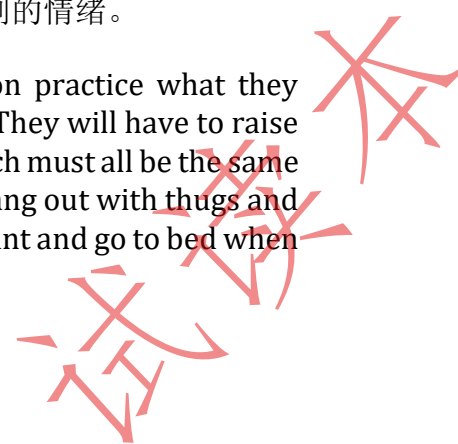
Jesus does indeed say, “Do not judge, or you too will be judged” (Matthew 7:1). But did you notice that he said it in the same chapter in which he warned so sternly against false teaching and false teachers? When he tells us not to judge, he is warning against all self-righteousness; he is warning us not to sit on our proverbial high horses as though *we* of ourselves and with our own merit were free to look down our noses at others or, indeed, to concoct our own doctrines apart from him and from his Word. But as he himself makes very clear in the rest of the chapter and in all of his Word, we are to judge on the basis of his Word, with a spirit of humble trust in his Word and work and in dread of ever departing from either what he has said in his Word or what he has done for us on the cross! Such judging is in point of fact not ours but his.

耶稣确实说：“你们不要评断别人，免得你们被审判”（太 7:1）。但是你注意到了吗？在他说这话的同一章里，他严厉的警告了假教导和假教师。当他告诉我们不要去评断，他是在警告我们反对一切的自以为义；他是在警告我们不要趾高气扬，仿佛我们可以用我们的功德随意的鼻孔里看人，或者，是的，离开他和他的道捏造我们自己的教义。但是正如他自己在这章余下的部分和所有他的道里清晰阐明的那样，我们基于他的道去评断，用一个谦卑的灵去相信他的道并行动，我们害怕离开他在他的道里所说的，以及他在十字架上为我们所做的。实际上，这样的评断不是我们的，而是他的。

Indeed, those who refuse to judge have missed the whole point of the Scriptures. God gave them to teach us *the way*—not just *a way*, one among many—of salvation and thereby the difference between truth and error. St. Peter and St. Paul tell us that when they speak of the goal of the Scriptures in 2 Peter 1:12-21 and in 2 Timothy 3:15,16. Paul urges us to give heed to the words of the apostles and prophets so that we will know the difference between truth and error and “no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming” (cf. Ephesians 4:11-16). All of these and so many other passages require us to judge and to make sure that the judging is on the basis of God’s own Word, not on the basis of unaided reason or unbridled emotion.

事实上，那些拒绝去评断的人已经错失了圣经全部的要点。上帝让他们来教导我们救恩的道路——不是众多道路中的一条，而是唯一的道路——并以此区分真理和谬误。圣彼得和圣保罗在彼得后书 1:12-21 和提摩太后书 3:15, 16 中谈到圣经的目标时，他们告诉了我们这一点。保罗督促我们留意先知和使徒的话，这样我们就会认识到真理和谬误的区别，并“不再作小孩子，中了人的诡计和欺骗的法术，被一切邪说之风摇动，飘来飘去”（弗 4:11-16）。所以这些和很多别的经文，都要求我们去评断并确保这评断是基于上帝自己的道，而不是基于无助的理性和无节制的情绪。

Yes, let those who follow Dame Reason and Unbridled Emotion practice what they preach. Let them try to conduct their lives without ever judging. They will have to raise their children without any instruction at all. Truth and error to such must all be the same thing. So such passionate non-judgers should let their children hang out with thugs and drug dealers—you don’t want to judge. Let them eat what they want and go to bed when



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they will—perish the thought that you should judge. Let them do just as they please and utter not a word of rebuke when they turn out and live like rabid beasts—after all, we shouldn't judge. Oh, but if you don't want to live like that or raise your children for this life like that, why then should you object when God's Word and his servants warn against all that would damage us in the eyes of God and hinder our entrance into life eternal?

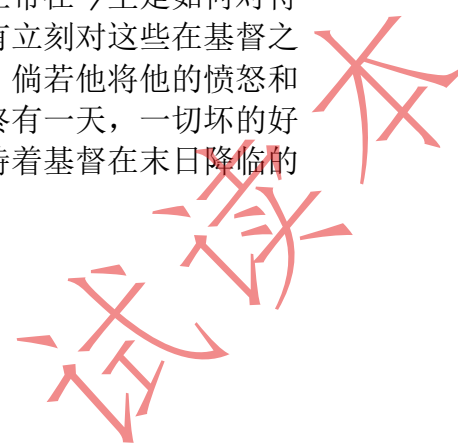
是的，让那些追随理性女士和无节制情绪的人实践他们的教导吧。让他们试着不带任何评断去过他们的人生吧。他们将不得不在没有任何指导下抚养他们的孩子。真理和谬误对他们来说是一回事。因此，这些热情的非评断者应该允许他们的孩子和暴徒与毒贩混在一起——你不应该去评断。允许他们吃任何他们想吃的，允许他们在任何时候上床睡觉——打消你应当去评断的想法。允许他们为所欲为，当他们试图像暴虐的野兽一样生活时，不要说一句责备的话——毕竟，我们不当评断。哦，但是如果你不想这样生活，也不想抚养你的孩子去过这样的生活，那么，为什么当上帝的道和他的仆人，警告所有在上帝眼里会伤害我们，并阻碍我们进入永生的事时，你会提出反对呢？

Again, we want to keep this in mind: We are talking about works that are bad *in the eyes of God*, particularly as those works are related to faith and eternal salvation. All those works that are done apart from Christ, no matter how good they may appear on the outside, even such as are done in all sincerity, are *bad* good works. They are done without trust in Christ as the only and all-sufficient Savior. Or they are works that are done without and contrary to the Word of God.

再次地，我们想要牢记这一点：我们是在谈论在上帝眼里是坏的行为，尤其是那些与信心和永恒救恩有关的行为。所有离开基督而做的行为，无论它们在表面上显得多么的好，甚至是带着多大的真诚而做的，都是坏的好行为。它们是在不相信基督为唯一全备的救主之下而做的。或者它们是在没有或反对上帝的道之下而做的行为。

As a final note in our consideration of *bad* good works, we should observe how God deals with such works *in this life*. It is a mark of God's special grace and mercy that he does not immediately reveal his anger against all those works that are done apart from Christ and are, therefore, in his eyes *bad* good works. Were he to rain down his wrath and punishment on all such works, the world would have perished long ago. The time will come, of course, when all *bad* good works will be seen as such and judged as such. But that time is not yet. It awaits the return of Christ on the Last Day.

在我们对坏的好行为的思考中，最后说一点，我们应该注意到上帝在今生是如何对待这样的行为的。它是上帝特别的恩典和怜悯的标志，上帝并没有立刻对这些在基督之外而做的行为，并因此在他眼里是坏的好行为，显明他的愤怒。倘若他将他的愤怒和惩罚倾倒在所有这些行为之上，这个世界早就灭亡了。当然，终有一天，一切坏的好行为都将被这样看待并被这样审判。但那日子尚未来到。它等待着基督在末日降临的那一天。



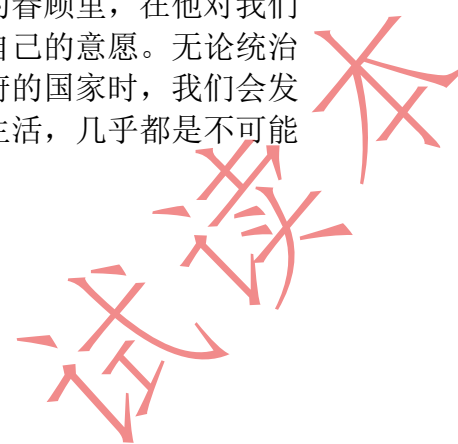
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Until the Last Day, very many *bad* good works are in fact outwardly rewarded. That may seem at first blush a terrible contradiction. If God is going to judge and condemn all *bad* good works on the Last Day, why would he *outwardly* reward many of them in the here and now? There are so many reasons, and all of them point to his grace and goodness and mercy:

很多坏的好行为事实上只有外在的奖赏，直到末日的到来。这乍眼看上去似乎是可怕的矛盾。如果上帝在末日要审判并定罪一切坏的好行为，为什么此时此刻它们中的很多会得到外在的奖赏？原因有很多，它们都指向他的恩典、良善和怜悯：

1. He tolerates and even rewards outwardly many *bad* good works for the sake of the church. The Bible gives us one particular example of this point. St. Paul urges us in 1 Timothy 2:1-6 to pray for governments and rulers. Why? Because governments are Christian and rulers are godly? Hardly! They certainly were not in Paul's day. Almost without exception, the rulers were vile and depraved, even persecutors of the church. Why then should we pray for them? Because governments perform a most useful service for the church and for believers, even when the rulers are wicked, even when on their best days their works are *bad* good works. To the extent that they maintain law and order, they make it possible for Christians to lead, as Paul says, "peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." Will such rulers on the Last Day escape God's wrath? Certainly not! For such good as they did for believers was not done in Christ the vine. Moreover, most often the rulers did the works with not the least intention of benefiting the church. But God in his wise providence, in his goodness to us, used them nevertheless and often contrary to their own will for our benefit. That benefit, whether intended by rulers or not, is evident when we look at countries that have no government; it is almost impossible in such places for anyone to lead a peaceful, quiet, or godly and honest life.

1、他为了教会的缘故容忍甚至外在的奖赏很多坏的好行为。关于这一点，圣经给了我们一个特别的例子。圣保罗在提摩太前书 2:1-6 督促我们为政府和统治者祷告。为什么？是因为政府成员是基督徒并且统治者是敬虔的吗？几乎不是！在保罗的时代肯定不是。统治者几乎没有例外的都是卑鄙邪恶的，甚至是教会的逼迫者。那么，为什么我们要为他们祷告呢？因为政府为教会和信徒施行着最有用的服事，即使当统治者是邪恶的，即使在最好的日子里，他们的行为也是坏的好行为。就他们维持法律和次序的地步而言，他们使基督徒有可能如同保罗所说的，“敬虔端正地过平稳宁静的生活。”这样的统治者在末日能逃避上帝的愤怒吗？当然不能！因为他们为基督徒所做的这样的善，并不是在基督这葡萄树里所做的。此外，大多数情况下，统治者做这样的行为，并没有一丁点有益于教会的目的。但是上帝在他智慧的眷顾里，在他对我们的良善里，依然为我们的益处使用这些统治者并常常违背他们自己的意愿。无论统治者是否有意，这益处都是显而易见的，当我们查看那些没有政府的国家时，我们会发现，在那样的地方，任何人要过一个平稳宁静，或敬虔端正的生活，几乎都是不可能的。





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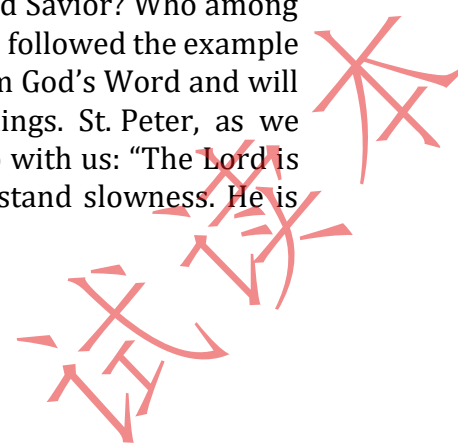
2. In the same passage, the apostle gives us another reason why God would not punish immediately the works of those who labor outside of Christ the vine. He says that we should pray for government and for rulers: "This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men." Good order in the state and rulers who maintain it serve the mission of the church. That is so regardless of their own personal agenda or intention. Where there is no order in society, in the state, it is very difficult and sometimes impossible for the church to proclaim the saving gospel. So in his love for us and so that we may have the blessed privilege of sharing the gospel with those who still need to hear the gospel, God outwardly blesses the works of even the most corrupt of rulers.

2、在同一段经文，使徒给了我们另一个理由，为什么上帝不立刻惩罚那些在基督这葡萄树之外劳作之人的行为。他说我们应该为政府和统治者祷告：“这是好的，在我们的救主上帝面前可蒙悦纳。他愿意人人得救，并得以认识真理。因为只有一位上帝，在上帝和人之间也只有一位中保，是成为人的基督耶稣。”在国家中良好的秩序，以及维护这秩序的统治者，服务于教会的使命。无论他们自己的议程和目的如何，都是如此。在社会和在国家中没有秩序的地方，对教会来说，宣扬得救的福音是困难，甚至某些时候是不可能的。因此，在他对我们的爱里，为了我们可以有福分，与那些依然需要听到福音的人分享福音，上帝对甚至是最腐败的统治者的行为，给予了外在的祝福。

3. He does not immediately judge works that he himself counts as sins because his patience with the unbelieving world is so great. Some of those with whom we share the gospel by its power will come to believe it just as we do. We don't know who will believe it and who will not; only God knows that. But as evidence of his patience with the fallen world, he gives it time. Consider Noah: He preached for 120 years before the flood finally came and swept away the godless of his day.

3、他不会立刻审判那些他亲自算为罪的行为，因为他对这个不信的世界的耐心是何等的大。我们与其分享福音的人群中，其中有些人将会借着福音的大能，进入信心，正如我们一样。我们并不知道谁会信谁不会；唯有上帝知道。但是他给了这个堕落的世界时间，作为他耐心地对待这世界的证据。想想挪亚：在大洪水最终来临，并扫除他所在时代的不敬虔之人之前，他传道 120 年。

4. In his patience with us too, God does not immediately pour out his anger on all evil and on *bad* good works. Who among us will dare to claim that all of his works were done in Christ, out of love for him, and trusting in him alone as God and Savior? Who among us has not had times, perhaps many of them in a lifetime, when he followed the example of the rich young ruler? For whatever reason, we went away from God's Word and will because we did not fear, love, and trust in God above all things. St. Peter, as we remember such times, comforts us with the patience of God also with us: "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise [of judgment], as some understand slowness. He is



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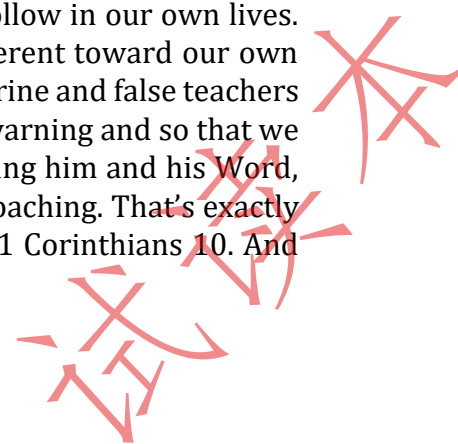
patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

4、在他对我们的耐心中，上帝并不立刻将他的愤怒倾倒在一切邪恶和坏的好行为上。我们中间有谁敢宣称，他一切的行为都是在基督里做的，都是出于对他的爱和唯独相信他为上帝和救主？我们中间有谁，没有跟随那个富有的年轻的官的榜样——甚至在他一生中常常如此呢？无论出于什么原因，我们因为并不敬畏、爱并相信上帝超过一切，而背离了上帝的道和旨意。当我们想起这样的时刻时，圣彼得用上帝对我们的耐心安慰我们：“主没有迟延他的应许，就如有人以为他是迟延，其实他是宽容你们，不愿一人沉沦，而是人人都来悔改”（彼后 3:9）。

5. Perhaps most surprising to us, even inside of the church God does not immediately pour out his anger on the works of hypocrites and teachers of false doctrine. The day will come when those who harm the faith of others will be judged, as Jesus tells us a number of times (e.g., Matthew 11:20-24; Luke 17:1,2). But for now, out of patience with the hypocrite and the false teacher, he endures their works. Also, in order to test and thereby to strengthen the faith of believers, he puts up with it for the present. Paul, in pointing out the difference between false doctrine and true, between genuine teachers and self-appointed ones, urged the Corinthians: “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?” (2 Corinthians 13:5). In the same vein, he calls to mind how so many in the Old Testament perished in their hypocrisy and idolatry and then warns us, “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

5、也许最让我们吃惊的是，甚至在教会内部，上帝也并未立刻倾倒他的愤怒在伪善者和假教师的行为上。在末日到来时，那些伤害他人信心之人将受审判，正如耶稣多次告诉我们的那样（比如，太 11:20-24；路 17:1,2）。但现在，出于对伪善者和假教师的耐心，他忍耐着他们的行为。此外，为了试炼并因此坚固信徒的信心，他暂时忍受了这一点。保罗，在他指出假教义和真教义，真教师和自封的教师之间的区别时，督促哥林多人：“你们总要省察自己是否在信仰中生活；你们要考验自己。除非你们经不起考验，你们自己岂不应该知道有耶稣基督在你们里面吗？”（林后 13:5）。沿着同样的脉络，保罗提醒我们，旧约中如此多的人是怎样在他们的假冒为善和偶像崇拜中灭亡的，然后他警告我们：“所以，自以为站得稳的人必须谨慎，免得跌倒”（林前 10:12）。

Thus, while God is patient and tolerates for the present *bad* good works, and that even for our sake, his patience toward evil is not a pattern for us to follow in our own lives. That is, his patience is not an excuse for us to be lazy and indifferent toward our own *bad* good works. Nor is it an excuse for the toleration of false doctrine and false teachers in the church. They are tolerated for the present by him for our warning and so that we may prove our faithfulness. We prove our faithfulness by following him and his Word, by clinging to it all the more as we see the day of judgment approaching. That’s exactly the point of St. Paul’s warning in citing the example of Israel in 1 Corinthians 10. And



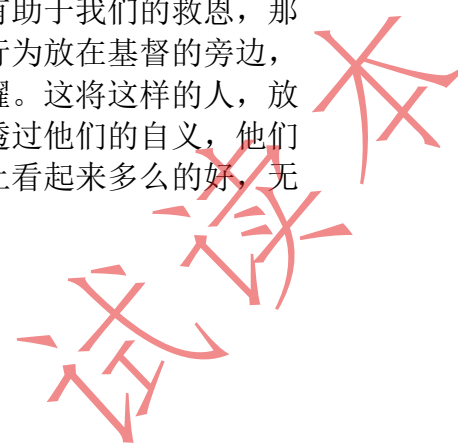
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that is the point of St. Peter's warning as well in 2 Peter 3 when he reminds us: "The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God" (2 Peter 3:10-12). Jesus tells us that an important element in a holy and godly life is, as noted earlier, that we watch out for false prophets (Matthew 7:15). St. Paul tells us too that we should avoid and have nothing to do with them (Romans 16:17,18).

因此，虽然上帝是耐心的，并暂且忍耐坏的好行为，即使是为我们的缘故，他对邪恶的耐心并不是我们在我们的生命中去追随的某种模式。也就是说，他的耐心并不是一个借口，让我们对自己坏的好行为粗心大意和漠不关心。它也不是借口去容忍教会里的假教义和假教师。他为了警醒我们并使得我们可以证明我们的信实，暂且容忍它们。随着我们看到审判的日子临近，我们借着追随他和他的道，借着更加的依附于这道，证明我们的信实。这正是圣保罗在哥林多前书 10 章引用以色列人的例子警告的要点。这也是圣彼得在彼得后书 3 章警告的要点，他提醒我们：“但主的日子要像贼一样来到；那日，天必在轰然一声中消失，天体都要被烈火熔化，地和地上的万物都要烧尽。既然这一切都要如此消失，你们处世为人必须圣洁敬虔，等候并催促上帝的日子来到”（彼后 3:10-12）。耶稣告诉我们圣洁敬虔的生命一个重要的要素是，正如先前提到的，我们要防备假先知（太 7:15）。圣保罗同样告诉我们，我们应该躲避他们，不和他们有任何关系（罗 16:17, 18）。

So then, and to sum it all up, *bad* good works are all those works that are done apart from Christ the vine. They may look good on the outside. They may be works that are outwardly obedient to the Word of God. But if they are done with the notion that they somehow merit heaven or help in some way towards our salvation, then they are by definition *bad* good works. Then the worker places himself and his works alongside of Christ as a reason for his hope of heaven. That robs Christ of his glory as the only Savior. That places such a person in the shoes of the self-righteous Pharisees who rejected God's grace and Christ's merit. By their self-righteousness they lost the forgiveness and eternal life that Christ came to win for them. No matter how good their works appeared on the outside, whether they were hypocrites or heretics or both, the bottom line was this: Their works were apart from Christ. May God preserve us from the deadly end of *bad* good works!

所以，总而言之，坏的好行为是所有那些离开基督这葡萄树而做的行为。他们可能外表上看起来很好。他们可能是外表上顺服上帝之道的行为。但是，如果它们是带着这样的想法做的，即，它们以某种方式配得上天堂或以某种方式有助于我们的救恩，那么它们就被定义为坏的好行为。这样的行为者将他自己和他的行为放在基督的旁边，作为一个他会上天堂的原因。这掠夺了基督作为唯一救主的荣耀。这将这样的人，放在自义的拒绝上帝的恩典和基督的功德的法利赛人的位置上。透过他们的自义，他们失去了基督来为他们赢得的赦免和永生。无论他们的行为外表上看起来多么的好，无



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论他们是伪善者还是异端，还是两者都是，根本要点是：他们的行为离开了基督。愿上帝保守我们免于坏的好行为致死的结局！

## *Good good works* 好的好行为

Perhaps there is no doctrine of the Bible more misunderstood than the Bible's teaching about genuine good works. We Lutherans in particular are accused by many outside of the Lutheran church of teaching that good works are unnecessary. Luther was accused of teaching that too; and the rumor was that Lutherans all lived like beasts, with no government, no discipline, no marriage even. Emperor Charles V in the Edict of Worms condemned Luther as a heretic and an outlaw, charging Luther with teaching such things. St. Paul was accused of the same thing and, ultimately, so was Christ.

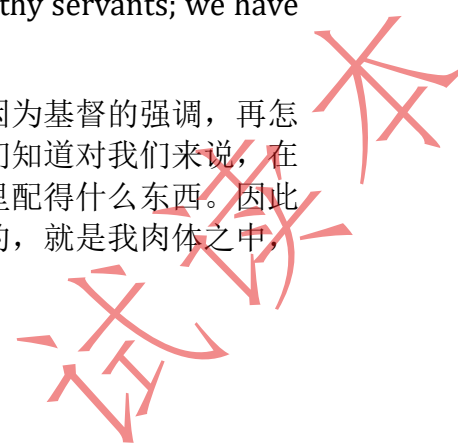
也许没有比圣经关于真正的好行为更容易被误解的圣经教义了。我们路德宗尤其被很多路德宗之外的教会指责，说我们教导好行为是不必要的。路德也被指责教导这一点；有谣言说路德宗都像野兽一样活着，没有政府，没有纪律，甚至没有婚姻。皇帝查理五世在沃尔姆法令中谴责路德为异端和违法者，指控路德教导这样的事。圣保罗被指控同样的事，最终，基督也被指控如此。

The accusation arises from our drumbeat urging of the basic truth of the Bible, the truth that no good works can save us or contribute in the least to our salvation. It arises from the never-too-often-repeated cry of Lutherans in private prayers and in the Sunday morning liturgy: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." That is what I am from the hairs on my head to the soles of my feet, from the moment of my conception to my dying breath.

这指控源于我们对基本圣经真理竭力的督促，这真理是，没有任何好行为能够拯救我们，或对我们的救恩有丝毫奉献。它来自于路德宗信徒在私下祷告和周天早上的敬拜仪文中，永不会过多的呼求：“上帝啊，怜悯我这么一个罪人。”从我头上的发梢到我的脚尖，从我受孕的那一刻到我临终最后一息，我都是这么一个人。

The emphasis in orthodox Lutheranism on salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, is *almost* impossible to overstate. We know well the pride that lurks just beneath the surface of every human heart. We know how easy it is for us to boast in the presence of God as though we merited something from him on account of our own goodness. And so we rehearse it endlessly in our minds: "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature" (Romans 7:18). And there echoes in our souls the reminder that Jesus also gives us on our best days: "So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty'" (Luke 17:10).

在正统路德宗里，对救恩唯独借着恩典，唯独透过信心，唯独因为基督的强调，再怎样也不会夸大。我们很清楚隐藏在每个人内心深处的骄傲，我们知道对我们来说，在上帝面前夸口是多么地容易，仿佛我们因为自己的良善从他那里配得什么东西。因此我们在我们的脑海里不止息的默念：“我也知道，住在我里面的，就是我肉体之中，



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没有善”（罗 7:18）。在我们最好的日子，我们心里也回想着耶稣给予我们的提醒：“这样，你们做完了一切所吩咐的，要说：‘我们是无用的仆人，所做的本是我们该做的’”（路 17:10）。

Yes, it is *almost* impossible to overemphasize the fundamental truth of the Scriptures and of our Lutheran faith that salvation is free, entirely the work of Christ for us. It is *almost* impossible to overemphasize the truth that salvation is given entirely and alone through faith created and preserved by the Holy Spirit in the gospel message of the Word and the sacraments. But this blessed and most comforting truth is overemphasized and perverted when the careless and the lazy proudly declare: “I’m a Lutheran; we don’t believe in good works. Since we are saved by grace through faith, it doesn’t matter what we do or if we do nothing at all.” That is certainly not what the Bible says! And that’s not what our Lutheran Confessions say either. St. Paul summed it up best:

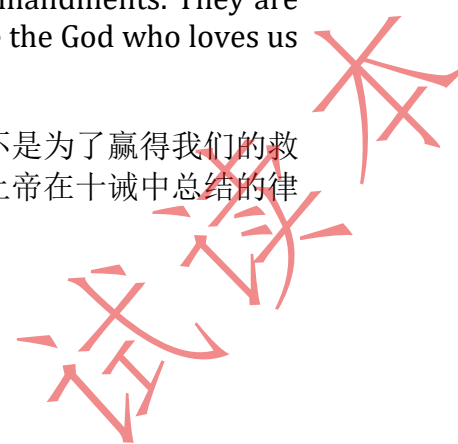
是的，对于圣经基本的真理和我们路德宗的信仰，即，救恩是白白的，完全是基督为我们的工作，怎么强调也不过分。对于救恩完全并唯独是透过信心——这信心是圣灵在圣道和圣礼的福音信息中做工，创造并持守的——给予的这一真理，怎么强调也不过分。但是当粗心并懒散的人，骄傲的宣称：“我是一个路德宗信徒，我们不相信好行为。由于我们得救是借着恩典透过信心，我们做什么和我们什么都不做，无关紧要。”这一蒙福和最安慰人心的真理，被过分强调和扭曲了。这肯定不是圣经所说的！我们路德宗认信文也不是这么说的。圣保罗极好地总结道：

The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:11-14)

因为，上帝救众人的恩典已经显明出来，训练我们除去不敬虔的心和世俗的情欲，在今世过克己、正直、敬虔的生活，等候福乐的盼望，并等候至大的上帝和我们的救主耶稣基督的荣耀显现。他为我们的缘故舍己，为了要赎我们脱离一切罪恶，又洁净我们作他自己的子民，热心为善。（多 2:11-14）。

So there is such a thing as *good* good works. They are works done, as St. Paul here tells us, not to earn our salvation but as a result of our salvation. They are works that are done in accord with the law of God summed up in the Ten Commandments. They are works done eagerly by those whose whole goal in life is to please the God who loves us and gave himself for us.

因此，存在着好的好行为。正如保罗在这里告诉我们的，它们不是为了赢得我们的救恩而做的，而是作为我们救恩的结果而做的行为。它们是按照上帝在十诫中总结的律





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法而做的行为。它们是基督徒热切完成的行为——他们人生全部的目标，都是去蒙那个爱我们并将他自己赐给我们的上帝喜悦。

To be sure, there is no such thing as a perfect good work. Even the best of our works are stained by the imperfection of the sin that remains in us. But the imperfection in our works drives us all the more to trust in the Savior's work for our salvation and not to trust in our own efforts for any part of that salvation. If we trust that God has forgiven our obvious sins that had not a shred of good in them, why should we not trust as well that he forgives those sins that stain our good works? Forgiveness for the stains on our good works is certainly included when St. Paul assures us that for those who live in Christ by faith, there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1). Trusting in that forgiveness, so gracious, so full, so free, we strive to heed the exhortation of Jesus: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). In our guilt we look to Jesus alone for rescue. In our good works we still look to Jesus alone for their acceptance and God's good pleasure in them.

可以肯定的是，并不存在完美的好行为。即使是我们最好的行为，都被残留在我们里面罪的不完美所沾污。但是我们行为的不完美，驱使我们更加相信救主为我们救恩所做的行为，而不是相信我们自己在救恩任何一部分上的努力。如果我们相信上帝赦免了我们公然的，在其中没有一丁点良善的罪，为什么我们不能同样相信，他赦免了那些沾污我们好行为的罪呢？当圣保罗向我们保证，那些借着信住在基督里的人，不被定罪（罗 8:1），赦免我们好行为上的污秽当然包括在其中。这赦免是如此恩慈，如此充足，如此自由，在对这赦免的信心中，我们努力留心耶稣的劝诫：“你们的光也要这样照在人前，叫他们看见你们的好行为，把荣耀归给你们在天上的父”（太 5:16）。对于我们的罪债，我们唯独指望耶稣来拯救。对于我们的好行为，我们依然唯独指望耶稣，接纳它们并让它们蒙上帝喜悦。

Notice that Jesus does not say "that [people] may praise you for your good works" but "that they may . . . praise your Father in heaven." Our good works bring praise to our Father in heaven in much the same way that a child's useful, good, and decent life brings credit to his family on earth. The world is drowning in the chaos that comes from lives which reflect only lust and greed and obsession with self and pleasure. What a witness to the gospel is the life that outwardly is the opposite! How many have come to hear the gospel because of the peace and the order, the decency and the usefulness to others that they saw in the life of a humble and pious Christian? Such a life certainly brought praise to the Father on those occasions—however rare they may be—when someone was first drawn to hear the gospel by the light of Christ radiating from the life of a Christian!

注意耶稣并没有说：“叫人们为你的好行为归荣耀给你”，而是说“叫他们……把荣耀归给你们在天上的父。”我们的好行为为我们天上的父带来荣耀，正如一个小孩有益、良善和体面的生活为他属世的家庭带来了荣耀。这世界正淹没在人生的混乱中，这混乱唯独反映了情欲、贪婪，以及对自我和享受的痴迷。外在上不同的生命是对福音的见证！有多少人来倾听福音，是因为他们在一个谦卑和敬虔的基督徒的生命中，看到了平安、秩序、正派和对他人的帮助啊？当有人第一次，被从基督徒生命中流露

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出来的基督的光吸引，去倾听福音时，在这样的情况下——无论这情况是多么的稀少，这样的生命无疑带来了为天父的荣耀。

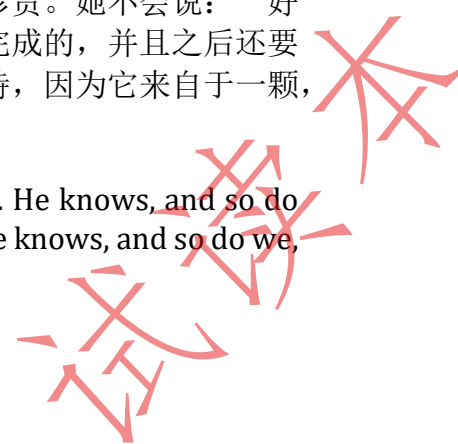
We should not imagine that such works, the *good* good works of a Christian, are a matter of indifference to God. Perhaps an analogy here will be useful. A father is teaching his little boy to ride a bicycle. He holds his son and the bicycle so that the boy does not fall off. He runs alongside for a time, even after he has let go of his son and his bike. The little boy squeals with delight when he has gone a way on his own. He looks back with a broad smile at his father, expecting his father to be proud and to share in his joy at his accomplishment.

我们不当假定基督徒这样的行为——好的好行为，是上帝漠不关心的事。也许一个类比会有所帮助。一个父亲正在教他的小儿子骑自行车。他扶着他的儿子和自行车，让这个孩子不会摔倒。他在旁边陪着一起跑，即使当他已经松开了他的儿子和自行车之后。这个小孩子自己骑行了一段路，他兴奋的叫起来。他带着灿烂的笑容回头看他的父亲，期待他父亲为他的成就骄傲并分享他的喜悦。

What a wretched father he would be if he were to say this to his son: “I don’t know what you’re so pleased about. After all, I bought the bike. I ran alongside you and held you up. You could have accomplished nothing were it not for me.” What a grouch! That’s not at all the way a good father would act. Though it is all true, that the whole business would be nothing at all were it not for the father’s efforts, nevertheless, the father will behave as though his son has done the greatest thing in the world. He will be pleased and proud. He will even praise his son, as though his son did it all on his own! A mother acts the same way; she takes the mindless scribbles of her little child and puts them up on the refrigerator door. She treats them as though they were more precious than the *Mona Lisa*. It doesn’t occur to her to say, “Well, it’s really just silly scribbles, all accomplished with *my* paper, *my* paints and chalk, and *my* cleaning up the mess afterward!” No, in each case the work is viewed with delight because it came from a heart eager to please the watchful eye of a loving parent.

如何这个父亲对他的儿子说：“我不知道你在高兴什么。毕竟，这辆自行车是我买的。我和你一起跑并扶着你。如果没有我你什么都做不到。”那他是一个多么悲惨的父亲啊。多么混蛋！这压根不是一个好父亲会做的事。虽然这一切都是真的，如果没有这个父亲的努力，这一切的事情都不会发生，然而，这个父亲将会表现得仿佛他的儿子做了全世界最伟大的事情一样。他会喜悦和骄傲，他甚至会称赞他的儿子，仿佛这些事都是他的儿子自己做的一样！一个母亲也是如此；她拿着她的小孩随意的涂鸦并将它们贴在冰箱门上。她对待它们仿佛它们比蒙娜丽莎画像更为珍贵。她不会说：“好吧，这真是一些愚蠢的涂鸦，都是用我的纸，我的颜料和彩笔完成的，并且之后还要我清理这堆邋遢！”不，在这两种情况下的行为都被欢喜的看待，因为它来自于一颗，渴望在他/她亲爱的父母眼里得蒙喜悦的心。

And that’s to a large extent the way God is with our good works. He knows, and so do we, that he gave us whatever ability we have to do good works. He knows, and so do we,



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that the desire to do them comes from him, from the desire implanted in us to respond to the gospel with a life of thankful obedience. He knows, and so do we, that he has in his providence provided us with just such opportunities to serve him as match the abilities that he has given us. But knowing all of that, he beams with pleasure and satisfaction when in our own faltering ways we love and serve him.

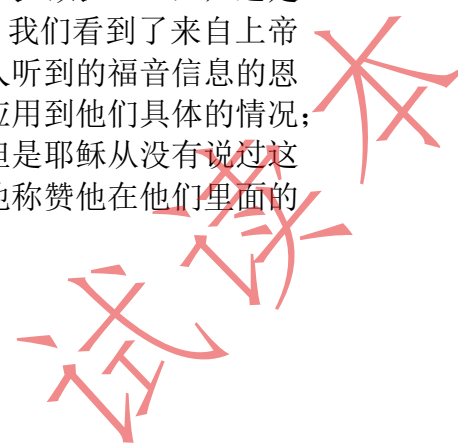
这在很大程度上就是上帝对待我们好行为的方式。他和我们都知道，他给了我们一切做好行为的能力。他和我们都知道，去做这些好行为的渴望来自于他，来自于根植在我们里面，用一个感恩顺服的生命去回应福音的渴望。他和我们都知道，在他的眷顾里，他为我们提供了，与他赐予我们的能力相匹配的，去服事他的机会。他知道这一切，但当我们以自己踉踉跄跄的方式爱他和服事他时，他就在喜悦和满意中开怀大笑。

That's what the psalmist says: "The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love" (Psalm 147:11). All of that fear which dreads displeasing God and all that hope which trusts in his unfailing love is one hundred percent God's gift in the Word. But, nevertheless, he accepts it and more; he is delighted with it as he sees it take root in us. Is that not an amazing thing? Is that not a wondrous incentive to these preeminent good works of receiving his gifts with thanksgiving? Ultimately, that is the best of all good works, to dread offending him and to delight in receiving his grace heaped upon grace.

诗篇作者这样说道：“耶和华喜爱敬畏他和盼望他慈爱的人”（诗 147:11）。所有那些害怕惹恼上帝的敬畏和所有那些相信他不变的爱的盼望，都百分百是上帝在圣道里的恩赐。但是，尽管如此，他接受了它；当他看到它在我们里面扎根时，他为此而喜悦。这难道不是一件令人惊奇的事吗？对于那些带着感恩领受他恩赐的卓越的好行为，这难道不是一个奇妙的激励吗？归根结底，这是一切好行为中最好的：害怕得罪他并喜悦于领受接踵而至的恩典。

We see that same delight from God in the gospels when Jesus praises faith, whether the faith of the woman who touched the edge of his cloak (Matthew 9:22) or of the centurion (Matthew 8:10), to mention just two of the many such examples. In each case the faith was entirely Jesus' gift through the message that these people had heard of or from him. In each case they had applied what they knew from that message to their particular situation; and then with their God-given trust in him, they came to him and received his help. But Jesus never says something like, "Well, at least you had the good sense to believe." No, he praises his gift in them and their subsequent use of it.

当耶稣在福音书中称赞信心时，无论是那个摸他衣裳繸子的女人（太 9:22），还是那个百夫长（太 8:10）——这不过是很多例子中的其中两个，我们看到了来自上帝的同样的喜悦。在这两个例子中，信心都完全是耶稣透过这些人听到的福音信息的恩赐。在这两个例子中，他们都将他们从福音信息中知道的事，应用到他们具体的情况；然后带着上帝赐下的信心，他们来到他面前并领受他的帮助。但是耶稣从没有说过这样的话：“好吧，至少你有正确的判断力去相信。”不是的，他称赞他们在他们里面的恩赐并且他们随后对这恩赐的使用。



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And if God is delighted with those preeminent good works that are so completely his gift, how could we doubt that he is delighted as well with such other works as flow from his gifts of penitent fear and confident hope in his mercy? We are not left to guess that such is the case. Indeed, the least little thing, something noted by few and looked down on by those who did note it, receives from Jesus the highest praise. Consider the widow who placed her fraction of a penny in the offering box in the temple. With what extravagant words Jesus praises her! “[She] has put more into the treasury than all the others” (Mark 12:43). Or think of the woman who anointed Jesus in Mark 14:3-9. His praise of her goes way beyond what that woman could have possibly thought of the work she had done—that’s how generous he is in his acceptance of what we do in love for him! He says of her: “She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.” Then there is the example of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. Jesus praises Mary, and for what? For listening! She had chosen to do the best of works. That didn’t mean that what Martha was doing was all wrong and bad; it just wasn’t, as Jesus himself put it, “what is better” and the “only one thing [that is] needed” (better translation: “necessary”).

如果上帝喜悦于那些完全是他的恩赐的卓越的好行为，我们怎能怀疑，对于那些在懊悔的战兢中和确信盼望他的怜悯中，流露出来的其它这样的行为，他会不同样喜悦呢？我们并不需要去猜测情况是否是这样。事实上，最微不足道的事，很少被人注意，并且被那些注意到的人瞧不起的事，获得了耶稣最高的称赞。想想那个将她的两个小钱放在圣殿奉献箱里的寡妇。耶稣用多么奢侈的话来称赞她啊！她“投入银库里的比众人所投的更多”（可 12:43）。或者想想马可福音 14:3-9 那个膏耶稣的女人。耶稣对她的称赞远远超出了那个女人对她所做的行为的想象——他接纳我们在对他的爱里所做之事，他的接纳是多么慷慨啊！他这样说她：“她是为了我的安葬，把香膏预先浇在我身上。我实在告诉你们，普天之下，无论在什么地方传这福音，都要述说这女人所做的，来纪念她。”还有在路加福音 10:38-42 马利亚和马大的例子。耶稣称赞马利亚，为什么？为着她在听上帝的话！她选择去做最好的行为。这并不意味着马大所做的都是错的和坏的；只是它不是，正如耶稣亲自说的，“上好的”和“不可少的”（更好的翻译是：“必要的”）。

Again, it boggles the mind: Jesus receives and is pleased with what we do for him and is most pleased of all when we are happy to receive from him what he has to give in his gospel. And that is so without in the least diminishing his pleasure and God’s delight in those things that we do for the church and in service to one another simply because we love Jesus and want to please him.

再次地，这让人难以置信：耶稣接受并喜悦于我们为他所做的一切，他尤其喜悦的是，我们开心的从他那里领受他在他福音里赐给我们的东西。同样，我们单单因为爱上帝的并想要蒙他喜悦，服事教会和彼此服事，上帝对此的喜悦也不会打一丝折扣。

In obedience to his command, we pray for peace and order in the state; and he shows his delight by preserving the world to this very moment so that it will be easier for us in

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our weakness to serve him. We listen to his Word and strive to live our lives according to it; and he shows his good pleasure by not allowing us to be tempted beyond our ability and then even still forgiving us when we do not avail ourselves of the help he offers us in the hour of temptation. We support the work of the church, and he blesses such support by preserving his Word and sacraments in our midst. We play the part of the boy who shared his few rolls and pieces of fish with Jesus so that Jesus could feed the thousands with it (John 6:9-13). We go with the Magi to worship the Christ Child, little realizing the use he will make of our gifts to him or the blessing he will bestow on others from our humble act of worship. We clothe the poor and thus put a blanket around the shivering Christ who lives in them. We feed the hungry and thereby nourish the Savior who feeds us all. We give a drink of water to the thirsty and so quench the thirst of him who is the Water of Life.

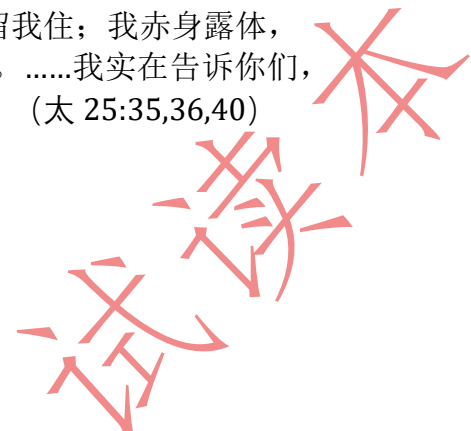
我们顺服他的命令，为国家的和平和秩序祷告；他显明了他的喜悦，持守这世界直到这一刻，使得软弱的我们更容易去服事他。我们听从他的道并努力按这道去生活；他显明了他的喜悦，不让我们承受超出我们能力的试探，甚至在试探的时刻，当我们没有利用他提供给我们的帮助时，依然赦免我们。我们支持教会的工作，而他祝福这样的支持，在我们中间持守他的圣道和圣礼。我们扮演着那个与耶稣分享他的几块饼和几片鱼的男孩的角色，这样耶稣可以用它喂饱几千人（约 6:9-13）。我们和博士一起去敬拜小耶稣，很少意识到他会使用我们给他的礼物，或者他会从我们谦卑的敬拜行为中赐予他人祝福。我们给穷人衣服穿，因此给住在他们里面哆嗦的基督披上了一件外袍。我们喂饱饥饿的人，从而为那喂养我们所有人的救主提供食物。我们给干渴的人水喝，这样就是在为那生命的活水解渴。

Do you not notice it, especially in Jesus' words to us about the last judgment, how he treasures the littlest things? He saves them up. He counts them. He is eager to bring all those little things out to show the whole world on the Last Day.

你注意到了吗，尤其是在耶稣对我们关于末日审判的话里，他是如何珍惜这微小的事的？他把它们捡起来。他数算它们。在末日，他渴望将这一切微不足道的事展示给全世界。

I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. . . . I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me. (Matthew 25:35,36,40)

我饿了，你们给我吃；渴了，你们给我喝；我流浪在外，你们留我住；我赤身露体，你们给我穿；我病了，你们看顾我；我在监狱里，你们来看我。.....我实在告诉你们，这些事你们做在我弟兄中一个最小的身上，就是做在我身上了。（太 25:35,36,40）





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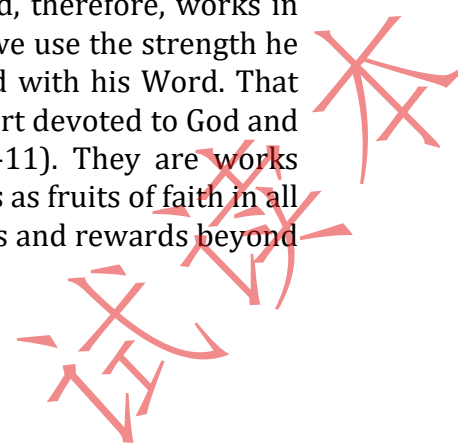
See! The devil didn't destroy goodness and virtue. See! The gospel did produce fruit appropriate to the vine. See! God is pleased! What more incentive do we need than to strive after a life in the vine, a life that reflects that we have been with Jesus?

看啊！魔鬼并没有毁灭良善和美德。看啊！福音确实结出了与葡萄树相适应的果子。看啊！上帝如此喜悦！努力去过一个在葡萄树上的生命，一个反应我们与基督同在的生命，还有什么比这更能激励我们的吗？

The works praised in the gospels are not splashy and highly regarded by the world. They are simple reflections of Christ's love for us in our loving service to him in our service to one another. Certainly some will be able to do great works because of the greater gifts that God has given them. But in their own eyes, the works are on the same level as the works of the lowliest of Christians doing what he is able to do with the different gifts that God gave him. The gifted and faithful teacher or preacher brings thousands to Christ with the gospel and his God-given understanding of it. The mother teaches her children about Jesus and how to pray with the gift that God has given to her to do with her children what no one else could. Both do works great, high, and holy in the eyes of God. The little old lady who is a shut-in or the shy old gentleman in the hospital invites the pastor in and listens with gratitude to the pastor's simple devotion. Little does he or she know what a great work was done just by a kind smile and a "Thank you for coming, Pastor!"—so different, so encouraging for the pastor compared to the reception he gets on many a discipline call or when the door is slammed in his face on an evangelism call!

福音书中称赞的行为，在这个世上并不显眼，也没有受到高度评价。在我们爱心的服事他和我们的彼此服事中，它们单单反映出了基督对我们的爱。当然，有些人能够去做伟大的行为，因为上帝给了他们更大的恩赐。但在他们自己眼里，这些行为与最卑微的基督徒所做的行为处以同一水平——他们都在用上帝给他们不同的恩赐做他们力所能及的事。这位有恩赐和忠心的教师或传道人，用福音和上帝赐给他的对这福音的理解，将人群带到基督面前。那位母亲用上帝赐下的恩赐向她的孩子教导耶稣和如何祷告——这对待她孩子的恩赐是无人能企及的。这两人都在做上帝眼里伟大、崇高和圣洁的行为。卧病在家的老太太，或在医院里害羞的老先生，邀请牧师探访，并感激的听着牧师简单的分享。他/她几乎不会知道，借着一个亲切的微笑和一句“牧师，谢谢你的到来！”他/她做了多么伟大的行为——对牧师来说，相比他在很多惩戒探访中受到的对待，或在传福音探访中被怦然拒之门外，这是多么不同和鼓舞人心啊！

In sum, as St. Paul reminds us, whatever we do, we should strive to do it to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). He mentions the most common works of all: eating and drinking. How can those be works done to the glory of God and, therefore, works in which God delights? We give thanks to God for food and drink; we use the strength he gives from nourishment to carry out our duties in life in accord with his Word. That praises him; that pleases him. Those simple works begin in a heart devoted to God and his Word, as Jesus shows us in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-11). They are works possible for the great and the small and works treasured by Jesus as fruits of faith in all who exercise themselves in them. They are works that he blesses and rewards beyond



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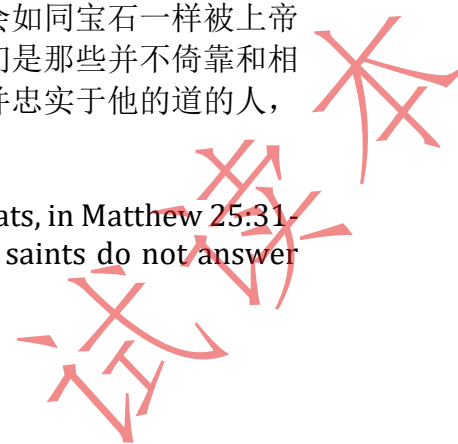
all possible merit, and that because he himself is ultimately their source. Thus, not one of them escapes his notice, his pleasure, his corresponding blessing (Mark 10:28-30). Yes, we cannot out-give or out-serve him. He always gives back more so that he will never be in our debt and we will always be delighted to serve him still more (Malachi 3:8-14; Luke 6:38).

总之，正如圣保罗提醒我们的，无论我们做什么，都要为荣耀上帝而做（林前 10:31）。他提到了最常见的行为：吃喝。怎样为荣耀上帝而做那些行为，并因此，是蒙上帝喜悦的行为呢？我们为饮食而感谢上帝；我们使用他从食物中赐我们的力量，按照他的道履行我们生命中的责任。这就是在称赞他；这就是蒙他喜悦。这些简单的行为开始于一颗献身于上帝和圣道的心，正如耶稣在他的“论福”（太 5:1-11）里所显明的那样。这些行为，无论是大还是小，都是耶稣所珍视的行为，作为所有在其中操练之人信心的果子。它们是蒙他祝福和奖赏的行为，远超过一切可能的功德，因为上帝自己是它们最终的源头。因此，它们中没有一个能逃脱他的注意、他的喜悦，和他随之的祝福（可 10:28-30<sup>2</sup>）。是的，我们不能给予和服事他超过他对我们的给予和服事。他永远还给我们更多，让他绝不亏欠我们，也让我们永远乐于更多的服事他（玛 3:8-14；路 6:38）。

So the little girl helps her mother. The little boy helps his sister and imitates his father. The mother cares for her children and her husband. The husband looks for ways to please his wife and works with a mindset of providing for the needs of his family. The pastor prepares his sermons, and the teacher prepares the lessons for the day. The policeman stands guard. The ruler and the judge govern honestly and in the fear of God. The old set a good example and pray for the young. The young show reverence for the old and patience when they are slow. And on and on it goes. All things great and small done in accord with the Word of God, done out of love for Christ and to serve those around us, are *good* good works. They are remembered by God. They are taken out like precious jewels for God to show off to the world of saints and angels and to spite the devil on the Last Day. They are done in the humility of those who are confident and trust not in their works but in God's mercy, his grace, his generosity, his faithfulness to his Word.

因此，小女孩帮助她的妈妈。小男孩帮助他的妹妹并模仿他的父亲。母亲照顾她的孩子和丈夫。丈夫想方设法取悦他的妻子，带着供应家庭需要的心态工作。牧师准备他的讲道，教师准备每日课程。警察站岗。统治者和法官在敬畏上帝中诚实的施行治理。老人以身作则，并为年轻人祷告。年轻人尊敬老人，对他们的迟缓充满耐心。还有很多例子。所有这些大大小小的事，若按照上帝的道而做，出于对基督的爱和服事那些我们身边之人而做，都是好的好行为。上帝会记住它们。它们会如同宝石一样被上帝拿出来，在末世向圣徒和天使夸耀，并作为对魔鬼的羞辱。它们是那些并不倚靠和相信自己的行为，而是倚靠上帝的怜悯、他的恩典、他的慷慨，并忠实于他的道的人，以谦卑的心去做的行为。

And did you notice in Jesus' great parable of the sheep and the goats, in Matthew 25:31-46, that many of those works were done almost by reflex? The saints do not answer



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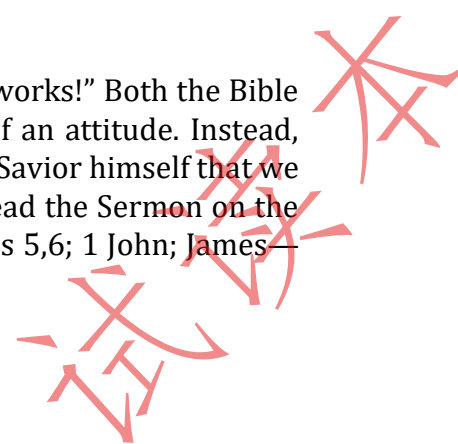
Jesus' praise of their works by saying, "Of course! That's why we did them, so that you would notice and finally praise us for them." Rather, their answer is one of humble instinct, something like this: "Oh, I wasn't even thinking of that when I did those things. Besides that, I didn't do them perfectly or often enough." Jesus' words of praise are for us even when we were, as it were, on "automatic pilot." How more than kind of him! And did you notice too that he never mentions the facts that the works were not perfect and were not done as often as they could have been? And why doesn't he mention that? It is because all of our sins—including those that stained even our best works—have been washed away. There is no further need to mention them!

你是否有注意到，在马太福音 25:31-46，耶稣关于绵羊和山羊的伟大比喻中，很多这样的行为都是出于条件反射？信徒并没有回答耶稣对他们行为的赞美，说：“当然！这就是为什么我们做这些事的原因，这样你就会注意到并最终为此而称赞我们。”相反，他们的回答出于一种谦卑的本能，类似于说：“哦，我在做这些事时甚至没想到这个。此外，我做的并不完美，也不足够。”耶稣赞美的话是给我们的，即便是当我们处于一种“自动驾驶”的状态。他是多么好啊！你是否还注意到，他从未提到这一事实，那就是，我们的行为并不完美，也没有按照它们本该完成的频率去完成？为什么他没有提到这个呢？这是因为我们所有的罪——包括那些甚至沾污在我们最好行为之上的罪——都被洗净了。再也不需要提到它们了。

If we have a mountain of sins that need forgiveness, and we do, then let us strive to build a mountain of good works that thank and praise him for the forgiveness he won for us at so great a price. We build that mountain when we hear his Word and delight to receive his grace heaped upon grace. We build it when we worship and pray in response to his Word. We build it when we look to our stations in life (Luther's Table of Duties in the Catechism) and serve one another in our stations in life. We do it when in love to him and to one another we forgive one another and help one another grow in faith, in doctrine, in life. We build it when as much as possible we seek only his honor and not our own, only the service of another and not the service and praise of self.

如果我们有一座需要赦免的罪恶之山——并且我们确实有，那么让我们努力建造一座好行为的山，来为他以如此巨大的代价为我们赢得的赦免，感谢并赞美他。当我们听从他的道，欣喜地领受他恩上加恩时，我们就在建造这座山。当我们敬拜并祷告请求回应他的道时，我们就在建造这座山。当我们考察我们生命中的位置（教义问答中的信徒职责表），并在我们生命中的位置彼此服事时，我们就在建造这座山。当在对他和彼此相爱中，我们彼此饶恕，互相帮助，在信心、教义和生命中共同成长时，我们就在建造这座山。当我们尽可能地唯独寻求他的荣耀而不是自己的荣耀，唯独寻求彼此服事而不是服事和称赞自己时，我们就在建造这座山。

So let no one say, "I'm a Lutheran, and we don't believe in good works!" Both the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions show no patience for that kind of an attitude. Instead, both urge on us the patient and persistent encouragement of the Savior himself that we abound in good works as branches in the vine. If you doubt it, read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Read Romans 12; Ephesians 5,6; Galatians 5,6; 1 John; James—



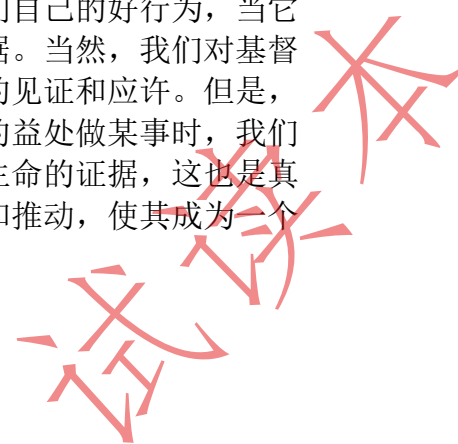
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in short, any book of the Bible. Read the summary refutation of such a perversion of the truth in Article IV of the Formula of Concord, a refutation repeated often also elsewhere in the Confessions. You will find in the Bible and in the Confessions one urging after another to abound in good works. You will find them urging us to do good works not to contribute to our salvation but because of the love of Christ and the needs of those all around us. And yes, they will urge us to good works also because of our own great and very personal need to show our love and gratitude to him who loved us first and gave himself for us. If that doesn't move us to strive after *good* good works, then we can only conclude that we are dead branches already broken off from the vine and fit for nothing but the fire, just as Jesus said.

所以不要让任何人说：“我是一个路德宗信徒，我不相信好行为！”无论是圣经还是路德宗认信文都对这样一种态度没啥耐心。相反，这两者都用救主自己耐心而持之以恒的鼓励督促我们，作为葡萄树的枝子而富有好行为。如果你怀疑这一点，请阅读登山宝训（太 5-7）。阅读罗马书 12 章；以弗所书 5, 6 章；加拉太书 5, 6 章；约翰一书；雅各书——总之，圣经任何一卷。阅读协同式第四条款对这样真理的歪曲简明扼要的驳斥，这驳斥在认信文里的其他地方也反复出现。你会发现在圣经和在认信文中，富有好行为的督促一个接着一个。你会发现它们督促我们去做好行为，不是有助于我们的救恩，而是因为基督的爱和我们身边人的需要。是的，它们督促我们去做好行为，也是因为我们自己极大和个人的需要，对于先爱我们并将他自己赐给我们的那一位，我们需要表达我们对他的爱和感激之情。如果这都不能激励我们追求好的好行为，那么我们只能得出这样的结论：我们是已经从葡萄树上折下来的死的枝子，只适合被火焚烧——正如耶稣所说的那样。

We do well to note yet another benefit that each one of us can derive from our own good works. One almost hesitates to mention it, lest it be misunderstood. But there is this benefit: that our own good works, when they are *good* good works, are evidences of Christ's life and the Spirit's work within us. Our real certainty of Christ's presence and the Spirit's work, of course, comes from the testimony and promise of Christ in the Word and sacraments. But it is also true that whenever we do something out of love for Christ, in accord with his Word and for the benefit of someone else, we have a proof and an evidence of faith, of Christ's life in us as well as his life for us. Where did the desire come from? Where did the impulse come from? Where did the ability to carry out the desire and the impulse as an act of service and obedience come from? It was all from Christ the vine. It was all from the Spirit alive in us by the power of the gospel.

我们应该注意到，我们每一个人都能从我们自己的好行为中得出另一个益处。人们几乎不愿意提到它，以免被误解。但这个益处是存在的：即，我们自己的好行为，当它们是好的好行为时，是基督的生命和圣灵在我们里面做工的证据。当然，我们对基督的存在和圣灵的工作真正的确信，来自于基督在圣道和圣礼中的见证和应许。但是，无论什么时候，当我们出于基督的爱，按照他的道，为着别人的益处做某事时，我们有了信心的证据，以及基督为我们的生命和基督在我们里面的生命的证据，这也是真的。这种渴望来自哪儿？这种推动来自哪儿？这种实行这渴望和推动，使其成为一个





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服事和顺服的行动的能力来自哪儿？这一切都来自基督这棵葡萄树。它都来自于借着福音的大能住在我们里面的圣灵。

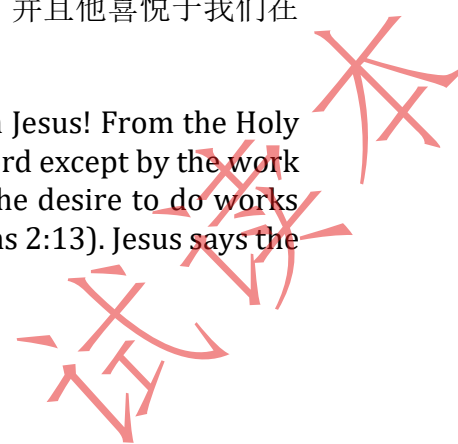
Perhaps we so seldom consider this other benefit because of our justified fear that we might fall into work-righteousness. We know how easy it is for us to slip into the idolatrous notion that somehow our works may contribute to our salvation. To escape that danger, we may too easily disparage the good works that flow from faith and their benefit even to faith. But keeping the warning in mind, there is nevertheless a great benefit to our own souls in these evidences of God's effective working in us. The evidence of his work in us can be a comfort to us especially when our consciences are ready to damn us and drive us to despair because of our sins. We can be so thoroughly aware of our inclination to evil and of the rot within us that we might start to think that we have no good works at all.

也许我们不常考虑这另一个益处，因为我们有理由担心，我们可能陷入行为的义。我们知道我们多么容易滑入偶像崇拜的观念，认为我们的行为在一定程度上可以有助于我们的救恩。为了逃避这危险，我们可能太容易轻视这从信心流出的好行为，以及甚至是它们对信心的益处。但是请记住这一警告，那些上帝在我们里面有效做工的证据，对我们自己的灵魂是大有益处的。特别是当我们的良心，因为我们的罪而预备好来咒诅我们并驱使我们陷入绝望时，他在我们里面做工的证据能够安慰我们。我们可能会如此透彻地意识到我们邪恶的倾向和我们里面的腐败，以至于我们开始想，我们根本没有任何好行为。

Oh, but we do have good works. We deplore our sin and shame. And Psalm 51 says that God does not despise the broken heart and the contrite sigh, that they are sacrifices which please him (51:17). We cry to God day and night for help; that's a good work; that's what he wants us to do (Psalm 91:15). We do strive, however imperfectly, to serve our neighbor out of love and not from compulsion; God is the one who planted that impulse in us—he is always pleased with his own work within us (Philippians 2:13). We do listen to the Word of the Lord and find in it all our health and help; that's why he gave us his Word, and he is delighted that we listen to his voice in it (Psalm 91).

哦，但是我们确实有好行为。我们哀悼我们的罪和羞耻。诗篇 51 说，忧伤痛悔的心，上帝并不轻看，它们是蒙他喜悦的祭（51:17）。我们昼夜呼求上帝的帮助；这是一个好行为；这是他想要我们去做的（诗 91:15）。我们确实出于爱而不是出于强迫，努力去服事我们的邻舍——虽然并不完美；上帝是在我们里面栽种这冲动的那一位——他总是喜悦于他自身在我们里面的工作（腓 2:13）。我们确实听从主的道，并在它里面找到一切的兴旺和帮助；这就是为什么主赐我们他的道，并且他喜悦于我们在这道里面听从他的声音（诗 91）。

Those are all good works. And where did they come from? From Jesus! From the Holy Spirit! St. Paul reminds us that no one can confess that Jesus is Lord except by the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). As already noted, even the desire to do works that are pleasing to God is a gift and work of God in us (Philippians 2:13). Jesus says the





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same thing from a slightly different perspective when he reminds us that without him we can do nothing good, that the good we do comes from him; he gives the desire, the ability, the opportunity, the strength (John 15:1-6).

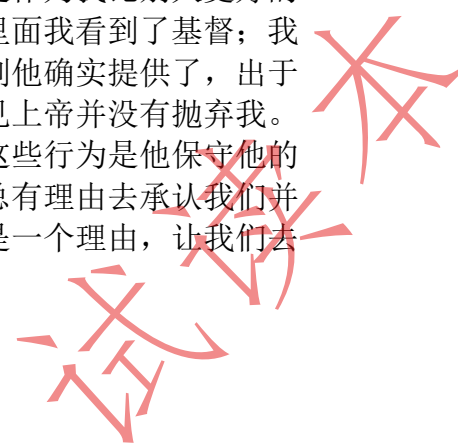
这些都是好行为。它们来自哪儿？来自耶稣！来自圣灵！圣保罗提醒我们，若不是借着圣灵的工作，没有人能够承认耶稣是主（林前 12:3）。正如前面提到的，甚至是去做蒙上帝喜悦的事情的渴望，也是上帝在我们里面的恩赐和工作（腓 2:13）。耶稣从一个稍微不同的角度说了同样的事，他提醒我们，离开我们不能行任何善，我们所行的善都来自于他；他赐下渴望、能力、机会和力量（约 15:1-6）。

What a comfort! How is it that I confess Christ, that I pray, that I hear his Word with gladness? How is it that I want to do what he wants me to do? How is it that, however imperfectly, I actually love and serve, seeking no reward save that of knowing that it is what he wants? How is it that, however weakly, I do struggle against temptation out of love for God and gratitude to Christ? It all happens and comes about as a result of his life in me through the power of his gospel in me in the Word and sacraments.

这是多大的安慰啊！我怎么会承认基督，祷告，并乐意听从他的道呢？我怎么会想要去做他想要我去做的事呢？我怎么会不寻求任何回报的，单单知道这是他想要的，就去爱和服事呢——尽管并不完美？我怎么会出于对上帝的爱和对基督的感激，努力与试探争战呢——尽管很软弱？这一切的发生，都是出于一件事的结果，那就是：他的生命，透过在圣道和圣礼中他福音的大能，住在我的里面。

How then can I despair? Why then should I look only at the fault and the sin, which have in any case been forgiven? Far better that I should look sometimes at the works; I look at them not as proofs that I am better than someone else, nor as my contributions to my own salvation. No, rather, I see Christ in them; I see that he really does live in me. I see the Holy Spirit in them; I see that he really does provide the impulse, the desire, the longing to serve God out of love for his perfect gift of full salvation. So then, God has not abandoned me. He has kept his promise to be with me. See, his Word promised it. See, the works are evidence that he has kept his Word and promise. Is there always room for growth and for improvement and always reason for confession that I have not done as much as I could or should? Of course that's true. But that is not a reason to ignore, much less to despise, such evidence as there is of Christ's life in me. Again, it's a matter of balance, a matter of striking the narrow middle way.

因此，我怎么能绝望呢？为什么我只会看到这些，在任何情况下都被赦免了的过犯和罪呢？在这些行为中我最好应该看到某件事；我看它们，并不是作为我比别人更好的证据，也不是作为我自己救恩的证据。不，相反，在这些行为里面我看到了基督；我看到他确实住在我里面。我看到在这些行为里面的圣灵；我看到他确实提供了，出于对上帝救恩完美的恩赐，而去服事他的冲动、热情和渴望。可见上帝并没有抛弃我。他保守了他与我同在的应许。看，他的道应许过这一点。看，这些行为是他保守他的道和应许的证据。是否我们总有成长和进步的空间，是否我们总有理由去承认我们并没有做到我们本可以或本应该做的？这当然是是的。但这并不是一个理由，让我们去



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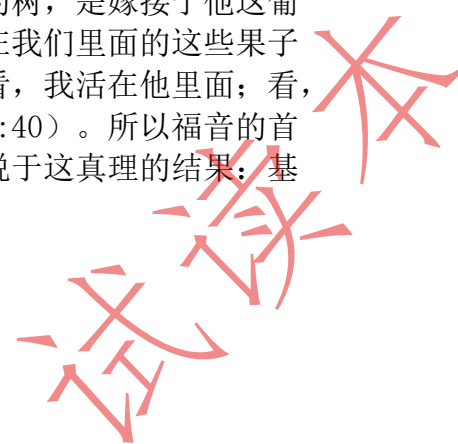
忽视，更不用说是贬低，基督活在我们里面的这证据。再次地，这是一个平衡的问题，一个关乎狭窄的中路的问题。

Luther, who more clearly than most saw the danger of relying on works for salvation, saw also this point with equal clarity. One of his recurring themes in condemning the scholastic theology that did so much damage to souls in his day was this: The scholastics taught that a person could do good works, works that were pleasing to God, without the assistance or the gracious presence of God. No, Luther declared, and that on the basis of texts we have already considered! No, works truly pleasing to God cannot be done without the presence and assistance of God himself (e.g., Smalcald Articles, III, I, 7; cf. also Apology, Article IV; Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article IV, par. 38). In fact, that's what makes good works good: Christ is in them; he motivates them; he gives opportunity for them, desire to do them, strength to do them. And then, in and with him, we do them.

路德比大多数人都清楚的看到，倚赖于行为得救恩的危险，他也同样清楚的看到这一点。在他谴责他那个时代，对灵魂造成了如此巨大伤害的经院神学中，一个反复出现的主题是：经院神学家教导，一个人可以在没有上帝的援助和他恩慈的同在下，做蒙上帝喜悦的好行为。路德宣称，不！并且基于我们前面讨论的内容，也是如此。离开上帝亲自的同在与援助，不可能有真正蒙上帝喜悦的行为（比如，施马加登信条第三章 1、7 条。也见辩护文，第四条款；协同式正文，第四条款第 38 段）。事实上，这就是为什么好行为之所以是好的：基督在它们里面；他激励着它们；他为它们赐下机会，又赐下渴望和力量去做它们。然后，我们在基督里面并和基督一起，去做这些行为。

How good and gracious God is! Even in our works he points us to Christ and forgiveness. Even in our stumbling, feeble, faltering works he wants to remind us that we are his and he is ours. Even in our struggle with despair he points us to the evidence that we are trees with good fruits, branches grafted onto him, the vine. What a beautiful thing that will be on the Last Day when before all the saints and angels he points to these fruits of his in us; what a beautiful thing it will be when he points to each one of us and says in effect, "See, I was alive in him and in her; see, this is the evidence of it; look what he did, what she did, just for me!" (Matthew 25:40). So the primary truth of the gospel is *Christ FOR us!* But we rejoice also in the consequence of that truth: *Christ IN us.*

上帝是多么良善和仁慈啊！甚至在我们的行为中，他也将我们指向基督和赦免。甚至在我们蹒跚、软弱和畏缩的行为中，他想要提醒我们，我们是他的，他是我们的。甚至在我们在绝望的挣扎中，他也向我们指出，我们是结好果子的树，是嫁接于他这葡萄树上的枝子。当在末日，他在一切圣徒和天使面前，指出他在我们里面的这些果子时，这是一件多么美妙的事啊；当他指着我们每一个人说：“看，我活在他里面；看，这就是证据；看看他所做的事，单单是为我而做的！”（太 25:40）。所以福音的首要真理是：基督为了我们（Christ FOR us）！但我们同样喜悦于这真理的结果：基督在我们里面（Christ IN us）。



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As we rejoice in these two truths, it is a great relief for us to know that our works do not contribute to our salvation. Think what torment it should be for us if they were a part of our salvation. We would or should then constantly be in fear that we had not done enough or done it well enough to accomplish the goal of our salvation. We would at the hour of death remember all the failures and only the failures. With only reason as our guide, we would die in despair.

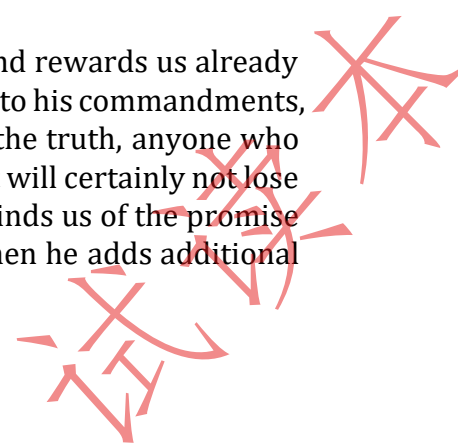
当我们喜悦于这两个真理时，知道我们的行为对我们的救恩没有贡献，这对我们是极大的释放。想想如果它们是我们救恩的一部分，这将给我们带来多大的折磨。我们将会或应该会不断的害怕我们做得不够或做得不够好，无法达到拯救我们的目标。在死亡临到时，我们会记得我们一切的失败——并且只有失败。如果只有理性为我们的向导，我们会死在绝望中。

But thanks be to God! We are free from such torment. Our works are those of children made heirs of salvation by grace alone through faith alone! We are not trying to earn God's favor; as children we already have that. We are not trying to earn our salvation; as those forgiven we already have that. We are not trying to set aside God's wrath at our failures and imperfections, our weaknesses and temptations, our stumbling and our stupidity; Jesus set aside God's wrath fully on the cross. Our works then are done freely, gladly. They are done as the works of children eager to please a kind and loving Father. They are done as the works of the already redeemed whose lives are hidden in the Redeemer as branches in the vine. They are done as the beloved of God in love to God. He is pleased to count it as service to him when we serve those around us, those he loves as much as he loves us.

但感谢上帝！我们脱离了这样的折磨。我们的行为是儿女的行为——唯独借着恩典唯独透过信心而成为得救的后嗣。我们不是试图去赢得上帝的喜爱；作为儿女我们已经拥有了这个。我们不是试图去赢得我们的救恩；作为蒙赦免的人我们已经拥有了这个。我们不是试图去驳回上帝对我们的失败和残缺，对我们的软弱和试探，对我们的跌倒和愚蠢——对这一切的愤怒；耶稣在十字架上完全驳回了上帝的愤怒。然后，我们自由的愉悦的去做我们的行为。它们是孩子们渴望去讨一个良善慈爱的父亲喜悦，而去做的行为。它们是那些已经得救赎的人——他们的生命藏在救赎主里面，正如枝子在葡萄树上一样——去做的行为。它们是那蒙上帝所爱的人，在对上帝的爱中去做的行为。当我们服事我们身边的人，服事那些他所爱的人——正如他爱我们一样，他就喜悦于将其算为我们对他的服事。

## God's reward for *good* good works 上帝对好的好行为的奖赏

As if God could not find enough ways to bless us, he blesses us and rewards us already in this life for those works we did out of love for him, in obedience to his commandments, and in service to one another. Jesus says it so simply, "I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward" (Mark 9:41, cf. also Matthew 10:40-42). St. Paul reminds us of the promise of long life attached by God to the Fourth Commandment. And then he adds additional



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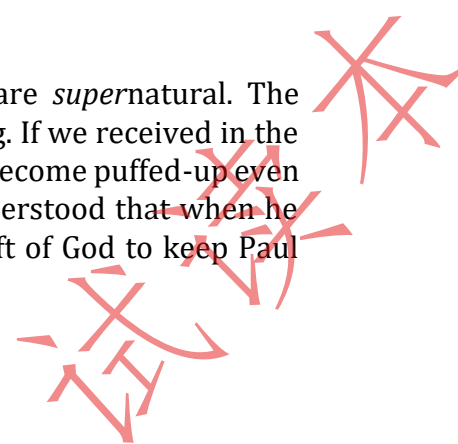
promises of reward from God to all those who serve as Christians, who do their duty (Ephesians 6:1-9). As we noted earlier, the blessing is out of all proportion to the merit of the work. That's the way God is—always so generous, always giving more than can ever be deserved, lest he ever be considered in someone's debt!

仿佛上帝找到的对我们的祝福方式还不够似的，他在今生就为我们出于对他的爱，顺服他的命令，并彼此服事的心而做的那些行为，赐福并奖赏我们。耶稣如此简单地说道：“凡因你们是属基督，给你们一杯水喝的，我实在告诉你们，他一定会得到赏赐”（可 9:41，也见太 10:40-42）。圣保罗以上帝附在第四诫上的长寿的应许提醒我们。然后他加上了额外的应许，上帝将奖赏所有作为基督徒去服事，去履行他们职责的人（弗 6:1-9）。正如我们先前提到的，这行为所蒙的祝福和它应得的功德是完全不相称的。这就是上帝的方式——总是如此慷慨，总是赐下比配得的更多的东西，以免他被认为是亏欠了谁。

Sometimes the blessings that reward good works may in a certain sense be considered *natural*. Thus, for example, the one who leads an outwardly moral and decent life has the reward of a good reputation. Such a one is spared the shame and disgrace of the outwardly immoral and indecent. We see the good and bad of that in the parable of the prodigal son—really of the two prodigal sons (Luke 15:11-31). The first son suffered well-deserved misery because of his sins; the second son, as a blessing of his obedience, enjoyed all that his father had while he was with him. The sad element in the parable is that the second son did not grasp that the blessings he had from his father outweighed his own faithfulness. Instead, the second son imagined that he deserved all that he had, that in fact his father owed him for his works. But the point remains that there are abundant blessings which flow from faithfulness and obedience; the blessings are always out of all proportion to the merit of such works. And the Lord rules over history in such a way that we receive those blessings.

有时，奖赏好行为的祝福，在某种意义上被认为是天然如此的。比如，一个过着外在道德和体面的生活的人，有好名声的奖赏。这样一个人免于了外在不道德和不体面的羞耻和侮辱。我们可以在浪子回头的比喻中看到这一点的好和坏——事实上，是两个浪子（路 15:11-31）。第一个儿子因为他的罪遭受了当之无愧的不幸；第二个儿子，作为对他顺服的祝福，在他与他父亲同在期间，享受他父亲所拥有的一切。这个故事可悲的地方在于，第二个儿子没有意识到，他从他父亲得到的祝福，远过于他自己的忠心。相反，第二个儿子想象他配得他所拥有的一切，确切地说，对于他的行为，他的父亲欠他的。但有一点依然存在：有丰富的祝福从忠心和顺服而来；这些行为所蒙的祝福总是远远超过它们的功绩。主以这样一种，让我们领受这些祝福的方式统管历史。

Some of the rewards that God promises to our good works are *supernatural*. The greatest of these are reserved for heaven. And that's a good thing. If we received in the here and now all that God intends to give us, we would probably become puffed-up even more than the second of the two sons was in Luke 15. Paul understood that when he spoke of his thorn in the flesh; it was sent and designed as a gift of God to keep Paul



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humble in the face of so many blessings that God had given him for his work as an apostle.

有些上帝应许给我们好行为的奖赏是超自然的。这些奖赏中最大的被保存在天上。这也是一件好事。如果我们在此时此世领受了上帝打算赐给我们的一切，我们很可能变得比路加福音 15 章的第二个儿子还要骄傲自大。保罗深知这一点，他谈到了他肉体中的刺；它是上帝作为一个恩赐为他精心设计并赐下的，让他在上帝为他作为使徒的工作赐下如此多的祝福面前，保持谦卑。

Nevertheless, one day we will be dazzled by how much God treasured our responses to his gospel by obedience to his law. He promised that to Daniel in a most striking image that has comforted and encouraged pastors in particular during dark and difficult days: “Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3). Yes, it is true: God only knows how to bless his own, bless them in such abundance that none will ever say that God was left owing anyone anything. Those blessings we experience in part in this life, and that more than we ever fully realize. His blessings and gracious reward will come in fullest measure in eternity. That’s what he has promised us (Mark 10:29-31), and he would never lie to us or deceive us.

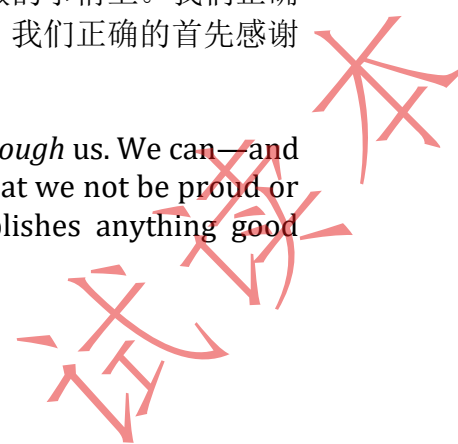
然而，上帝是多么珍视我们借着顺服他的律法对他爱的回应，有一天，我们将会因这珍视而头晕目眩。他以一种最醒目的画面应许但以理，这应许安慰和鼓励着牧师——特别是在黑暗艰难的日子：“智慧人要发光，如同天上的光；那领许多人归于义的必发光如星，直到永永远远”（但 12:3）。是的，这是真的：唯独上帝知道怎么去祝福属他的子民，他以如此丰富的方式祝福他们，以至于没有人会说上帝欠任何人任何东西。我们在今生部分的经历到了这些祝福，这就远超过我们意识到的了。他的祝福和恩慈的奖赏将会在永恒里到达完全的程度。这是他对我们的应许（可 10:29-31），他绝不说谎或欺骗我们。

And now: an almost unLutheran thought 现在：一种几乎非路德宗的思想

We rightly concentrate most of our thinking on what God has done for us in Christ. We rightly loathe any thought of contributing to our own salvation by our good works. We rightly give thanks chiefly for the work of Christ for us on the cross.

我们将我们的大部分思想正确的聚焦在上帝在基督里为我们所做的事情上。我们正确的憎恶任何借着我们的好行为，对我们的救恩有所贡献的想法。我们正确的首先感谢基督在十字架上为我们的工作。

But sometimes it is worth giving thanks also for Christ’s work *through* us. We can—and we Lutherans tend to go in this direction—become so anxious that we not be proud or self-righteous that we end up denying that God ever accomplishes anything good





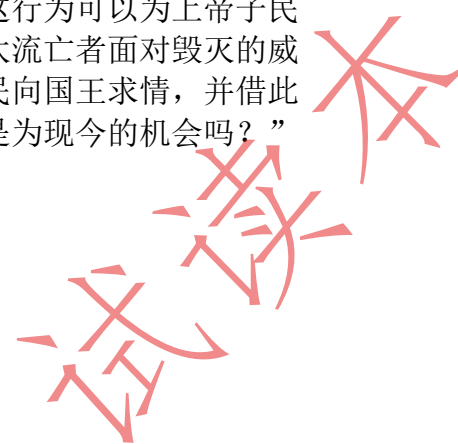
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through us. We end up all but denying that he has given us any gifts by which we might be his instruments for good in the family, the church, the world. We almost want to be humble to such an extent that we become proud of being lazy; because our works are never good enough, never perfect, never a reason to boast, why even bother trying? But that's not the example which the Scriptures set for us. They bid us to appreciate not only God's gifts *to* us but also God's gifts and blessings *through* us.

但有时，感谢基督透过我们的工作，这也是值得的。我们可能如此担心我们不要骄傲和自义——我们路德宗信徒倾向于朝这个方向走，以至于我们最终否认上帝透过我们成就任何善事。我们最终几乎否定他赐我们任何恩赐，借此我们可以成为他在家庭、教会和世界行善的器皿。我们几乎想要谦卑到这样一个程度，以至于我们为懒散而骄傲；因为我们的行为永远不够好，永远不完美，永远不是去夸耀的理由，为什么还要去尝试呢？但这不是圣经为我们设立的榜样。它吩咐我们不仅感激于上帝赐我们的恩赐，也感激于上帝透过我们的恩赐和祝福。

In the Old Testament, we have a couple of especially striking examples of people who appreciated the blessing that God gave them, the blessing of being a blessing. In a passage that some at first find shocking, if not offensive, Nehemiah prayed, "Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out what I have so faithfully done for the house of my God and its services" (Nehemiah 13:14). But it was a worthy prayer! He was not claiming merit for himself or salvation as a reward for his work. He was giving thanks to God for the great gift that God gave him and for the ability to use that gift so successfully for the benefit of God's people. Confident of God's mercy, he called on God to remember the work and so prosper it that the work might remain for the benefit of God's people. We have another such example in the book of Esther. When the Jewish exiles were threatened with destruction, Esther was the favored queen in the palace. With her blessings, she alone could become a blessing by interceding for her people with the king. Mordecai reminded her of that: "Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14). God blessed her and blessed his people through her.

在旧约中，我们几个特别的引人注目的例子，人们感激于上帝赐给他们的祝福——成为一个祝福的祝福。尼希米祷告说：“我的上帝啊，求你因这事纪念我，不要涂去我为上帝的殿与其中的礼仪所献的忠心”（尼 13:14），有些人一开始会觉得这段话即使不是冒犯，也是让人震惊的。但这是一个很有价值的祷告！他并不是在为他自己或救恩索取功德，作为对他行为的奖赏。他是在为上帝给他的如此大的礼物，并为上帝赐他能力，如此成功的为上帝子民的益处使用这礼物，而感谢上帝。带着对上帝怜悯的确信，他呼求上帝纪念他的行为，并因此而兴旺它，使得这行为可以为上帝子民的益处而存留。我们在以斯帖记中有另一个这样的例子。当犹太流亡者面对毁灭的威胁时，以斯帖是宫中受宠的皇后。她的祝福使她可以为她的子民向国王求情，并借此成为一个祝福。末底改提醒她说：“焉知你得了王后的位分不是为现今的机会吗？”（斯 4:14）。上帝祝福她并透过她祝福上帝的子民。



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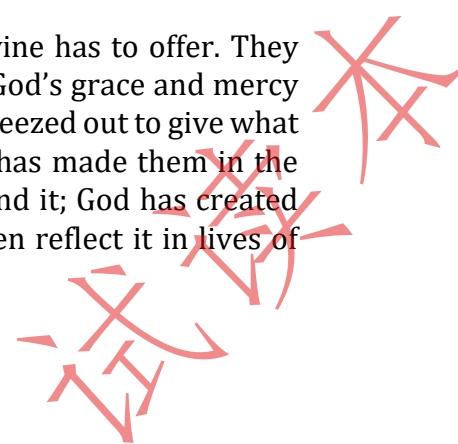
We have similar examples in the New Testament, examples of people who understood that they were a blessing. For the sake of (as our church fathers so often put it) useful brevity, we will mention just two of them. There is the example of Cornelius in Acts 10. He was a Roman centurion who believed in the God of Israel and waited for the message of salvation through the promised Messiah. Even before he heard from Peter the message that the Savior had indeed come and accomplished the work of salvation, Cornelius used his position to encourage faithfulness and obedience to the Word of God. God blessed richly his special use of his gifts by giving him the incomparably greater gift of the full message of salvation from Peter. Cornelius understood that he had been a blessing; he understood as well that in response God gave him still greater blessings in the gospel so that Cornelius could become, on his part again, a still greater blessing.

在新约中我们有类似的，人们明白他们是一个祝福的例子。为了简洁的缘故，我们只提到其中的两个人。在使徒行传 10 章有哥尼流的例子。他是一个罗马的百夫长，他相信以色列的上帝，切切盼望着透过蒙应许的弥赛亚而来的救恩的信息。甚至在他听到彼得说，救主确实来了并完成了他救恩的工作这一信息之前，他就使用他的位置鼓励人们忠心并顺服于上帝的道。上帝丰富的祝福这个百夫长对上帝给他的恩赐特别的运用，赐他无与伦比的更大的恩赐，就是从彼得而来的完整的救恩信息。哥尼流知道他是一个祝福；他也知道上帝在福音里赐他更大的祝福，作为对他的回应，这样，哥尼流——就他自己而言——就能够成为一个更大的祝福。

Then, of course, there is the example of St. Paul. He knew very well the gifts of God to him, and he understood just as well the blessings of God *through* him. How perfectly he explains it to us in 2 Corinthians 10-12. He understood that all the gifts God had given him were designed with this in mind: that Paul should be a blessing. All of the weaknesses and problems that God did not take away were likewise designed so that Paul should be a blessing. After his lengthy defense of his service, actually of his life of being a blessing, he nicely summed it all up for us: "We are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you" (2 Corinthians 13:4).

当然，还有圣保罗的例子。他清楚的知道上帝给他的恩赐，他也清楚的知道上帝透过他赐下的祝福。在哥林多后书 10-12 章他多么完美的向我们解释了这一点。他知道上帝赐给他的一切恩赐，都是带着这样的想法被精心设计的，那就是，让保罗成为一个祝福。所有上帝并没有拿走的软弱和问题，也是这样被精心设计的，使得保罗可以成为一个祝福。在保罗为他的服事——事实上是为他作为一个祝福的生命，进行了冗长的辩护之后，他为我们很好地总结了这一切：“我们在他里面也成为软弱的，但对你们，我们将因上帝的大能而与他一同活着”（林后 13:4）。

So the grapes in Christ the vine soak up all of the life that the vine has to offer. They drink in richly the sweetness of the gospel and the fragrance of God's grace and mercy for time and for eternity. And then the grapes are plucked and squeezed out to give what they have received, to become and be the blessings that Christ has made them in the gospel. May God grant us grace that we recognize and understand it; God has created and redeemed us so that we may both receive his grace and then reflect it in lives of



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*good good works (Ephesians 2:8-10), through which he blesses the world, the church, and those around us.*

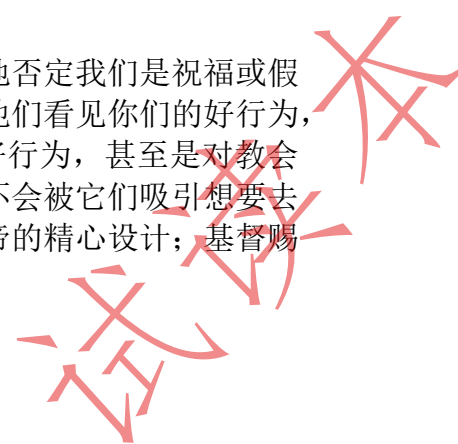
因此，在基督这葡萄树上的葡萄，吸收了这葡萄树提供的一切生命。他们畅饮福音的甘甜，饱尝上帝的恩典和怜悯的芬芳，从今直到永远。然后，这葡萄被采摘下来，并将他们所领受的挤压出来，去成为基督在福音中为他们成就的祝福。愿上帝赐予我们恩典使我们去认识并理解它；上帝创造了我们并救赎了我们，使我们既可以领受他的恩典，又可以在我们好的好行为的生命中，去反射这恩典（弗 2:8-10），借此他祝福这个世界、教会和我们身边的人。

The mother may lament that someone else would have been a better mother for her children. But someone else is not their mother. That's the blessing God gave her in order to be a blessing. The father may feel bad that he is not a better father to his children than he is. But that's not an excuse to be a poorer father than he can be. God gave him his station as husband and father so that he could be a blessing to his wife and children. The pastor may look over his service and say, "Oh, but so and so could have done it so much better." But it's not the call that God gave to so and so; he gave it to this one to be a blessing with both his obvious gifts and perhaps his obvious limitations as well, so that in all things Christ might be glorified.

母亲可能会哀叹，对于她的孩子某个别的人可能是一个更好的母亲。但是别人不是他们的母亲。这是上帝给她的祝福，让她去成为一个祝福。父亲可能会因为他对他的孩子不够好而感到难过。但这不是他成为一个更差的父亲的借口。上帝给了他作为丈夫和父亲的位置，使得他可以成为一个对他妻子和孩子的祝福。牧师省察他的服事可能会说：“哦，但是某某人可能会做得好得多。”但这不是上帝给某某人的呼召；他将这呼召赐给这一位，带着他明显的恩赐，也可能是他明显的局限，去成为一个祝福，使得基督在一切事上得荣耀。

Indeed, Jesus himself expects us to be blessings. Since that is so, why should we work so hard to deny that we are or imagine that we need not be? He says, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). The good deeds of which he speaks are of benefit even to those outside of the church. Were it otherwise, they would neither see them nor think to be drawn to the praise of God for them. Clearly then the one who does good deeds has been a blessing. And that is all by Christ's design; Christ gives us gifts in order that we might be gifts. Or, as he puts it, he gives us light and is the Light for us so that we may be lights. It is false modesty and a thin veil for laziness and ingratitude when we, to continue with Christ's analogy, hide our Christ-given light under a bushel basket.

的确，耶稣希望我们成为祝福。既然这样，为什么我们要努力地否定我们是祝福或假设我们需要不是呢？他说：“你们的光也要这样照在人前，叫他们看见你们的好行为，把荣耀归给你们在天上的父”（太 5:16）。他所谈到的这些好行为，甚至是对教会外部的人也是有益的。如若不然，他们就既不会看到它们，也不会被它们吸引想要去赞美上帝。显然，这些行善的人成了一个祝福。这都是出于上帝的精心设计；基督赐



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我们恩赐，使得我们可以成为恩赐。或者，照他的话说，他赐我们光并是照亮我们的光，使得我们可以成为光。继续耶稣的比喻，当我们将基督赐下的光隐藏在斗底下时，它是一种假谦卑和掩盖懒惰和冷漠的面具。

Without boasting, without self-righteousness, it is possible, and should be done more often, that we look into the face of God and say: "O Lord, I can never thank you enough for your abundant blessings to me in Word and sacraments, in the gift of the Savior who comes to live for me and in me by that precious gospel. But I want to thank you also for this gift: that you have permitted me to be a blessing to those around me in family, church, and state. What an honor! What a delight to grow in grace and then to grow in the art of being one who is blessed so that I can be still more of a blessing!"

我们可以，也应该更经常地，不带夸耀和自义的，看着上帝的面并说：“哦，主啊，对于你在圣道和圣礼中，在救主的恩赐里给我的祝福，我怎么感谢也不会够，他借着那宝贵的福音来为我而活并在我里面而活。但是我也想为这个恩赐感谢你：你允许我成为家庭、教会和国家里我身边之人的祝福。这是何等的尊荣啊！在恩典中成长，成为一个不断蒙福的人，这样我也能成为一个祝福，这是何等令人喜悦啊！”

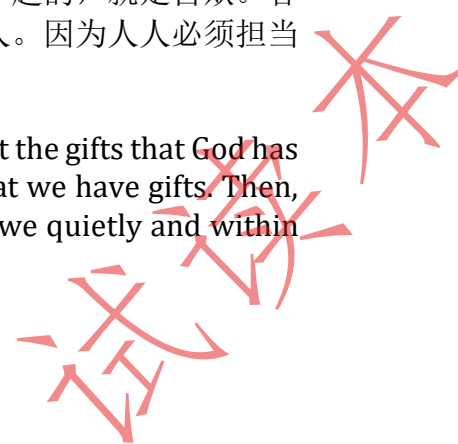
So it's not such a bad thing to examine our own lives from time to time and to look for the ways that God has made us blessings to our families, our churches, our society. Such an examination can help cure us of the depression that Satan sends to those who say that life is pointless and their own lives in particular are of no value. Yes, and it can spur us on to continue to be and to grow in being blessings from God to those around us.

所以，时不时省察我们自己的生活，看看上帝是怎样让我们成为对我们的家庭、我们的教会和我们的社会的祝福，这并不是坏事。对于那些撒旦欺骗他们说，生命是没有意义的，并且他们自己的生命更是毫无价值的人，这样的省察能够帮助他们医治他们的沮丧。是的，它能激励我们继续成为并继续成长为，上帝对我们身边之人的祝福。

St. Paul has a final piece of advice for us as we do that: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry his own load" (Galatians 6:2-5).

在我们这样做时，圣保罗给了我们一条最终的建议：“你们各人的重担要互相担当，这样就会成全基督的律法。人若没有什么了不起，还自以为了不起的，就是自欺。各人要省察自己的行为；这样，他所夸口的只在自己，而不在别人。因为人人必须担当自己的担子”（加 6:2-5）。

Excellent advice! We look as honestly and realistically as we can at the gifts that God has given us *for service*. It is ungrateful to fake modesty and deny that we have gifts. Then, with the emphasis on serving more than on self-congratulation, we quietly and within



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our own souls give thanks for the honor that God has given us. By his generosity, we carry our loads and are useful to others in helping them to carry theirs. We need not bother letting others know how useful we are. Just be useful and give thanks that you have the honor of being a blessing. On those perhaps too rare occasions when another expresses gratitude for our service, we need not foolishly and ungratefully protest that the service was nothing. Nor is it necessary every time to make a long speech about how it was all God's doing; said too often, that may well come across as false modesty, a vice that is only a thin veil used to cover arrogance. It is enough to just answer, "Thank you! I was glad I could help/be useful." Then to God you can say, "How kind of you to make of me, even of me, a blessing!" That's the narrow Lutheran middle between boastfulness and false modesty.

卓越的建议！我们尽可能诚实和实际地看待上帝为服事赐我们的恩赐。假谦虚并否定我们有恩赐是忘恩和无情的。然后，带着对服事的强调而不是沾沾自喜，我们在我们心里默默地感谢上帝赐我们这荣耀。借着他的慷慨，我们背负我们自己的担子，也有助于去帮助他人背负他们的担子。我们不需要困扰于让别人知道我们是多么有用。单单去帮助人并感谢上帝赐你成为一个祝福的尊荣。在一些也许很罕见的情况下，当别人为我们的服事表达感谢时，我们不必愚蠢并不领情的反对说，这服事什么都不是。我们也不需要每次都长篇大论地说，这一切都是上帝做的；说的太多，就很可能是一种假谦卑，一种只是用来掩盖傲慢的恶习。单单回答说：“谢谢你！我很高兴我能有所帮助。”这就够了。然后你可以对上帝说：“你是多么的美好啊，让我，甚至是我，成为一个祝福！”这是在自夸和假谦卑之间狭窄的中路。

So much for our *almost* unLutheran thought.

我们几乎非路德宗的想法就到这儿了。

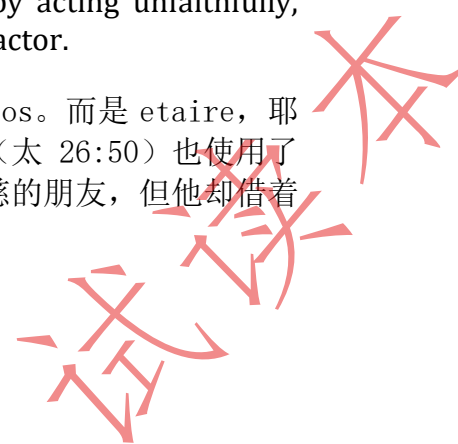
But it's time to move along to another stretch of the narrow middle road.

现在是时候走上另一段狭窄的中路了。

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> Greek scholars will want to note that the word which Jesus uses here for "friend" is not *philos*. It is *etaire*, the word used by Jesus in the parable of the wedding (Matthew 22:12) and again in addressing Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:50). The word always connotes someone who has been befriended most generously and graciously but who has betrayed the grace and goodness of his benefactor by acting unfaithfully, ungratefully, and altogether counter to the intention of his benefactor.

<sup>1</sup> 希腊读者会想要指出，耶稣在这里使用的朋友一词，不是 *philos*。而是 *etaire*，耶稣在婚宴的比喻（太 22:12）和在客西马尼园对犹大的讲话中（太 26:50）也使用了这一词。这一词总是暗含着某个人，他曾结交了最慷慨和最仁慈的朋友，但他却借着





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不忠实和忘恩负义的行为，背叛了他恩人的恩慈和良善，并与他恩人的意图完全背道而驰。

<sup>2</sup> This passage is especially interesting because it lists persecution as one of the blessings that comes as a reward for putting Christ and his kingdom first! Persecution confirms for the Christian that he was right in putting Christ and his kingdom first, since everything else is always at risk, can easily be lost, or can be taken away. But when Christ and his kingdom come first, the losses are put into perspective: they weren't all really that bad or that much of a loss; for as good as the things lost were, they were never what really mattered—and that no one can take away. See also in this connection Matthew 6:25-34 as an excellent commentary on this verse.

<sup>2</sup> 这段经文特别有趣，因为它将迫害列为一种祝福，作为将基督和他的国放在首位的奖赏！迫害证实了基督徒将基督和他的国放在首位是正确的，因为别的一切事总是处于危险中，很容易失去或被夺走。但是当基督和他的国首先临到时，损失就能被正确看待：它们并不是真的那么糟糕，或有那么大的损失；因为尽管失去的东西是好的，它们从来不是真正重要——和没有人能夺走——的东西。关于这一点，也可参见马太福音 6:25-34，作为对本节经文一个极好的注释。

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## 7. The Narrow Lutheran Middle Between an Idolatrous Love of the World and an Ungrateful Contempt for the World 在对这世界偶像般的爱和不领情的鄙视之间狭窄的路德宗中路

Perhaps by now we are getting the hang of it. Finding and keeping to the narrow middle road requires eyes that are fixed on Christ, minds that are bent on submission to his Word, and hearts that want nothing more than to draw ever closer to him who loves us and gave himself for us. The middle road despises neither reason nor emotion. Rather, it keeps them in their places. We give thanks for them and use them. At the same time, we recognize that they can push us off the narrow middle road. That's what happens when we take our eyes off of Christ and let our minds wander from his Word. Then they seize control and push aside both the cross and the Word, and that to the peril of our faith and life in Christ.

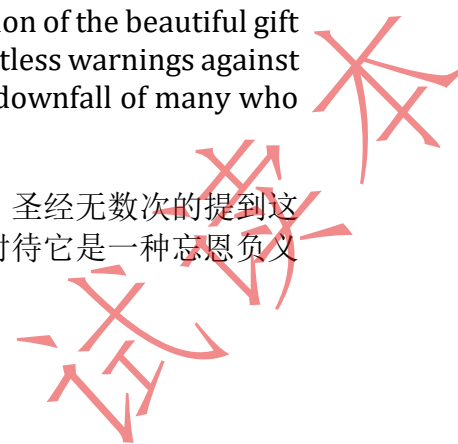
也许现在我们已经掌握了窍门。要想找到并保守在这狭窄的中路上，需要一双聚焦在基督身上的眼睛，一个专心顺服他圣道的思想，和一颗单单只想去亲近他的心——他爱我们并为我们舍了他自己。这中路既不藐视理性也不藐视情感。相反，它将它们保持在它们的位置上。我们感谢它们并使用它们。与此同时，我们意识到它们能够将我们推离这狭窄的中路。当我们将我们的目光从基督身上拿开，并让我们的思想从他的道上移走时，这样的事就发生了。然后，它们就夺去了控制权并将十字架和圣道一把推开，使我们在基督里的信心和生命置于危险之中。

In this chapter, with the same goal of sticking to the narrow middle road, we want to travel along a stretch of the road with ditches that should be very obvious to each of us. But as obvious as they should be and as easy to avoid, there are still many who plunge headlong into one or the other of them.

在这一章，带着坚持走在狭窄的中路上这同样的目标，我们想要沿着一段带有沟壑的道路前进，这沟壑对我们每个人本该非常明显。但尽管它们本该非常明显并非常容易避免，依然有很多人一头扎入其中一个或另外一个中。

It is easier to travel this section of the narrow middle road in theory than it is in practice. The Bible has uncounted references to the material world as a blessed gift of God. To despise it or treat it with contempt is a sin of ingratitude. It often betrays a false spirituality that imagines God is somehow pleased by a renunciation of the beautiful gift of his creation. But on the other hand, the Bible also contains countless warnings against the idolatrous love of this world. That kind of love has been the downfall of many who once were on the narrow middle road.

在狭窄的中路的这一段行走，在理论上比在实际上要容易得多。圣经无数次的提到这个物质世界是上帝充满祝福的恩赐。轻视它或带着鄙视的态度对待它是一种忘恩负义



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的罪。它常常流露着一种虚假的属灵，即，想象借着弃绝上帝受造物这美好的恩赐，而在某种程度上能蒙他喜悦。但另一方面，圣经也包含无数的警告，反对我们对这个世界偶像般的爱。这样的爱导致了許多曾走在这狭窄的中路之人的墮落。

## On the idolatrous love of the world 对这个世界偶像般的爱

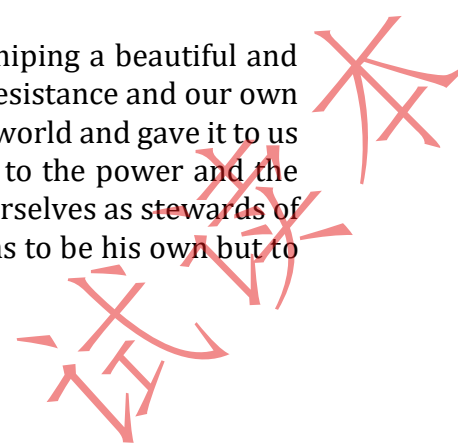
That his world and all that it contains is a great blessing from God is already evident in the creation account in Genesis 1,2. God made it. God declared it to be good. God gave it into the hands of Adam and Eve, that they should act as his regents and as stewards of his beautiful creation. Certainly it was his intent from the very beginning that they should enjoy his creation as well as manage it. It was their sin and our resultant sinfulness that has made the middle between an idolatrous love of the world and an ungrateful contempt for it such a problem for so many. Using our fallen nature as a launching pad, the devil together with the now-corrupted world itself tempt us to turn the material world into a god instead of receiving it with thanksgiving and using it as a precious gift of God.

上帝的世界和其中包含的一切，是他伟大的祝福，这在创世记 1, 2 章创造的叙述中就已经显明了。上帝创造了它，上帝宣称它是好的。上帝将它交到亚当和夏娃手里，让他们作他美丽创造物的摄政者和管家。当然，从一开始，他的目的就是让他们享受他的创造的同时，又管理它。正是他们的罪以及由此而来的我们的罪，导致如此多的人在对这世界偶像般的爱和无情的蔑视之间，出现了问题。使用我们墮落的本性作为发动台，魔鬼和现今墮落的世界一起，引诱我们将物质世界变为一个神，而不是带着感恩领受它，并作为上帝宝贵的恩赐使用它。

It was sin that brought down a curse on the material world, a curse whose effects will continue until the end of time. Now creation resists our rule over it and frustrates it. Now the sweat of the brow often makes work drudgery for many, instead of a blessed means of serving God and one another. Yes, and it is the sinfulness that inheres in all of us from the moment of our conception which ends up turning our hearts and minds to the worship of this perishing world even though it resists our control at every turn.

是罪为这个物质世界带来了咒诅，这咒诅的影响将一直持续到末日。现在，受造物反抗我们对它的统治并挫败着它。现在，汗流浹背常常让工作对很多人成为了一个苦差，而不是一个意味着服事上帝和他人的祝福。是的，正是在我们受孕的那一刻，遗传在我们所有人身上的罪性，最终使我们的的心灵和思想转去敬拜这个垂死的世界，即使它在每时每刻都在反抗着我们的统治。

So how shall we sort it all out and find a middle between worshiping a beautiful and useful creation of God and having contempt for it because of its resistance and our own weakness? We can begin by remembering that God designed the world and gave it to us as a *means* to an end. It should serve as a means that points us to the power and the goodness of God. God's generosity to us should move us to see ourselves as stewards of his goods and goodness. A steward does not consider what he has to be his own but to



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be his to use according to the direction of his master—again, the world and what it contains are not ends but means. Our sinful nature, however, wants to turn the world and what it contains into *ends*; that is, it wants to make things the reason for living and the acquiring of things the goal of life. And therein lies the problem. St. John puts the matter into perspective for us when he tell us:

所以我们应该怎么将事情理清楚，并在敬拜上帝美好和有用的受造物，以及因为它的反抗和我们自己的软弱而鄙视它之间，找到中路呢？我们可以从记住这一点开始：上帝设计这个世界并将它赐给我们，作为达到目的的工具。它应该作为一个工具，将我们指向上帝的大能和良善。上帝对我们的慷慨，本该激励我们看我们自己为他财物和美德的管家。一个管家并不认为他所拥有的是他自己的东西，而是按照他主人的指示去使用的东西——再次地，这个世界和它所包含的一切，并不是目的而是工具。然而，我们的罪性想要将这个世界和它所包含的变为目的；也就是说，它想要使世上东西变成生活的原因，使获得这些东西变成生命的目标。这就是问题所在。圣约翰为我们阐明了这事，他告诉我们：

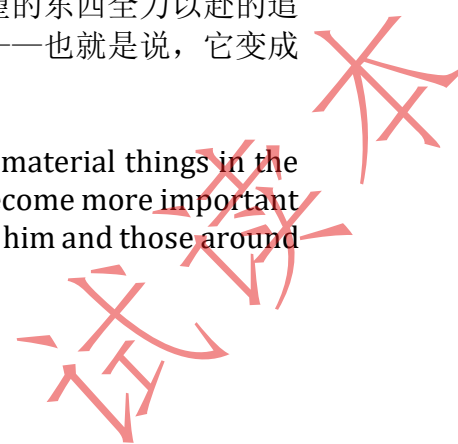
Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever. (1 John 2:15-17)

不要爱世界和世界上的东西，若有人爱世界，爱父的心就不在他里面了。因为凡世界上的东西，好比肉体的情欲、眼目的情欲和今生的骄傲，都不是从父来的，而是从世界来的。这世界和世上的情欲都要消逝，惟独那遵行上帝旨意的人永远常存。（约一2:15-17）

Did you notice that St. John does not tell us to despise the world in an absolute sense? He warns us against a love of the world that takes precedence over and is in opposition to a love for God. With such a love of the world, the heart longs for the things in the world as ends themselves: how much of what I see do I crave, and how much of it can I get? In striving with all my might to get what my heart craves, the world and what it contains becomes the be all and end all of life—that is, it becomes my god.<sup>1</sup>

你注意到没有？圣约翰不是告诉我们要绝对的鄙视这个世界。他警告我们不要爱这个世界，将其凌驾于爱上帝之上，并反抗对上帝的爱。带着这样一种对世界的爱，人心渴望这世界上的事，将它们自身作为目的，人心总是这样去想：我所看到的东西有多少是我渴望的，其中又有多少是我能够得到的？在对我心所渴望的东西全力以赴的追求中，这个世界和它所包含的东西，成为了生命的一切和归宿——也就是说，它变成了我的神。<sup>1</sup>

Yes, and that craving of the heart extends to more than just the material things in the world. It extends to all those “things” that we crave, things that become more important to us than Christ and his Word, more important to us than serving him and those around



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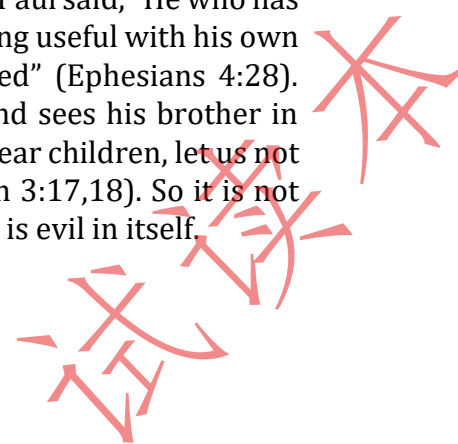
us. We think here of nonmaterial things. There is, for example, the lust to be respected or famous for mental or physical ability. There is the accompanying pleasure in looking down on those less gifted. There is the desire to pull down those more gifted. There is the ambition to rule more than serve, to get my own way rather than yield in loving service to another. There is the addiction to popularity, to the praise of the world that causes me to keep silent in the face of evil or to deny the truth of the Word of God. All these nonmaterial things come easily under the heading of the *“cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does.”*

是的，人心的渴望不仅仅涉及这个世界上物质的东西。它涉及一切我们渴望的“东西”，一切对我们来说，变得比基督和他的道，比服事他和我们身边的人更重要的东西。我们在这里想到的是非物质的东西。比如，一种希望以心智或身体能力受尊重或出名的欲望。与此同时，乐于鄙视那些有较少恩赐的人。渴望将那些有更多恩赐的人踩倒在地。雄心勃勃的去掌权而不是去服事，去自行其是而不是顺服于在爱心中服事他人。沉溺于被人欢迎，受这个世界的称赞，这导致我面对邪恶时保持沉默，或否定上帝之道的真理。所有这些非物质的东西，都很容易归属于“肉体的情欲、眼目的情欲和今生的骄傲”之中。

To be sure, some of what the heart craves may or may not be evil in itself. Someone desires to make a decent living so that he can support himself and not be a burden to society. He works so that he will have enough to provide for his family, to help the poor, and to support the work of the church. There need be nothing wrong with that, and there is a good deal that is right with it.

可以肯定的是，人心渴望的某些东西，就其自身，可能是也可能不是邪恶的。有些人希望过一个体面的生活，这样他就能养活自己，而不是成为社会的负担。他努力工作，使得他有能力供应他的家庭，帮助穷人，并支持教会工作。这没有什么错误，而且它有很多东西是对的。

Indeed, the Bible tells us that we should work. St. Paul reminded the Thessalonian Christians, “Even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ‘If a man will not work, he shall not eat.’ We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12). And in his first letter to young Pastor Timothy, the apostle urged him to remind his members, “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8). To the thief who craved the things of the world so much that he didn’t care how he got what he craved, Paul said, “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need” (Ephesians 4:28). St. John likewise exhorts, “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth” (1 John 3:17,18). So it is not work or even the desire to work hard and be rewarded for it that is evil in itself.





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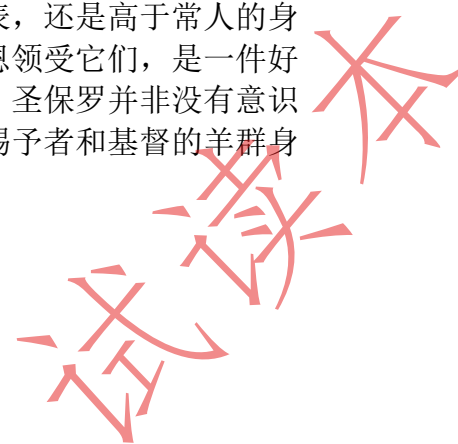
事实上，圣经告诉我们我们应该工作。圣保罗提醒帖撒罗尼迦的基督徒说：“我们在你们那里的时候曾吩咐你们，说若有人不肯做工，就不可吃饭。因为我们听说，在你们中间有人懒散，什么工都不做，反倒专管闲事。我们靠主耶稣基督吩咐并劝戒这样的人，要安分做工，自食其力”（帖后 3:10-12）。在他第一封写给年轻牧师提摩太的信里，他督促提摩太提醒他的会友：“若有人不照顾亲属，尤其是自己家里的人，就是背弃信仰，还不如不信的人”（提前 5:8）。对于那些如此渴望这世界的东西，以至于他并不关心他如何得到他所渴望的东西的小偷，保罗说：“偷窃的，不要再偷；总要勤劳，亲手做正当的事，这样才可以把自己有的，分给有缺乏的人”（弗 4:28）。圣约翰也劝诫说：“凡有世上财物的，看见弟兄缺乏，却关闭了恻隐的心，上帝的爱怎能住在他里面呢？孩子们哪，我们相爱，不要只在言语或舌头上，总要以行为和真诚表现出来”（约一 3:17, 18）。所以工作，甚至想要努力工作并得到其奖赏，就其本身并不是邪恶的。

And certainly a desire to have a good reputation in the world is not wrong in itself. We should strive for a good reputation, not least because a bad reputation harms not just us but those who will sneer at the gospel because of what they see in us. How many children turn their backs on the church prompted at least in part by the bad example of their parents, who did not even bother to have a good reputation with their own children? And so Jesus exhorts us in the Sermon on the Mount, “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

当然，想要在这个世上有一个好名声，本身不是错误的。我们应该争取一个好名声，因为一个坏名声不仅伤害了我们，也伤害了那些因为在我们身上所看到的而嘲笑福音的人。多少孩子背弃教会，至少有部分是由他们父母的坏榜样所引起的，他们甚至懒得在他们自己的孩子面前有一个好名声。因此耶稣在登山宝训中劝诫我们：“你们的光也要这样照在人前，叫他们看见你们的好行为，把荣耀归给你们在天上的父”（太 5:16）。

Even to be aware of the gifts that God has given to us individually, be they gifts of a good appearance or of physical or mental ability that rises above the average, need not be evil. To acknowledge such gifts and to receive them with thanksgiving can be a good thing. To deny that we have them would be a mark of ingratitude to the God who gave them. St. Paul was not unaware of the gifts that God gave him. He was grateful that they could be put to good use in the service of Christ the giver and of Christ’s flock (1 Corinthians 15:9-11). We considered this point in the last chapter.

甚至意识到上帝给我们个人的恩赐，无论这恩赐是一个好的外表，还是高于常人的身体或心智能力，也不一定是邪恶的。承认这样的恩赐并带着感恩领受它们，是一件好事。否定我们拥有它们，是对那赐下它们的上帝不领情的标志。圣保罗并非没有意识到上帝赐给他的恩赐。他很感激它们能够被很好地用在基督这赐予者和基督的羊群身上（林前 15:9-11）。我们在上一章讨论了这一点。



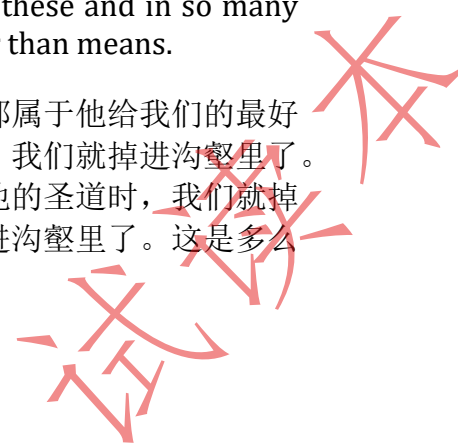
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But at the same time that we recognize the good in work, in reputation and honor, in God's particular gifts to us as individuals, we are quick to recognize something else as well. There is nothing in the world that may be good and a gift of God that cannot be easily corrupted by us with our fallen nature. Is there anything that cannot be used by the devil to push us into a ditch? Even family and other loved ones can become for us the ultimate reason for living and thus be turned into gods enticing us into a ditch. Jesus in a most dramatic way warns us against that possibility; he says, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). And this from the God who in so many other places tells us that the essence of obedience to the commandments is love to God *and* love for one another! How could he possibly mean what he says in that passage? He explains it when he says, "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37).

我们意识到，工作，名声和尊荣，上帝赐我们个人独特的恩赐都是有益的，但与此同时，我们也很快意识到一些别的事。这世界上没有一件，也许是好的并是上帝的恩赐的事，不能轻易被我们堕落的本性腐化的了。有哪件事不能被魔鬼用来将我们推入沟壑呢？甚至家庭和其他我们所爱的人，都能够成为我们活着的终极原因，并因此变成引诱我们进入沟壑的“神”。耶稣以一种最引人注目的方式警告我们抵挡这种可能；他说：“无论什么人到我这里来，若不恨自己的父母、妻子、儿女、兄弟、姊妹，甚至自己的性命，就不能作我的门徒”（路 14:26）。上帝在很多别的地方告诉我们，顺服诫命的本质是爱上帝并彼此相爱！他在这段经文里怎么可能说这样的话呢？他解释它说：“爱父母胜过爱我的，不配作我的门徒；爱儿女胜过爱我的，不配作我的门徒”（太 10:37）。

Jesus' point is clear. Though other people, family, and other loved ones are among his greatest gifts to us, we fall into the ditch when we no longer see them as means to provoke us to thanksgiving and service. We fall into the ditch when for their sakes we are willing to turn our eyes away from the Giver and his Word. We fall into the ditch when we make them the ultimate reason for living. And how often and easily that happens. The child does what he knows is wrong in order to be popular with the friends God gave him. The friends God gave become more important than the God who gave them. The couple is willing to sacrifice obedience to the Sixth Commandment in order to please the beloved. Either personal pleasure or that of the beloved replaced the God who "sets the lonely in families" (Psalm 68:6). The spouse gives up on personal or public worship to keep peace with an unbelieving partner. Parents abandon expectations of decent behavior from children lest the children "hate" them. In these and in so many similar situations, beautiful gifts of God have become ends rather than means.

耶稣的论点是清楚的。虽然其他人、家人和别的我们所爱的人都属于他给我们的最好的礼物，当我们不再视他们为激励我们去感恩和服事的工具时，我们就掉进沟壑里了。当我们甘心情愿为他们的缘故，将我们的目光转离那给予者和他的圣道时，我们就掉进沟壑里了。当我们让他们成为活着的终极原因时，我们就掉进沟壑里了。这是多么



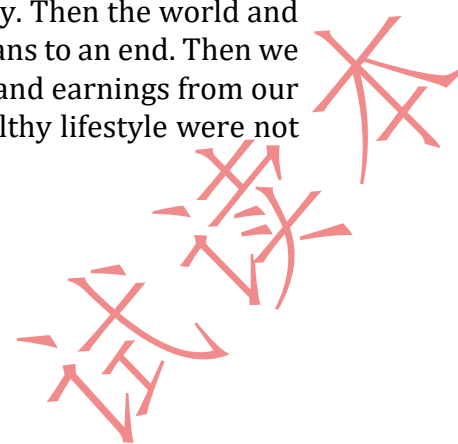
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频繁和容易发生啊。小孩为了在上帝给他的朋友中受欢迎，做他知道是错误的事。上帝赐下的朋友变得比那赐下他们的上帝更重要。夫妻为了取悦对方甘愿牺牲对第六诫的顺服。要么是个人愉悦，要么是爱人的愉悦，取代了那“使孤独的有家”（诗 68:6）的上帝。配偶放弃个人或公众敬拜，去与不信的另一半保持和平。父母放弃对孩子行为得体的期待，以免孩子会“恨”他们。在这些和太多类似的情况下，上帝美好的礼物变成了目的而不是工具。

Even life itself can become a god, a *thing* that we love more than the God who gave it. Jesus said in Luke 14:26 that unless we hate our own life, i.e., unless we love him more than life itself, we cannot be his disciple. How often do we hear and maybe even use the cliché “As long as you have your health, you have everything?” It’s not true. As precious as life is, as much to be cherished and nurtured as it is, life is not the goal of life! The goal of life is the hearing of the gospel and the receiving of its life-giving promises in faith. The goal of life is grateful obedience and service to him who lived and died for us and for our salvation. The goal of life is heaven. The one who is jogging and doing sit-ups on Sunday morning instead of giving attention to the Word of Life has doubtless missed that point. The one who is terrified of death as though it were the worst thing that could ever happen to him has not taken to heart the glorious promises of eternal life.

甚至是生命本身也能变成一个神，我们爱它超过爱那赐下它的上帝。耶稣在路加福音 14:26 中说，除非我们恨恶我们自己的生命，即，除非我们爱他超过生命本身，我们不能做他的门徒。我们多么频繁地听到，甚至可能用过这句俗语：“健康比一切都重要”？这不是真的。无论生命多么珍贵，多么值得珍惜和呵护，生命并不是生命的目的！生命的目的是听到福音并领受其在信心里赐生命的应许。生命的目的是感恩的顺服并服事，那为我们和我们的救恩降生并死去的主。生命的目的是天堂。那些在周天早上跑步或健身，而不是专注于生命之道的人，无疑是错失了这一点。一个害怕死亡，仿佛这是能发生在他身上最糟糕的事情的人，并没有把永生荣耀的应许放在心上。

So it is not work in itself, nor what we gain by work, that is evil. Nor is the desire for an honorable and good reputation wrong in itself. Nor is the effort that it takes to have a good name evil in itself. And certainly, the desire for a happy family life and good friends and good health is not evil in itself. Rather, it is the attitude with which we pursue and use all these things that can become the problem. What if lurking beneath the desire for a good reputation is simply a craving for the praises of men? What if supporting family and helping the poor and giving to the work of the church has become a bother to us? What if our effort to stay healthy has behind it chiefly a fear of death or only the desire to enjoy ourselves rather than the desire to serve? Then it is clear that we love the world in the way that John warns against in the passage cited previously. Then the world and what it contains have become ends in themselves rather than means to an end. Then we have fallen off of the narrow middle road, even though the work and earnings from our labor, a good reputation, a happy family, good friends, and a healthy lifestyle were not sinful in themselves.



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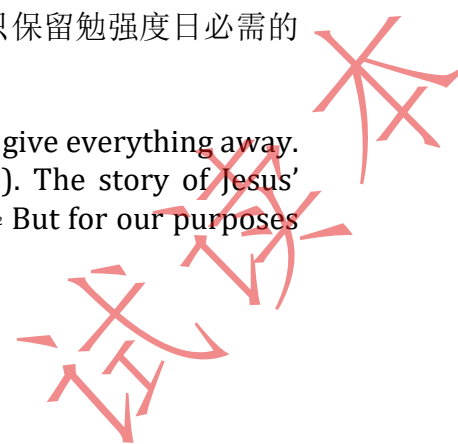
所以，不是工作本身，也不是我们借着工作获得了什么，是邪恶的。渴望荣誉和好名声本身并没有错。获得好名声的努力本身不是邪恶的。当然，渴望有一个幸福的家庭生活、好的朋友和健康，本身也不是邪恶的。不如说，我们追求和使用这一切东西的态度会成为问题。如果潜伏在渴望好名声之下的，不过是得人的称赞的欲望，那又怎么样呢？如果供养家庭，帮助穷人，奉献支持教会工作，变成了我们的烦恼，那又怎么样呢？如果我们努力保持健康，背后主要是恐惧死亡或只想尽情享受，而不是想去服事，那又怎么样呢？那么显然，我们就是按照约翰在前面引用的经文里警告的那样，去爱这个世界。那么这个世界和它所包含的东西，就变成了目的本身，而不是达成目的的工具。那么我们就从狭窄的中路上跌落了，即使工作、我们劳碌的收获、好名声、幸福的家庭、好朋友和健康的生活方式，本身并不是罪。

It isn't the "how much" that matters but the attitude toward the "how much" “多少”并不是问题，问题是对“多少”的态度

In all of these "things," how much of them we have is not the issue. Whether we have many friends, really good health, a good income, or the reverse is not of itself the problem. It isn't even a matter, for example, of how much of this world's goods we receive as the fruit of our labors. The Bible shows us any number of people who were rich, who had large and often happy families and many good friends; they were not condemned for it. The patriarchs of the Old Testament were wealthy men. Solomon was perhaps the richest man who ever lived. Job was wealthy and healthy and had a large and happy family before God tested him; and after the test, he was again blessed with wealth and family even more than he had been before. St. Paul wrote an entire epistle to a wealthy man, his letter to Philemon. Nowhere are any of these individuals told to divest themselves of all their worldly wealth and live as beggars or as hermits in a cave. They are not even told to give away most of what they had and to keep only so much as was absolutely necessary for them to get by.

在所有这些“东西”上，我们有多少它们并不是问题。我们是否有很多朋友，是否真的很健康，有很好的收入或者相反，本身并不是问题。它甚至不是一件事儿，比如，我们拥有这世上多少物品，作为我们劳动的成果。圣经向我们展示了很多富有的人，他们有一个大的并且通常很幸福的家庭和很多朋友；他们并不因此受责备。旧约中的先祖都是富有的人。所罗门也许是有史以来最富有的人。在上帝试炼约伯之前，他富有、健康，并有一个大而幸福的家庭；在试炼之后，他再一次得到，甚至比他曾拥有的更多的财富和家庭的祝福。圣保罗写了一整封信给一个富人，即，他致腓利门的信。没有任何地方告诉这些人要放弃他们自己所有的属世财富，像乞丐或隐士一样住在洞穴里。他们甚至没有被告知要他们放弃所拥有的大部分东西，只保留勉强度日必需的东西。

Only once in the Bible do we have an example of someone told to give everything away. That's the example of the rich young man (Matthew 19:16-26). The story of Jesus' encounter with this young man is instructive on so many levels.<sup>2</sup> But for our purposes





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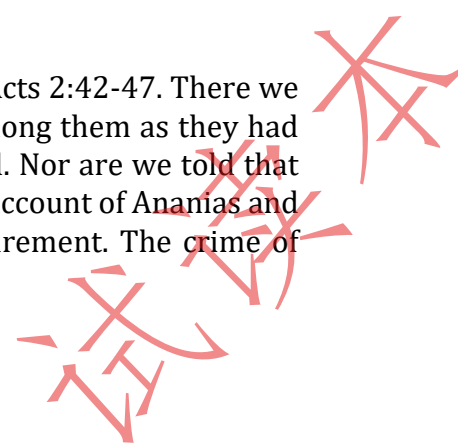
here, it is enough to say that Jesus' primary intent was to show the young man that he desperately needed a Savior. All of the obedience of the young man to the law of God was nothing compared to his great sin: he loved his wealth more than God and more than his neighbor; thus, he had broken the First Commandment and was an idolater. Only by telling him to give it all away could Jesus bring that sin and, more important, the young man's great need to light. In spite of the fact that the young man wanted very much to be on the narrow middle road, he had fallen deeply into the ditch of love for the world. At least on the occasion of this encounter with Jesus, the man was not moved to cry out for help and rescue from the idolatry into which he had fallen. But otherwise, Jesus never made poverty a condition for following him.

在圣经中，我们只看到一次，有人被告知去放弃一切的例子。就是那个年轻的财主的例子（太 19:16-26）。耶稣和这个年轻人相遇的故事，在很多方面都有教育意义。<sup>2</sup>但就我们在这里的目的而言，我们只需要说，耶稣主要的意图，是向这个年轻人显明，他极度的需要一位救主。这个年轻人对上帝律法全部的顺服，相比他极大的罪，什么都不是：他爱他的财富超过上帝和他的邻舍；因此，他违背了第一条诫命并是一个偶像崇拜者。只有借着告诉他去放弃一切，耶稣才能将他放在这个罪之下，更重要的是，让这个年轻人看到他对光极大的需要。尽管这个年轻人非常想走在这狭窄的中路上，他却深深的陷入了爱这个世界的沟壑。至少在这次与耶稣相遇的时候，这个年轻人并没有哭喊着请求帮助，从他跌入其中的偶像崇拜中被解救出来。但除了这个情况外，耶稣从未将贫穷作为跟随他的条件。

To be sure, the apostles left their earthly occupations when Jesus called them to follow him full time. But there was in that call no requirement that they should forever be destitute and beggars. St. Paul tells us that those who serve God's people full time as pastors and teachers should be supported by those they serve (1 Corinthians 9:1-14). He does not suggest that the level of that support should leave the worker on the brink of financial ruin or with just enough to get by. In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul even points to the example of the priesthood of the Old Testament. The priests were supported by the gifts of the people; they were never required to take a vow of poverty; Jesus never required that of anyone either.

可以肯定的是，当耶稣呼召使徒全职跟随他，他们离开了他们属世的职业。但这个呼召并不要求他们永远是贫困者和乞丐。圣保罗告诉我们，那些作为牧师和教师全职服事上帝子民的人，应受那些他们服事之人的支持（林前 9:1-14）。他并不认为，这样的支持程度应该让工人处于经济崩溃的边缘，或是刚够勉强度日。在哥林多前书 9 章中保罗甚至指出旧约祭司职的例子。祭司受人民献上的礼物供应；他们从未要求发誓守贫；耶稣也从未要求任何人这样做。

Some might want to point to the example of the early church in Acts 2:42-47. There we note that people sold their possessions and gave to the poor among them as they had need. But the text doesn't say that they sold everything they had. Nor are we told that that was a requirement for fellowship in the church. Indeed, the account of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) makes the point that such was never a requirement. The crime of





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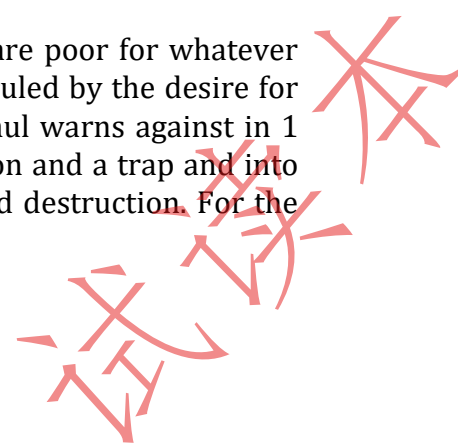
Ananias and Sapphira was not that they refused to give all they had for the support of the poor; their crime was that they deliberately lied about what they had given. Acts 6 and the calling of the serving deacons likewise indicates that as generous as the members of the congregation were, they did not live a totally communal life. The deacons were needed not to divide up food for the whole community but only for the needy widows. The rest provided for themselves and in the process gave what was needed for the support of those in need.

有些人可能想举使徒行传 2:42-47 早期教会的例子。在那里，我们注意到人们变卖他们的财产，并按人们所需的分给他们中间的穷人。但文中并没有说他们卖了他们所有的一切。我们也没被告知这是对教会团体的一个要求。事实上，亚拿尼亚和撒非喇的记述（徒 5）指出这绝不是一个要求。亚拿尼亚和撒非喇的罪状，不是他们拒绝献上他们所有的一切去支持穷人；他们的罪状是他们故意谎报他们所献上的。使徒行传 6 章和呼召服事执事同样表明，尽管教会成员十分慷慨，他们并不完全是过着一种共有生活。这些执事不需要为整个社团，而只需要为贫困的寡妇分配食物。其余的人自给自足，并在这一过程中，给那些缺乏的人供应他们所需的帮助。

In point of fact, those who imagine that taking a vow of poverty somehow makes them more worthy in the eyes of God make of their poverty a god just as much as those who worship their wealth. Whatever we make the goal of life, and that which gives it meaning either here or hereafter, is our god. The one who imagines that his self-chosen works (any works for that matter) will contribute to his own salvation robs Christ of the glory he has and wants as our only and all-sufficient Savior. Luther had a great deal to say about the imagined holiness of those who lived off of the labor of others in idle contemplation and prayer; nothing of what he had to say about such a lifestyle is complimentary. His conclusion too was that many of those who have fallen into the ditch of contempt for the world are idolaters just as much as those who have an excessive love for the world.

事实上，那些想象发誓守贫，在某种程度上让他们在上帝眼里更有价值的人，让他们的贫穷成为了一个神——如同那些崇拜他们的财富的人一样。无论我们让什么成为生命的目的，赋予它无论是今生还是来生的意义，那就是我们的神。那想象他自择的行为（就此而言的任何行为）将有助于他自己的救恩的人，剥夺了基督作为我们唯一和全备的救主他所拥有和想要的荣耀。在路德的时代，有些人靠着别人的劳作活在空虚的沉思和祷告中，对于这样的人所想象的圣洁，路德说了很多话；对于这样一种生活方式，他所说的没有一句话是称赞性的。他的结论同样是，很多坠入鄙视世界这沟壑的人，如同那些过度热爱这世界的人一样，都是偶像崇拜者。

So neither poverty nor wealth can save us. Indeed, those who are poor for whatever reason are just as capable of greed as the rich if their lives are ruled by the desire for wealth or by envy toward those who have it. That's what St. Paul warns against in 1 Timothy 6:9,10: "People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the



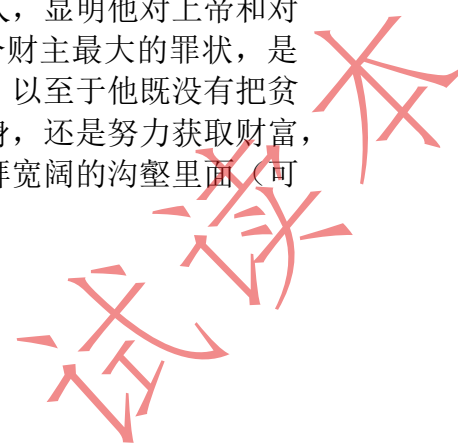
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love of money [note: not money itself!] is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

因此，无论贫穷还是财富都不能拯救我们。事实上，那些无论出于什么原因而贫穷的人，当他们活在对财富的渴望中，或者活在对那些拥有财富之人的嫉妒中，他们就和富人一样贪婪。圣保罗在提摩太前书 6:9, 10 警告我们说：“但那些想要发财的人就陷在诱惑、罗网和许多无知有害的欲望中，使人沉沦，以致败坏和灭亡。贪财是万恶之根。有人因贪恋钱财而背离信仰，用许多愁苦把自己刺透了。”

Jesus too warns us more than once against the dangers of wealth, of how treacherous it can be and how easy it is for this world's goods to seduce us into idolatry. He does that in the passage noted previously (Matthew 19:16-26), in which he tells the disciples how difficult it is for those with wealth to be saved. It is so very easy to fix one's heart on the desire to have and then always to have more that the slope into idolatry is a slippery one indeed. Jesus makes the same point when he speaks of the deceitfulness of riches—whether we have wealth or have wealth as our goal—in the parable of the sower and the seed (Mark 4:18,19). In the story of the rich man and poor Lazarus, Jesus highlights the problem: the rich man was not condemned because he was rich but because he had no compassion. He thereby showed plainly that he loved his wealth more than God and more than he loved his poor neighbor. God gave him such a neighbor so that the rich man could show his love for God and man by generous service to the one in need (Luke 16:19-31). Notice that even in that story the rich man's greatest crime was that he did not listen to Moses and the prophets. He was too busy acquiring and enjoying his wealth to be bothered with either poor Lazarus or with the Word of God. So whether it is wealth itself or work to acquire wealth or the enjoyment of wealth, when these become the goals of life, we have fallen into the wide ditch of idolatry (Mark 8:36,37; Luke 12:13-21). The same point can be made with respect to anything else in the world—to family, to friends, to health, and to life itself.

耶稣也不止一次地警告我们钱财的危险，提醒我们这世上的物品是多么凶险并多么容易引诱我们陷入偶像崇拜。他在前面提到的经文（太 19:16-26）里就谈到了这一点，在其中他告诉门徒那些有钱财的人要得救是多么地难啊。将人心绑在想要拥有，并永远想要拥有更多的渴望上，是如此容易，使得陷入偶像崇拜的斜坡确实何等陡峭。当耶稣在播种者和种子的比喻中，谈到钱财的迷惑（可 4:18:19）——无论是我们拥有的钱财还是将钱财作为目标——时，他表达了同样的观点。在财主和穷人拉撒路的故事里，耶稣强调了这个问题：财主并不是因为他富有而被责备，而是因为他没有同情心。借此他清楚地显明他爱他的钱财超过爱上帝和爱他贫穷的邻舍。上帝赐他这样一个邻舍，这样这个财主就可以借着慷慨地服事这个在缺乏中的人，显明他对上帝和对他人的爱（路 16:19-31）。请注意，即使在这个故事里，这个财主最大的罪状，是他并没有听摩西和先知的的话。他如此忙于获得和享受他的财富，以至于他既没有把贫穷的拉撒路也没有把上帝的话放在心上。因此，无论是财富本身，还是努力获取财富，还是享受财富，当这成为了生命的目的时，我们就掉入偶像崇拜宽阔的沟壑里面（可



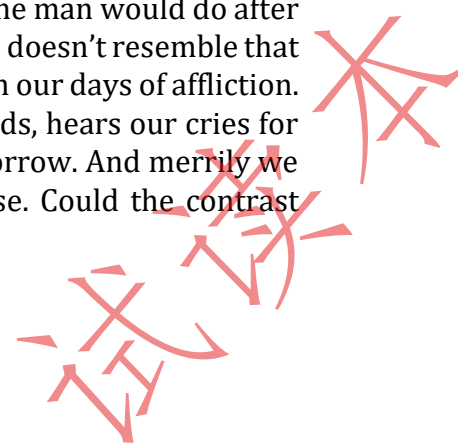
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8:36, 37; 路 12:13-21)。这样的观点，对这世上的任何其它东西——家庭，朋友，健康，和生命本身，同样适用。

But is it not an amazing thing, a remarkable testimony to the goodness, the kindness, the generosity of God? He could have put us into a dreary gray world without any beauty, without things that make life easier and more enjoyable. He could have set us in as solitary a society as that of some animals in the forest, without family and friends. He could have made us without the vigor that health affords and the pleasure of being alive. Had he done that, we would have none of the temptations to turn his gifts into gods. Had he done that, our only temptation would have been to a sullen grumpiness and an ever-complaining spirit. But he didn't want that for us. And so he gives and then gives more. He heaps on us one blessing after another of things, of people, of health, and of life itself. He does that even though he knows full well that in our fallen nature, we can easily make any or all of these things substitutes for him. He does it knowing that we can turn our love from the Giver to the gifts. Yes, is that not an amazing thing? His kindness in contrast to our perversity is a thing of endless wonder—and a reason for unending praise and grateful adoration.

这难道不是一件令人惊奇的事吗？是对上帝良善、仁慈和慷慨卓越的见证吗？他本可以将我们放在一个枯燥的灰色的世界，没有任何美，没有任何让生命变得更轻松和更愉悦的东西。他本可以把我们放在一个独居的世界，就像森林里的某些动物一样，没有家庭和朋友。他本可以让我们失去健康所提供的活力和活着的乐趣。如果他这么做了，我们就不会有将他的恩赐变为神的试探了。如果他这么做了，我们唯一的试探就会是闷闷不乐和没完没了的抱怨了。但是他不想我们这样。因此他供给我们，并供给更多。他赐给我们一个接一个的祝福：物品、人们、健康和生命本身。尽管他完全知道，在我们堕落的本性里，我们可以很轻易让任何一件或全部这些东西来代替他，他依然这样做了。他知道我们能够将我们的爱从那赐予者身上转到这些恩赐身上，他依然这样做了。是的，这难道不是一件令人惊奇的事吗？与我们的邪恶相对比，他的良善是一件让人无限惊奇的事——也是一个在感恩中不断赞美和敬拜的原因。

Consider the example of the leper in Mark 1:40-45. In his need, the leper was willing to submit everything to the will of Jesus. But once he was cleansed of his leprosy, he thought he knew better than Jesus what was best. Jesus sternly warned him not to publish the miracle; but the leper in understandable excitement over his healing, pushed aside the warning of Jesus and did exactly what Jesus told him not to do. But didn't Jesus know that that would happen? Of course he knew. Nevertheless, in his kindness, in his grace and goodness, he healed the man. Jesus' eagerness to help and serve that man overcame his own understanding of the damage the man would do after Jesus helped and healed him! What a remarkable thing! Whose life doesn't resemble that of the leper? We cry for help in time of need. We plead for mercy in our days of affliction. And God, knowing how easily we turn his gifts into substitute gods, hears our cries for mercy. He delivers us today and wards off threatening peril tomorrow. And merrily we go along, unmindful of today's blessing and tomorrow's promise. Could the contrast



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between God's goodness and our perversity be sharper? Only the utterly perverse notion that God forgives us so that we can sin all we want is worse.

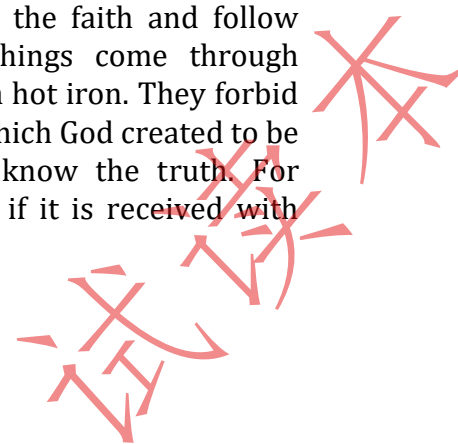
想想在马可福音 1:40-45 中麻风病人的例子。在他需要的时候，这个麻风病人甘愿在一切事上都顺服耶稣的旨意。但是一旦他的麻风病得了洁净，他认为他比耶稣更知道什么是最好。耶稣严肃地警告他不要去公开这个神迹；但是这个对他的医治处于合情合理的兴奋中的麻风病人，将耶稣的警告放置一旁，恰恰做了耶稣告诉他不要去做的事。但是耶稣不知道将会发生这样的事吗？他当然知道。然而，在他的仁慈里，在他的恩典和良善里，他医治了这个人。耶稣对帮助和服事这个人的热忱，胜过了他知道这个人会在耶稣帮助和医治他之后所做的伤害！多么奇异的事情啊！谁的生命不类似于这个麻风病人呢？我们在缺乏的时刻呼求帮助。我们在遭难的日子祈求怜悯。上帝知道我们多么容易将他的恩赐变为替代他的神，尽管如此，他依然听了我们对怜悯的呼求。他今天搭救我们，又在明天帮助我们避开危险。我们自顾自地前行，不在乎今天的祝福和明天的应许。还有什么比上帝的良善和我们的邪恶之间的对比更鲜明的呢？比之更糟糕的，恐怕只有这样的刚愎的观点了，即，上帝赦免我们使得我们可以犯我们想犯的一切罪。

## Contempt for the world is not the answer 鄙视这个世界并不是答案

And that point brings us to at least a brief consideration of the opposite ditch, that of ungrateful contempt for God's blessings. God does not tell us to despise his gifts of material things, of family and friends, of health and life itself. Those who treat all these things with contempt are ungrateful for the bounty that God bestows. It is a sorry spectacle indeed when someone imagines that all laughter and pleasure, the joys of marriage and children, the vigor of a healthy body and a sound mind are evil. In point of fact, St. Paul warns against an ungrateful contempt for the world in the same book in which he warns against a worship of the world. He tells us:

这一点至少给我们带来了，对于另一边的沟壑的一个简短的思考，那就是对上帝的祝福不领情的鄙视。上帝没有告诉我们去轻视他赐下的各种物质、家庭、朋友、健康和生命本身。那些带着鄙视对待所有这些东西的人，是对上帝慷慨赐予的不领情。当有人假设欢笑和快乐，婚姻和儿女的喜悦，健康的身体和健全的心灵带来的活力——所有这些都是邪恶时，这确实是令人遗憾的景象。事实上，在警告我们不要崇拜这个世界的同一卷书里，圣保罗也警告说，不要对这个世界怀有不领情的鄙视。他告诉我们：

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with



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thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. (1 Timothy 4:1-5)

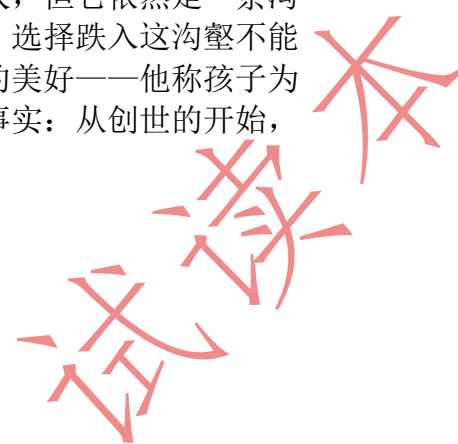
圣灵明说，在末后的时期必有人离弃信仰，去听信那诱惑人的邪灵和鬼魔的教训。这是出于撒谎者的假冒；这些人的良心如同被热铁烙了一般。他们禁止嫁娶，又禁戒食物—就是上帝所造、让那信而明白真理的人存感谢的心领受的。上帝所造之物样样都是好的，若存感谢的心领受，没有一样是不可吃的，都因上帝的话和人的祈祷而成为圣洁了。（提前 4:1-5）

Pride in poverty or celibacy or the hermit's life does not make us somehow more worthy of God's favor than we would be otherwise. That some against nature impose on themselves and others such unnecessary misery and then imagine that for it they deserve heaven, at least in part, is a tragedy indeed. As wealth and marriage, family, friends, and health cannot save us, so too their renunciation will in no way contribute to our salvation. Even when one undertakes a solitary life or a life of poverty willingly, the ditch is inviting. Such a one may fall into a self-centered idleness. He may yield to the temptation of contempt for "the common herd" of mankind who are living a different life than the one he has chosen. It is after all just as easy to be proud of what one has given up as it is to be proud of what one has and enjoys.

对贫穷、独身或隐士生活的骄傲，并不使我们在某种程度上比其它情况更值得上帝的喜爱。一些人违背自然地把这样不必要的痛苦强加在他们自己和别人身上，然后幻想借此他们配得天堂，至少在一定程度上，这确实是一出悲剧。正如钱财、婚姻、家庭、朋友和健康不能拯救我们，弃绝它们对我们的救恩也没有任何帮助。甚至当一个人心甘情愿的过着隐士或贫困的生活时，这个沟壑也正在吸引着他。这样一个人可能陷入了自我中心的懒散中。他可能屈服于鄙视“普通大众”的试探——鄙视他们过着一种与他所选择的不同的生活。毕竟，为自己放弃了什么而骄傲，与为自己拥有和享受了什么而骄傲，一样容易。

The ditch of contempt for the world may be a less appealing one than that ditch on the opposite side of the road, but it is a ditch nevertheless. Choosing to fall into it does not reflect the grateful joy of the psalmist who sings his praise and thanks to God for all that God has given, as for example in Psalm 103. It misses the good in the gratitude of the psalmist who calls children a special gift and blessing of God (Psalm 127:3-5). And it takes no notice of the fact that from the beginning of the world God commends marriage as a mark of his kindness (Genesis 2:18-24).

鄙视世界的沟壑，相比这条路另一边的沟壑，可能没那么吸引人，但它依然是一条沟壑。在诗篇 103 篇中，诗人为上帝赐下的一切歌颂和感谢上帝，选择跌入这沟壑不能反映诗人的感恩和喜悦之情。它丧失了诗人在他的感激之情中的美好——他称孩子为上帝特别的恩赐和祝福（诗 127:3-5）。它也忽略了这样一个事实：从创世的开始，上帝就称赞婚姻为他仁慈的记号（创 2:18-24）。





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St. James sums it all up for us when he reminds us that all we are and have we should see as good and perfect gifts of God, gifts that begin with the gift of faith but certainly do not end there (James 1:17,18). It is interesting to note that such a reminder comes in a book which contains also the sharpest warnings against the ditch on the other side of the road, the ditch of an idolatrous love of the world.

圣雅各就这一切为我们做了总结，他提醒我们，我们所有人和我们拥有的一切，都应当被视为上帝美善和完美的恩赐，这些恩赐开始于信心的恩赐，但当然不会到此为止（雅 1:17,18）。有趣的是，出现了这样一个提醒的同一卷书里，也包含了对这条路上另一边的沟壑的尖锐警告，即，偶像般的爱这个世界的沟壑。

## The middle between the two ditches 这两个沟壑之间的中路

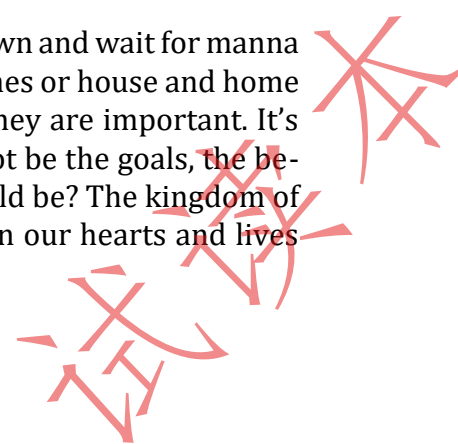
How then shall we find and stay on the narrow middle road? How shall we avoid the ditch of ungrateful contempt and the doubtless wider ditch of an idolatrous love of the world? Of all that the Bible has to say by way of warning and encouragement to travel the narrow middle road, we will consider just a few of the passages that well serve as road markers along the narrow middle way.

那么，我们应该怎样找到并留在这条狭窄的中路上呢？我们应该怎样避开这不领情的鄙视的沟壑，以及无疑更宽阔的偶像般的爱这个世界的沟壑呢？圣经说了很多警告和鼓励人们走在这条狭窄中路上的话，我们将会细思其中的几段经文，它们是沿着这条中路的很好的指路牌。

The first of these is in Luke 12:22-34, where Jesus gives us his perfect instruction on the whole matter of the proper attitude towards wealth and what it can buy. In his instruction he wants to ward off the very beginnings of a false attitude toward wealth. The false attitude begins not with wealth itself. It begins with worry that we don't have enough or might not have enough in the future. He urges us to avoid worry and the ditch of idolatry over against wealth by telling us what our real, our primary, our only concern should be.

第一段经文是路加福音 12:22-34，在那儿，耶稣在对待钱财的正确态度和它能买到什么这整个问题上，给了我们完美的指示。他想要帮助我们从根本上避开对钱财错误的态度。这种错误的态度并不是开始于钱财本身。它开始于担心我们没有足够的钱，或可能没有足够的钱。他告诉我们真正的、首要的和唯一应该关注的是什么，借此，他督促我们避开对钱财的忧虑和偶像崇拜的沟壑。

Read the verses carefully! Jesus does not say that we should sit down and wait for manna to fall from heaven. He is not suggesting either that food and clothes or house and home are useless and of no value. In point of fact, he recognizes that they are important. It's just that they should not be what we set our hearts on, should not be the goals, the be-alls and end-alls, the definitions of our existence. What then should be? The kingdom of God. Jesus says that we should seek first and foremost his rule in our hearts and lives



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and trust him to give us what we need of these other things. He will give these other things in such a measure as we need and as suits us as we go about earning our daily bread with thanksgiving to its ultimate source.

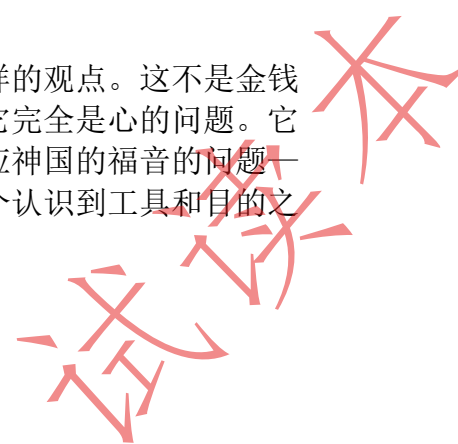
仔细阅读这段经文！耶稣没有说我们应该呆坐着，等候吗哪从天上掉下来。他并不是在暗示说，食物和衣服，或房子和家庭是无用的和没有价值的。事实上，他承认它们是重要的。只是，它们不应该是我们的心之所向，不应该是我们的目标、我们的要旨、我们存在的定义。那么什么应该是呢？上帝的国。耶稣说，我们应该首先寻求他在我们心里和我们生命中的统治，并相信他会赐予我们这些我们所需要的别的东西。在我们带着对我们日用饮食终极源头的感恩之心去谋生时，他按着我们所需要的和适合我们的方式赐下这些别的东西。

Whether he gives much or little, we shall not be disturbed if our real need and goal in life has already been accomplished. And it has been. He won the kingdom for us on the cross. And he plants that kingdom in our hearts through the gospel in Word and sacraments. He tells us plainly, "Your Father knows that you need them [i.e., food and clothes and the like]. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well" (12:30,31). Then he goes on to urge us to generosity with "these things" that God gives us in the course of our earthly lives through work or by other honest means: "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (12:33,34).

无论耶稣赐下的多还是少，如果我们生命真正的需要和目标已经成就，我们就不应该为此不安。并且它确实已经成就。他在十字架上为我们赢得了上帝的国。并且他透过圣道和圣礼中的福音将这国植入我们心里。他简洁明了地告诉我们：“你们需要这些东西，你们的父都知道。你们只要求他的国，这些东西就必加给你们了”（路 12:30, 31）。然后他继续督促我们，慷慨地使用上帝在我们今生的生命中，透过工作或其他正当的方式赐给我们的“这些东西”：“你们要变卖财产周济人，为自己预备永不坏的钱囊和用不尽的财宝在天上，就是贼不能近，虫不能蛀的地方。因为你们的财宝在哪里，你们的心也在哪里”（路 12:33, 34）。

What a master teacher he is! He makes much the same point and expands on the thought in Luke 16:9-15. It's not a question of wealth or possessions. Nor by extension is it a matter of health and reputation in and of themselves. It's all a matter of the heart. It's a matter of priorities. It's a matter of the use to which we put all these "things" in response to the gospel of the kingdom won by him for us and given freely to us in the gospel. It's a matter of knowing the difference between means and ends.

他真是一位教学大师！在路加福音 16:9-15 他阐明并扩展了同样的观点。这不是金钱或财富的问题。引申而言，它也不是健康和名望本身的问题。它完全是心的问题。它是优先顺序的问题。它是我们如何使用所有这些“东西”来回应神国的福音的问题——这神国是他为我们赢得并在福音里白白赐予我们的。它是一个认识到工具和目的之不同的问题。



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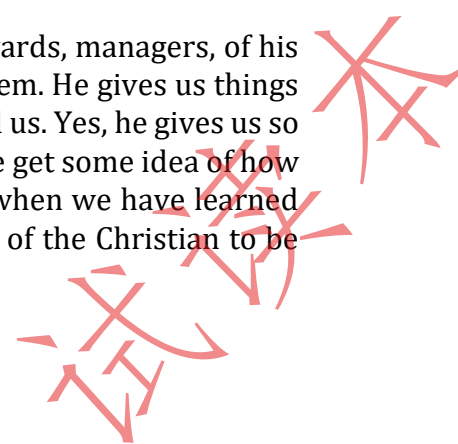
Clearly these words of Jesus will often strike a guilty note in our hearts. Who is there among us that has not worried more about his bank account, his popularity, his health, than about the condition of his soul? Who is there who does not fret at least from time to time about whether he has enough or how much more he can get? Who is there who is never stirred by envy or greed or by resentment at the seeming prosperity of another? Even the psalmist recognized this problem in himself when he was grieved at the prosperity of the wicked (Psalm 73). Who is not sometimes troubled, as the psalmist was, by the gifts of God to another—gifts of talent, wealth, or beauty? If we nurse such thoughts, we come soon to bitterness, even to resenting God for not giving us what he has given to another. Yes, we become no different than the pagans of whom Jesus speaks in these verses. On rare occasions we may even run to the opposite ditch and declare ourselves more worthy than these others because we have less.

显然，耶稣的这些话常常在我们心中激起负罪感。我们中有谁不是更担心他的银行账号、他的名望和健康，超过他灵魂的状态呢？有谁没有至少不时地为是否拥有的够多，或他如何能拥有更多而焦虑呢？有谁没有因他人表面上的兴旺而被激起嫉妒、贪婪或怨恨呢？甚至当诗篇作者悲痛于恶人的兴旺时，他也意识到在他里面的这个问题（诗 73）。有谁没有如同诗篇作者那样，不时为上帝赐予别人的各种恩赐——才能、财富或美丽——而烦恼呢？当我们怀有这样的想法，我们就必速生苦楚，甚至为上帝没有将他赐给别人的东西赐给我们而怨恨他。是的，我们变得和耶稣在这些经文中所说的外邦人没有什么不同。在极少数的情况下，我们甚至会跑到相反的沟壑里，宣称我们自身比他人更优秀——因为我们拥有的更少。

All such thoughts should quickly remind us of how perverse the human heart is. They should move us anew to recognize how desperately we need the fact that the kingdom of God is entirely God's gift on account of Christ's work and not our own. If we had to merit it even in the least small part, we would have long ago lost any hope for it by our slips on the edges of these ditches. Yes, and the very reminder of the richness of God's grace and mercy should move us again to desire that kingdom first and foremost. What do all the riches of the world have to offer by comparison? Nothing but things to lose!

所有这些想法本该很快提醒我们人心是多么地邪恶。它们本该激励我们再次认识到，我们对这样一个事实多么迫切的需要，即，上帝的国完全是上帝的恩赐，它基于基督的工作而不是我们自己的。如果我们必须配得，哪怕只需最微不足道的一点，我们早就因滑入这些沟壑而失去任何盼望了。是的，对上帝丰富恩典和怜悯的提醒，本该激励我们再次渴望先求上帝的国。相比之下，这世界一切的财富能够提供什么呢？除了终将失去的东西，什么都不能！

And that's how Jesus gives us the desire to see ourselves as stewards, managers, of his treasures. He gives us things so that we may, to be sure, enjoy them. He gives us things so that we may use them gratefully and in service to those around us. Yes, he gives us so often so much more than we need so that we can give it away. We get some idea of how close we may be getting to Jesus' intended attitude adjustment when we have learned to love being generous. Someone has well said that the last part of the Christian to be



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converted is his wallet. But when we finally come to see our treasures—be they of money and goods or of time and talents—as having this value that we can use them for the benefit of others, then we have started to get the point. Then, when we love being generous just out of love and gratitude to our Savior, we are storing up treasures in heaven.

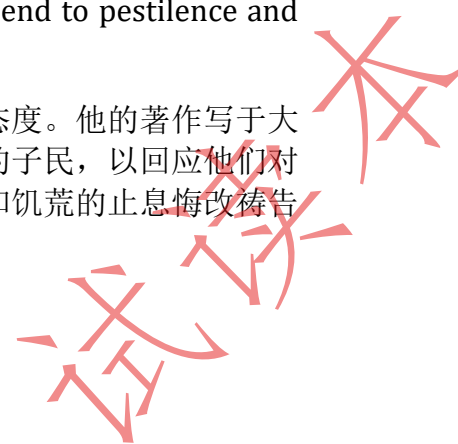
借此，耶稣让我们渴望将自己视为他财富的管家和经理。他赐我们各样东西，使得我们可以去享受它们——事实的确如此。他赐我们各样东西，使得我们可以满怀感激地使用它们，并去服事我们身边的人。是的，他赐给我们的常常远超过我们所需要的，使得我们可以将其分给别人。当我们学着甘心情愿的慷慨解囊时，我们就能了解，我们可以离耶稣想要的态度有多近了。有人很好地说道，基督徒最后归信的部分是他的钱包。但是，当我们最终认识到我们的财富——无论这财富是金钱、货物还是时间、天赋——具有这样的价值，那就是，我们可以为他人的益处去使用它们，我们就开始抓住了要点。然后，当我们单单出于对我们救主的爱和感激，慷慨解囊时，我们就是在积累天上的财宝。

How richly those treasures given away will pay dividends Jesus indicates in Matthew 25:34-36. As we have already noted several times, on the Last Day he will call it all to mind and praise us before all the saints and angels. That's how much he treasures our use of his treasures of time and talent and the fruits of our labor. His praise will not be that we have merited heaven thereby; that is entirely his gift. He will praise us for showing that we understood how rich we were in being those "blessed by my Father" (verse 34). We were so rich that we could easily afford to be generous in service to him by serving those around us. As St. Paul says when he is encouraging such generosity, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

耶稣在马太福音 25:34-36 指出，把钱财慷慨的施予他人将带来多么丰富的回报。正如我们之前好几次说过的那样，在末日他将在所有圣徒和天使面前，记念这一切，并称赞我们。这就是他珍惜我们使用他时间、才能的恩赐和我们的劳动成果的方式。他的称赞不是让我们配得上天堂——这完全是他的恩赐。作为那“蒙我父赐福的”，我们是多么丰富啊，他将为我们明白这一点而称赞我们。我们是如此丰富，以至于我们可以很容易借着慷慨地服事我们身边的人去服事他。正如保罗在他鼓励这样的慷慨时说道：“上帝爱乐捐的人”（林后 9:7）。

The prophet Joel in the Old Testament shows us the right attitude in a most interesting way. He was writing at a time of famine in the land, at a time when God visited his people with one pestilence after another in response to their idolatrous love of the world. When God through Joel urged his people to repent and to pray for an end to pestilence and famine, listen to how he framed the issue:

旧约中先知约珥以一种十分有趣的方式，向我们展示了正确的态度。他的著作写于大地遍布饥荒的时候，那时，上帝用一场接着一场的瘟疫临到他的子民，以回应他们对这个世界偶像般的爱。当上帝透过约珥督促他的子民，为瘟疫和饥荒的止息悔改祷告时，请听他是怎么考量这一问题的：



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“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and have pity *and leave behind a blessing—grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.* (Joel 2:12-14).

然而你们现在要禁食，哭泣，哀号，一心归向我。这是耶和华说的。你们要撕裂心肠，不要撕裂衣服。归向耶和华—你们的上帝，因为他有恩惠，有怜悯，不轻易发怒，有丰盛的慈爱，并且会改变心意，不降那灾难。谁知道他也许会回心转意，留下余福，就是献给耶和华—你们上帝的素祭和浇酒祭。（珥 2:12-14）

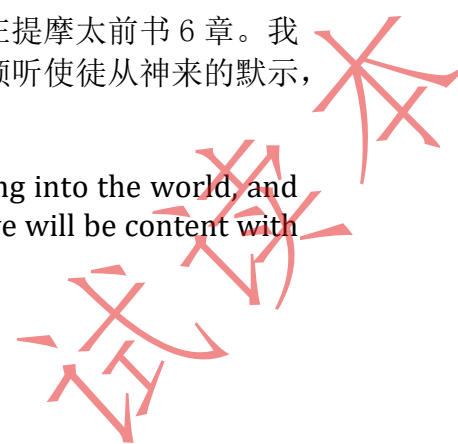
Isn't that interesting? The goal of restored prosperity was not prosperity itself. He doesn't even say, "O Lord, bless us so that we won't go hungry and starve to death." Rather, the goal was that there would be enough so that the people could give it back to the Lord who gave it all. Giving back came first. How often do we think that way? How often do we hope for prosperity, for a raise in salary or other income primarily so that we will have a greater ability to give? Isn't it rather more often our hope that with an increased income we can get more and more things, not just things we really need but things we just want? That is not to say that we should shun an increased income or that every getting of things we want is bad. It's just a question of where generosity and the opportunity to serve fit into the equation that needs some more thought from most of us most of the time.

这难道不是很有趣吗？恢复繁荣的目标并不是繁荣本身。他甚至没有说：“主啊，请祝福我们，免得我们挨饿甚至饿死。”相反，这样的目标是让人们有足够的祝福，使得他们可以回报将这一切赐给他们的主。回报是第一位。我们有多少次这样想呢？我们有多少次期待繁荣，期待薪金和其它收入的提高，主要是为了我们有更大的能力去奉献呢？恰恰相反，我们岂不是更盼望，随着收入的增长，我们能够获得越来越多的东西，不仅仅是我们真的需要而仅仅是我们想要的东西吗？这不是说我们应该避免收入的增长，也不是说我们想要任何东西都是不好的。问题仅仅在于，慷慨和服事的机会如何融入其中，这是我们大多数人大多数时候需要进一步思考的问题。

Another of the many passages in the Bible that merits our consideration in making sure that we are on the narrow middle road is in 1 Timothy 6. We have already noted part of the chapter that warns us against greed. Now we listen to the apostle's inspired pointing to the positive, to the narrow middle road. Paul tells us:

圣经中另一段值得我们思考，以确保我们在狭窄中路上的经文在提摩太前书 6 章。我们已经提到了这章警告我们不要贪婪的部分经文。现在我们来倾听使徒从神来的默示，它指向积极的狭窄的中路。保罗告诉我们：

Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with





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that. But you, man of God, flee from all this [i.e., the love of money, greed], and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. (1 Timothy 6:6-8,11)

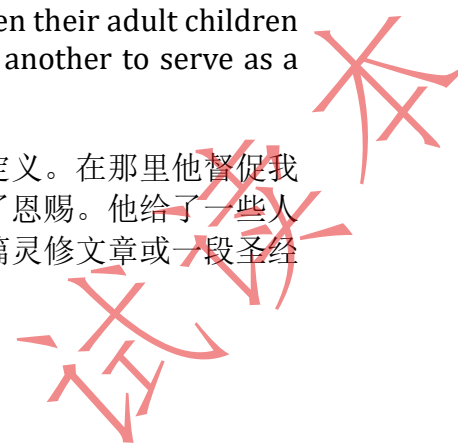
其实，敬虔加上知足就是大利。因为我们没有带什么到世上来，也不能带什么去；只要有衣有食，我们就该知足。但你这属上帝的人哪，要逃避这些事；要追求公义、敬虔、信心、爱心、忍耐、温柔。（提前 6:6-8,11）

“Contentment!” That is a noble goal in and of itself—even to reason, even for Aristotle. But it is much more than that for the Christian. Paul said it all so well in the epistle to the Galatians: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (2:20). To be content with God’s gifts comes from a recognition that our goal in life, the meaning of life itself, is all wrapped up in Christ, in the gospel, in the pursuit, and yes, in the enjoyment of the kingdom of God. **That is followed to be sure by the work that is necessary to support ourselves and our family.** But the pursuit of a living should be accompanied by contentment with what God gives in the process. We recognize that this world will perish, but while we wait for that to happen, God through our labors gives what we need to survive and sometimes much more. And when we recognize as well that he promises to provide for us also in the future, then we are on the way to contentment.

“知足！”这本身是一个高尚的目标——即使对理性，即使对亚里士多德也是如此。但对基督徒来说它远不止如此。保罗在给加拉太人的书信中说得好：“现在活着的不再是我，乃是基督在我里面活着；并且我如今在肉身活着，是因信上帝的儿子而活；他是爱我，为我舍己”（加 2:20）。对上帝的恩赐知足，意味着承认我们生命的目标，生命本身的意义都致力于基督、致力于福音、致力于追逐，是的，也是在享受上帝的国度上。**当然，通过工作来供应我们自己和我们的家庭是必须的。**但是，对生活的追求，应该伴随着对上帝在这个过程中所赐予的知足。我们承认，这个世界终将毁灭，但是在等候它到来的过程中，上帝透过我们的工作赐我们生存所需的东西——有时甚至更多。当我们认识到，他同样应许了在将来也会供应我们，那我们就走在知足的路上了。

Paul gives us something of a commentary on or a definition of this contentment in 1 Corinthians 12,13. There he urges us to remember that God has been generous to all of us. To each and every one of us he has given gifts. To some he gives the ability to teach. It might be the gift to parents who teach their children when they read a devotion or a portion of the Bible at the dinner table. It might be the ability of grandparents who teach their adult children to be patient and wait for the Lord’s help when their adult children are in distress or fearful of the future. It might be the ability of another to serve as a pastor or a teacher.

在哥林多前书 12, 13 章，保罗给出了对这种知足的一些论述和定义。在那里他督促我们铭记，上帝对我们所有人的慷慨。他对我们每一个人都赐下了恩赐。他给了一些人教导的能力。这也许是给父母的恩赐，当他们在餐桌上阅读一篇灵修文章或一段圣经



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时，他们就是在教导他们的孩子。这也许是给爷爷奶奶的能力，当他们成年的儿女陷入困难或对未来的恐惧中时，他们教导他们成年的儿女耐心等待主的帮助。这可能是给一个，要作为牧师或教师去服事之人的能力。

To another he gives the ability to heal. The gift of healing might be that of those who performed miracles in Bible times. Their number was always small, and miraculous healing was never promised as the normal way that God would deal with us. There are other healing gifts besides those very rare ones. There is the gift of healing that God gives to doctors and nurses and other healthcare workers. They should see their professions as more than just jobs. Theirs is an ability that God has given to be used to his glory for the benefit of others, even while it provides a living to the healer. But others heal or help heal in other ways. There is the healing that comes from patient listening to the woes and cares of another. There is the healing that comes from a cheerful word or kind counsel to one in need of advice that is grounded in the Word of God. There is the healing that comes from the simple, "Here, let me help you with that!" The one helped is raised up from the burdens and cares of the moment and has the balm of a Christian's care and concern.

对另一些人他赐下医治的能力。医治的恩赐也许是给那些在圣经时代施行神迹之人的恩赐。他们的人数一直都很少，并且上帝从未应许，神迹般的医治是他和我们相处的常态。除了这些非常罕见的方式，也有其它医治的恩赐。那就是，上帝赐给医生、护士和别的医护工作者医治的恩赐。他们应当将他们的职业不仅仅视为一份工作。他们的能力是上帝为他人的益处赐下的，来彰显他的荣耀——即使在其中它也为医治者提供了一份谋生的职业。也有一些人以别的方式医治或辅助医治。有一种医治来自于耐心地倾听别人的悲伤和忧虑。有一种医治来自于，对一个需要劝诫的人，一句建立在圣道上的鼓励的话或忠告。有一种医治来自于简单的说：“现在，让我来帮助你吧！”被帮助的人会从当前的重担和忧虑中振作起来，从基督徒的关怀和关心中得安慰。

Another has gifts of money more than of time. Another has more time than money. Another has a voice to sing, another an ear to hear, another a mouth to speak the wisdom and the glory of God. Another has the physical strength to shovel the walk at church or of the neighbor next door. Another has a garden that gives more tomatoes and potatoes than the family needs. What a good witness to the neighborhood when one sees the tables outside of a church weighed down by produce from family gardens; they were brought to church for those without gardens to take home whatever they might need.

一些人拥有钱财的恩赐而不是时间的。一些人拥有更多的时间而不是钱财。一些人有好嗓子去歌唱，一些人耳朵善于倾听，一些人开口去讲说上帝的智慧和荣耀。一些人拥有强壮的体力去为教会或邻舍搬家。一些人的菜园里长出比家庭需要更多的西红柿和土豆。当一个人看到教会外面的桌子上摆满了自家菜园的农产品时，这是一个多么好的见证啊；它们被带到教会，让那些没有菜园的人，能够将他们需要的东西带回家。

Obviously making a list here of all possible gifts and how they can be used to the glory of God and the benefit of others is impossible. But it is not a waste of time for each

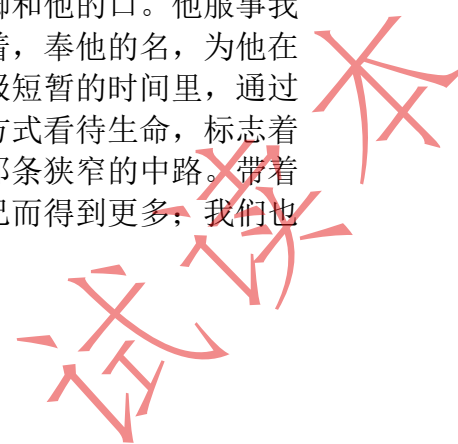
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Christian to spend some time considering the gifts that God has given; once we have counted up such gifts, it is further a good use of time both to give God thanks for his generosity and then to look for opportunities to use them. God is way too generous with us to ever leave any of us without more gifts and more opportunities than we can count for using them to his glory and the benefit of those around us. If someone doesn't see the gifts, that one should ask another what they might be; often others know us and God's blessings to us better than we know them ourselves. The narrow middle avoids loving things in themselves as well as ungrateful contempt for the things that God has given us. Again, it's all a matter of attitude. The narrow middle is a grateful heart that seeks to serve with God's bounty while at the same time enjoying it.

显然，在这儿列出所有可能的恩赐，以及它们被如何用于荣耀上帝和帮助他人，是不可能的。但是每一个基督徒花些时间去思考上帝赐下的恩赐，并不是在浪费时间；当我们数算了这些恩赐，我们就可以更好地使用时间，去感谢上帝的慷慨，并寻找机会去使用这些恩赐。上帝对我们太过慷慨，相比于我们能够算到的，为了他的荣耀和我们身边之人的益处去使用的恩赐和机会，他总是赐给我们更多的恩赐和更多的机会。如果有人没有看到上帝赐他的恩赐，那么这个人应该问问别人它们可能是什么；往往别人比我们自身，更了解我们和上帝对我们的祝福。狭窄的中路，避免了对事物本身的爱，同时也避免了对上帝赐我们的事物不领情的鄙视。再说一遍，这完全是态度的问题。狭窄的中路是一颗感恩的心，在寻求用上帝的慷慨去服事的同时，也去享受他的慷慨。

In sum, Paul bids us in 1 Corinthians 12,13 to remember that we all have gifts. He invites us to consider the gifts that God has given to each of us and to look for ways to use them in love to him and for the benefit of one another. We are Jesus' hands and feet and mouth during this time of grace before he comes again. He served us and gave his all to redeem us for himself. So we live to move and act in his name and for the benefit of the rest of his mystical body on earth. That is a high honor indeed, to serve him in serving his mystical body for the short time that we have here. Looking at life that way is a mark of having found the middle road between excessive love for the world and ungrateful contempt for it. With such an attitude, we do not imagine that the goal of life is just to get more for my own indulgence; nor do we look at life with sour and grumpy ingratitude for God's blessings to us in the world and the good reasons he has for being so generous to us.

总之，在哥林多前书 12、13 章，保罗吩咐我们记住，我们都有恩赐。他邀请我们去思考上帝赐给我们每个人的恩赐，并寻找方法，在对他的爱中并为了彼此的益处去使用它们。在耶稣再来之前的恩典时间里，我们是他的手、他的脚和他的口。他服事我们，将他的一切赐给我们，救赎我们归向他自己。因此我们活着，奉他的名，为在这世上其它隐秘的肢体的益处，行动和做事。在我们存在的这极短暂的时间里，通过服事他隐秘的肢体去服事他，这确实是极大的荣耀。用这样的方式看待生命，标志着我们找到了，在对这个世界过度的爱 and 对其不领情的鄙视之间那条狭窄的中路。带着这样的态度，我们并不幻想生命的目标仅仅是为了放纵我们自己而得到更多；我们也



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不带着酸溜溜的心态看待生命，对上帝在这世上给我们的祝福和他如此慷慨对待我们的原因，抱着一种暴躁的不领情的态度。

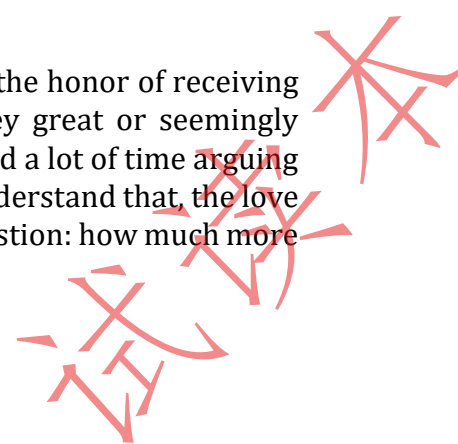
Jesus puts this all in context for us when he encourages us to be ambitious. Ambition is not the opposite of contentment in the way that Jesus uses the word. The opposite of contentment is selfish striving or lazy indifference to anyone but myself or those who can somehow benefit me. Jesus sets the tone of a good ambition that accompanies contentment when he dealt with the disciples and their wrong ambition in Mark 9:33-37. It is a lesson Jesus had to teach more than once—and a lesson we too no doubt need to keep relearning! The disciples were ambitious; each wanted to be more important than his fellows. Each wanted to be on top and to rule. And what did Jesus say to their ambition? Did he tell them to deny any and all ability and quietly sit with heads down in the dark? Not at all! He encouraged an ambition that would match contentment with God's gifts and the opportunities he gave to use them. Their ambition should be directed toward taking advantage of even the lowliest of opportunities to serve, to be useful. How beautifully he put it:

当耶稣鼓励我们要有雄心时，他将这一切都结合了起来。在耶稣使用雄心这个词的方式中，它并不是知足的反义词。知足的反义词是自私的努力，或对他人——除了自己或那些能给我们带来好处的人——的懒惰和冷漠。在马太福音 9:33-37，当耶稣在处理门徒们错误的雄心时，他为一个好的，伴随着知足的雄心设立了基调。这是耶稣不止一次的教导——也是我们毋庸置疑需要不断学习的功课！门徒们雄心勃勃；每一个都想要比他的同伴更重要。每一个都想要站在顶点，去统治别人。耶稣对他们的雄心说了什么呢？他是否告诉他们去否定他们拥有任何或一切的能力，单单垂着脑袋安静地坐在黑暗中呢？完全不是！在我们知足于上帝的恩赐和他赐下机会去使用它们的同时，他鼓励他们拥有一种与这种知足相匹配的雄心。他们的雄心应该被指向这样的方向：利用哪怕是最微不足道的机会去服事，去做有所帮助的事。他说的多好啊：

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me." (Mark 9:35-37)

耶稣坐下，叫十二个使徒来，说：“若有人愿意为首，他要作众人之后，作众人的用人。”于是耶稣领一个小孩过来，让他站在门徒当中，又抱起他来，对他们说：“凡为我的名接纳一个像这小孩子的，就是接纳我；凡接纳我的，不是接纳我，而是接纳那差我来的。”（可 9:35-37）

What a joy he gives us! To the greatest and to the least he gives the honor of receiving him by receiving and serving those he puts around us, be they great or seemingly insignificant. When we understand that, we will not need to spend a lot of time arguing about how much we should give of time or treasure. When we understand that, the love of Christ for us will move us more and more to ask a different question: how much more



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can I do? We will search the New Testament in vain for a law that dictates or limits “how much.”

他给了我们多大的喜乐啊！对最伟大的和最渺小的人，他都赐他们接待他的荣耀——借着接待和服事他放在我们身边的人，无论他们是伟大的还是看起来微不足道的。当我们理解了这一点，我们就不再需要花费大量的时间争论，我们应该奉献多少时间或是钱财。当我们理解了这一点，基督对我们的爱将激励我们越来越多地问一个不同的问题：我还能做什么？倘若我们想在新约中寻找一条规定了或限制了“多少”的律法，这终究会是徒劳的。

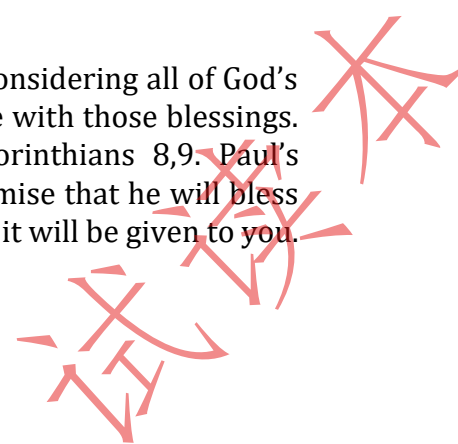
In the Old Testament there was, of course, the law of the tithe. Ten percent of income or produce was to be law for giving. But in the New Testament, there is no set percentage or limit. One with the responsibility of raising and supporting a family may have less to give of time or treasure outside of the family than the one who is single or whose children are out on their own. Circumstances are different, and circumstances change.

当然，在旧约中存在着十一奉献的律法。收入或产出的百分之十是奉献的律法依据。但在新约中，没有设定比例或限制。一个有家庭要养育和供应的人，相比一个单身或儿女已经离开家庭的人，可能更少有时间或钱财在家庭之外奉献。情况是不同的，情况是变化着的。

Each needs to look at the blessings God has given and at the responsibilities and at the opportunities that God gives as well. Then each should determine in his own heart what he gives of time and treasure for the support of himself and his family and what he gives for the work of the church and to help those in need. Clearly we want to give more than just the leftovers. We look for balance. We look for the middle road. We want to shun the lifestyle that is never satisfied until it has all the latest and all the best. But there is no requirement that we go around looking like refugees from the ragpickers' ball either. Most will probably try to find a percentage that they want to give either of time or of treasure or of both—again depending very much on individual circumstances.

每个人都需要看到上帝赐下的祝福，同时看到上帝赐下的责任和机会。然后每个人都应该在他心里决定，他要拿出哪些时间和钱财来供应他自己和他的家庭，哪些用来支持教会的工作和帮助那些在缺乏中的人。当然我们想要奉献的不仅仅是剩下的零碎。我们寻求平衡。我们寻求中路。我们想要避免这样一种生活方式——除非一切都是最新的和最好的，否则我们绝不满足。但是也没有要求我们看上去像从废品堆中走出来的难民。大多数人可能会想要找到一个比例，去奉献他们的时间、钱财或这两者——这同样很大程度上取决于个人的情况。

In sum, an obsession with “how much” can best be avoided by considering all of God's blessings and our consequent fervent desire to serve him in love with those blessings. That's also Paul's inspired advice to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 8,9. Paul's encouragement to generosity should be coupled with Jesus' promise that he will bless us as we give away what he has given to us. Jesus says, “Give, and it will be given to you.”





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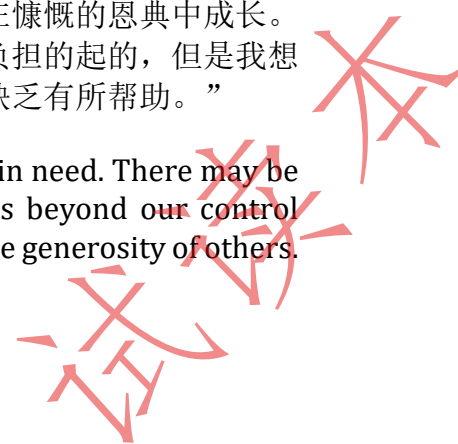
A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6:38). He would not lie to us! So we have Jesus’ generosity on the cross always at the front of heart and mind. Then we have close at hand his assurance of his never-ending generosity to us in our daily lives as he answers the Fourth Petition of the Lord’s Prayer. And notice in that petition that he bids us to pray, “Give us this day *our daily bread*,” and he promises to hear and answer that prayer. He does not invite us to pray for the satisfaction of every want that the advertising world plants in our heads, nor to give us so much today that we will never need to ask him again for his generosity tomorrow. He wants us to see ourselves as in constant need of his grace and goodness. Then, by satisfying that need day-to-day, he inspires in us both a deeper sense of dependency on him and a gratitude to him for his unfailing goodness.

总之，考虑到上帝一切的祝福，以及随之而来的，我们用这些祝福在爱里去服事他热烈的渴望，才能最好地避免对“多少”的痴迷。这也是哥林多后书 8、9 章保罗对哥林多人的劝诫。保罗对慷慨的鼓励应该加上耶稣的应许，他应许当我们将他赐给我们的东西舍去时，他会祝福我们。耶稣说：“你们要给人，就必有给你们的，并且用十足的升斗，连摇带按，上尖下流地倒在你们怀里；因为你们用什么量器量给人，也必用什么量器量给你们”（路 6:38）。他不会骗我们！因此，我们有耶稣在十字架上的慷慨，它一直在我们的头脑和心灵面前。然后，在我们的每日生活中，当他回应主祷文的第四请求时，我们有他对我们无限慷慨的保证。注意在这个请求中他督促我们祷告说：“我们日用的饮食，今日赐给我们”，并且他应许倾听和回应这个祷告。他并没有邀请我们为广告界种植在我们脑海里的每一个需要祷告，也没有在今天给我们这么多，以至于在明天我们绝不需要再次为他的慷慨请求他。他想要我们看到自己不断地需要他的恩典和良善。然后，借着日复一日满足这样的需要，他在我们里面激发，对他更深的倚赖和他永不止息的良善的感激之情。

With all the evidences of his never-failing grace and goodness, we can do battle against what someone has called donor fatigue, i.e., weariness in the face of never-ending needs and requests for help. And at the same time, we may even grow in the grace of a generosity that sometimes puts the *needs* of the poor and of the church ahead of our own *wants*. It’s a good thing at times to say to oneself, “This is what I want and can really afford, but I think I’ll forego it or at least put it off for a while so that I can help out a bit more in relieving that need.”

带着这一切他永不止息的恩典和良善的证据，我们能够与所谓的“捐献疲劳”——即，面对永不停止的缺乏和需求帮助所产生的疲倦——作斗争。与此同时，当我们有时将穷人和教会的缺乏放在我们自己的需要前面时，我们甚至可以在慷慨的恩典中成长。有一件很好的事情是，时不时对自己说：“这是我想要并确实负担的起的，但是我想我会放弃它，或至少推迟一段时间，这样我就可以对缓解这种缺乏有所帮助。”

Certainly there may be times in our lives when we ourselves are in need. There may be times when unemployment or ill health or other circumstances beyond our control make it impossible to be very generous. We may have to rely on the generosity of others.



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At such times, the middle road is still contentment! At such times, with all the fears and uncertainties that may plague us, we still look to the hand of God for help and rescue. When that help comes from others, we will strive to receive such help with thanks both to them and to the God who moved them to help. Yes, and we will look forward to the day when, calling to mind the previously cited prayer of Joel, we too may once more be generous. Indeed, our time of need may serve to help make us all the more generous when that again is possible.

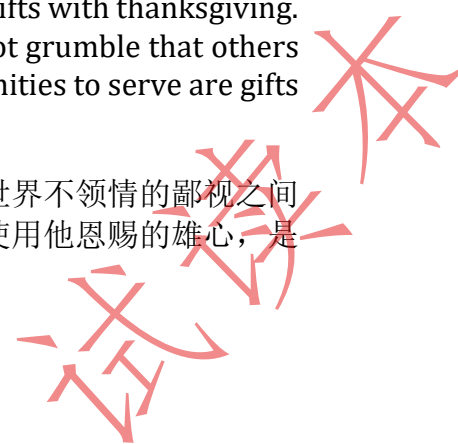
当然，在我们的生活中，我们自己也有缺乏的时候。那可能是失业、疾病或别的超出我们控制的情况，这让非常慷慨成为不可能的事。我们也许不得不倚赖别人的慷慨。在这样的时候，狭窄的中路依然是知足！在这样的时候，伴随着一切可能会纠缠我们的恐惧和不确定，我们依然寻求上帝的帮助和拯救。当这帮助来自于他人时，我们将努力地，带着对他们和对那感动他们去帮助的上帝的感激，来接受这样的帮助。是的，回想先前引用的约珥的祷告，我们期待着有一天我们能再次慷慨奉献。的确，我们缺乏的日子，也许有助于帮助我们所有人，在情况好转时更加慷慨。

On the other hand, many people, even Christians, are drowning in debt because of an undisciplined, not to say greedy, satisfying of *wants*. Clearly they will find it impossible to be generous. If we find ourselves in their number, that would be a good indicator that we have probably fallen off the narrow middle road. We may be deep in the ditch of an idolatrous love of the world. The time then has come for a cry for mercy from the Savior, for rescue in the gospel of forgiveness, for restoration to the middle road of contentment and generosity. Such a restoration may indeed take some time as we reorder our priorities. But the goal, not just of a renewed financial sanity but of the ability to be generous again, will certainly be a God-pleasing one.

另一方面，很多人，甚至很多基督徒，因为无规律地，甚至可以说贪婪地满足各种欲望，而深陷债务之中。显然，他们会发现，慷慨奉献是不可能的事。如果我们发现自己自己正身处其中，这将会是一个很好的指标，表明我们也许已经离开了这狭窄的中路。我们也许已经深深的陷入对这个世界偶像般爱的沟壑之中了。那么，现在是向救主呼求怜悯的时候，是在赦免的福音里呼求拯救的时候，是呼求重新回到知足和慷慨的中路上的时候。在我们重新调整事情的轻重缓急时，这样的恢复也许确实会花些时间。但其目的，并不仅仅是恢复财政健全，而是有能力再次慷慨，这必定也是蒙上帝喜悦的目的。

Yes, and then, to say it once more, we will have found the middle road between excessive love for the world and ungrateful contempt of the world. We will have found godliness with contentment wedded to an ambition to receive and use his gifts with thanksgiving. And as he gives us opportunities to serve, to be useful, we will not grumble that others and their needs are an inconvenience and a burden. The opportunities to serve are gifts as much as the gifts he gives for service.

是的，再说一遍，我们将找到，对这个世界过度的爱和对这个世界不领情的鄙视之间的中路。我们将发现，带着知足的敬虔，与带着感恩去领受和使用他恩赐的雄心，是



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结合在一起的。既然他赐我们机会去服事，去有所帮助，我们就不去抱怨别人和别人的需要是一种麻烦和负担。服事的机会同样是恩赐，正如他为服事赐下的恩赐一样。

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luther's comments in his Large Catechism under the First Commandment.

<sup>1</sup> 参见路德大问答第一诫下的注释。

<sup>2</sup> For a more complete consideration of the account of Jesus with this young man, see chapter 3, pp. 43,44.

<sup>2</sup> 关于耶稣和这个年轻人一个更完整的思考，请参阅本书第 3 章。

试读本

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## 8. Finding the Middle in the Work of the Church 找到教会事工的中路

In this chapter we want to find the middle road with respect to three areas of concern in the life of the church. Each of the three sections of the road is relatively short. Nevertheless, people have found problems in each of these three short sections, problems that are ditches on the sides of the road.

在这一章，我们想要在三个教会生活中值得注意的方面寻找中路。这条路的这三个部分，每一个都相对较短。然而，在这三个短路段的每一个上，人们都看到了问题，也就是在路两侧的沟壑。

### The universal priesthood of all believers and the holy office of the ministry 所有信徒的普世祭司职和神职

In the history of the church, these two doctrines have often been pitted against each other. Damage has been done to the church when one of the two has been emphasized at the expense or to the exclusion of the other.

在教会历史上，这两种教义常常互相对立。当其中一种被过于强调，以至于损害或排斥另一种时，对教会的危害就发生了。

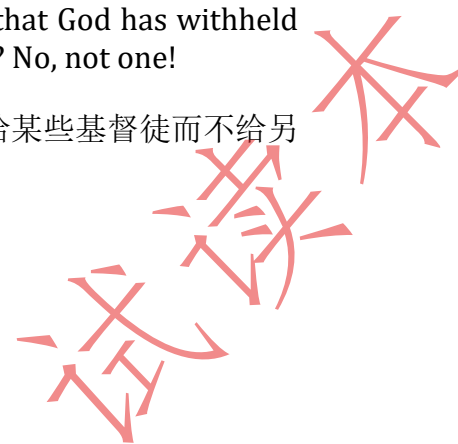
### The universal priesthood of all believers 所有信徒的普世祭司职

The doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers is most beautifully expressed in the New Testament. St. Peter is addressing every Christian when he tells us, “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

所有信徒普世祭司职的教义在新约中得到了完美的表达。当圣彼得告诉我们：“你们是被拣选的一族，是君尊的祭司，是神圣的国度，是属上帝的子民，要使你们宣扬那召你们出黑暗入奇妙光明者的美德”（彼前 2:9），他是在说每一个基督徒。

Notice how all-inclusive Peter’s words are. Is there any dignity that God has withheld from some Christians in order to give it to some other Christians? No, not one!

注意彼得的话包含的多么广泛啊。有没有什么尊荣是上帝为了给某些基督徒而不给另一些基督徒的呢？不，一个都没有！



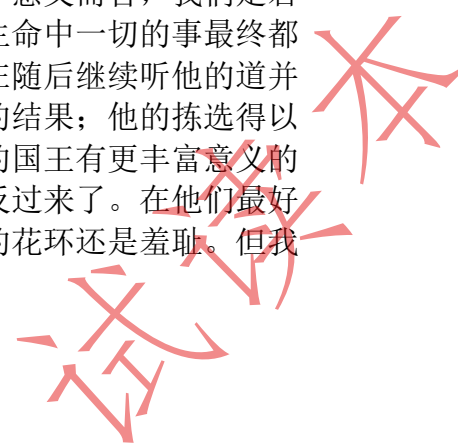
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Each and every Christian is a Christian because he has been *chosen* by God. Not one can claim that his status before God was of his own choosing. His status with God is always and alone the status of one chosen. And that choice for the greatest saint as for the lowliest and the least was by grace alone; it had nothing at all to do with the merit of the chosen. In point of fact, all of our dignity and merit and worth are donated; they are the gifts of the One choosing, gifts purchased at so great a price on his cross.

每一个基督徒之所以是基督徒，因为他是被上帝拣选的。没有人能够声称，他在上帝面前的状态是他自己的选择。他在上帝面前的状态永远是并唯独是蒙拣选的状态。这样的拣选，对最伟大的圣徒和最微小卑贱的人都是一样的，都是唯独借着恩典；人自己对这样的拣选毫无功绩可言。事实上，我们一切的尊贵、功绩、价值都是蒙授予的；它们都是那一位拣选者的恩赐，这恩赐是他在十字架上以极大代价买来的。

And the results of that choosing on God's part could not be richer than they are. Each and every Christian is part of a *royal priesthood*. What a concept! In the Old Testament, the office of king and priest were under normal circumstances kept separate and, in any case, reserved for a privileged few. But now, because of our status as the chosen, we are all kings and also priests. We are kings in the sense that Christ the King rules over all of history for our benefit (Ephesians 1). He rules over it so that his choosing will be brought to pass. He rules over it so that all things in life will ultimately be for our good (Romans 8). It is no accident that we were baptized. It is not a coincidence that we have subsequently continued to hear his Word and believe it. No, all of that is the result of his rule over time and tide; it is all his work to bring into effect his choosing. Now we are, therefore, kings in a richer sense than any mere earthly king. Earthly kings come and go; today one succeeds and another fails, and tomorrow it is the reverse. At their best, not a one of them can know whether he will succeed or fail, be an ornament to history or a disgrace. But that's not the way it is with us! We are assured of victory and ultimate glory because Christ has won them for us by his death and resurrection. And Christ has promised them to us in his always true and faithful Word. Nothing could be more certain! The kingdom of God is a kingdom of kings. There are no slaves in it. There is not one who is the water carrier for another. And all these kings have no greater joy in heaven than casting down their crowns before the One who chose them and made them kings by his choosing and by his cross.

上帝拣选的结果再丰盛不过了。每一个基督徒都是君尊的祭司。这是怎样一个概念啊！在旧约中，国王和祭司职在通常情况下是分开的，而在任何情况下，它们都只为少数特权人士保留。但现在，因为我们蒙拣选的状态，我们都既是君王又是祭司。基督是万王之王，他为了我们的益处统管全部的历史（弗 1），就这个意义而言，我们是君王。他统管一切，使得他的拣选终会实现。他统管一切，使得生命中一切的事最终都是为着我们的益处运行（罗 8）。我们受洗并不是意外。我们在随后继续听他的道并相信他，也不是巧合。不，所有这一切都是他统管时间和时代的结果；他的拣选得以生效，完全是他的工作。因此，现在我们是王——一个比世俗的国王有更丰富意义的王。世俗的王来来去去；今天一个成功另一个失败，而明天就反过来了。在他们最好的时候，他们中也没有人能够知道他会成功还是失败，是历史的花环还是羞耻。但我





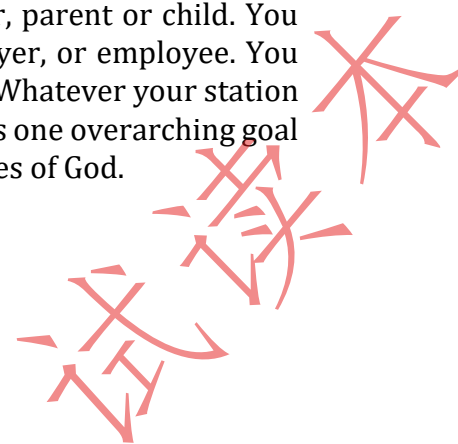
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们不是这样！我们有确定的得胜和最终的荣耀，因为基督借着他的死亡和复活已经为我们赢得了它们。并且基督在他永远真实可信的道里，应许了将它们赐给我们。再也没有比这更确定的事了！上帝的国是万王的国。那里没有奴隶。没有人是别人的绿叶。所有这些王，在天堂将会在拣选他们并借着他的拣选和他的十字架让他们成为王的那一位面前，放下他们的王冠——再没有比这更快乐的事了。

Yes, and we are priests too! It was the work of the Old Testament priest to offer sacrifices to God according to God's command in the ceremonial law. But now those sacrifices have been set aside. Christ's sacrifice on the cross fulfilled and completed what they pictured and foretold. The entire epistle to the Hebrews describes how Christ's sacrifice brought all the Old Testament sacrifices to an end. Likewise, the Old Testament priesthood that was limited to males from the tribe of Levi has been set aside. Now each Christian, young or old, male or female, is a priest before God. Each and every one offers up sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving and obedience to God. The sacrifice is that of a Christian life; it is a life in which we strive to walk by faith and in obedience to the Word of God (Romans 12). Again, what an honor! Royal priests live lives of sacrifice to God. Christian priests pray. They serve. They obey. And they do all of it with the certainty that their priestly sacrifice made in obedience to the Word of God is pleasing and acceptable to God. It is offered up in union with the Great High Priest, made perfect by his sacrifice, and washed in the water of Baptism (Ephesians 5:1,25-27).

是的，我们也是祭司！旧约祭司的工作是，根据上帝在礼仪律中的命令，献上祭物给上帝。但现在这些献祭被撤销了。基督在十字架上的献祭完全并完成了它们所描述和预言的。整卷希伯来书都在描述基督的献祭如何终结了所有的旧约献祭。同样的，旧约只限于利未支派男性担当的祭司职，也被撤销了。现在每个基督徒，无论年轻还是年老，无论男性还是女性，都是上帝面前的祭司。每一个人都献上祷告、感恩，和对上帝的顺服为祭。这献祭是基督徒的生命；在这样的生命中，我们努力行在信心和对上帝之道的顺服里（罗 12）。再次地，这是多么荣耀的事啊！君尊的祭司过着向上帝献祭的生活。基督徒祭司祷告。他们服事。他们顺服。他们做这一切，确信他们在对上帝之道的顺服中所献的这些祭物，是蒙上帝悦纳的。这一切都是在与那位大祭司的联合中被献上的，靠着他的献祭得以完全，并在洗礼中得以洗净（弗 5:1, 25-27）。

As kings we live in joyful confidence—no matter what the circumstances of the moment—that we will ultimately be victorious over sin, death, and hell. As priests we see our whole lives as devoted first and foremost to him who has loved us and gave himself for us. With all of that in mind, Peter exhorts each of us to live as a royal priest so that “you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” You may be husband or wife, father or mother, parent or child. You may be carpenter, farmer, factory worker, office worker, employer, or employee. You may be brilliant or dull, rich or poor, or somewhere in-between. Whatever your station in life, as part of the royal priesthood of all believers, you have this one overarching goal in life. By your life and your position in life, you declare the praises of God.



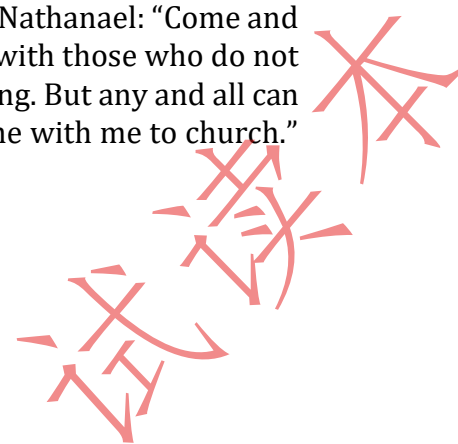
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作为君王，我们活在喜乐的确信中——无论当时的情况如何——我们最终都将战胜罪、死亡和地狱。作为祭司，我们视我们全部的生命，首先和首要是献给那爱我们并将他自己赐给我们的主。带着这一切的想法，彼得劝诫我们每个人，作为君尊的祭司活着，使“你们宣扬那召你们出黑暗入奇妙光明者的美德。”你也许是丈夫或妻子、父亲或母亲、父母或儿女。你也许是木匠、农民、工厂工人、办公室职工、雇主或雇员。你也许聪明或愚钝、富有或贫穷，或者介于两者之间。无论你处于生命的什么位置，作为君尊的祭司，你生命中有这么一个首要的目标。借着你的生命和你生命中的位置，去宣扬上帝的美德。

How do we declare his praises? Jesus tells us, “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). And St. Peter says the same thing: “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us” (1 Peter 2:12); from there he goes on to describe just what those good deeds are. In each description, Peter sees royal priests who occupy different stations in life. But regardless of their stations, royal priests want those around them to see from the way they live that they are children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ. They want to imitate the humble life of obedience and service that they see in Christ (Philippians 2).

我们如何宣扬他的美德呢？耶稣告诉我们：“你们的光也要这样照在人前，叫他们看见你们的好行为，把荣耀归给你们在天上的父”（太 5:16）。圣彼得说了同样的话：“你们在外邦人中要品行端正，好让那些人，虽然毁谤你们是作恶的，会因看见你们的好行为而在鉴察的日子归荣耀给上帝”（彼前 2:12）；从此出发他继续描述那些好行为是什么。在每一个描述中，彼得都看到了君尊的祭司出现在生命中不同的位置。但不管他们的位置如何，君尊的祭司都想要他们身边的人，从他们的生活方式上，看到他们是上帝的儿女，是在基督里的弟兄姐妹。他们想效仿他们在基督里看到的，那个在卑微中顺服和服事的生命（腓 2）。

Yes, and as priests they want especially to share the forgiveness won for us all by the high priestly sacrifice of Christ. Husbands and wives, parents and children, act as priests when they forgive one another. A Christian neighbor or coworker acts as a priest when he seeks and finds opportunities to share the gospel with those around him. That sharing may come when someone asks him something like this: “What makes you tick, anyway? You seem different.” The sharing may come when tragedy strikes a neighbor and the opportunity presents itself to comfort that neighbor with the message of the Savior’s rule over all things in grace. It may come through a member of the evangelism committee in the local parish. It may come the way that it came to Philip, whose first missionary effort consisted of the simple invitation to a skeptical Nathanael: “Come and see” (John 1:43-46). Too often Christians fail to share the gospel with those who do not know it because they are afraid that they might say the wrong thing. But any and all can imitate Philip, at least at the beginning. Any and all can say, “Come with me to church.” Or, “Why don’t you just visit a Bible class with me?”



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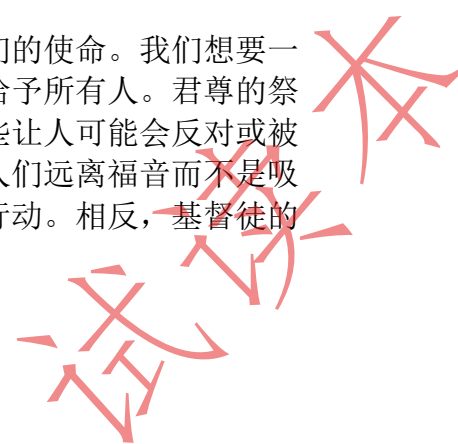
是的，作为祭司，他们尤其想要分享，基督伟大的献祭为我们所有人赢得的赦免。丈夫和妻子、父母和儿女，当他们彼此饶恕时，这就是作为祭司的行为。当一个基督徒邻居或同事寻求并找到机会，和他身边的人分享福音时，这就是作为祭司的行为。这样的分享可能来自于，有人问他这样的问题：“是什么让你这样做呢？不管怎样，你看起来有些不同。”这样的分享可能来自于，当悲剧降临在某个邻居身上，而我们有机会去用救主在恩典中统管万有的信息去安慰这个邻居。它可能来自于本地牧区某个福音组织的一员。它可能按照腓力传福音的方式而来——他第一次传道的努力，仅仅是简单的邀请怀疑中的拿但业：“你来看”（约 1:43-46）。基督徒有太多次，因为害怕他们可能会说错话，而不去与那些不了解的人分享福音。但是每个人都可以效仿腓力，至少在开始的时候可以。每个人都可以说：“来和我一起去教会。”或说：“欢迎你来和我一起参加一个圣经课！”

Yes, to “declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” is what the life of royal priests is all about. They declare his praises by the way they live in their families, in their neighborhoods, at work, at pleasure. They see as the cardinal mission of life the carrying out of Jesus’ commission shortly before his ascension. That mission (Matthew 28:18-20) is to do all they can individually and in union with their fellow royal priests to carry the message of redemption and salvation into all the world.

是的，“宣扬那召你们出黑暗入奇妙光明者的美德”，是君尊的祭司全部的生命之所在。他们通过在他们家庭、他们邻舍，在工作、在休息中的生活方式，去宣扬他的美德。他们视人生主要的使命是履行耶稣在他升天前的大使命。这个使命（太 28:18-20）就是，尽他们所能，以单独的和与基督徒同伴联合的方式，将救恩的信息传向全世界。

The message is Jesus’ message, all of it! His message is our mission. In the process, we want always to be faithful to all he has taught in the law and to give all that he gives in the gospel. Royal priests do not pick apart his Word. They do not consider themselves free to leave out things from his Word that some may object to or find offensive. Even if in their weakness Christians imagine that some parts of God’s Word keep people away from the gospel rather than draw them to it, it is not a Christian’s business to act on that weakness in their faith. Rather, it is our business to strive for a life of obedience that begins with submission to all of his Word and then extends outward to the rest of life. We do not declare God’s praises by presuming to correct him or tell him what he should have said and what would have been better left unsaid. That’s not the behavior of a royal priest; it’s the behavior of a rebel, of a pagan priest.

这个信息就是耶稣的信息——耶稣一切的信息！他的信息是我们的使命。我们想要一直忠实于他在律法中一切的教导，并将他在福音中给予我们的给予所有人。君尊的祭司并不挑拣他的道。他们不认为他们可以从他的道里，排除某些让人可能会反对或被冒犯的话。即使基督徒在软弱中臆断，上帝之道的某些内容让人们远离福音而不是吸引人们归向它，基督徒的责任也不是按照他们在信心里的软弱行动。相反，基督徒的



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责任是努力过一个顺服的生命，这开始于顺服于他一切的道，然后扩展到我们全部的生命。我们并不试图去纠正他，或告诉他他应该说什么，或最好没有说什么——并妄图借此来宣扬他的美德。这不是一个君尊的祭司的做法；它是一个反叛者，一个异教祭司的做法。

The keys of the kingdom of heaven are in the hands of each and every royal priest. The key to heaven's gates is exactly that message of forgiveness on account of the grace of God and the merit of Christ. It is the message of forgiveness that unlocks heaven for the penitent and slams shut the gates of hell. The praise of God that is the Christian life is always aimed at that, at drawing men and women, young and old, to the gates of heaven. It is focused on sharing all that he has taught, the center of which is the gospel message that forgives sins, that creates and preserves faith (Matthew 18:15-20; John 20:19-22).

天国的钥匙在每一个君尊祭司的手里。打开天国的钥匙，正是基于上帝的恩典和基督的功德的赦免的信息。正是赦免的信息，为忏悔之人打开了天国并怦然的关上了地狱的大门。基督徒的生命总是致力于此，致力于将男人和女人、少年或老人，都拉往天堂的大门，这就是他们对上帝的赞美。它聚焦于上帝一切的教导，其中心就是福音的信息，正是这福音的信息赦免了罪，创造并持守了信心（太 18:15-20；约 20:19-22）。

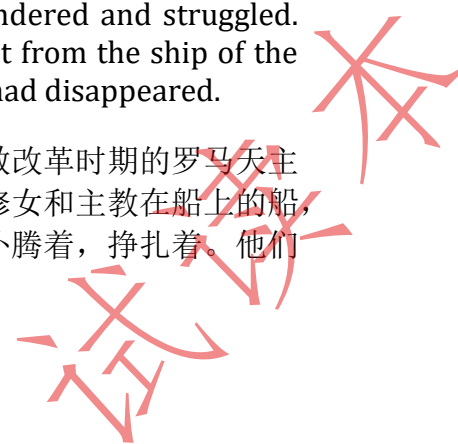
## The holy office of the ministry 神职

Well then, if each and every believer is a royal priest, what purpose do pastors and teachers serve? Why do we even need them? After all, God teaches us himself through his Word. He gives to each and every believer the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the privilege, yes, the duty, to forgive one another. What then is the holy office of the ministry? How does it differ from the universal priesthood of all believers?

那么，如果每个信徒都是君尊的祭司，牧师和教师服事的目的是什么？为什么我们还需要他们呢？毕竟，上帝是透过他的话将他自己指教给我们。他赐给每一个信徒天国的钥匙和彼此饶恕的特权，是的，以及责任。那么，什么是神职呢？它与所有信徒普世的祭司职有什么区别呢？

In the history of the church, there has been a tendency either to overestimate or to underestimate the holy office of the ministry. In the Roman papacy at the time of the Reformation, the office of the ministry was so exalted that the church was pictured as a ship on which were only priests and nuns and bishops with the pope as the ship's captain and pilot. In the swirling sea, the common people floundered and struggled. Their only hope was to catch hold of a staff extended by a priest from the ship of the church. The doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers had disappeared.

在教会历史上，总有一种倾向，要么高估要么贬低神职。在宗教改革时期的罗马天主教会，神职被如此高举，以至于教会描绘成一艘只有牧师、修女和主教在船上的船，这艘船的船长和领航员就是教皇。在波涛汹涌的海里，普通人扑腾着，挣扎着。他们



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唯一的希望是抓住，某个牧师从教会这艘船上伸出来的权杖。所有信徒普世祭司职的教义消失了。

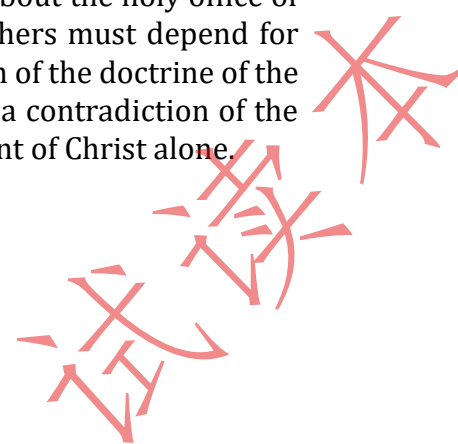
To this day, Roman Catholicism teaches that it is not faith in Christ as the only and all-sufficient Savior that assures us of our peace with God and eternal salvation. Instead, Catholicism teaches that it is fellowship with the church headed by the pope that gives peace and ultimately the certainty of salvation. To be outside of fellowship with the pope is to be outside of the true church. That the pope contradicts the Word of God and demands obedience to himself instead of to the clear Word of God is supposed to make no difference to his members. So the pope dedicates himself and his church in devotion to the saints and especially to the virgin Mary. He and his priests offer masses to rescue people from a mythical purgatory. He and they sell masses in his cloisters, monasteries, and parish churches in order to obtain the favor of God for this or that intention. It is all idolatry, and it is all at bottom a gross exaggeration of the holy office of the ministry. Yes, it is exactly what St. Paul describes as the great falling away in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

直到今天，罗马天主教会教导，并不是相信基督为唯一和全备的救主，给了我们与上帝的平安和永恒救恩的保证。相反，天主教教导，与由教皇领导的教会之间的团契，赋予了平安和救恩的最终确据。脱离与教皇的团契是脱离真正的教会。因此教皇否定上帝的道，要求顺服于他自己而不是上帝清晰的话语——而天主教会成员认为这两点没有区别。因此教皇将他自己和教会献给圣徒，尤其是献给圣母马利亚。他和他的神父献上弥撒，将人们从神话中的炼狱里拯救出来。他和他们在修道院、教区、教会里出售弥撒，为了这样或那样的目的获得上帝的恩宠。这完全是偶像崇拜，这实际上是对神职过分的夸大。是的，这正是圣保罗在帖撒罗尼迦后书 2:1-12 描述的大堕落。

This most horrible of all exaggerations of the office of the ministry ends up turning the eyes of faith away from Christ and his work, from God and his grace, from the clear Word of God. It gives to the priests and their papal head a right that belongs only to God: God alone can establish doctrine, and he has done that in his own unerring and verbally inspired Word.

这种对神职可怕的夸大，最终使信心的眼睛离开基督和他的工作，离开上帝和他的恩典，离开上帝清晰的道。它赋予了神父和他们的教皇一种只属于上帝的权力：唯有上帝能够建立教义，并且他在他无误和逐字默示的道里已经建立了它。

Additionally, that exaggeration robs Christians of their distinction as royal priests. Christ earned that distinction and the work of royal priests for them; and he promised and gave these to them already at their baptisms. Any teaching about the holy office of the ministry that turns pastors into a special caste on which others must depend for their salvation is contrary to the Word of God. It is a contradiction of the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers. Even more important, it is a contradiction of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone through faith alone on account of Christ alone.





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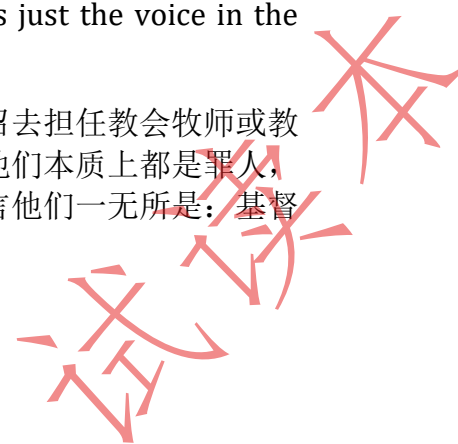
此外，这种夸大也掠夺了基督徒作为君尊祭司的荣耀。基督为他们赢得了这荣耀和君尊祭司的工作；他在他们的洗礼中将些已经应许并赐给了他们。任何关于神职的教导，将牧师变为一个特殊阶层，而其他入必须依赖于这一阶层才能获得他们的救恩，这样的教导都是违背了上帝的道。它与所有信徒普世祭司职的教义相矛盾。更重要的是，它与救恩唯独靠着恩典，唯独透过信心，唯独基于基督的教义相矛盾。

But there is another tendency that is also contrary to the Word of God, a tendency to underestimate the holy office of the ministry. One sees this tendency in much of Protestantism and in some Lutheran circles as well. Many think that pastors and teachers of the church are really not much more than hired hands. Their thinking goes something like this: We hire and contract with them to do for us what we as individuals cannot do. Most members don't have the ability or the training or the inclination to conduct worship services. Most, because of the press of other responsibilities, don't have the time to be missionaries, even in their own communities. Most aren't skilled enough to teach children and adults, to comfort the sick and the dying, to counsel the troubled and the fallen. So, we hire somebody to do that in our stead, in our name. We tell them what we want them to preach or teach, and we expect them to follow our instructions. As long as we are in agreement, they will stay in our employ. If, for whatever reason, we or they decide that it's just not working out, well, then we can fire them or they can quit and we can hire someone else.

但是还有另一种倾向，同样与上帝的道相违背，就是贬低神职的倾向。我们可以从很多新教教派和某些路德宗圈子里看到这一倾向。很多人认为教会牧师和教师不过是雇工。他们的想法大概是这样的：我们雇佣他们为我们去做我们个人不能做的事。大多数成员没有能力、没有受训或没有意愿去组织敬拜仪式。大多数人，由于其他职责的压力，并没有时间去做宣教士，即使是在他们自己的社区。大多数人并没有足够的技能来教导孩子和成人，来安慰病人和濒死的人，来辅导陷入困境和跌倒的人。因此，我们雇佣一些人来代替并代表我们做这事。我们告诉他们我们想要他们宣讲或教导什么，我们期待他们按照我们的指示去做。一旦我们达成协议，他们就会被我们雇佣。如果，无论基于什么原因，我们或他们认为行不通了，那好吧，我们可以解雇他们，或者他们可以离开，让我们可以雇佣其他人。

But that's not the picture which we have of the holy office of the ministry in the New Testament. To be sure, those called to be the pastors and teachers of the church are in their persons no different than any other Christian. They are by nature sinners, frail and fallen. And even in the exercise of their offices they recognize that in their persons they are nothing: Christ and his Word is everything. That was the attitude of St. John the Baptist, who wanted nothing else than to exalt Christ. John was just the voice in the wilderness (Mark 1:1-8; John 1:6-36).

但这并不是我们在新约中看到的神职的画面。诚然，那些被呼召去担任教会牧师或教师的人，就他个人而言，他和任何其他基督徒没有任何区别。他们本质上都是罪人，脆弱而堕落。甚至在履行他们职责时，他们都承认，就个人而言他们一无所是：基督



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和他的道是一切。这就是施洗约翰的态度，他只想要高举基督。他本人不过是旷野里的声音（可 1:1-8；约 1:6-36）。

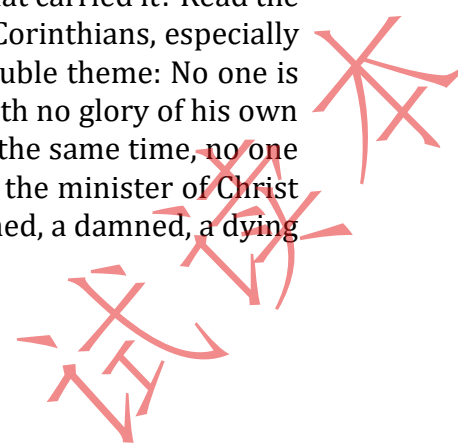
St. Paul speaks of himself and of his coworkers that way too. Among the most striking metaphors that he uses when speaking of his ministry, and by implication the ministry of all called pastors and teachers, is the one in 2 Corinthians 4:7. There he tells us, “We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power [i.e., the power of the gospel to save] is from God and not from us.” People in Paul’s day would hide and bury treasures in clay jars; it was the business of the jar to conceal and to protect the treasure. The pastors and teachers of the church, even the greatest of the apostles, are but fragile containers for the treasure. The treasure is hidden in the jar so that it may be taken out and shown to the world. Furthermore, the jar does not protect the treasure but the treasure protects the jar!

圣保罗也以同样的方式谈论他自己和他的同工。当他谈到他的事工，以及所有被呼召为牧师和教师之人的事工时，其中一个最引人注目的比喻是在哥林多后书 4:7。在那儿他告诉我们：“我们有这宝贝放在瓦器里，为要显明这莫大的能力（比如，福音拯救的能力）是出于上帝，不是出于我们。”保罗时代的人会将财宝藏在瓦器里；瓦器的职责是隐藏并保护财宝。教会牧师和教师，甚至是最伟大的使徒，也不过是盛放宝贝的易碎的容器。这宝贝被藏在瓦器里，这样它就可以被拿出来并向世人显明。此外，这瓦器并不保护这宝贝，而是这宝贝保护这瓦器。

Both the description of St. John and that of St. Paul put the office of called workers in the church into perspective. St. John was just a voice; the message is what is important. St. Paul was just a clay jar, nothing beautiful or impressive in itself. It is the treasure of the gospel that is beautiful and God himself working through it that is powerful and glorious. That is the lowliness of the gospel ministry.

无论是圣约翰还是圣保罗的描述，都将教会对圣工的呼召放在了正确的视角。圣约翰只是一个声音；重要的是信息。圣保罗只是一个瓦器，本身并不美丽或引人注目。真正美丽的是福音这个宝贝，真正有能力和荣耀的是上帝亲自透过它做的工作。这就是福音使者的卑微。

At the same time, that lowliness is the greatest joy and highest glory of the ministry. St. John was just a voice. But what a voice! It was a voice that God was pleased to use to exalt his Son and to point to his Son as the saving and sacrificial Lamb who took away the sin of the world. St. Paul was just a clay jar. But where would the treasure be and how would it have come to us were it not for that lowly clay jar that carried it? Read the rest of what Paul has to say about the office of the ministry in 2 Corinthians, especially in chapters 1-6. There you will find this constantly recurring double theme: No one is more lowly than the minister of Christ; he is the servant of all, with no glory of his own but only the glory of Christ and his message of salvation. And at the same time, no one has a more glorious office; and that for exactly the same reason: the minister of Christ is the ambassador sent from God to proclaim salvation to a doomed, a damned, a dying



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world. Glorious indeed is the office with that message—the message that brings life to the dying, rescue for the damned, freedom and salvation for the doomed.

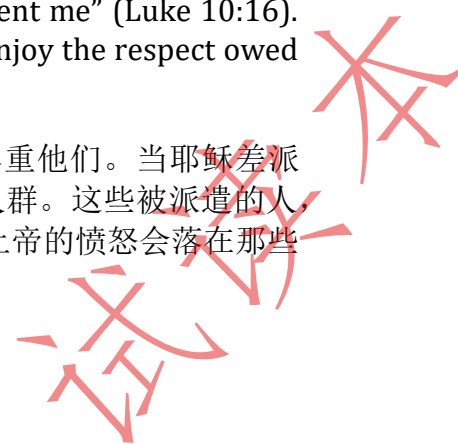
与此同时，这种卑微是福音使者最大的喜乐和最高的荣耀。圣约翰只是一个声音，但这是怎样的声音啊！上帝乐意用这样一个声音高举他的儿子，指出他的儿子是拯救和献祭的羔羊，拿去世人的罪。圣保罗只是一个瓦器。但若不是这卑贱的瓦器盛载着宝贝，这宝贝在哪里，它又怎么临到我们呢？阅读保罗在哥林多后书，特别是在 1-6 章，关于神职他接下来说了什么。在那儿你会发现这样一个反复出现的双重主题：没有人比基督的使者更卑微；他是所有人的仆人，没有一点他自己的荣耀，唯有基督和他拯救信息的荣耀。与此同时，没有人有比这更荣耀的职务；这正是基于同样的原因：基督的使者是蒙上帝差派的，向这个在劫难逃的、该下地狱的、濒死的世界宣告拯救。这一职务所传达的信息确实是荣耀的——这信息为濒死者带来生命，为该下地狱者带来释放，为在劫难逃者带来自由和拯救。

And so, in the New Testament, the office of a called servant of the gospel is most highly praised. St. Paul reminds the members of the church in Ephesus that apostles and pastors and teachers are God's gifts to them. God gave them for this high and holy work of serving the servants of God. He gave them to build up his kings and priests through the teaching and preaching not of their own word but of his Word. Again, notice both the dignity and the lowliness of the office: it is high and holy because of its purpose; it is humble and lowly because it is all directed to service of another. The office is devoted first of all to the service of Christ himself and then to the service of his people (Ephesians 4:7-16).

因此，在新约中，呼召福音仆人的职务是被高度称赞的。圣保罗在以弗所书提醒教会会众，使徒、牧师和教师是上帝给他们的恩赐。上帝赐他们这神圣崇高的工作，来服事上帝的仆人。他赐下他们来建立他的众王和众祭司，不是透过教导和传讲他们自己的话而是上帝的道。再次地，请注意这个职务的高贵和卑贱：因为其目的，它是崇高圣洁的；因为它一切的方向都是去服事别人，它是低微卑贱的。这个职务首先致力于服事基督本人，然后致力于服事他的子民（弗 4:7-16）。

Because of the nobility of the work and the nobility of the One who sends pastors and teachers, we honor them and hold them in high regard. When Jesus sent out the 72 to preach and teach, he commissioned them with promises and warnings for those to whom they were sent. Those sent would bring Jesus' peace to those who heard Jesus' words through them. But the wrath of God would fall on those who would reject the message and the messengers God sent: "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me" (Luke 10:16). Because they bring Christ and his saving message, they should enjoy the respect owed to the One who sent them.

因为这事工的崇高和差派牧师和教师者的崇高，我们尊敬并尊重他们。当耶稣差派 72 门徒去传教时，他委派他们将应许和警告带给他们的目标人群。这些被派遣的人，会给那些透过他们听到耶稣之话的人，带去耶稣的平安。但是上帝的愤怒会落在那些



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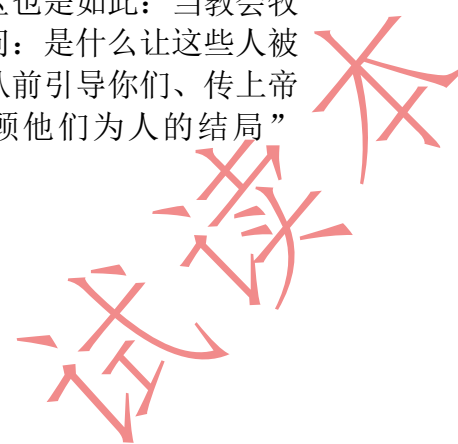
拒绝这信息和上帝的信使之人的头上：“听从你们的就是听从我；弃绝你们的就是弃绝我；弃绝我的就是弃绝差遣我来的那位”（路 10:16）。因为他们带来了基督和他救恩的信息，他们应该享受给那位差派他们者的尊重。

So the messenger is not a hired hand. He is Christ's ambassador. He is the servant of Christ in the midst of the people of God (1 Corinthians 4:1). Because of his work, an ambassador deserves respect, just as his message deserves obedience when it is the message that Christ has given in his Word. That's Paul's instruction too in 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13: "Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other." What a terrible witness it is to our children and to the community when pastors and teachers are treated with disrespect by their own members. Should anyone be surprised that the next generation does not listen to the message and the community isn't much interested in it either? After all, if the ambassador is held in contempt, what attention do we expect people to give to the message?

因此这信使并不是雇来的，他是基督的使者。他是基督在上帝子民中间的仆人（林前 4:1）。一个大使配得为他的工作受尊重，正如他所带来的信息配得顺服一样——因这信息是基督在他的道里赐下的。这也是保罗在帖撒罗尼迦前书 5:12, 13 中的教导：“弟兄们，我们劝你们要敬重那些在你们中间劳苦的，就是在主里面督导你们、劝戒你们的人。又因他们所做的工作，要以爱心格外尊重他们。你们也要彼此和睦。”当牧师和教师受他们自己成员不尊重的对待时，这对我们的儿女和社区是一个多么可怕的见证啊。若是这样，那我们下一代并不听从这信息，我们社区对它也不感兴趣，又有什么好奇怪的呢？毕竟，如果信使被藐视，我们还能期待人们对这信息有什么态度呢？

On the other hand, what a blessing it is in the family when the office of the ministry is honored. What an incentive for children to listen to those their parents hold in such high regard and for whom they pray. Yes, and in the community as well: when the pastors and teachers of the church are so obviously honored by their members, those outside of the church may well ask what it is that makes these people so respected. The answer of course will be this: *the message!* The epistle to the Hebrews sums it up so well: "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith" (13:7). That's a worthy work for hearers.

另一方面，当神职被尊重时，家庭是多么蒙福啊。让孩子们去倾听他们的父母如此尊敬并为之祷告的人，这对他们是多么大的激励啊。是的，在社区也是如此：当教会牧师和教师被他们的成员如此尊重时，那些教会外面的人可能会问：是什么让这些人被如此尊重呢？答案当然是：这信息！希伯来书总结的很好：“从前引导你们、传上帝的道给你们的人，你们要记念他们，效法他们的信心，回顾他们为人的结局”（13:7）。这对听众是值得做的事。



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It is a noble goal for pastors and teachers that their lives as well as their doctrine should be worthy of such respect and imitation. Pastors and teachers need always to remember that it is not because they in their own persons are so great that they are respected and honored. It is all about the message. It is all about the One who sent them. Their words are his words. Their lives should match their words and be an imitation of his life as the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep. St. Paul exhorted the pastors of Ephesus to pay strict attention to both their doctrine and their lives. They had been called and sent by Christ to feed his flock. The flock is so dear to him that he purchased it with his blood (Acts 20:28). St. Peter urges the same thing. He reminds the pastors and teachers of the church both of their own lowliness and of their high office as those sent to serve (1 Peter 5:2-4).

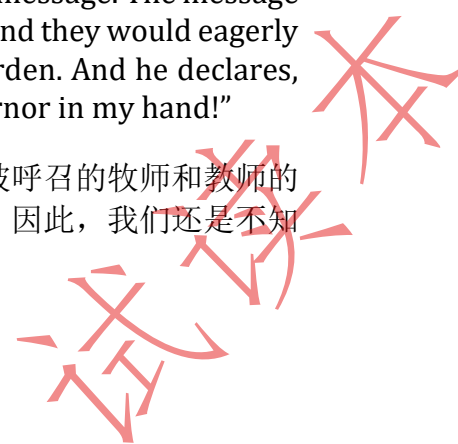
牧师和教师的生命也应该和他们的教义一样，配得尊敬和效仿，这对他们是一个荣耀的目标。牧师和教师需要时刻记得，他们受尊敬和尊重并不是他们本身有多了不起。这都是因为那信息。这都是因为那差派他们者。他们的话是他的话。他们的生命应该效法他的话，模仿那个好牧人的生命——他为羊舍了他自己。圣保罗告诫以弗所的牧师要严格地关心他们的教义和他们的生命。他们被基督呼召和差派去牧养他的羊群。他如此珍爱这羊群，以至于他用他的血赎买了它们（徒 20:28）。圣彼得督促了同样的事。他用他们自身的卑贱和他们被差派去服事的圣职，来提醒教会的牧师和教师（彼前 5:2-4）。

So the office of the holy ministry is a special gift of God to the church. God himself considered it important enough to have three of the epistles addressed especially to pastors: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

因此神职是上帝给教会特别的恩赐。上帝及其看重这件事，有三封书信是特别给牧师的：提摩太前书、后书和提多书。

But someone at this point might say, "Wait a minute: the work of the apostles and, by extension, the work of the called pastors and teachers of the church doesn't sound like it is any different than the assignment that Christ has given to all of his royal priests. So, we still haven't discovered why God sends and gives them if their work is no different than that of all his royal priests." In essence, the observation is correct that the pastor does what all Christians are to do. His message of forgiveness is no different. But while the essence of the message is the same, the manner of its presentation is different; and that is by God's own design and arrangement. Let us say, for the sake of analogy, that a prisoner hears on the radio that all the prisoners are to be released. He eagerly shares what he has heard with his fellow prisoners who did not hear the message. The message shared would certainly excite and thrill the rest of the prisoners, and they would eagerly look for the unlocking of their cell doors. Then in comes the warden. And he declares, "You are all free to go! See, here I have the pardon from the governor in my hand!"

但这里可能有人说：“等一等：使徒的工作，进一步说，教会被呼召的牧师和教师的工作，听起来和上帝赐给他所有君尊祭司的职责，没什么不同。因此，我们还是不知





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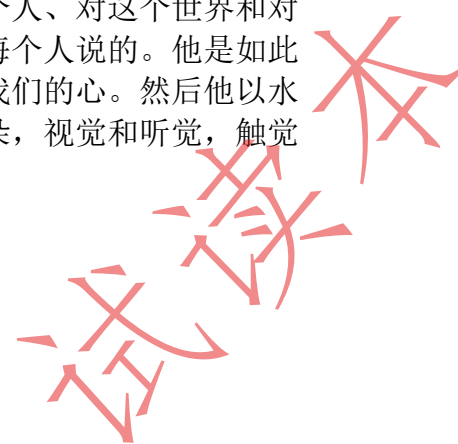
道，为什么差派并赐下他们——如果他们的工作和他一切君尊祭司的工作是一样的话。”本质上，这个观察是对的，牧师做的事是所有基督徒去做的。他赦免的信息并无不同。但是虽然这信息的本质是一样的，其表达的方式有所不同；这是出于上帝自己的计划和委派。为类比的缘故，让我们举个例子，一个囚犯在收音机里听到所有的囚犯都要被释放。他热切的将他所听到的和那些没有听到这信息的同伴分享。这个被分享的信息必然让其他的囚犯兴奋和激动，他们会急切地期待监狱的大门被打开。然后守门人进来了。他宣告说：“你们都可以出去了！看，我手上拿着政府的赦免状！”

The message is no different in its essence. Merely the form that it takes, merely the position of the messenger, is different. So the neighbor, the husband, the wife, the parent, the child says, "Christ died for you; your sins are forgiven." Then on Sunday morning I hear it from the called representative of Christ: "By virtue of my office as a called servant of the Word, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Again, there is no difference in the essence of the message. It is the same—and yet it is different. And that is by God's own design and arrangement.

这信息在本质上并无区别。仅仅是它采取的形式，仅仅是信使的位置，有所不同。因此邻居、丈夫、妻子、父母、孩子说：“基督为你死了，你的罪得赦了。”然后在周天早上，我从被召的基督的代表那里听到了它：“借着我被召为圣道仆人的职分，我奉圣父、圣子和圣灵的名，赦免你一切的罪。”再次地，这信息在本质上并无区别。它是相同的——但又有所不同。这是出于上帝自己的计划和委派。

But why would God entrust the same message to all his royal priests and then to called servants of the church? Because it is God's way to be generous! That's the way he always is. He gives the gospel message so beautifully and clearly in the words of the Bible. Then he gives us the same powerful and faith-creating message in the Sacrament of Baptism. Then he assures us of the same so wondrously in the Sacrament of the Altar. In the Bible he speaks to us individually and to the world and to the church collectively. In the sacraments he says the same thing, but he says it to each of us, one at a time. He is so generous that he has his gospel touch the ears and the heart with words. Then he comes to us with water and the Word and with his own real presence with the forms of bread and wine. So, he appeals and comes to the ears, to sight and sound, to touch and taste. It's all the same message—only different.

但是为什么上帝将这同样的信息，委托给他所有君尊的祭司，又委托给教会蒙召的仆人呢？因为这是上帝慷慨的方式！他总是如此。他在圣经的话语里如此美丽又清晰地赐下福音信息。然后他在圣洗礼中赐下同样满有能力并创造信心的信息。然后他如此奇妙地在圣餐礼中给了我们同样的保证。在圣经中，他对我们个人、对这个世界和对教会集体说话。在圣礼中他说了同样的事，但这是挨次对我们每个人说的。他是如此慷慨，以至于他用他的福音，以话语的形式触摸我们的耳朵和我们的内心。然后他以水和道临到我们，以饼和酒的形式真实临在。因此，他诉诸于耳朵，视觉和听觉，触觉和味觉。这是同样的信息，却又有所区别。



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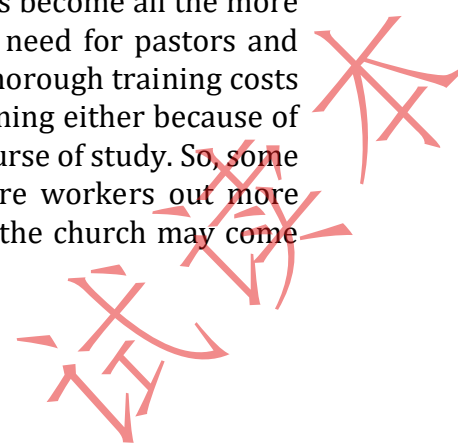
That generosity is pictured already in creation. He gives colors, not just black and white or grey. He gives variety in geography and weather, not just flat plains or stagnant water. He gives abundance of tastes and sights and sounds. That's just the way he is: generous.

这样的慷慨在创世中已经被描述出来了。他赐下颜色，不仅仅是黑、白或灰色。他赐下丰富多彩的地貌和天气，不仅仅是平原或静水。他赐下丰富的味道、景色和声音。这就是他的特征：慷慨。

And so he gives the message to be shared by all his royal priests. And then he gives his message to be proclaimed by his called representatives. They are not in their office by their own choice but by his. He has called them. He does it not with an inner whisper. He does it through the church to which he sends them. In the gospels, he called his apostles directly. Now he calls indirectly, through the church. But the call remains his. They are his servants. They carry his message. They proclaim his Word. They belong to him wholly and entirely. That's why we don't speak of hiring and firing pastors and teachers of the church. We call them. Technically we don't even speak of paying them a salary. We support them. They are our servants, but servants given to us by Christ, whose servants they still remain; they belong to Christ first. They live to serve us; but their service to us is real service only when it is with the message Christ gives in his Word and sacraments.

因此他赐下这信息给所有君尊的祭司去分享。然后他赐下他的信息给他蒙召的代表去宣讲。他们的职位并不是出于他们自己的选择，而是出于他的选择。他呼召了他们。他并不是用内心的窃窃私语这样做的。而是透过他差派他们去的教会这样做。在福音书中，他直接呼召他的使徒。现在他透过教会间接地呼召。但是，这呼召依然是他的。他们是他的仆人，他们承载着他的信息。他们宣讲他的道。他们完全地全部的属于他。这就是我们为什么不说我们雇佣和解雇教会的教师和牧师，我们呼召他们。严格来说我们甚至不说我们付他们工资。我们支持他们。他们是我们的仆人，但是是基督赐给我们的仆人，他们依然还是基督的仆人；他们首先属于基督。他们是为服事我们而活；但是他们对我们的服事，唯有当它是带着基督在圣道和圣礼中赐下的信息时，这服事才是真正的服事。

Yes, and before we call them, we train them. It is certainly true and obvious to anyone who thinks about it: not all of God's royal priests are able to preach and teach, to counsel and console, to have a thorough knowledge of the difference between true and false doctrine and to know why that difference matters. Indeed, as errors have multiplied over the ages, as the demands and distractions of modern life have multiplied as well, the careful and thorough training of our pastors and teachers has become all the more important. It is a tragedy that in so many churches the urgent need for pastors and missionaries has put thorough training on a cold back burner. Thorough training costs money; it limits the number willing or able to undergo such training either because of its cost or because of the time and effort required to finish the course of study. So, some cut back the requirements to a bare minimum just to get more workers out more quickly—and at less expense. The result is that the message of the church may come



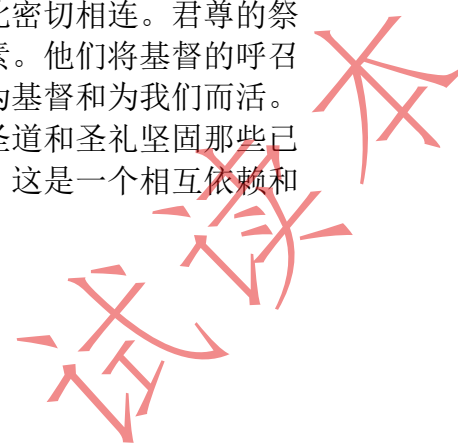
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from more and more but be always less and less of the “all things” that Jesus commanded us to teach. To put it another way, the careful training of the ambassadors of Christ and the sharing of the message of Christ belong together: if all the energy is devoted to training and none to sharing, then the role of ambassador has largely disappeared. But if all the energy is devoted to sharing and less and less to a thorough knowledge of the message to be shared, then too the role of ambassador disappears. It’s another one of those many narrow middle roads that we need to seek and find. We look for the middle with zeal to be faithful royal priests—faithful to the commission to go, faithful to the commission to teach all things.

是的，在我们呼召他们之前，我们培训他们。对任何思考过这一问题的人来说，这都是正确和明显的：不是所有君尊的祭司都有能力去宣讲和教导，去辅导和安慰，对真教义和假教义之间的区别有透彻的了解，并知道为什么这区别很重要。的确，随着错误在过去时代的倍增，同时现代生活的需求和焦虑也在倍增，对我们牧师和教师精心而透彻的训练，变得尤为重要。不幸的是，在很多教会，对牧师和传道人迫切的需要，将训练搁置在次要位置。透彻的训练很花钱；它限制了愿意或能够参加这种训练的人数，要么是因为其花费，要么是因为完成这些课程需要的时间或精力。因此，一些人将其职位要求消减到最低限度，只是为了更快地获得更多工人——并且以更少的花费。其结果是教会信息的来源可能越来越多，但对于耶稣命令我们去教导的“一切”，总是越来越少。换句话说，对基督的使者精心的训练和分享基督的信息是相辅相成的：如果所有的精力都用在训练上，而没有分享，那么使者的作用很大程度上就消失了。但是如果所有的精力都用在分享，而对要分享的信息的透彻了解越来越少，那么，使者的作用也消失了。这是另一条我们需要去寻求并发现的狭窄中路。我们满怀热情寻找中路，去成为忠心的君尊祭司——忠心于“要去”的大使命，忠心于“教导一切”的大使命。

From all that has been said, it should be clear that the universal priesthood of all believers and the holy office of the ministry are intimately connected to each other. The royal priests are anxious that their pastors and teachers be as well-trained as possible for their all-important work. They extend to their pastors and teachers the call of Christ to serve with his Word and sacraments. Then those called live for Christ and for us. They fulfill an important role in calling others to be royal priests. They strengthen with the Word and the sacraments those who are already royal priests and help them carry out their roles as royal priests. It is all a beautiful circle of mutual dependence and support. Each needs the other; each supports and sustains the other. And it is all according to God’s most kind and generous design. And in the middle, at the center of it all, is Christ!

综上所述，我们清楚的看到，所有信徒普世的祭司职和神职彼此密切相连。君尊的祭司迫切希望他们的牧师和教师，在其一切重要事工上都训练有素。他们将基督的呼召给他们的牧师和教师，用圣道和圣礼去服事他们。然后那些人为基督和为我们而活。他们履行着重要的角色，呼召其他人成为君尊的祭司。他们用圣道和圣礼坚固那些已经是君尊祭司的人，并帮助他们承担他们作为君尊祭司的职责。这是一个相互依赖和



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彼此支持的美丽的循环。这两者彼此需要；这两者彼此支持和维系。这一切都是按着上帝最良善和慷慨的设计。而在这中间，在这一切的中心，是基督！

The middle road that connects the two can best be illustrated with the last words of Jesus to the congregations of Asia Minor in the book of Revelation. Notice in 1:20 how the relationship between Jesus and his pastors is described; notice how the relationship between Jesus and the churches is described. Jesus holds the pastors as stars in his right hand; they are close to him and dear to his heart. The pastors as stars shine in the church with light from him. At the same time, he calls the churches lampstands; they too shine with his light into the dark world. Again, the stars and the lampstands have the same function: they shine and radiate the light of Christ, the Light of the world. They are the same—only different. To despise either is to despise their Light, their Lord. For the stars to shine on the lampstands is their great honor. For the lampstands to hold in high esteem the stars that Christ holds in his right hand is to honor Christ, who treasures them and sends them.

在启示录中耶稣对小亚细亚会众末尾的话，可以最好的描述连接这两者的中路。注意 1:20 是如何描述耶稣和其牧师之间的关系；注意它是如何描述耶稣和教会之间的关系。耶稣在他的右手中握着牧师如同星星；他们亲近他并为他所珍爱。牧师用从他而来的光，如同星星一样照着教会。与此同时，他称教会为灯台；他们同样用他的光照着这个黑暗的世界。再次地，星星和灯台有同样的功用：它们发光并射出基督的光，就是世上的光。他们是一样的——却又有所不同。轻视他们中任何一个，就是轻视他们的光，他们的主。星星照耀在灯台上，是他们极大的荣耀。灯台尊敬握在基督右手的星星，就是尊敬那珍爱他们并差派他们的基督。

We have found the narrow middle road when pastors and teachers of the church cherish and prize both their office and those they serve in that office. We have found the narrow middle road when we honor Christ by honoring those he has sent to serve us with his pure Word and sacraments. The flock was not created to trample the shepherd. The shepherd was not sent to devour the flock. Both exist for the glory of the Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep and is Lord of both the flock and the shepherds he sends to guard and feed his flock.

当教会牧师和教师珍视他们的职务和他们在这职务上服事的人时，我们就找到了这条狭窄的中路。当我们尊敬那些基督派来，用他纯粹的道和圣礼来服事我们的人，并借此尊敬基督时，我们就找到了那条狭窄的中路。羊群并不是创造来践踏牧羊人的。牧羊人并不是被派来吞吃羊群的。这两者都是为了那个大牧人的荣耀，他为羊群舍命，他是羊群的主，也是牧羊人的主——这牧羊人是蒙他所派来看守喂养羊群的。

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## The narrow middle between the doctrine of election and the Great Commission 在拣选的教义和大使命之间狭窄的中路

On another short stretch of the narrow middle road, we note two doctrines that are rich with application, each in its own way. A problem can occur, however, when one of them is emphasized without thinking about the other. We will look at each and then consider the middle road that connects them.

在这狭窄中路的另一小段路上，我们注意到两个教义，它们每一个都在其自己的道路上有着丰富的应用。然而，当其中一个被强调，却不去思考另一个时，问题就出现了。我们将考察这两者，然后思考连接它们的狭窄的中路。

### The doctrine of election 拣选的教义

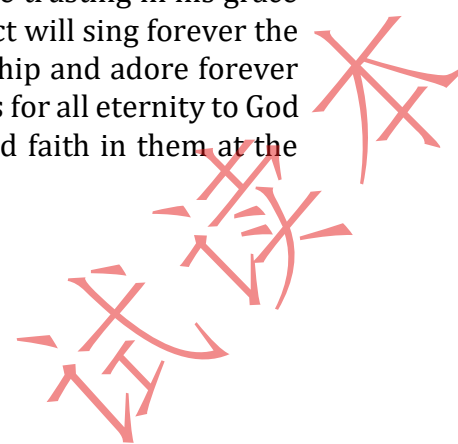
The doctrine of election is a beautiful and most comforting doctrine. It will not be our purpose here to deal with all of the controversies that have arisen over this doctrine. We wish here merely to summarize what the Bible tells us about election and then in due course to make the connection between this doctrine and the Great Commission.

拣选的教义是一个美好并最安慰人的教义。我们在此的目的，并不是去处理在这个教义之上一切的争议。我们在这儿只想要总结圣经告诉我们的关于拣选的事，然后顺次将这个教义和大使命联系起来。

The Bible tells us that already in eternity God knew and chose those whom he would bring to faith and ultimately to heaven. Of the many places in the Bible that deal with this doctrine, we will consider one of the most beautiful. Read Ephesians 1:3-23. How beautifully Paul portrays the doctrine of election! God's choice was not based on anything good or meritorious in the elect. It was based alone and altogether on his own grace and on the merit of Christ.

圣经告诉我们，在永恒中上帝就已经知道并选择了那些他会带入信心并最终带入天堂的人。圣经中有很多地方涉及这一教义，我们将会思考其中一个最美好的地方。阅读以弗所书 1:3-23。保罗将拣选的教义描绘的多么美丽啊！上帝的拣选并不基于他选民里有任何善或功绩。它唯独并完全基于他自己的仁慈和基督的功德。

God was not idle in bringing his choice into effect. He so ruled and governed all of history that those he had chosen would hear his Word, believe it, and die trusting in his grace and in Christ's merits alone for their salvation. In heaven the elect will sing forever the praises of God's grace that caused their election. They will worship and adore forever the Lamb of God who earned their salvation. They will give thanks for all eternity to God for his Word of the gospel that created their faith and preserved faith in them at the hour of death.





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上帝在成就他的拣选上并不无所事事。他治理并统管一切的历史，使得他所拣选的人能够听到他的道，相信它，并在对他的恩典和基督的功德的信赖中死去。在天堂，选民将永永远远歌唱赞美上帝的恩典——这恩典是他们蒙拣选的原因。他们将永永远远敬拜尊崇上帝的羔羊——它为他们赢得了救恩。他们将为上帝福音的道永远感谢他，这道创造了他们的信心，并在他们里面持守这信心，直到临终的那一刻。

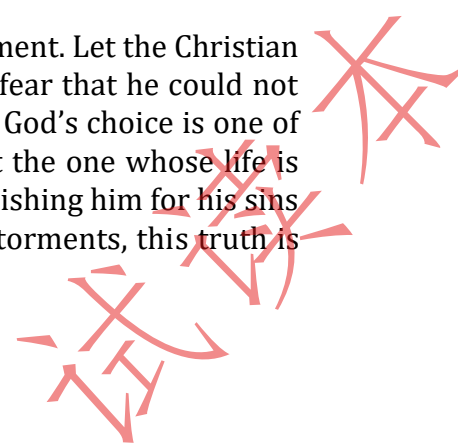
Again, read Ephesians 1:3-23. If we pay attention to all that Paul says there, we will avoid the temptation to misuse this beautiful doctrine. The words of the apostle begin and end with praise and thanks to God for his grace and for the comfort that this doctrine affords. There is not a word of speculation about why God chose some and not others. Paul is very clear about it: those chosen have only God to thank for it; those who perish have only themselves to blame for it. In the same chapter Paul makes it equally clear that this doctrine is not revealed so that we can wallow comfortably in our sins. Some people come to this conclusion: "Since I'm one of the elect, I can never fall, and therefore, it doesn't matter if I sin or not; it doesn't matter if I pray or not; it doesn't even matter if I listen anymore to God's Word or receive his sacraments." What an abuse of God's grace that would be! What a horrible mark of unbelieving ingratitude for the price of our salvation that would be!

再一次阅读以弗所书 1:3-23。如果我们重视保罗在那儿说的一切，我们就能避免误用这一美好教义的试探。使徒的话，以赞美和感谢上帝的恩典和这一教义提供的安慰开始和结束。在那儿并没有一个字去推测为什么上帝拣选了某些人而不是别人。保罗对此很清楚：那些蒙拣选的人，唯独为此感谢上帝；那些灭亡的人为此只能责备他们自己。在同一章里，保罗同样清楚地指出，上帝启示这一教义，不是让我们可以在我们的罪中自甘堕落。一些人得出这样的结论：“因为我是选民，我永不能跌倒，因此，我是否犯罪无关紧要；我是否祷告无关紧要；甚至，我是否再听上帝的道并领受圣礼也无关紧要。”这是对上帝的恩典多大的滥用啊！这种对我们救恩的代价的忘恩负义，是多么可怕的不信的标记啊！

Rather than wallowing in sin, the so gracious and expensive choice of God moves us to an adoration that does not end with words. Our adoration is one of a life of thanksgiving, thanksgiving lived out in the obedience of royal priests to their King of grace and the Lord of their salvation.

相比于在罪中堕落，上帝如此仁慈和昂贵的拣选，让我们进入无法用言语结束的敬拜。我们的敬拜是一种感恩的生命——感恩地活在君尊祭司对他们仁慈的王和他们救恩的主的顺服中。

The doctrine of election is meant for our comfort and encouragement. Let the Christian whose memory of past sin and present weakness drives him to fear that he could not possibly be good enough to enter heaven think on this doctrine: God's choice is one of grace alone, not at all of our merit—past, present, or future. Let the one whose life is weighed down with problems that make him fear that God is punishing him for his sins consider this doctrine: In the midst of all of life's tragedies and torments, this truth is



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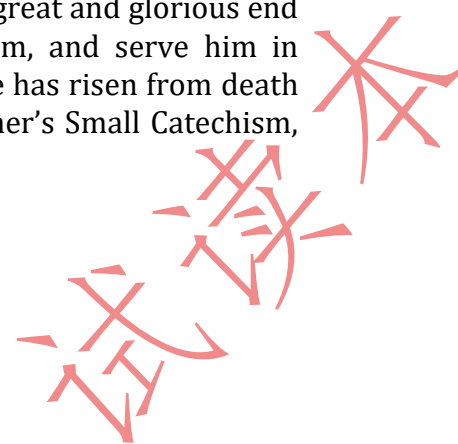
forever sure: Christ died and Christ rose; Christ reigns to bring us through joys and sorrows, through death itself to himself in glory. He will not allow anything in history to prevent his chosen from reaching the goal of heaven. Instead, he will use all of history to further his gracious choice and purpose. It's not so important that we see or fully grasp and understand how that works in any given moment. He sees it. He fully grasps and understands it. He is in control, and that's what matters. He will not fail in carrying out his rule for our benefit and the ultimate fulfillment of his choice.

拣选的教义是为了安慰和鼓励我们。那些想到过去的罪和当下的软弱，并使他害怕自己不够好，不能进入天堂的基督徒，让他们想想这个教义吧：上帝的拣选是唯独恩典的拣选，完全无关我们的功德——过去的、现在的，或未来的。让那些生命被各种问题压垮，并使他害怕上帝正在因他的罪惩罚他的人，想想这一教义吧：在生命中一切的悲剧和痛苦之中，这一真理永远确定：基督死了，并复活了；基督的统治带领我们透过喜乐和悲伤，透过死亡本身进入他的荣耀。他不会允许历史上任何事阻止他的选民到达天堂。相反，他将使用一切的历史来促进他恩慈的拣选和目标。我们是否看到，或完全掌握并理解在某个特定的时刻这是怎么运行的，并不重要。他看到了它，他完全掌握并理解它。他在掌权，这才是重要的。他为我们的益处和为他拣选的最终实现而施行的统治，永远不会失败。

Those who stick to the presentation of this doctrine in Ephesians 1 and elsewhere in the Bible will find rich comfort and encouragement in this doctrine. Those, of course, who depart from the Scriptures and try to satisfy curiosity and fallen reason will find themselves entangled and ensnared in one doubt and difficulty after another. Therefore, let us here, as on every stretch of the narrow middle road, look straight ahead to Christ and to his Word lest we go astray and miss the comfort and encouragement he wants to give us also with this doctrine.

那些坚守以弗所书和圣经其它地方对这一教义的描述的人，会在这一教义中找到丰富的安慰和鼓励。当然，那些离开圣经并试图去满足他们的好奇心和堕落的理性的人，将会发现他们自己陷入了一个又一个的疑惑和困难中。因此，让我们在这儿，如同在每一段狭窄中路上一样，牢牢盯着基督和他的道，免得我们误入歧途，也错失了他想要用这个教义给我们的安慰和鼓励。

That's the way our Confessions also present the doctrine of election (cf. especially Article XI of the Formula of Concord). Before the world began, God thought of me. On the cross Jesus thought of me. For my sake he refused to come down from that cross. For my sake he suffered, he died, he rose again. And now, for my sake, he still preserves his Word and sacraments. And he did and does all of this for the great and glorious end that "I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true!" (Luther's Small Catechism, Second Article)<sup>1</sup>



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我们的认信文也是以这样的方式呈现拣选的教义（特别参看协同式第 11 条款）。在这世界开始前，上帝想到了我。在十字架上耶稣想到了我。为我的缘故他拒绝从十字架上走下来。为我的缘故他受苦，受死，他又复活。现在，为我的缘故，他仍然保存着他的圣道和圣礼。他做这一切都是为了这一伟大而荣耀的目的：“使我属于他，在他之下活在他的国度里，永远在公义、无罪和祝福中服事他，正如他从死里复活，永远活着掌权。这是千真万确的！”（路德小问答，第二条款）<sup>1</sup>

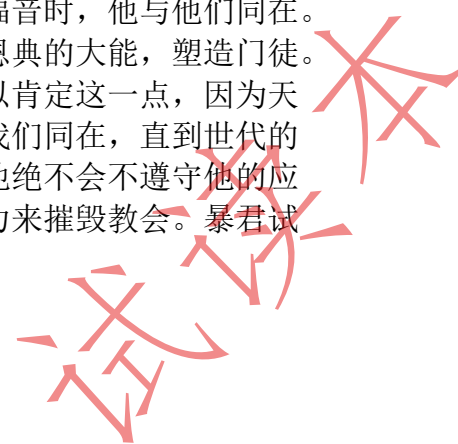
## The Great Commission 大使命

Shortly before his ascension Jesus gathered his disciples together and gave them what has come to be called his Great Commission. He said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

在耶稣升天之前，他将他的门徒聚集在一起，并给了他们一句后来被称为大使命的话。他说：“天上地下所有的权柄都赐给我了。所以，你们要去，使万民作我的门徒，奉父、子、圣灵的名给他们施洗，凡我所吩咐你们的，都教导他们遵守。看哪，我天天与你们同在，直到世代的终结”（太 28:18-20）。

So much is packed into these few words of the Savior! Precisely because he has all authority in heaven and on earth, the work he has given us to do cannot fail. He will be with his church, his royal priests, as they baptize and teach his gospel. He will be with them and by his power preserve his church. He will be with them; and by the power of grace inseparably attached to his Word and sacrament, he will make disciples. He will create faith and preserve it in the world until he comes again. Of that we can be sure because all power in heaven and on earth is his. Of that we can be sure because he will be with us until the very end of the age. Of that we can be sure because he who does not lie has promised it and will not fail to keep his promise. The very existence of the church from that day to this day is proof of it. The devil does all that he can to destroy the church. Tyrants have tried to drown the church in rivers of blood. Heretics and hypocrites have done their worst to corrupt the church by their false teaching or godless lives. But none of these have been able to destroy his Word or his church. Christ has been true to his Word!

救主的这段话包含了太多的内容！正因为他有天上地下一切的权柄，他赐给我们的工作不能失败。当他的教会和他君尊的祭司施行洗礼、教导他的福音时，他与他们同在。他用他的大能保守他的教会。他借着与圣道和圣礼牢不可分的恩典的大能，塑造门徒。他在这世界创造信心并维持信心，直到他再来的日子。我们可以肯定这一点，因为天上地下一切的权柄都是他的。我们可以肯定这一点，因为他与我们同在，直到世代的终结。我们可以肯定这一点，因为那不说谎者已经应许了它，他绝不会不遵守他的应许。教会从那时存在到如今，就是它的明证。魔鬼尽其一切努力来摧毁教会。暴君试



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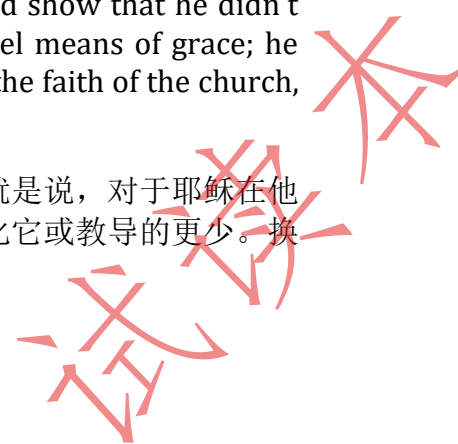
图用血流成河来淹没教会。异端和伪君子借着他们错误的教导和不虔不敬的生活来腐败教会。但是这些都不能摧毁他的圣道和他的教会。基督对他的道是信实的！

And so, confident that he will remain true to his Word, Christians individually and in union with the church work to bring the gospel into all the world. They are most eager to do that because of Christ's command. They are most eager to do it because of the great benefit, the benefit of salvation, that they have to share with a fallen world. After all, how can we help but share the salvation that Christ has given us in his Word? How can we withhold from those on the way to hell the one and only way of rescue from hell and for heaven? The apostles said as much when they were ordered to stop preaching Christ and him crucified: "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). St. Paul impresses on us the urgency of the task when he reminds us of the sad plight of those who have not heard the gospel and of our corresponding obligation to bring it to them: "As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.' How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Romans 10:11,14).

因此，基督徒确信他将依然信实于他的道，他们个人地或是在与教会的联合里，将福音带到全世界。他们及其热心地这样做，因为它是基督的命令。他们及其热心地这样做，因为他们必须与这个堕落的世界分享这极大的益处——得救的益处。毕竟，除了分享基督在他的道里赐给我们的救恩，我们还能做什么呢？我们怎能向那通往地狱之人，隐瞒那条唯一能够使他们脱离地狱进入天堂的路呢？当使徒们被命令不要再宣讲基督并他钉十字架时，他们说：“我们所看见所听见的，我们不能不说”（徒4:20）。当圣保罗提醒我们，那些没有听到福音之人的悲惨处境，以及我们将这福音带给他们的责任时，圣保罗让我们深深认识到这任务的紧迫，他说：“经上说：‘凡信靠他的人必不蒙羞。’然而，人未曾信他，怎能求告他呢？未曾听见他，怎能信他呢？没有传道的，怎能听见呢？”（罗10:11,14）。

It is important to note that the apostles paid attention to all that Jesus said in the Great Commission. That is, it did not occur to them to water down the message and teach less than all he gave them to teach in his Word. To put it another way and to connect the Great Commission to the doctrine of election: they were confident that Jesus would gather all whom he had chosen through the teaching of all that he had taught. Paul makes the point in so many of his epistles: if he compromised any of the truth of God's Word, he could have escaped persecution, but then he would no longer be carrying out Christ's commission and would be found unfaithful to his Savior and Lord. He would show that he feared men more than he trusted God, or he would show that he didn't believe that the Lord could gather his church through the gospel means of grace; he would have arrogantly supposed that it was up to him to create the faith of the church, not up to Christ and the Holy Spirit working through the gospel.

值得提到的是，使徒们注意到耶稣在大使命中说的一切话。也就是说，对于耶稣在他的道里赐给他们让他们去教导的一切信息，他们并没有想要淡化它或教导的更少。换



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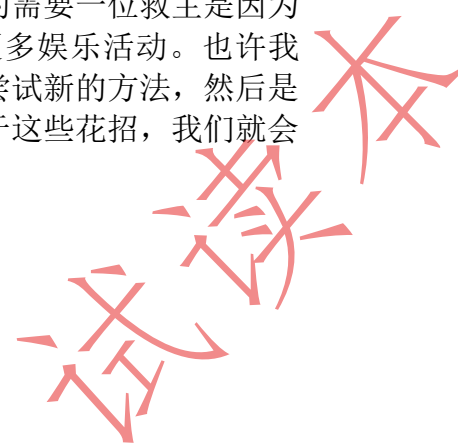
一种说法，把大使命和拣选的教义联系起来：他们确信，耶稣将透过他告诉他们的一切教导，来招聚他所有的选民。保罗在他的许多书信中都提到了这一点：如果他对上帝之道的真理有任何一点妥协，他就能逃离逼迫了，但是他将不再是在执行基督的使命，并将发现他对他的救主和主不再忠诚。他会显出他害怕人超过相信上帝，他会显出他并不相信主能够透过福音这施恩具招聚他的教会；他会傲慢的认为，教会的信心是由他来创造的，而不是由基督和圣灵透过福音的工作。

Paul's zeal for mission work is beyond doubt, and it would be difficult for anyone to be more zealous in doing mission work than he was. We, therefore, will find no better example than Paul when we are confronted with the temptation that was foreign to his whole mission effort. The temptation is to let our zeal get out of bounds. The temptation is that we imagine that the success of our mission efforts depends on us—not on God's election, not on God's promise to gather in those whom he has chosen by means of the faithful proclamation of his Word.

保罗对宣教事工的热心是毫无疑问的，任何人要比他更热心的去做宣教事工，都是困难的。因此，当我们面对与保罗整个宣教事工无关的试探时，再也找不出比他更好的例子了。试探是让我们的热心超过限度。试探是我们臆断我们宣教事工的成功依赖于我们——而不是依赖于上帝的拣选，不是依赖于上帝的应许：借着忠心的宣扬他的道来招聚他的选民。

When that temptation gets the upper hand, we can start to get a sort of “Messiah complex,” either individually or as a church body. We can see evidences of a Messiah complex when we torment ourselves over the seeming lack of success in proclaiming the gospel. “Since what I’m doing isn’t working, I’ve got to find some new method (*a.k.a.*—gimmick) that will work. Maybe if sermons were more fun. Maybe if I didn’t tell my neighbor that he really needs a Savior because he is a sinner; maybe if I left that part out until later. Maybe if our worship services were more entertaining, people would come. Maybe if we had more fun organizations. Maybe if we . . .” The list goes on and on and knows no end. As one approach yields the same apparent failure, a new one is attempted, and then another and another. Or still worse, if outward success seems to result from gimmicks, we imagine that we have really helped the message and served the purpose of the gospel.

当这种试探占了上风时，我们就开始产生了一种“弥赛亚情结”——不管是个人还是教会团体。当我们为宣扬福音似乎缺乏成功而折磨我们自己时，我们就能看到弥赛亚情结的证据。“既然我所做的不起作用，我要找到某个新的会起作用的方法（又称——花招）。也许讲道更有趣些。也许我不告诉我的邻居，他真的需要一位救主是因为他是一个罪人；也许我将这部分留到以后再说。也许我们有更多娱乐活动。也许我们……”这样的名单没完没了。当一种方法明显失败时，就会尝试新的方法，然后是下一个，再下一个。或者更糟的是，如果外在的成功似乎来自于这些花招，我们就会想象我们真的帮助了这信息，服务了福音的目的。





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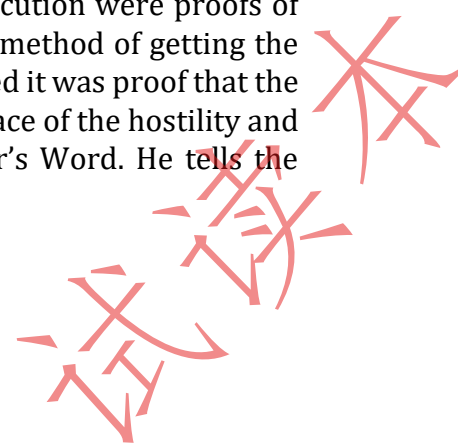
Now someone is going to jump up and object: “But are we supposed to just repeat Bible passages in as tedious a way as we can find? Shouldn’t we do our best with the gifts that God has given us in the proclamation of the gospel?” The answer is that of course we should employ the best means we can for the sharing of the gospel. It’s not a question of trying to be as tedious as we can. It’s not a matter of paying no attention to the way we invite, the way we worship, or even the order in which we present the truths of the Bible.

现在有人跳起来反对说：“难道我们就应该用我们能找到的最乏味的方式重复圣经吗？难道我们不应该尽力使用上帝在宣扬福音上给我们的恩赐吗？”答案是，当然，我们应该用我们所能的一切方式，去分享福音。这个问题并不是让我们怎么沉闷怎么来。也不是不关注我们邀请人的方式、我们敬拜的方法，甚至也不是我们呈现圣经真理的顺序。

The point is not that methods don’t matter. The point is that methods as such do not convert or preserve our faith. Only the gospel can do that. We need to make sure that when we are looking for methods, we don’t imagine that if we just hit on the right method, then everyone will like the gospel (and us!). Jesus never told us to find the method that would take away the offense of the gospel and the scandal of the cross. And St. Paul assumed that there is no such method. What Jesus promised was that the gospel would work. What Jesus promised was that he would gather in the elect through the faithful proclamation of that gospel. That many, even most, will reject the message is not the fault of the gospel but of those who reject it. That the rejection of the gospel will be accompanied by hostility and even persecution is a fact of life that Jesus said would remain until the end of time (John 15:18-25). He doesn’t threaten us with his judgment if outwardly we seem to fail; he warns against a success that is achieved by a compromise, really by a denial, of his Word.

重点不是方法不重要。重点是，这些方法不能使我们归信或持守信心。唯有福音能做到这一点。我们需要确保，当我们寻求方法时，我们并不假设如果我们找到了正确的方法，每个人都会喜欢福音（和我们）。耶稣从未告诉我们找到方法会拿走福音的冒犯和十字架的羞耻。圣保罗认定没有这样的方法。耶稣的应许是，福音会起作用。耶稣的应许是，他会透过忠实的宣讲这福音，聚集他的选民。许多人，甚至大多数人将会拒绝这福音，这并不是福音的过失，而是那些拒绝它的人。这对福音的拒绝将会伴随着敌对甚至迫害，这是耶稣所说的将会持续到世界末了的生命的事实（约 15:18-25）。如果表面上我们失败了，他并没有用他的审判恐吓我们；他反而警告了一种借着妥协——实际上是否定——他的道而获得的成功。

St. Paul recognized that fact of life. For him, rejection and persecution were proofs of faithfulness, not indications that he had not yet hit on the right method of getting the message out so that all would believe it. That anyone at all believed it was proof that the gospel “worked,” that it created faith and preserved faith in the face of the hostility and persecution he encountered when he was faithful to the Savior’s Word. He tells the Thessalonian Christians, for example:



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圣保罗认识到生命的这个事实。对他来说，拒绝和迫害是忠信的证据，并不表明他还没有找到某个正确的表达这信息，使得所有人都能够相信它的方法。当他忠实于救主的道时，无论是谁最终相信它，都是这福音“起作用”的证据，它在保罗所面对的敌对和逼迫面前，创造信心并维持信心。例如，保罗告诉帖撒罗尼迦的基督徒：

You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure. We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. (1 Thessalonians 2:1-6)

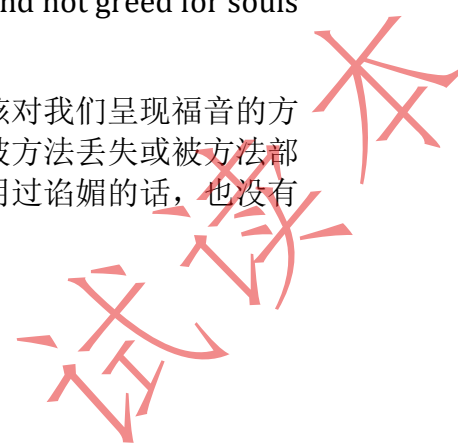
弟兄们，你们自己知道我们来到你们那里并不是徒然的。我们从前在腓立比蒙难受辱，这是你们知道的，可是我们还是靠着上帝给我们的勇气，在强烈反对中把上帝的福音传给你们。我们的劝勉不是出于错误，也不是出于污秽，也不是用诡诈。但上帝既然认定我们经得起考验，把福音托付我们，我们就照着传讲，不是要讨人喜欢，而是要讨那考验我们的心的上帝喜欢。因为我们从来没有用过谄媚的话，这是你们知道的，也没有藏着贪心，这是上帝可以作证的。我们作为基督的使徒，虽然可以受人尊重，却没有向你们或向别人求荣耀。（帖前 2:1-6）

Paul's emphasis is clear: his goal was faithfulness to the message; he expected it to produce the result of faith, and he expected it to arouse hostility and opposition. No cleverness of his and no gimmick could produce the result; only the gospel could do that. And if he were looking for a gimmick that would take away all of the hostility and opposition, then he would be found unfaithful to the message.

保罗的重点是清楚的：他的目标是忠实于这信息；他预期它会结出信心的果子，他预期它会激起敌对和逼迫。他的聪明才智和花招都不会产生这样的果子；唯有福音能够如此。如果他寻找某个花招能够拿走一切的敌对和逼迫，那他就会发现他并不忠实于福音。

So the point is not that looking for useful methods is bad. The point is not that we should be careless in the way we present the gospel. The point rather is that we should not imagine that methods will succeed where the message of the law and the gospel gets lost or is partially concealed by the method. Paul says it—“we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed”—not greed for money and not greed for souls either!

因此重点并不在于：寻找有用的方法是坏的。重点不是我们应该对我们呈现福音的方式毫不关心。重点是，我们不应该想象，在律法和福音的信息被方法丢失或被方法部分隐藏的地方，方法会获得成功。保罗说——“我们从来没有用过谄媚的话，也没有藏着贪心”——既不对金钱贪婪，也不对灵魂贪婪！



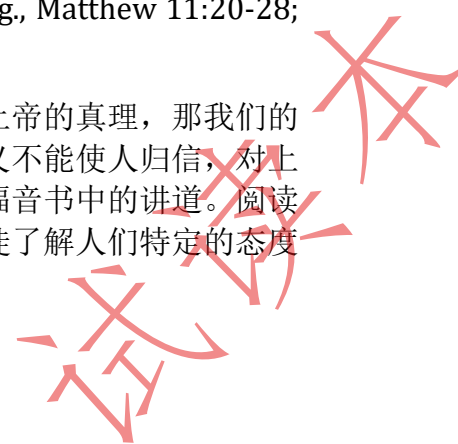
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We need, therefore, to watch our hearts carefully when casting about for new methods of sharing the gospel. On the one hand, we do not want to despise the search with the thought that it doesn't matter at all how we present the gospel message. That would be akin to saying this to someone: "Why do you bother preparing a tasty meal for your family? You could get all the same benefit from fiber and minerals and vitamins in a simple and tasteless pill!" Paul often expressed his concern that neither he nor his coworkers do anything that would put an unnecessary obstacle in the way of the message. That was certainly a warning against a careless and indifferent presentation of the message. If a pastor just droned on in the pulpit, if the service was sloppy and conducted in an indifferent manner, those things would put unnecessary obstacles in the path of the gospel. If someone shared the gospel without ever bothering to consider the particular needs and circumstances of the one with whom he was sharing, that too would make the task of the Holy Spirit more difficult than it is already. If we are unmindful of the culture or indifferent to the society in which we share the gospel, we will come across as indifferent to those who hear us; they will close their ears before the gospel even has a chance to enter their hearts.

因此，当我们寻找新的方法分享福音时，我们需要仔细考察我们的心。一方面，我们并不想带着这样的想法轻视这种探索，即，认为我们如何呈现福音信息一点都不重要。这就类似于对某人说：“为什么你要操心为你的家人准备可口的饭食呢？从简单无味的药丸里，你就能获得所有和饭食一样的益处：纤维素、矿物质和维生素！”保罗常常表达他的担心，希望他和他的同工不会做任何事，给这福音的传播造成不必要的障碍。对于对福音表达的漫不关心和无所谓，这无疑是一种警告。如果一个牧师在讲道台上絮絮叨叨，如果服事草率并以一种冷漠的方式进行，那这些事将会在福音的道路上放置不必要的障碍。如果有人分享福音时，从未操心思考他分享之人特殊的需要和境况，这也会让圣灵的任务更加困难。如果我们不留心我们分享福音的文化，或对这社会漠不关心，我们给人的印象就是对那些听我们的人漠不关心；他们就会在福音有机会进入他们的心之前，塞住耳朵。

But, on the other hand, if we cover up some of God's truth because we are afraid of failure, then our methods do not advance the cause of the gospel; they become another hindrance to it. False doctrine converts no one, and silence about the whole truth of God's Word doesn't strengthen anyone either. Consider the sermons of Jesus in the gospels. Read the sermons of Peter and Paul in the book of Acts. In every case, Jesus and the apostles meet people where they are, with an understanding of their particular attitudes and needs. What will you always find in those inspired sermons and lessons? The sting of the law and the saving salve of the gospel are never far apart. And the sting can be as severe and biting as the gospel is saving and sweet (e.g., Matthew 11:20-28; Acts 2:14-41; 13:16-52).

但是，另一方面，如果我们因为我们害怕失败，而掩盖了某些上帝的真理，那我们的方法就不会促进福音事业；它们成为另一个对它的障碍。假教义不能使人归信，对上帝之道整全的真理保持沉默，也不能坚固任何人。想想耶稣在福音书中的讲道。阅读彼得和保罗在使徒行传中的讲道。在每一种情况下，耶稣和使徒了解人们特定的态度



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和需要，他们在人们所处的地方和人们见面。在这些鼓舞人心的讲道和教导中，你会发现什么呢？律法的针扎和福音医治的膏抹，从未分离。这针扎的严厉和刺痛，正如福音的医治和甜蜜一样。（如，太 11:20-28；徒 2:14-41；13:16-52）。

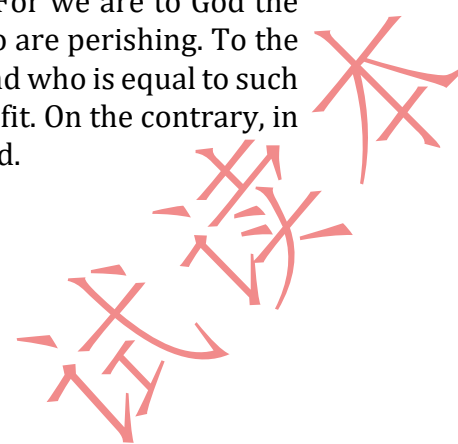
The point is especially clear from the example of Paul's sermon in Athens (Acts 17:16-34). Paul was a well-educated man. He knew how much the Greeks loved philosophy and their great poets. He knew that one of the bedrock assumptions in so much of Greek philosophy was that the material world was evil and the soul was good. For the Greeks, the goal of the soul was to escape from the prison house of the body and the material world.<sup>2</sup> Had Paul been concerned about not offending anyone, the last thing he should have brought up was the resurrection of the dead! But there it is, the one thing that would most easily shock and offend his hearers: "[God] has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead" (17:31). And what was the reaction of those who heard his sermon? Some quickly laughed, mocked, and dismissed everything that Paul had said. But at the same time, the gospel did its saving work too: "A few men became followers of Paul and believed" (17:34).

这一点，在保罗在雅典的讲道中（徒 17:16-34），尤为清晰。保罗是个受过良好教育的人。他知道希腊人是多么的爱哲学和他们伟大的诗人。他知道在许多希腊哲学中，一个基本的假定是，物质世界是邪恶的，而灵魂是良善的。对希腊人来说，灵魂的目标是逃离身体和物质世界的监狱。<sup>2</sup> 如果保罗担心冒犯人，他最不需要提的事是死后复活！但在那儿，他说了一件最容易震惊和触犯他听众的事：上帝“已经定了日子，要藉着他所设立的人按公义审判天下，并且使他从死人中复活，给万人作可信的凭据”（徒 17:31）。那些听到他讲道的人是什么反应呢？有些人立刻嘲笑、讥讽并摒弃保罗所说的一切。但与此同时，福音也在做它救恩的工作：“有几个人依附他，信了主”（徒 17:34）。

Whatever Paul's methodology, his guiding principle is clear: first, last, and always he wanted to be faithful to the message, trusting that it would save and taking it as a given that it would also be rejected. He expressed the matter so well in 2 Corinthians 2:14-17:

无论保罗的方法学是什么，他的指导原则是明确的：从开始，到最后，他一直想要忠实于这信息，相信它会带来拯救，同时也认定了它会被拒绝。在哥林多后书 2:14-17，他很好地表述了这个问题：

Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task? Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.



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感谢上帝！他常率领我们在基督里得胜，并藉着我们在各处显扬那因认识基督而有的香气。因为无论在得救的人或在灭亡的人当中，我们都是基督馨香之气，是献给上帝的。对灭亡的人，这是死而又死的气味；对得救的人，这是生而又生的气味。这些事谁能当得起呢？我们不像许多人，把上帝的道当商品贩卖，而是由于真诚，而是受命于上帝，在上帝面前凭着基督讲道。

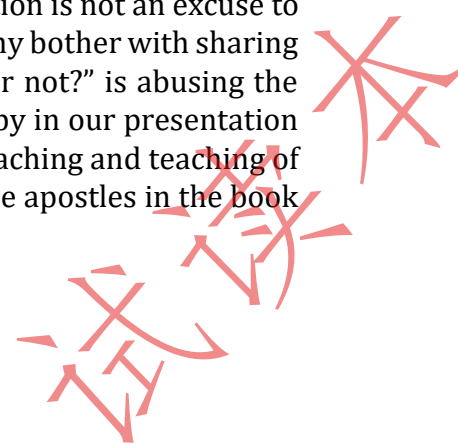
Thus, any methodology that conceals truths from the Word of God is a methodology not in harmony with the Scriptures, with the practice of the apostles and of Christ himself. Any methodology that flatters the hearer by hiding from him his need and his guilt will end up hiding also the beauty of the Savior, who satisfies his need and removes his guilt. Any methodology that allows the hearer to think that he has some natural goodness left for making a right decision for Christ will end up obscuring the work of the Holy Spirit in creating the decision for Christ that comes only from the gospel.

因此，任何隐藏了上帝话语里的真理的方法学，都是与圣经，与使徒的实践和与基督自己不一致的方法学。任何向听众隐藏他的困境和罪债，并借此讨好他的方法学，都最终会隐藏救主的美好——这救主满足了他的困境，并消除了他的罪债。任何让听众认为他还剩下某些天然的善，可以用来为基督做正确的决定，都最终会模糊圣灵的工作——圣灵唯独透过福音创造为基督的决定。

In short, our methods must conform to the message, not the other way around. We find people where they are. We make use of the best tools we can find for reaching them. But in the process, we need always to remember that the assignment in the Great Commission is to be successful by “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). Hence, faithfulness to the message, not some quick popularity that comes from removing from the message things that people won’t like, is the first mark of success. In the process of being faithful to the message, we can expect what the early church came to expect as “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47).

简而言之，我们的方法必须与这信息相一致，而不是相反。我们在人们所处的地方找到他们。我们使用我们能够找到的最好的工具接近他们。但在这个过程中，我们需要时刻记住，大使命的任务是“凡我所吩咐你们的，都教导他们遵守”（太 28:20）。因此，忠实于这信息，而不是通过删除这信息中某些人们不喜欢的事，让它快速流行起来，是成功首要的标志。在忠实于这信息的过程中，我们能够期待早期教会所期待的：“主将得救的人天天加给他们”（徒 2:47）。

And so, we come to the narrow middle road. The doctrine of election is not an excuse to be lazy in our seeking of the lost. The one who says to himself, “Why bother with sharing the gospel; the Lord will gather in his elect whether I share it or not?” is abusing the doctrine. And the doctrine of election is not an excuse to be sloppy in our presentation of the saving message. That’s not the example we have in the preaching and teaching of the Savior. And it is not the example we have from the work of the apostles in the book of Acts.





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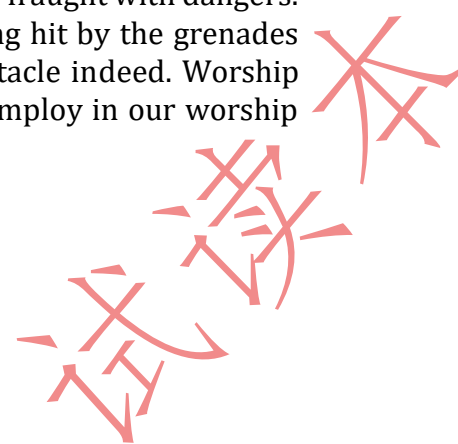
在此，我们来到了这条狭窄的中路。拣选的教义不是让我们在寻找迷失者这件事上变得懒惰的借口。若有人对他自己说：“为什么要操心分享福音呢；无论我是否分享它，主都会聚集他的选民。”这是对这教义的滥用。拣选的教义不是在描述救恩信息上草率行事的借口。这不是救主在宣讲和教导时的样子。这不是使徒行传中使徒们行事的樣子。

But at the same time, the doctrine of election comforts us as we zealously seek to reach those lost in the dark night of unbelief. The success of the message we share is assured because the Holy Spirit is always present with his Word. But the success is his as he gathers in the elect. We do not know who the elect are. Only he knows that. And so, we do everything we can in conformity with the message to reach as many as we can. That the message often will be rejected will neither surprise us nor deter us. That some will hear and believe it for a time and then fall away will not surprise us either. But rejection will not move us to adopt methods that compromise the message in the vain hope that we can accomplish what only the message can accomplish. We will not presume to second-guess God's election. We will not imagine that we can improve on his Word by leaving some of it out in order to accomplish his goal of gathering in those he has chosen. Rather, in all things we will strive to be faithful to his Word. Then we will marvel at the miracle of faith that we have experienced ourselves; and as well, we will rejoice and give thanks that the same pure gospel still works and creates that life-giving miracle in others too, others with whom we share the message.

但与此同时，当我们热心寻求接触那些在不信的黑暗中的迷失者时，拣选的教义安慰着我们。我们分享的信息的成功是确定的，因为圣灵一直和他的道同在。但这成功是他的，他招聚他的选民。我们并不知道这选民是谁。唯有他知道。因此，我们尽我们所能将这信息传给更多的人。这信息常常会被拒绝，这既不让我们惊讶，也不让我们却步。一些人会听从并相信它一段时间，然后抛弃它，这也不让我们惊讶。但拒绝不会让我们采取妥协这信息的方法，徒然的盼望我们能完成唯有这信息能完成的事。我们不会擅自揣度上帝的拣选。我们不会假设我们能够通过舍弃某部分来改良他的道，以便于我们能够达到他聚集他选民的目标。相反，在一切事情上我们都要努力忠实于他的道。然后我们就将亲自经历这信心的神迹，并为这神迹充满惊叹；同样，我们也将喜悦并感激于这纯粹的福音依然做工，在他人身上创造这赐生命的神迹，就是我们与之分享这信息的人。

## Finding the middle in the *Worship Wars* 在敬拜的战争中找到中路

We now enter on a short stretch of the narrow middle road that is fraught with dangers. We almost have to duck down low if we are going to avoid being hit by the grenades tossed from one side of the road to the other. It is a sorry spectacle indeed. Worship wars have to do with the way we worship, with the forms we employ in our worship services.



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我们现在进入了另一小段充满了危险的狭窄中路。如果我们要避免被这两侧互相投掷的手榴弹击中，我们几乎不得不匍匐前进。这真是一个让人遗憾的场景。敬拜的战争与我们敬拜的方式有关，与我们的敬拜仪式采用的形式有关。

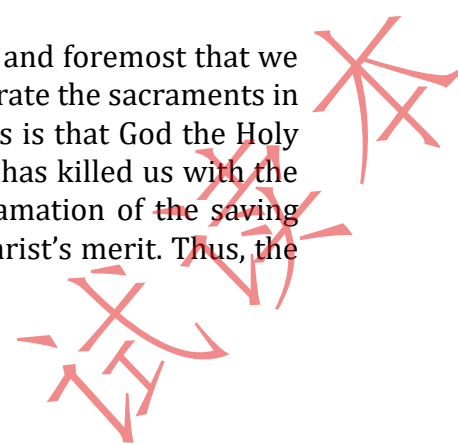
If we begin with a few principles that apply to our public worship services, we may more clearly see the middle of the road that avoids the extremes which are the essence of worship wars. What are the principles that we need to keep in mind when we arrange our worship services?

如果我们用一些适用于我们公共敬拜仪式的原则作为开始，我们可能能够更清楚地看到一条避免极端化的中路——这就是我们敬拜战争的本质。当我们安排我们的敬拜仪式时，什么原则是我们需要铭记于心的呢？

1. There are no divinely mandated forms of worship in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, there were. The forms of worship were clearly laid down in the ceremonial Law of Moses. That law prescribed set sacrifices for sins, rules for ritual cleanness and uncleanness, days of celebration and days of rest. But the chief purpose of the ceremonial law was to picture Christ and his work. When Christ came, he fulfilled all of those things pictured in the ceremonial law. He was the true sacrifice for the sins of the world. He brought perfect cleansing by the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. He gives us that cleansing in the Sacrament of Baptism. He brought us the true and everlasting rest that is ours in the message of his work for our forgiveness. He himself is the one great and true Passover Lamb, whose body and blood we receive for our forgiveness in the Sacrament of the Altar. Since the ceremonial law has been fulfilled, the way we worship in the New Testament is an *adiaphoron*. That is, the forms we use in public worship are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Bible. We are free to adopt such forms as best serve the ultimate purposes of public worship.

1、在新约中，没有上帝强制的敬拜形式。在旧约中，有。敬拜的形式在摩西的礼仪律中有明确的规定。这律法规定了赎罪祭，洁净和不洁净的礼仪规范，庆祝日和安息日。但礼仪律的首要目的是描绘基督和他的工作。当基督来了，他满足了在礼仪律中描绘的这一切事。他是为世人真正的赎罪祭。他用新的和永恒的立约之血带来了完美的洁净，并在洗礼中将这洁净赐给了我们。在他为我们的赦免所做之工的信息中，他带给我们真正的永恒的安息。他自己是那伟大的和真正的逾越节羔羊，在圣餐礼中我们领受了其身体和宝血，使我们得赦免。由于礼仪律已经被满足，我们在新约中的敬拜方式是一个中立物。也就是说，我们在公众敬拜中所用的形式，在圣经中并未命令也未禁止。我们可以自由地采用这些形式，以最好的服务于公众敬拜的最终目的。

2. And what is the ultimate purpose of public worship? It is first and foremost that we hear the Word of God in all its truth and purity and that we celebrate the sacraments in accord with Christ's institution. The goal in our worship services is that God the Holy Spirit should speak to us in the law to crush our pride. Once he has killed us with the law, the Holy Spirit then brings us again to life with the proclamation of the saving gospel of full and free forgiveness because of God's grace and Christ's merit. Thus, the



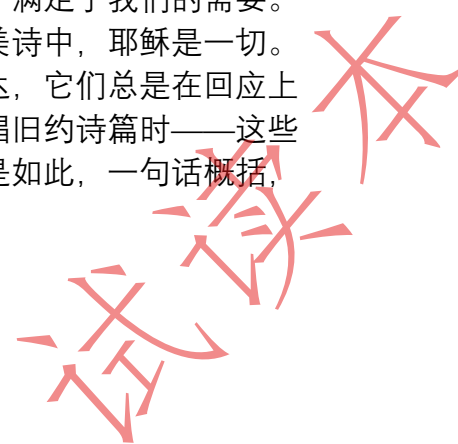
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ultimate purpose of our worship services is to let God do his thing; it's not so that we can do our thing. Christ in Word and sacraments is the center of the worship service—the center in the readings, the sermon, the hymns, the liturgy.

2、公众敬拜的最终目的是什么呢？首先并最重要的是，我们听到上帝之道最真实和最纯粹的表达，我们按照基督设立的方式庆祝圣礼。我们敬拜仪式的目标是，圣灵可以在律法中向我们说话，粉碎我们的骄傲。一旦他用律法杀了我们，圣灵就会用福音的宣告——即，因为上帝的恩典和基督的功德，我们拥有了完全和白白的赦免——将我们再次带到生命中来。因此，我们敬拜仪式的最终目的，是让上帝做他的事；这并非说这样我们就能做我们的事（敬拜仪式的核心和全部都是他的事）。圣道和圣礼中的基督是敬拜仪式的中心——是读经、讲道、赞美诗和敬拜仪文的中心。

3. Public worship has then as its secondary purpose our response to that message of the gospel. That is a legitimate and proper purpose of the worship service, but it always follows the primary and ultimate purpose; the primary purpose must ever be the focus on Christ and what he has done, not on what we are doing. We don't read Robert Frost or Walt Whitman in church even though they have some nice things to say that make people feel good. We don't sing songs that are only about how we feel or even songs that focus exclusively on God's wonders in nature or in our hearts. We read his Word. We talk about its application to life. We confess our sins and the faith that his Word creates and preserves. We sing praises that focus on what Christ has done for us and for our salvation. We recognize our need for his mercy and help, and we rejoice in the fullness of God's grace in Christ that satisfies our need. In short, whether in the readings, in the sermon, in the liturgy, or in the hymns, Jesus is everything. To the extent that our faith and feelings find expression, they are always in response to the clear Word of God with Jesus and his cross always at the center. Even when we are singing the psalms from the Old Testament, they are sung in the context of the message that focuses on our need and God's grace in satisfying that need—in a word, Christ is still the center.

3、然后，公众敬拜的第二个目的是我们对福音信息的回应。这是敬拜仪式一个合理正当的目的，但是它总是在首要和根本的目的之后；首要的目的必须是聚焦在基督和他所做的事情上，而不是我们在做什么。我们在教会并不阅读罗伯特·弗罗斯特或华尔特·惠特曼的作品，即使他们说了很多让人们感觉很好的话。我们并不唱只是关于我们感觉如何的歌，甚至也不唱只是聚焦于上帝在自然中或在我们心里有多奇妙的歌。我们阅读他的道，我们谈论它对生命的应用。我们承认我们的罪，承认他的道创造并持守信心。我们的歌颂赞美聚焦于基督为我们和我们的救恩所做的事。我们认识到我们需要他的怜悯和帮助，我们喜悦于上帝在基督里丰富的恩典，满足了我们的需要。简而言之，无论在读经中、在讲道中、在敬拜仪文中、或在赞美诗中，耶稣是一切。从这个意义上说，无论什么时候，当我们的信心和感觉获得表达，它们总是在回应上帝清晰的道——其中心总是基督和他的十字架。甚至当我们在唱旧约诗篇时——这些诗篇的背景聚焦在我们的缺乏和上帝满足缺乏的恩典上——也是如此，一句话概括，基督依然是中心。



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4. Since the worship service is primarily God's service to us in the gospel, and since he is the God of our creation and the Lord of our salvation, it should be self-evident that the forms used in worship would have a measure of dignity, of reverence and respect for God and for his Word.<sup>3</sup>

4、由于敬拜仪式主要是上帝在福音里服事我们，也由于他是创造我们的上帝和救赎我们的主，在敬拜中使用的形式应该高贵、崇敬、并尊重上帝和他的道，这是不言自明的。<sup>3</sup>

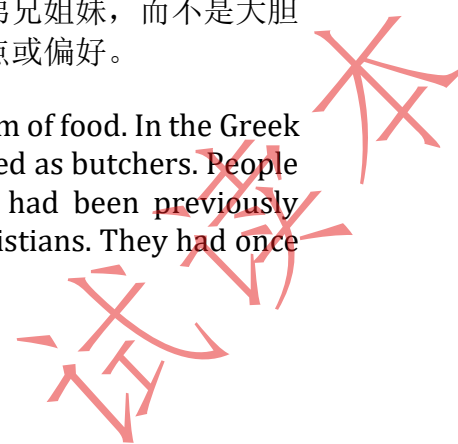
5. Since God in his Word is always seeking to find us by means of his gospel, it should likewise be self-evident that we would not want to adopt forms of worship that would of themselves turn people away from listening to his Word. Forms of worship can turn people away from God when they are used to hide false doctrine or when they confuse people about the difference between false doctrine and true; a worship service that looks too much like a Roman mass or too much like a Reformed service may lead people to conclude that there is no difference between the doctrines those services are designed to reflect and the true doctrine. Such confusion can easily be the case even if not the intentions of those designing or conducting the service. (Cf. in this regard especially Article X of the Formula of Concord.)

5、既然上帝总是借着福音这一工具，在他的道中寻找我们，同样不言自明的是，当某种敬拜的形式本身让人们不听他的道时，我们不会想要采用它。当敬拜形式被用来掩盖其中的假教义，或当它们使人们混淆真假教义的区别时，这种敬拜形式就能让人转离上帝；一个看上去太像罗马弥撒或太像改革宗敬拜的敬拜仪式，可能让人们得出这样的结论：这些仪式被设计出来，用来反映的教义与真教义没什么不同。这种混淆很容易出现，即便那些设计或组织这仪式之人并没有这样的意图。（就这点，特别参见协同式第 10 条款。）

In applying these basic principles to the forms of worship we use, we need to remember what the Bible teaches us about *adiaphora* in general. With things that are *adiaphora*, that is, with those things that are neither right nor wrong in and of themselves, the "rule" is Christian love. That love seeks the building up of our brothers and sisters in Christ, not the bold and bald and loveless exercise of my rights or my freedom or my opinions and preferences.

在将这些基本原则应用到我们使用的敬拜形式中的时候，我们需要记住圣经通常关于中立物的教导。对于那些属于中立物的事，也就是，那些就其本身并不是对也不是错的事，“规则”是基督徒的爱。这爱寻求在基督里建造我们的弟兄姐妹，而不是大胆地、盲目的、冷漠的实践我们的权利、我们的自由、我们的观点或偏好。

St. Paul set the example for us in the way he dealt with the problem of food. In the Greek world of Paul's day, often the priests at the pagan temples doubled as butchers. People would go to the temple to buy their meat, meat that usually had been previously sacrificed to a false god. That presented a problem for many Christians. They had once



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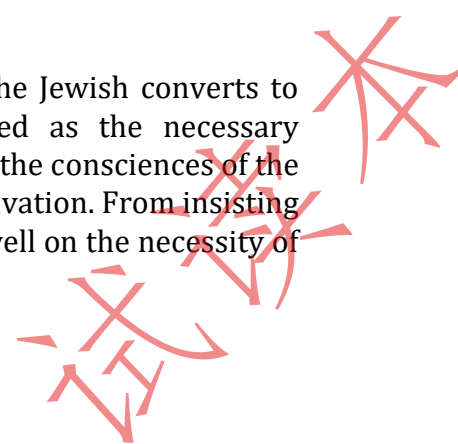
been participants in those sacrifices. After their conversion, many of them had a bad conscience about eating meat; they feared that by buying and consuming meat which had been offered to idols, they were again participating in those pagan sacrifices. And so, they refused to eat meat, lest they sin against their conscience.

在处理吃肉的问题上，圣保罗为我们设立了榜样。在保罗时代的希腊世界，异教寺庙里的祭司通常也兼职屠夫。人们会去这庙里买肉，这肉通常是之前被献祭给假神的。这给许多基督徒带来了问题。他们曾经参与过这样的献祭。在他们归信后，他们中很多人对吃这样的肉良心不安；他们害怕借着购买和消费这些曾经被献祭给偶像的肉，他们再一次参与了那些异教祭祀。因此，他们拒绝吃这肉，恐怕他们犯罪冒犯他们的良心。

Paul understood the problem. He knew on the one hand that eating or not eating meat is an *adiaphoron*. To eat meat is not a sin, and to abstain from the eating of meat is not a virtue. But if someone's conscience is bothered by eating meat offered to idols, then he should not eat it. And those whose conscience was not bothered should be left free to eat it as they pleased, since eating or not eating is in itself neither sin nor a virtue. But neither side should look down on the other. Those who understood that they were free to eat meat should not have tried to force those who were troubled by it to violate their conscience. At the same time, those who were troubled by eating meat should not have tried to force their own scruples on everyone else. To force someone to act against his conscience is to force him to sin, since to act against conscience is a sin. That's true even when the conscience may be in error. And, likewise, to bind someone else's conscience, to make a sin out of something that is free, is just as wrong. So each should respect the other. With time the one whose conscience is in error may come to understand better the freedom that he has in matters of *adiaphora*. But that is not something that should be forced (cf. Romans 14).<sup>4</sup>

保罗理解这一问题。一方面，他知道吃这肉或不吃这肉是一个中立物。吃这肉并不是罪，放弃吃这肉并不是一个美德。但是如果有人良心被吃这祭过偶像的肉所困扰，他就不应该吃它。那些良心没有受到困扰的，就可以随意吃，因为吃或不吃本身既不是罪也不是美德。但双方都不应该鄙视对方。那些明白他们可以自由吃肉的人，不应该试图强迫那些被困扰的人侵犯他们的良心。与此同时，那些被吃肉困扰的人，不应该将他们自己的顾忌强加在所有人身上。强迫某人违背良心就是强迫他去犯罪，因为违背良心就是罪。即使当这良心可能是错的，也是如此。同样，约束别人的良心，将某件自由的事说成罪，也是错的。因此每个人都应该尊重他人。随着时间的推移，那些良心出错的人可能能够更好地理解在中立物的事情上他所拥有的自由。但这不应该是一个被强迫的事（参见罗马书 14）。<sup>4</sup>

The matter of circumcision was likewise a problem. Some of the Jewish converts to Christianity thought that circumcision should still be treated as the necessary sacrament that it was in Old Testament times. They tried to bind the consciences of the gentile converts, insisting that circumcision was necessary for salvation. From insisting on the necessity of circumcision, they then went on to insist as well on the necessity of





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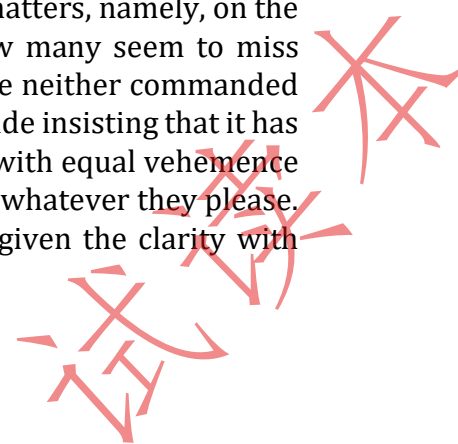
following the Old Testament dietary laws. Much of the epistle to the Galatians is a strong, even a vehement condemnation of such a teaching and of such teachers. To make anything other than the grace of God and the saving work of Christ a condition for pleasing God or for salvation is to deny the heart and core of the gospel. Paul says of them, "Let [them] be eternally condemned" (Galatians 1:9). So then, when someone tries to bind the conscience of another over what started out as an *adiaphoron*, it ceases to be an *adiaphoron*. Earlier, Paul, when he was working among the Jews, had his coworker Timothy (whose father was Greek) circumcised; that would make it easier for Timothy to work among the Jews. But once Jewish Christians insisted that circumcision was necessary to salvation, Paul condemned the practice in the strongest possible terms. What had been an *adiaphoron* ceased to be one when it was turned into a law or made necessary in any way for a true Christian life or for salvation.

割礼也是同样的问题。一些归信基督教的犹太人，认为割礼仍然应该被视为必要的圣礼——正如旧约时代那样。他们试图约束外邦归信者的良心，坚持割礼对救恩是必要的。从坚持割礼的必要性开始，他们接着坚持遵循旧约饮食律法的必要性。加拉太书对此的很多话是强烈的，它甚至激烈的谴责了这样的教导和这样的教师。除了上帝的恩典和基督救恩的工作之外，让任何其他的事成为蒙上帝喜悦和得救的条件，都是在否定福音的核心。对于他们保罗说：“他该受咒诅”（太 1:9）。因此，当某人试图用起初是一个中立物的事约束别人的良心时，它就不再是一个中立物了。在早些时候，保罗，当他在犹太人中做工时，叫他的同工提摩太（其父亲是希腊人）受了割礼；这将让提摩太更容易在犹太人中做工。但是一旦犹太基督徒坚持割礼对救恩是必要的，保罗用最强烈的话谴责了这样的实践。当某个中立物变成律法，或对基督徒真正的生命或救恩，以任何方式成为必需品时，它就不再是一个中立物了。

Thus, those who think themselves strong and sure and certain in what they are doing give up their freedom to do what they think best in love for those they consider weak. And at the same time, those who have a particular sense that their own way is the only right way are not free to bind the conscience of anyone else when it is a matter of an *adiaphoron*.

因此，那些认为他们自己在他们所做的事情上足够坚强、肯定和确信的人，放弃他们的自由，去做他们认为最好的事，来爱他们认为软弱的人。与此同时，那些有某个特别的观念，认为他们自己的方式是唯一正确的方式的人，在属于中立物的事情上，并不能随意约束他人的良心。

Indeed, St. Paul told Timothy not to let himself get bogged down in quarrels about *adiaphoron* but, as a good pastor, to concentrate on what really matters, namely, on the law and gospel of salvation (1 Timothy 4). It is sad to see how many seem to miss St. Paul's good advice when it comes to forms of worship that are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Scriptures. It is a sorry spectacle to see one side insisting that it has found the only really correct way to worship and the other side with equal vehemence waving a flag of liberty that they think gives them the right to do whatever they please. It is doubly strange to see that happening in Lutheran circles, given the clarity with



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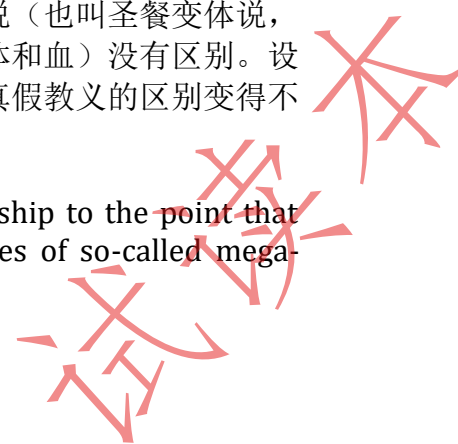
which the Lutheran Confessions deal with the matter of freedom in forms of worship (cf. Articles XV and XXIV of the Augsburg Confession and of the Apology, and Article X of the Formula of Concord). Luther too knew of no law when it came to forms of worship. Each Lutheran territory adapted existing forms as it thought best. It cleansed the existing forms of those things that promoted false doctrine (e.g., the worship of the saints, transubstantiation and the veneration of the elements of Holy Communion, the mass as a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, etc.). Then they retained much of what remained; some kept more, some less. Luther's own *Deutsche Messe* (his German Mass) was neither a slavish following of the liturgies of the past nor a freewheeling rejection of what had been inherited from earlier centuries.

事实上，圣保罗告诉提摩太，不要让他自己陷入对中立物的争论之中，而是，作为一个好牧师，专注于真正的事情上，也就是，律法和救恩的福音（提前 4）。当论及敬拜形式这圣经并未命令或禁止之事时，我们悲哀的看到，有多少人错过了圣保罗这么好的建议。看到一方坚持自己找到了唯一真正正确的敬拜方式，而另一方则同样热切的挥动着自由之旗，认为他们有权利去做他们想做的任何事，这是一个多么令人遗憾的场面啊。看到这样的事发生在路德宗的圈子里，它就更令人加倍奇怪了——考虑到路德宗认信文清楚地处理了敬拜形式中自由的问题（参见奥斯堡辩护文第 15 和第 24 条款，协同式第 10 条款）。路德同样知道，对于敬拜形式，并没有任何律法。每一个路德宗领地都按照它认为最好的方式来改编现存的敬拜形式。它清除了现存形式中那些宣传假教义的东西（比如，敬拜圣徒，圣餐元素的化质和崇拜，为活人和死人的罪献祭的弥撒，等等）。然后他们保留了剩下的东西；有些人保留的多，有些人保留的少。路德自己的德国弥撒，既不是对过去的敬拜仪文盲从般的追随，也没有将之前诸世纪遗留下来的东西随心所欲的抛弃。

The point is that there should be a narrow Lutheran middle road when it comes to forms in worship. The extremes of excessive ceremony that make the Lutheran service appear no different from a high form of the Roman mass would best be avoided. We do not want to give anyone the impression that there is no difference between the Lutheran teaching concerning the Sacrament and the Roman false doctrine of transubstantiation (the doctrine that the priest transforms the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood when he recites the Words of Institution). Freedom in establishing forms of worship should not be exercised in such a way that people become unclear about the difference between false doctrine and true.

重点是，当涉及敬拜的形式时，本该有一条狭窄的路德宗中路。最好避免某种极端过度的礼仪，这会让路德宗的仪式看起来和罗马弥撒高调的形式没什么区别。我们不想给人这样的印象：路德宗关于圣餐的教导和罗马的假教义化质说（也叫圣餐变体说，这教义称当神父背诵圣餐设立文时，他将饼和酒变为基督的身体和血）没有区别。设立敬拜仪式的自由不应该以这样一种方式运用，即，让人们真假教义的区别变得不清不楚。

At the same time, the rejection of all the historic forms of worship to the point that Lutheran worship services seem to be the same as the services of so-called mega-



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churches may well be an abuse of freedom. For again, people may get the impression that the doctrine of the one is the same as the doctrine of the other when they see no real difference in the content of the services. Is the focus of the mega-service to get people in the right mood to “make their decision for Christ” or “invite King Jesus into their hearts” or just teach them how to live better lives? We certainly would not want to adopt words or forms, music, or sermon styles and content that would give people the impression that that’s what our services are all about.

与此同时，拒绝一切历史上的敬拜形式，以至于路德宗的敬拜仪式看上去与所谓的大型教会的仪式一样，很可能是一种对自由的滥用。再一次，当人们看到敬拜仪式的内容没有真正的区别时，他们很可能认为这个教义和别的教义是一样的。这个大型仪式（如，福音大会）的焦点，是否是在正确的气氛下让人们“为基督做一个决志”或“邀请耶稣进入他们的心”，或单单只是教导他们怎样过更好的生活呢？我们当然不希望我们采取的文字、形式、音乐、讲道风格或内容，让人产生我们的敬拜仪式是这样的映像。

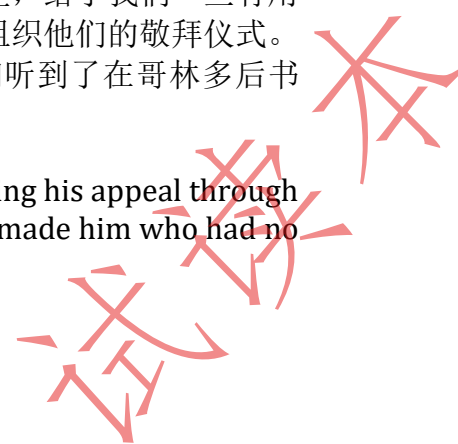
In the worship wars one side shouts: “We know that this is *the* right way to worship, and so that’s the way we’re going to do it. We don’t care what anyone else thinks about it; and we certainly don’t want to have anything to do with the ‘tent meeting’ approach to worship so common among false teachers in Protestantism.” And the other side with equal vigor cries out: “We’re free to worship any way we want to; and besides that, we think our way will be more appealing to outsiders who are ‘turned off’ by any kind of formalism.”

在敬拜战争的一边咆哮着：“我们知道这就是正确的敬拜方式，因此我们就要这样做。我们并不在乎别人怎么想；我们当然不会想和‘帐篷聚会’敬拜的方式有任何关系，这在新教的假教师中太常见了。”而另一边用同样的声量呼喊道：“我们可以自由地以任何我们想要的方式去做敬拜；除此之外，我们认为我们的方式更能吸引那些‘排斥’任何形式主义的局外人。”

Where is the middle between these two extremes? In his epistles to the Corinthians, Paul gives us some useful reminders that apply well to the way we worship. In 1 Corinthians 14 he admonishes the Corinthians to conduct their worship service in an orderly manner. But what, finally, is an orderly form for worship? Is it not that in our worship we hear the beautiful summary of the whole gospel message in 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1?

这两个极端化之间的中路在哪儿呢？保罗在他致哥林多人的信里，给了我们一些有用的提醒。在哥林多前书 14 他告诫哥林多人以一种有序的方式组织他们的敬拜仪式。但，什么是有序的敬拜形式呢？不正是在我们的敬拜中，我们听到了在哥林多后书 5:20-6:1 对整个福音信息美好的总结吗？

We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no



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sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.

所以，我们作基督的特使，就好像上帝藉我们劝你们一般。我们替基督求你们，与上帝和好吧！上帝使那无罪的，替我们成为罪，好使我们在他里面成为上帝的义。我们与上帝同工的也劝你们，不可白受他的恩典。

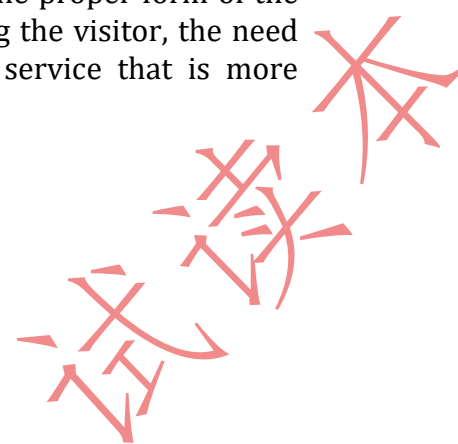
The form of a worship service that conceals our desperate need for such a reconciliation has missed the ultimate point of the worship service. Such services tend to leave out as a matter of course a confession of sins or talk about the need for true repentance. Rather, the main use of the law in such a service is what we generally call its third use. The first use of the law is that it shows us our sin and our desperate need of a Savior; the third use of the law is that it shows us those works which are pleasing to God. But without the first use, the third use easily degenerates into moralizing or self-improvement instruction. It misses the point that the very first purpose of a worship service is to present Christ as the one and only Savior of sinners.

当一种敬拜仪式的形式，掩盖了我们对这种和好及其迫切的需要时，它就失去了敬拜仪式的根本要点。这样的仪式倾向于省略认罪告白，也不再谈论真懊悔的必要性。相反，在这样的仪式中，律法的主要用法是我们通常所说的第三重功用。律法的第一重功用是向我们显明我们的罪，以及我们迫切需要一位救主；律法的第三重功用是向我们显明哪些行为是蒙上帝喜悦的。但是离开第一重功用，第三重功用很容易退化为道德说教和自我改良的指示。它忽略了一点：一个敬拜仪式首先的目的，是将基督作为罪人唯一的救主呈现出来。

That very basic first purpose of worship can also be missed where the form, the ceremony, has become an end in itself. The ceremony itself and the emphasis on doing everything "right" may fail to confront any and all with their need of a Savior. Then, as in the service with no apparent form, we will give people little reason to focus on the solution that Jesus is and that Jesus provides for that need.

当敬拜的形式、礼仪本身变成一个目的时，敬拜首要的目标同样会错失。礼仪本身和强调把每个环节都做“对”，可能无法面对每个人都需要一位救主的境况。然后，如同那些没有明显形式的敬拜仪式一样，我们不再让人去关注耶稣为这需要提供解决之道。

In sum, one sometimes fears that Jesus as the Savior of sinners can get lost in an excess of ceremony, in spite of the intention of those concerned with the proper form of the ceremony. One fears equally that in the interest of not offending the visitor, the need that they have for the Savior of sinners can disappear in a service that is more entertaining than edifying.



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总之，我们有时害怕耶稣作为罪人救主的信息，迷失在某种过度的礼仪中——无论那些关注这礼仪恰当形式的人，其意图是什么。我们同样害怕，为了不冒犯来访者，他们需要救主的信息，可能会消失在某个更令人愉悦而不是给人教诲的仪式中。

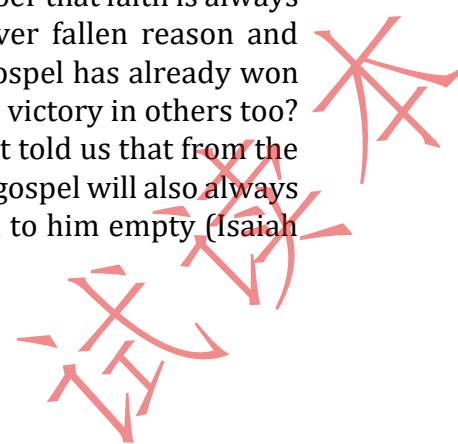
A consideration of the members of our congregation and of our sister congregations simply should not be ignored. It would be good if we all recognized that there are certain parameters within which freedom and variety can be a good thing. Inside of those parameters, the two most important purposes of the worship service should always be kept clearly in view. We want always to show visitors and members alike their need and Jesus as the solution to their need. If our own members are so uncomfortable with the forms that the message gets lost, then there is something wrong with the forms—even if someone has decided that this is really the right way to do things. Likewise, if in the interest of appealing to the outsiders the service ignores the offense of our sinfulness and the only way of salvation, then our exercise of our freedom from forms is getting in the way of the real purpose of the service.

对我们教会的成员和我们姐妹教会的关心，是不应该被忽略的。如果我们都能意识到，在一定的界限内，自由和多样化可以是一件好事，那就好了。在这样的界限内，敬拜仪式的两个重要目的，必须始终保持清晰。我们总是想要向来访者和会众展示他们的缺乏，以及基督是他们缺乏的解决之道。如果我们自己的会众，对某个形式使信息产生了遗失而感到不安，那么这形式就有问题了——即便有人判定这是正确的做法。同样，如果我们的仪式为了吸引外人，而忽视了对罪性的攻击以及唯一的得救之路，那我们对自由的运用，就妨碍了敬拜仪式真正的目的。

Yes, it can happen that the ego of the one in charge of the service gets in the way: "I know that this is the best way, and so this is the way we're going to do it!" Where is the love for members weak and strong in that kind of an attitude? Where is the heart of a servant to the servants of God in that kind of thinking?

是的，负责这仪式之人的自负可能会带来妨碍，他可能会说：“我知道这是最好的方式，因此我们就这么做！”在这样的态度里，那种对软弱和强壮的会众的爱在哪里呢？在这样的想法里，一个仆人对上帝众仆人的心肠在哪里呢？

And it can happen as well that a lack of trust in the power of the law and the gospel gets in the way. If I'm not really sure that the law will crush and the gospel bring to life again, then the service can easily degenerate into something other than this appeal: "Be reconciled to God!" It can become an attempt to bring people in by making Christianity seem easy and entertaining. The one so tempted needs to remember that faith is always a miracle in which the truth of the gospel wins the victory over fallen reason and emotion. Yes, the one so tempted needs to remember that the gospel has already won that victory in him! Why is he afraid that it won't or can't win the victory in others too? Of course, there will always be those who reject the gospel; Christ told us that from the start. Our forms will not change that fundamental reality. But the gospel will also always have its fruit. Christ promised that too. His Word will not return to him empty (Isaiah





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55). The pure Word, the “all things” of the Great Commission, is what we want to present in whatever forms we adopt. The forms, after all, are means to an end, not ends in themselves.

对律法和福音的大能缺乏信赖，同样会带来妨碍。如果我不真的确定，律法将摧毁生命，而福音会带来重生，那么这敬拜仪式就很容易退化为别的什么东西，而不是这样的呼求：“与上帝和好！”它可能会变成某种尝试，借着让基督教显得舒适有趣而吸引人加入。受这种试探的人需要记住，信心永远是一个神迹，在这个神迹里，福音的真理赢得了对堕落的理性和情感的胜利。是的，受这种试探的人需要记住，福音已经在他里面赢得了这样的胜利！为什么他还担心它不会或不能在他人里面也赢得这胜利呢？当然，总会有人拒绝福音；基督在一开始就告诉了我们这一点。我们的形式不会改变这一根本的事实。但福音也会一直结出果子。基督同样应许了这一点。他的道并不徒然返回（赛 55）。无论我们采用什么形式，我们想要去呈现的，是纯粹的圣道，大使命中吩咐的“一切”。形式终究是达到目的的工具，而不是目的本身。

We cannot here prescribe the exact form that we should use in worship if we are to be on the narrow middle road. We cannot do that precisely because the forms are *adiaphora*. But we can hope that the emphasis of those arranging our worship services would always be on “speaking the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15). Then our unity in the faith will be evident. Then those who worship with us will from week to week be built up in that faith “until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming” (Ephesians 4:13,14).

如果我们要走在狭窄的中路上，我们不能在这儿规定我们在敬拜中应该使用的确切形式。我们不能这样做，因为形式是中立物。但我们能够盼望，那些安排我们敬拜仪式的人，其重心总是在“在爱中说真理”（弗 4:15）。这样，我们在信心里的联合就显而易见了。这样，那些和我们一起敬拜的人，将一周又一周，在这样的信仰中被建立起来：“直等到我们众人在信仰上同归于一，认识上帝的儿子，得以长大成人，达到基督完全长成的身量。这样，我们不再作小孩子，中了人的诡计和欺骗的法术，被一切邪说之风摇动，飘来飘去”（弗 4:13, 14）。

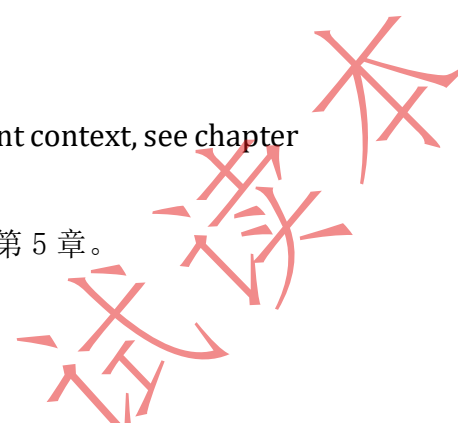
But now it is time to run the final stretch of the narrow middle road.

但现在是时候奔向最后一段狭窄的中路了。

## Footnotes: 注释

<sup>1</sup> For a consideration of the doctrine of election in a slightly different context, see chapter 5, especially pp. 103-107.

<sup>1</sup> 对于在一个不同的语境下，对拣选的教义的思考，请参阅本书第 5 章。



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<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that such was not quite the message of the best of the Greek philosophers. But by Paul's day, much of Greek thought had been reduced to that caricature—it was a lot easier to deal with than the actual teaching of the philosophers. How everything changes only to stay the same: people still do that today, even to the teachings of the Bible (e.g., “Jesus loves me, this I know; and this is all I want to know”).

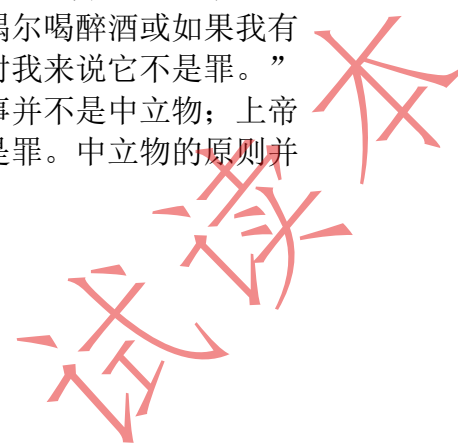
<sup>2</sup> 有趣的是，注意到这并不完全是最优秀的希腊哲学家的信息。但是在保罗时代，很多希腊思想都堕落到这样滑稽的地步——处理它比处理哲学家实际的教导要容易得多。日光之下并无新事：今天的人们依然如此，甚至是对圣经的教导也是如此（比如：“耶稣爱我，这是我知道的；这也是一切我想知道的”）。

<sup>3</sup> Some have rightly observed that perhaps we as worshipers should give a bit more thought to this matter of the dignity of God's house and the dignity of worship there than is common these days. Given the One who is there and what we come to do there, perhaps we should appear in his presence with some dignity too. It may well be that God does not care much what we wear to church. But maybe we should care enough to look our best. Tattered jeans or short-shorts when something better is available to us do not bespeak respect. If you wouldn't go to court or to an afternoon wedding looking that way, why would you want to bow low before the judgment seat of God in confession and hear him embrace you as the bride of Christ in absolution looking that way?

<sup>3</sup> 有些人正确的观察到，作为敬拜者，也许我们应该比现代通常的做法，更多的考虑一下上帝之家的庄重和在那儿敬拜的庄重。考虑到在那儿的那一位和我们去那儿干什么，也许我们应该带着一些庄重出现在他面前。确实，上帝可能并不在乎我们穿什么去教会。但是我们也许应该在乎让自己打扮得最好。破烂的牛仔裤和短裤，在我们有更好的衣服时，并不表示尊重。如果你不愿意这样去法庭或参加婚宴，为什么你愿意这样来到上帝的审判台前低头认罪，并在赦罪中倾听他接纳你为基督的新娘呢？

<sup>4</sup> It's important to keep in mind that we are here talking about legitimate *adiaphora*; we are not talking about things clearly commanded and forbidden by the Word of God. A person might say, “Well, my conscience doesn't bother me if I occasionally get drunk or if I have a sexual relationship outside of marriage; and since my conscience doesn't bother me, for me it is no sin.” That's a gross misuse of the principle of respect for a person's conscience in matters of *adiaphoron*. Such things are not *adiaphora* at all; the Word of God clearly calls them sins; and sins they are, whether someone's conscience is bothered or not. The principle of *adiaphoron* does not do away with the clear law of God.

<sup>4</sup> 记住我们在这里谈的是法定的中立物，这很重要；我们在这里谈的并不是上帝在他的道里清楚的命令和禁止的事。有人可能会说：“嗯，如果我偶尔喝醉酒或如果我有婚外性行为，我的良心并不困扰我；由于我的良心不困扰我，对我来说它不是罪。”这是对在中立物上尊重人的良心这一原则的严重滥用。这样的事并不是中立物；上帝的道清楚称它们为罪；无论某人的良心是否受到困扰，它们都是罪。中立物的原则并不废除上帝清楚的律法。



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## 9. The Final Stretch on the Narrow Middle Road 最后一段 狭窄的中路

The road is long, but it finally comes to an end. That is true whether we are speaking of the road of life or the road through the truths of the Bible. While the stretches of the road that we have traveled in the chapters of this book by no means portray the whole of the journey, it is time to bring our wanderings in this work to a close. We will leave for others and for another time the consideration of other parts of the journey that we have neglected or skipped over.

路漫漫却终有尽头。无论我们说的是生命之路，还是圣经真理之路。虽然我们在本书各章中走过的路，并不能描述整个旅程，但对于我们在这本书中的遨游，到了结束的时候了。对于这个旅程中，我们忽略或跳过了的其它部分，我们将留给别人和别的时间来考虑。

It is on the final stretch of the road that the two—the road of life and the road through the truths of the Bible—become one. The ultimate goal of both life and of the truths revealed in the Bible is the glory of God. And that goal is finally reached when at the end of days, we come to enjoy the beatific vision of Jesus enthroned in glory. The goal is finally reached when in heaven we join with all the saints and angels to sing forever their song of praise:

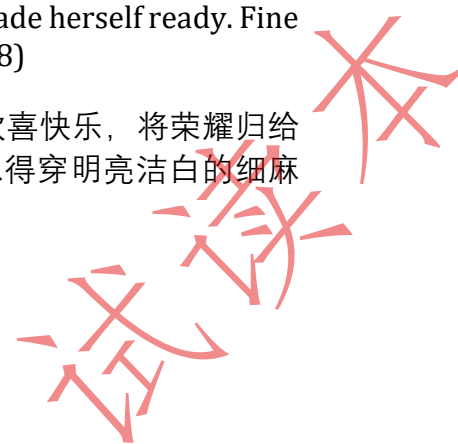
在道路的最后一段，这两条路——生命之路和圣经真理之路——合而为一。生命和圣经启示的真理的终极目标，都是上帝的荣耀。当在末日，我们享受耶稣坐在荣耀宝座上的至福异像时，这一目标就最终实现了。当在天堂我们和所有圣徒和天使一起，唱着赞美的歌直到永远时，这一目标就最终实现了。

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise! . . . To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” (Revelation 5:12,13)

“被杀的羔羊配得权能、丰富、智慧、力量、尊贵、荣耀、颂赞。……愿颂赞、尊贵、荣耀、权势，都归给坐在宝座上的那位和羔羊，直到永永远远！”（启 5:12,13）

“Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Revelation 19:6-8)

“哈利路亚！因为主——我们的上帝、全能者，作王了。我们要欢喜快乐，将荣耀归给他；因为羔羊的婚期到了，他的新娘也自己预备好了，她蒙恩得穿明亮洁白的细麻衣。”（启 19:6-8）



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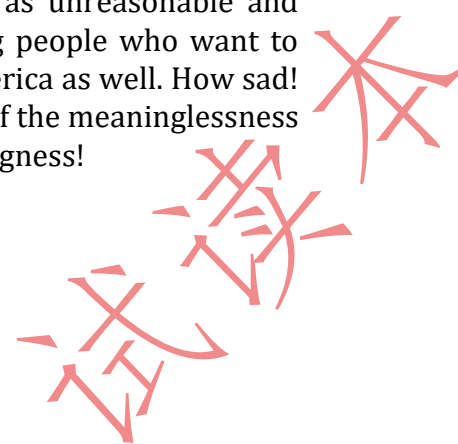
As always with the truths of God's Word, there is no end of delight in listening to what God has to say and in pondering the import of his words for our life here and our life there in the endless bliss of heaven.

随着圣道的真理与我们同在，当我们倾听上帝的话，思考他的话对我们此世的生命和我们在天堂无尽福乐中的生命的含义时，我们的喜乐是无限的。

Poor Aristotle! He knew nothing of the joy of life with Christ here. He was altogether unaware of the blessed state of the saints in the full light of the eternal day with Christ in heaven. So Aristotle and his god, human reason (the *logos* of Greek philosophy), will not help us on this final stretch of the road. Indeed, many of the philosophers of his day and since have thought that the greatest gift that the gods gave to men was the ability to end one's own life. They considered it a virtue and a duty to commit suicide once life no longer afforded one the pleasures of the flesh. Montesquieu, for example, one of the most famous of the French *Philosophes* of the 18th century, published his *Persian Letters* in 1721. In the *Persian Letters* Montesquieu's correspondent argues that the church shouldn't object to suicide. After all, if God loves all that he has created, then what difference does it make to him whether one becomes dust now or later; whether dust or a live human being, anything God has made should be equally loved by him, or so Montesquieu argued. That's the best that reason could do for him! It does not occur to him that the same reasoning should make murder, mass murder, and genocide likewise matters of indifference to God.

可怜的亚里士多德！他不知道今生与基督同在的生命拥有的喜乐。他也完全不知道，圣徒在天堂，在与基督同在的永生的光明里，蒙福的状态。因此亚里士多德和他的神，人类的理性（希腊哲学里的逻辑），在这最后一段路上并不能帮助我们。确实，在他那个时代以及随后的很多哲学家，认为诸神给人最大的恩赐，是有能力结束他自己的生命。他们认为，一旦生命不再能为一个人提供肉体的欢愉，自杀就是一种美德和义务。例如，孟德斯鸠，18世纪最著名的法国哲学家之一，在1721年出版了《波斯人信札》。在《波斯人信札》中孟德斯鸠的通信者争辩说，教会不应该反对自杀。毕竟，如果上帝爱他所创造的一切，那么对上帝来说，是现在变为尘土还是随后变为尘土有什么区别呢；上帝创造的任何东西，无论是尘土还是一个活人，都应该受到上帝同样的爱——这也是孟德斯鸠的争辩。这就是理性能够给他的最好的东西了！他并没有意识到，这样的推理会让谋杀、大规模屠杀和种族灭绝对上帝来说同样没有任何区别。

These days our culture seems to be forsaking whatever thin veneer of Christian truth may have covered it. It seems to be returning to that attitude of the philosophers guided by blind reason alone and then adopting attitudes which are as unreasonable and horrific as those of Montesquieu. Societies devoted to assisting people who want to commit suicide are multiplying in Europe and now in North America as well. How sad! How tragic that so many would find in death the ultimate proof of the meaninglessness of life and a vainly hoped-for escape from its burdens into nothingness!



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我们如今的文化似乎抛弃了基督真理遮盖着的饰面。它看上去又回到了那些哲学家的态度——单单被盲目的理性指引，然后采用像孟德斯鸠那样的毫无理性和可怕的态度。致力于帮助那些想要自杀之人的集群在欧洲倍增，现在在北美同样如此。多么悲伤啊！如此多的人将在死亡中找到生命毫无意义的最终证明，并徒劳的盼望从它的重担中逃离，进入虚无，这是多么不幸啊。

The opposite attitude in the world is no better. An opposite and equally faithless opinion is that death is the ultimate horror: fearing what may lie beyond, people struggle against death with all their might and all their resources and the resources of their family and even of the state. When their vain struggles finally fail, they die in despair.

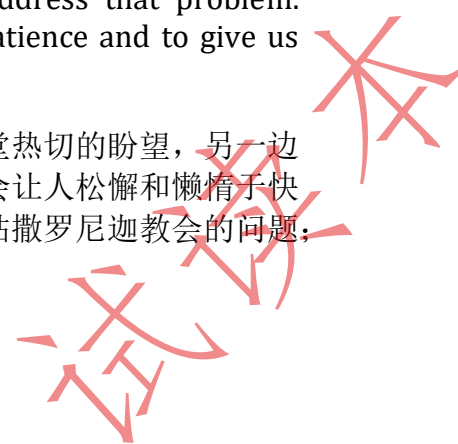
这世上另一种对立的态度并不更好一点。一个相反并同样靠不住的观点是：死亡是终极的恐怖。在对将来会发生什么的恐惧中，人们努力用他们一切的可能、一切的资源，以及他们家庭甚至国家一切的资源，来对抗死亡。当他们徒劳的抗争最终失败时，他们在绝望中死去。

Oh, how blessed the lot of the Christian! He neither longs for death as an escape from the supposed meaninglessness of his life nor clings to life in terror of a vast abyss into which he will fall when death claims him. The Christian has walked along the narrow middle road, with Christ as his light and Christ as his goal. He has had God's Word as his map and faithful guide. The road often has been rough. Often the climb has been steep and the path watered by tears. But at length it comes to an end. For both the journey and its end, the Christian is profoundly, yes, eternally grateful.

哦，基督徒是多么蒙福啊！他既不渴望透过死亡来逃离所谓的无意义的生命，也不在对死亡会将他拉入巨大深渊的恐惧中，死守着生命。基督徒走在狭窄的中路上，有基督为他的光和他的目标。他有上帝的道作为他的地图和忠实的指引。这路常常崎岖不平。常常是攀爬陡峭的山崖并被泪水浇灌。但最终它还是结束了。无论是对这段旅途还是它的结束，基督徒都深深的，是的，并且永恒的感恩。

This stretch of the road too has a narrow middle to it. It is the middle between an eager anticipation of our future in heaven on the one hand and, on the other hand, our delight in serving Christ in the here and now. To spend too much time with eyes fixed on heaven can make people lax and lazy in the joyful carrying out of the service that Christ wants from them here and now. That to some extent was the problem of the church in Thessalonica; Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians in part to deal with just that problem. But an exclusive attention to the here and now can get very depressing when the days are long and the road is hard. Many places in the New Testament address that problem. Especially the book of Revelation was inspired to encourage patience and to give us hope when the journey seems long and its crosses heavy.

这段路同样是一条狭窄的中路。这条中路的一边是对未来在天堂热切的盼望，另一边是我们此时此刻服事基督的喜乐。花太多的时间聚焦在天上，会让人松懈和懒惰于快乐地执行基督想要他们在此时此刻的服事。这在某种程度上是帖撒罗尼迦教会的问题；





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保罗写帖撒罗尼迦后书，部分原因就是去解决这个问题。但是当日子还很长，路还很艰难的时候，过度地关注此时此刻会让人非常沮丧。新约中的很多地方都致力于这个问题。特别是启示录，上帝默示它，在旅途看上去还很长，磨难重重时，鼓励我们坚忍并给我们盼望。

As we bring the journey that is this book to a close, let us then spend a little time considering what the Bible has to say about our future in heaven. And then let us consider also the middle between an excessive longing for that happy day that knows no end and the joyful service to God in the here and now, a service that we are eager to render until God himself brings it to an end.

在我们结束这本书的旅程时，让我们花点时间思考，关于我们在天上的未来，圣经说了什么。然后让我们思考，在极度渴望我们知道不会有终结的美好的日子，和此时此刻喜乐的服事上帝——这服事是我们热切渴望去做的，直到上帝将它终结——之间的中路。

## Our blessed future in heaven 我们在天堂蒙福的未来

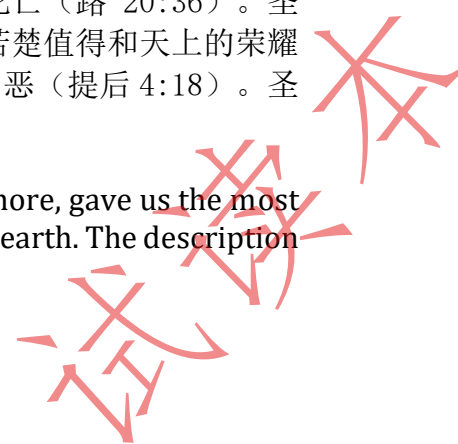
“What will heaven be like?” “What will we do in heaven?” Who hasn’t asked those questions a hundred times? The little child asks them out of curiosity. The sufferer asks seeking comfort for troubles of the moment. The aged ask with longing and in anticipation of their entry into its peace and joy. And what does the Bible have to say to all of us in answer to the questions? The answers are filled with comfort for the aged, hope for the suffering, and much food for thought for the young.

“天堂是什么样的？”“我们将在天堂做什么？”谁没有成百上千次的问这些问题呢？小孩出于好奇心这样问。受难者为当下的烦恼寻求安慰而这样问。老人带着对他们将要进入的平安喜乐的渴望和期待这样问。圣经向我们所有人说了什么，来回答这些问题呢？这回答充满了对老人的安慰，给受难者的盼望，给年轻人的丰富的思想。

Most of the passages that speak of heaven are surprisingly short. Jesus tells us that in heaven there will be no more death (Luke 20:36). St. Paul tells us that heaven is a reward so great for the blessed that none of earth’s sorrows are worthy to be compared to its glory (Romans 8:17,18). He tells us that there we will find rescue from every form of evil (2 Timothy 4:18). St. Peter tells us that heaven’s blessings can never be spoiled or come to an end (1 Peter 1:4).

大部分讲天堂的经文都出奇的短。耶稣告诉我们在天堂不再有死亡（路 20:36）。圣保罗告诉我们，天堂是对蒙福之人极大的奖赏，世上没有任何苦楚值得和天上的荣耀相比较（罗 8:17,18）。他告诉我们在那里我们将脱离一切的凶恶（提后 4:18）。圣彼得告诉我们，天堂的祝福永远不会朽坏和终结（彼前 1:4）。

Jesus, knowing that his brothers and sisters would want a little more, gave us the most touching description of heaven in his final words to the church on earth. The description



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is in the book of Revelation. That book was written at a time when the church was suffering one devastating persecution after another. All of the apostles except for St. John were dead; and if we accept tradition, they had died horrible deaths as martyrs. St. John himself was about 90 years old and living in exile on the salt mine prison island of Patmos. To underscore Paul's words in Romans 8:18 and the echo of prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 25:8; 35:10; 49:10; 60:20), Jesus encouraged the faithful to patiently endure. This is what awaits them after this short time on earth and what those already in heaven experience and enjoy even now:

耶稣知道他的弟兄姐妹想要知道更多，在他对地上教会最后的话中，他给了我们天堂最动人的描述。这描述就在启示录中。这本书写于教会正在遭受一个又一个毁灭性的逼迫中。除了圣约翰，所有的使徒都死了；如果我们接纳传统说法的话，他们都是作为殉道者被可怕的杀死的。圣约翰本人大约 90 岁了，被流放在拔摩岛上盐矿坑的监狱里。耶稣强调了保罗在罗马书 8:18 中的话，并重复了先知以赛亚的话（赛 25:8; 35:10; 49:10; 60:20），来鼓励我们在忠实中恒久忍耐。这就是在地上这短暂的日子之后等待着我们的，也是在天堂中的人此刻所经历和享受的：

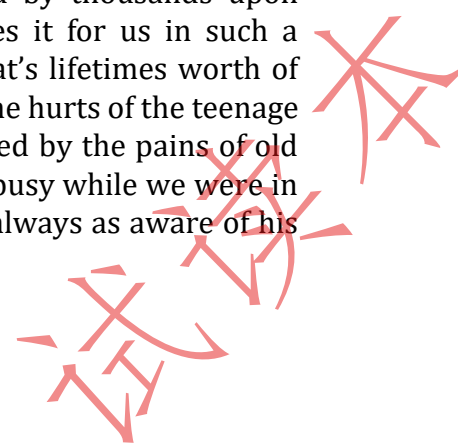
They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (Revelation 7:15-17)

所以，他们在上帝宝座前，昼夜在他殿中事奉他；那坐在宝座上的要用帐幕覆庇他们。他们不再饥，不再渴；太阳必不伤害他们，任何炎热也不伤害他们，因为宝座中的羔羊必牧养他们，领他们到生命水的泉源；上帝必擦去他们一切的眼泪。”（启 7:15-17）

[God] will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. (Revelation 21:3,4)

看哪，上帝的帐幕在人间！他要和他们同住，他们要作他的子民。上帝要亲自与他们同在。上帝要擦去他们一切的眼泪；不再有死亡，也不再有悲哀、哭号、痛苦，因为先前的事都过去了。”（启 21:3-4）

How tender! How cheering! Though heaven will be inhabited by thousands upon thousands of the saints and angels, Jesus nevertheless pictures it for us in such a personal way. "[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes!" That's lifetimes worth of tears! He has counted them—the tears of childhood, tears from the hurts of the teenage years, tears from the disappointments of middle age, tears caused by the pains of old age. God will not be too busy for any of them. He never was too busy while we were in the midst of those tears here on earth; it's just that we weren't always as aware of his



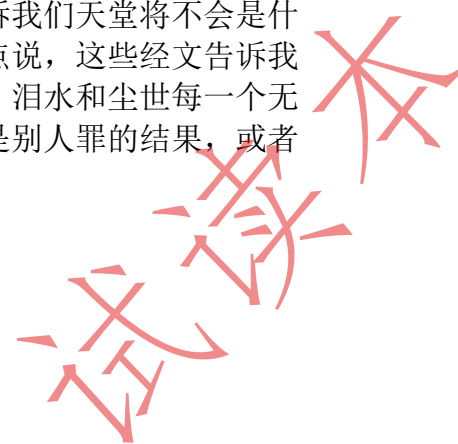
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kind and personal attention as we should have been. In life Jesus taught us to call God our Father. And there in heaven God, like a tender father, will take each one of us to himself. God will show each of us in such a personal way how well he understood us. Even in heaven, not one of us will be some nameless, faceless blot in a crowd. Not one of us will be cringing in a corner, hoping that no one will notice that we are there and point to us and cry out: "There's been a mistake! What's that one doing here?" No, each one will be the dearly beloved child of God. Each one will see most fully, most beautifully, that when Jesus was born, when he suffered, when he died, he was thinking about me, even me. Each one will see how God really did already in eternity desire my salvation, yearn for it, plan for it, and rule all of history so that I would be with him forever. And thus, heaven will be, for the whole church and for each individual believer, the great wedding feast of the Lamb that Jesus speaks about in Revelation 21.

多么温柔！多么愉悦！虽然天堂将住着千千万万的圣徒和天使，耶稣依然为我们以这样一种个人化的方式描述它。“上帝要擦去他们一切的眼泪！”这是伴随一生的眼泪！他一一数算它们——童年的眼泪，少年时代伤痛的眼泪，中年人失望的眼泪，老年人因疼痛而来的眼泪。上帝不会无暇顾及于它们任何一颗。当我们在这世上这些眼泪中间时，他绝不会无暇顾及；只是我们没有总是意识到他的良善和他亲身的关心——我们本该意识到这些的。在这一生中耶稣教导我们称上帝为我们的父。而在天堂那边，上帝，如同一个温柔的父亲，将带领我们每一个人归向他。上帝将以这样一种个人化的方式，向我们每个人表明他有多么的了解我们。甚至在天堂，我们没有人会成为人群中的无名之辈。我们没有人会蜷缩在角落，盼望没人能注意到我们在那儿，指着我们喊道：“这真是个失误！这个人在这儿做什么？”不，每一个人都是上帝亲爱的孩子。每个人都会看到最完全最美丽的画面：当耶稣降生，当他受难，当他死亡时，他在想我，即便是我。每一个人都将看到上帝是如何在永恒中就已经渴望我的救恩、寻求他、设计它、统治一切的历史使得我可以和他永远在一起。因此，对整个教会和每个基督徒个人，天堂将成为耶稣在启示录 21 章所说的羔羊极大的婚宴。

But what do we notice even in this most beautiful picture of heaven? It and the other passages that we cited earlier speak of heaven almost entirely in negatives. That is, they tell us what heaven will not be and will not have. It will not have death or pain or sorrow or tears. To put it most simply, these passages tell us that sin and all of its consequences will have no place in heaven. Death and sadness, tears and the impermanence of every earthly joy are all the results of sin, be they the results of our own sins, the sins of others, or simply the consequences of the fall of Adam and Eve.

但即使在这个关于天堂最美丽的画面中，我们注意到了什么呢？它和我们前面引用的其它谈到天堂的经文，几乎都是否定的方面。也就是，它们告诉我们天堂将不会是什么和不会有什么。它将不会有死亡、疼痛、悲伤和泪水。简单点说，这些经文告诉我们，罪和其一切的后果在天堂将不会有容身之地。死亡、悲伤、泪水和尘世每一个无常的欢乐，都是罪的结果，无论它们是我们自己罪的结果，还是别人罪的结果，或者仅仅是亚当和夏娃堕落的后果。



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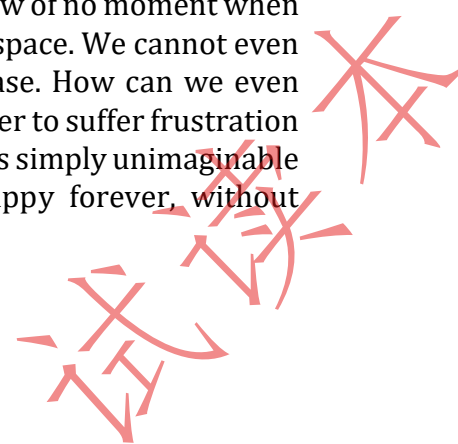
It is certainly comforting to know that in heaven our sins will not only be fully forgiven but that also their causes and their effects will be completely gone. There will be no more temptations that caused us here such struggle. There will be no more shame and guilt buried so deep in our memories. There will be no more of the ravages of our sinful condition so evident in sickness and sorrow of every kind and finally in death itself. All of that will be gone, gone forever. To the extent that we remember any of it, the memory will only be a cause of rejoicing and thanksgiving that Jesus has rescued us from it and replaced it with eternal peace and joy.

我们知道在天堂我们的罪不仅会被完全赦免，而且它们的原因和它们的后果都将完全消失，这诚然令人安慰。再也不会导致我们此刻如此挣扎的试探了。再也不会深深埋在我们记忆中的羞耻和愧疚了。再也不会我们罪恶状况的遗迹了——这在各种各样的疾病、悲伤，以及最终死亡本身上是多么的明显。所有这些都消失，永远消失。从这个意义来说，当我们记住其中任何一点，这记忆将只会变成喜乐和感恩的原因：耶稣将我们从其中拯救出来，并代之以永恒的平安和喜乐。

But still we are left with questions about the positives: what will there be in heaven for us once temptations, sin, and all its terrible effects are gone? St. Paul gives us a bit of a clue as to why the Bible says so little in answer to that question. He tells us in 1 Corinthians 13:12 that here we look up to heaven through a smoky glass; we can only see intimations of heaven's glory. Once we get there, it will all become clear and bright as day; we will know and understand there, just as God knows and understands us perfectly here. Then in 2 Corinthians 12 he speaks of a man (probably himself) who was snatched up into heaven before death. But there he saw and experienced things that have no point of reference on earth, things that he just wouldn't or shouldn't even attempt to describe. That's how wonderful it will be!

但是我们依然对肯定的方面有困惑：一旦试探、罪和它一切恐怖的后果都消失了，天堂对我们将是什么样的呢？圣保罗给了我们一点线索，为什么圣经在回答这一问题上说的如此少。在哥林多前书 13:12 他告诉我们，在今生我们对着镜子观看天堂，我们只能看到天堂荣耀的影子。一旦我们到那儿，一切都会变得清晰明亮，如同在白昼一样；我们将知道和明白那儿，正如上帝在这儿完美的知道和明白我们一样。然后，在哥林多后书 12 章，他谈到一个人（可能是他自己）在未死之前被提到天堂。但是在那儿他看到和经历到的事，在地上并没有参照物，他甚至连试图去描述这些事也不能够或不应该。这将会是多么地美好啊！

We can understand the difficulty. Here on earth we know of no moment when we are not to one degree or another affected by sin. Here on earth we know of no moment when we are not completely hemmed in by the limitations of time and space. We cannot even begin to imagine a time or a condition where such is not the case. How can we even begin to picture what it will be like never to be tempted again, never to suffer frustration or sorrow again, never to be even capable of sickness or death? It is simply unimaginable for us. Even the notion of being completely and perfectly happy forever, without becoming bored by such a state, is unimaginable to us.



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我们能够理解这艰难之处。在今生我们没有一刻不受罪的影响。在今生我们没有一刻不完全被时空的界限束缚。我们甚至不能想象某一刻或某个情形不是这样。我们怎能去描绘再也没有试探、再也不遭受挫折和悲伤、甚至再也不可能生病或死亡是什么样子呢？这对我们简直不可想象。即便是永永远远完美和完全的快乐，而不会对这一状态产生厌烦的观点，对我们都是不可想象的。

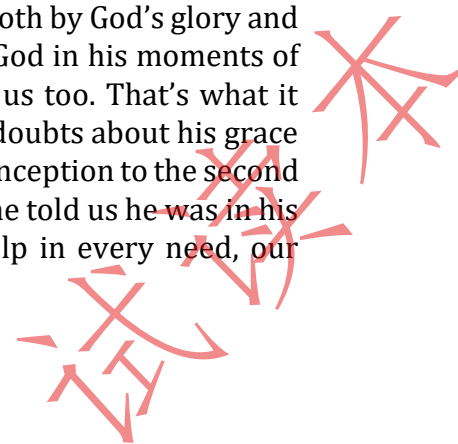
The best way that the Bible has of summing up such a state, such a place, such a condition, is perhaps in the words of St. John: "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! . . . Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, *for we shall see him as he is*" (1 John 3:1,2).

圣经总结这样一个状态、这样一个地方、这样一种情形，最好的方式或许是圣约翰的话：“你们看父赐给我们的是何等的慈爱，让我们得以称为上帝的儿女……亲爱的，我们现在是上帝的儿女，将来如何还未显明。我们所知道的是：基督显现的时候，我们会像他，因为我们将见到他的本相”（约一 3:1,2）。

*"We shall see him as he is!"* And just how is he? He is always our gracious God and our perfect Savior. He is always ruling over events in our lives, over things great and small, to accomplish the blessed end that we should be forever with him in heaven. He is always surrounding us with the protection of the holy angels, without ever leaving us just to their care, as sufficient as that would be. But that's not how we see him now. Now we see him under the burden and weight of the cross. Now we often view him only through the prism of tears. Now we wonder why he permits this to happen and allows that. Now we have occasion often to say deep down inside, "When I get to heaven, when I see him, there are a few bones that I'm going to have to pick with him! There are a few things that I'm going to want him to explain!"

“我们将见到他的本相！”他的本相是什么呢？他一直是我们的恩慈的上帝和我们完美的救主。他一直统管着我们生命中的事情，无论是大事还是小事，为要完成那蒙福的结局，就是我们在天堂和他永远在一起。他一直用圣天使的保护环绕着我们——但从不将我们留给他们照顾，仿佛那样就足够了一样。但这不是现在我们看到他的样子。现在我们看到他在十字架的重担之下。现在我们常常只能透过泪眼看他。现在我们疑惑为什么他许可这件事和那件事发生。现在我们常常在心灵深处说：“当我到了天堂，当我看到他，有几根骨头我一定要和他挑一挑！有几件事我一定要让他解释一下！”

Job thought that way too in the midst of his suffering. But read the closing chapters of Job's book. When God finally does visit him, Job is overwhelmed both by God's glory and his goodness; he raises not one of the questions that he had for God in his moments of weakness and suffering. That is no doubt the way it will be for us too. That's what it means: "We shall see him as he is!" No more questions, no more doubts about his grace and his goodness as he exercised them from the moment of our conception to the second of our last breath. We will see perfectly that he always was what he told us he was in his Word, in his sacraments: our gracious God, our Refuge and Help in every need, our





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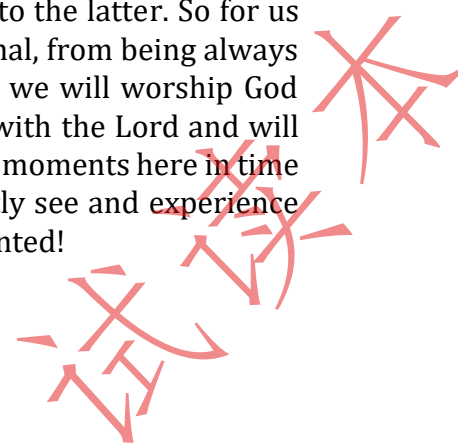
Redeemer, our mighty King, our Brother! Thus, our first words in heaven will probably not be, "How come . . . ?" Instead, in wonder and awe and profound thanksgiving we will simply say, "Oh!" For then and there, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:12, "Then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."

约伯在他受苦的时候也是这样想的。但请阅读约伯记结尾的几章。当上帝最终拜访约伯时，约伯被上帝的荣耀和良善所淹没；他没有提出一个，当他在软弱和受苦的时候向上帝发出的问题。毋庸置疑，这也将是我们的道路。这就是这话的意思：“我们将见到他的本相！”对于他的恩典和良善，不再有疑问，不再有怀疑，他一直在我们生命中运行着它们，从我们出生的那一刻直到我们最后一息。我们将完美的看到，他一直都是他在圣道和圣礼中告诉我们的样子：我们恩慈的上帝，我们在一切缺乏中的避难所和帮助者，我们的救赎者，我们全能的王，我们的弟兄！因此，我们在天堂的第一句话可能不会是：“为什么……？”相反，我们将单单在惊奇、敬畏和深深的感激中说：“噢！”到那时和到那里，正如保罗在哥林多前书 13:12 中说：“到那时，就要面对面了。我如今所认识的有限，到那时就全认识，如同主认识我一样。”

But we still haven't answered the question of what we will actually be *doing* in heaven. If the reader will pardon one personal reference, the author remembers his aged mother thinking out loud one time. She said, "I wonder if someone will have to do the dusting in heaven; if so, I'd be happy to do it." The child asks, "Can I play with my puppy in heaven?" One of our seminary professors speaks of the little boy he had in confirmation class. The boy lived for fishing and would often show up for class smelling of fish and the river bank. And just as often the boy would ask, "Will we be able to go fishing in heaven?" He just could not imagine that he would be happy there if he couldn't go fishing.

但是我们依然没有回答这个问题：在天堂我们将做什么。请读者允许我使用一个个人性的例子。作者还记得有一次他年迈的母亲在思考时，自言自语说：“我好奇在天堂是否有人在打扫卫生；如果有，我很乐意去做这个工作。”小孩问：“在天堂我能和我的小狗一起玩吗？”我们的一个神学院教授，谈到在他的坚信礼课堂上的一个小孩。这个小孩喜爱钓鱼，在课堂上总是散发出鱼腥味和河岸的味道。他常常会问：“在天堂我还能钓鱼吗？”他无法想象，如果他不能钓鱼，他还会快乐。

For all of these queries and musings, the good seminary professor had perhaps the best answer when he told the boy in his confirmation class, "I don't know exactly what we will be doing in heaven; all I know is that whatever we are doing, *we will not wish that we were doing something else!*" What an excellent answer! Does the baby at birth have even the foggiest notion of what its life will be like outside of the womb? Of course not; the baby simply has no point of comparison of the former state to the latter. So for us too when we consider our passing from the temporal to the eternal, from being always stained by sin to being ever free from it. The Bible tells us that we will worship God perfectly and forever. The Bible tells us that we will be forever with the Lord and will see him as he is. That should be enough for us. After all, if our best moments here in time were those when we felt closest to him, surely when we perfectly see and experience him in the fullness of his grace and glory, we will not be disappointed!



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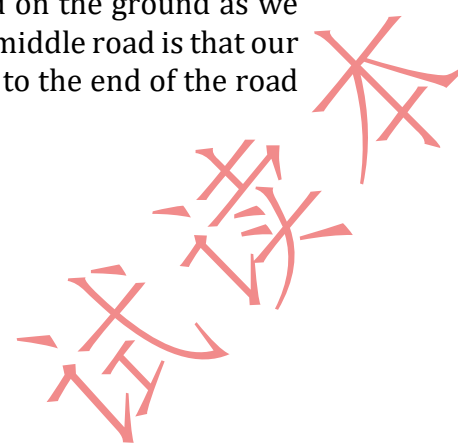
对所有这些问题和思考，这个优秀的神学家可能给出了最好的回答，在他的坚信礼课堂他告诉这个小孩：“我不知道在天堂我们将具体做什么；我知道的是，无论我们在做什么，我们都不会盼望我们在做别的事情！”多么美好的回答啊！刚出生的婴儿对于他在子宫之外的生活将会是什么样的，是否有哪怕最模糊的概念？当然没有；婴儿完全没有着眼点来将前者的情形和后者进行比较。当我们思考我们从今生到永恒，从总是被罪所沾污到脱离它得自由时，我们也是如此。圣经告诉我们，我们将完美和完全地敬拜上帝。圣经告诉我们，我们将永远和主同在，并将看到他的本相。这对我们就足够了。毕竟，如果我们今生最好的时刻就是当我们感到与他亲近的时候，当然，当我们在他丰盛的恩典和荣耀中完美的看到他和经历到他时，我们将不会失望！

## Our life here and now 我们此时此世的生命

So the Bible does not go much beyond the largely negative descriptions that tell us what heaven will not be like. We just don't have the vocabulary for more than that. But we may surmise still another good reason why the Bible is relatively sparse in its descriptions of heaven, namely this: We have work to do in the here and now before we get there! If the picture of heaven's glory were complete in the Bible, how could we stand it to stay here a minute longer? God tells us enough of the glory that awaits us in heaven to comfort and encourage us here and now. He tells us enough so that even on good days here, we may long for the perfect and endless day there. He tells us enough so that we don't fall too much in love with this world and what it offers while we wait for the perfect world and what it contains. He tells us enough so that in union with the church, the bride of Christ, we hear Jesus in the last verses of the Bible promise to come and take us to himself; and we sigh in answer: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"

所以除了大量否定性的描述，圣经并没有用很多别的话告诉我们天堂是什么样的。除此之外，我们也没有更多的词汇去描述它。但我们也许可以说，为什么圣经相对少的描绘天堂，还有另外一个好的理由，那就是：在我们到那儿之前，在此时此世，我们还有工作要做！如果天堂荣耀的画面在圣经里完全写下来，我们怎能忍受在此世的一刻呢？上帝告诉我们在天堂有足够的荣耀等候着我们，来在此时此世安慰和鼓励我们。他告诉我们的足以使我们在今生好的日子里，也会渴望在那儿完美而无尽的日子。他告诉我们的足以使我们在等候那个完美的世界和它所包含的一切时，不至于陷入对这个世界和它所提供的东西太多的爱里。他告诉我们的足以使我们与教会——基督的新娘联合，在圣经最后几节里，我们听到耶稣应许要来并带我们到他那里去；我们用叹息的声音回应说：“阿门，主啊，我愿你来！”

The narrow middle road then is to have both feet firmly planted on the ground as we are about our Father's business in the here and now. The narrow middle road is that our vision nevertheless looks ahead, looks up, looks eagerly forward to the end of the road where we will see Jesus as he is.



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狭窄的中路是，作为我们父在此时此世的工作，我们脚踏实地往前走。狭窄的中路是，尽管如此，我们的异像是向前看、向上看，热切盼望着路的尽头，在那儿我们将看到耶稣的本相。

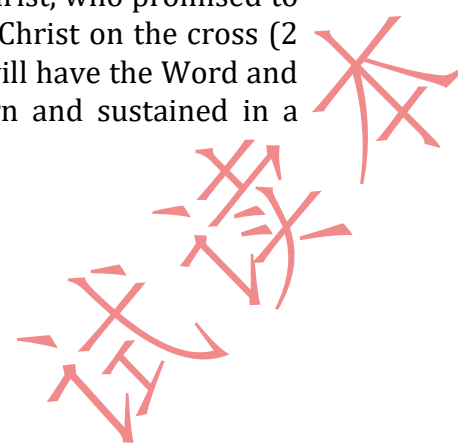
Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, St. Paul more than anyone else tells what his own thoughts were on the middle road between eagerness to serve and a longing for heaven. While in prison in Rome, unable to serve the way he had for so many years and with the possibility that he would be put to death after his trial, Paul had this to say on the middle road:

在圣灵的启示下，圣保罗说道他在这条热心服事和渴望天堂的中路上的想法，他说的比所有人都好。在罗马被囚禁的时候，保罗不能再去做他已经做了很多年的服事，并很可能会在审判之后被处死，保罗在这条中路上这样说道：

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me. (Philippians 1:20-26)

这就是我所切慕、所盼望的：没有一事能使我羞愧；反倒凡事坦然无惧，无论是生是死，总要让基督在我身上照常显大。因为我活着就是基督，死了就有益处。但是，我在肉身活着，若能有工作的成果，我就不知道该挑选什么。我处在两难之间：我情愿离世与基督同在，因为这是好得无比的；然而，我为你们肉身活着更加要紧。既然我这样深信，就知道仍要留在世间，且与你们众人一起存留，使你们在所信的道上又长进又喜乐，为了我再到你们那里时，你们在基督耶稣里的夸耀越发加增。（腓 1:20-26）

One thing stands out above everything else: Christ! If Paul dies and goes to heaven, there he will have blessed peace and life with Christ. If he lives and can still be useful here on earth, then Christ will be exalted and Christ's elect will be served. And so, whether here or in heaven, Christ is all in all; Christ is everything! When Paul faces trial in the imperial court, he will be faithful to Christ and make a good confession of his faith in accord with the Word of God that he had taught. If he dies, he will cling to Christ, who promised to deliver him at last and give him the reward of grace earned by Christ on the cross (2 Timothy 4:8). If he lives, such service as he is still able to offer will have the Word and work of Christ as its center; that's how faith and joy are born and sustained in a believer's heart.



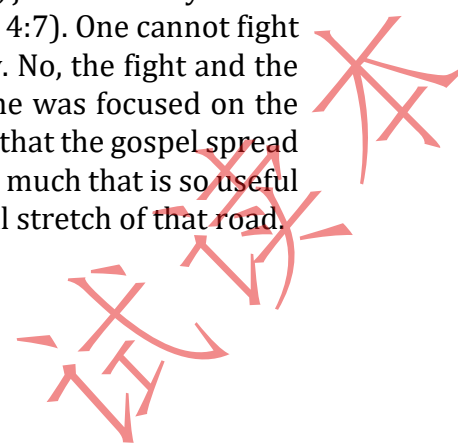
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有一件事屹立在一切事之上：基督！如果保罗死了并上了天堂，那么他将拥有与基督同在的平安与生命。如果他活着并依然能够在世上有所帮助，那么基督将会被尊崇，基督的选民得以被服事。因此，无论在此世还是在天堂，基督是一切中的一切；基督是全部的事！当保罗面对帝国法庭的审判时，他将忠实于基督，并按照上帝教导他的道，对他的信仰做出认信。如果他死了，他将紧抓住基督——基督应许了最终将搭救他，并赐他恩典的奖赏，这奖赏是基督在十字架上为他赢得的（提后 4:8）。如果他活着，他所能提供的服事，将依然以圣道和基督的工作为其中心；这是一个信徒心里产生和维持信心和喜乐的原因。

What a perfect model for us as we travel the last stretch of the narrow middle road. Jesus has made it clear that our time here is not to be wasted. He does not want us to spend our days gazing up into heaven in lazy longing. He made that clear to the disciples on the day of his own ascension. They looked up, no doubt stunned by what they had just witnessed. But Jesus did not let them spend much time in idle gazing. He had told them shortly before that they had work to do (Matthew 28:18-20). And then at his ascension he told them to get ready to do it (Acts 1:9-11). At the same time, he assured them that he would not forsake them but would return and take them to himself when the time had fully come. He has given us this time of grace for service that he considers important and of eternal significance. So we will not despise our time in the here and now the way the ungrateful steward did (Matthew 25:14-30). Nor will we be like the foolish virgins who seemed to think that their Lord would never really come at all and thus were unprepared when he did come (Matthew 25:1-13).

在我们走到这最后一段狭窄的中路时，这对我们是一个多么完美的模式啊。耶稣清楚地表明，我们今生的时间并不会被浪费。他不希望我们在懒散渴望中，将我们的日子花在凝视天堂上。在他升天的日子他向门徒清楚地表明了这一点。他们抬起头，毋庸置疑的被他们刚刚看到的事惊呆了。但是耶稣并没有让他们花太多的时间无所事事地凝望。不久之前他就告诉他们他们有工作要做（太 28:18-20）。然后在他升天时，他告诉他们要为此做好准备（徒 1:9-11）。与此同时，他向他们保证，他不会抛弃他们，并会在日子满足的时候再来并带他们到他那里去。为着这他认为重要并有永恒意义的事工，上帝给了我们恩典的时间。所以我们不会像那个不领情的管家（太 25:14-30）那样，轻视我们此时此世的时间。我们也不会像那几个愚蠢的童女一样（太 25:1-13），她们似乎认为她们的主永远不会真的来，并因此在他来的时候毫无准备（太 25:1-13）。

The time here is a busy time for us indeed. In the strong words that he uses to describe his life, the apostle Paul tells us, when his journey is about to end, just how busy it was: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race" (2 Timothy 4:7). One cannot fight a good fight or run a race with his eyes gazing lazily into the sky. No, the fight and the race required all of Paul's attention and all his energy, even as he was focused on the prize at the end. We are heirs of all his labors. It was through Paul that the gospel spread so far and wide. And it was through Paul that the Lord inspired so much that is so useful to us on our journeys along the middle road and even on this final stretch of that road.



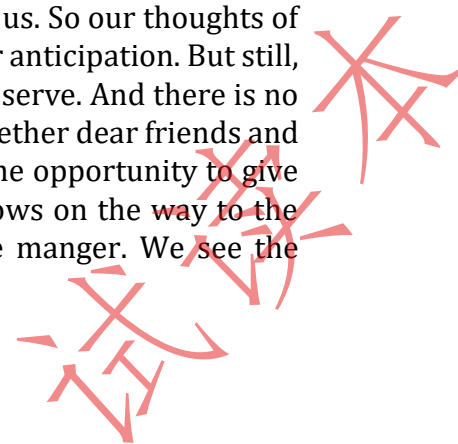
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对我们来说，今生的时间确实是忙碌的。当使徒保罗在他生命的旅程走到终点时，他使用强烈的语言来描述他的一生，他告诉我们这生命是多么的忙碌：“那美好的仗我已经打过了，当跑的路我已经跑尽了”（提后 4:7）。一个人不能将他的眼睛懒散的盯着天空，然后去打美好的仗或去赛跑。不，这场战斗和这场赛跑要求保罗的全部注意力和全部精力，即便是他一直聚焦在终点的奖赏上。我们是他一切辛苦劳动的继承人。正是透过保罗，福音如此远如此广地传开了。正是透过保罗，主在我们沿着中路的旅途中，甚至在这段最后的旅途中，如此有用的启示我们如此之多。

Each of us in his day has reason to consider this final stretch of the middle road. When we are young, we perhaps think of the end of the journey less than we will when we are old. We in our youth should have our attention fixed on the work that the Lord may yet place in front of us in the various stations of life. We think about the possibilities of a future vocation, of a future as a husband or wife, as a parent. We think about all the doors that we have yet to pass through. There is so much excitement, so much of anticipation, so much energy and eagerness. And that's all well and good. It should be that way. Mindful of the focus on the here and now and of the greater attention to the immediate future, the church has always prayed: "For all swift and young and happy things, we thank thee, O Lord." But even the young and the very young do well to remember that the present and its possibilities are all gifts for use and usefulness. Even the young do well to think from time to time that the greatest joys await them still in heaven, and the greatest joy of the here and now is service to the One who won heaven for them at so great a price.

我们每个人在他的日子都有理由去思考这最后一段中路。当我们年轻的时候，我们可能思考人生之旅的终点要远少于我们年老的时候。当我们年轻时，我们将我们的注意力放在，在我们生命中的各个时期主摆在我们面前的工作上。我们思考未来的职业、未来作为丈夫、妻子、作为父母的各种可能。我们思考所有我们还没走过的路。那很让人兴奋、让人期待、让人充满能量和渴望。这些都是好的。本就应该这样。教会关注着此时此世和明天的事，总是祷告说：“主啊，为所有敏捷、年轻和愉快的事，我们感谢你。”但即使是年轻人和小孩，也需要记住，当下和其一切可能都是上帝的恩赐，让我们去使用并带来帮助。即使是年轻人也需要时常想到，等待着我们的最大的喜乐依然在天上，今生最大的喜乐是服事用如此大的代价为我们赢得了天堂的那一位。

For the rest of us, thoughts of heaven too will come and go with varying degrees of intensity. We want to see our children grown and with children of their own. We would like to tell even our grandchildren the story of Jesus that we taught our children. We should be happy to show both our children and our grandchildren that our reason for living is to love and serve him who loved us and gave himself for us. So our thoughts of the end of the journey may not be many or even thoughts of eager anticipation. But still, on our best days, we do not live for the here and now. We live to serve. And there is no greater joy than such service. In the needs of those around us, whether dear friends and family or even enemies, we see the lowliness of Christ. We see the opportunity to give him a cup of water, to offer a piece of bread to the Man of sorrows on the way to the cross, a cloak or a blanket against the cold to the Child in the manger. We see the





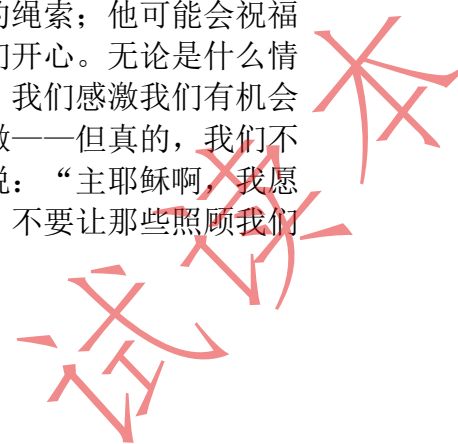
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opportunity to share the Bread of Life in the message of the gospel that saves for time and for eternity. It is all so worthwhile. It is all so blessed. It is all made holy and an eternal fruit of the passion of the Savior.

对我们其余人来说，对天堂的思考也会反反复复，有不同的强烈程度。我们想要看到我们的孩子长大，和他们自己的孩子在一起。我们甚至想要告诉我们的孙子孙女耶稣的故事，正如我们教导我们的孩子一样。我们应该高兴地向我们的孩子和孙子孙女表明，我们活着的理由是去爱和服事那爱我们并将他自己赐给了我们的主。因此，我们对人生之旅的终点的思考，可能不会很多，也没有带着热切的期待。但在我们最好的日子里，我们依然不是为此时此世活着。我们活着就是去服事。没有比这样的服事更大的快乐了。在我们身边之人的缺乏中，无论是亲爱的朋友、家人，甚至是敌人，我们看到了降卑的基督。我们看到我们有机会去给那个在十字架上受苦的人一杯水、一块饼。我们看到我们有机会给那个马槽里的婴孩一件披风或一个毯子去御寒。我们看到我们有机会在福音的信息里分享生命的粮，为当下和为永恒带来拯救。这一切都如此值得。这一切都如此蒙福。这一切都是圣洁的，并是蒙救主所爱的永恒的果子。

But when the time comes that such service is severely constricted or made almost impossible by the infirmities of sickness or age, well, then we think of heaven more often and with greater longing. And there is nothing wrong with that. We see that our journey is coming to an end. We may wish that the end would come sooner rather than later. But it may be that the Lord still wants to use us as examples of patience and devotion for those we will soon leave behind. It may be that the Lord is taking his time in order to cut better the ties that bind us to the earth or the ties even that bind others to us; he may be blessing them by giving them the time they need to adjust to our leaving and even to be happy for us when we do leave. Whatever the case may be, we are grateful for the journey. We are grateful for the gospel that made it worthwhile. We are grateful for the opportunities we had to reflect our love for Christ and his Word and his people. We are grateful for it all—but really, we don't want to do it over again. And so with the saints of every age, we may say often, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Our greatest task has become a striving for patience. Our hardest work is that of not making the work of those who care for us harder than it needs to be. Our holiest efforts at service are our prayers for them and our efforts to be grateful to them when we are more inclined to be grumpy.

但是当时候到了，这样的服事因疾病或年老而严重受限或几乎不可能时，那么，我们就会更多地并带着强烈的渴望思考天堂。这并没有错。我们看到我们的旅程即将走到终结。我们也许会希望这终点更早来而不是更晚。但是也许主依然想要使用我们，作为忍耐和奉献的例子去帮助那些我们即将离开的人。也许上帝有他的时间，为了更好地割断我们与这个世界绑着的绳索，或甚至是别人与我们绑着的绳索；他可能会祝福他们，给他们时间来适应我们的离开，甚至在我们离开时为我们开心。无论是什么情况，我们都为这段旅程充满感激。我们感激福音让它变得值得。我们感激我们有机会来反映我们对基督、对他的道和他子民的爱。我们为一切而感激——但真的，我们不会想再来一遍。因此，我们也许常常和历世历代的圣徒一起，说：“主耶稣啊，我愿你来！”我们最大的任务变成了努力忍耐。我们最大的工作是，不要让那些照顾我们



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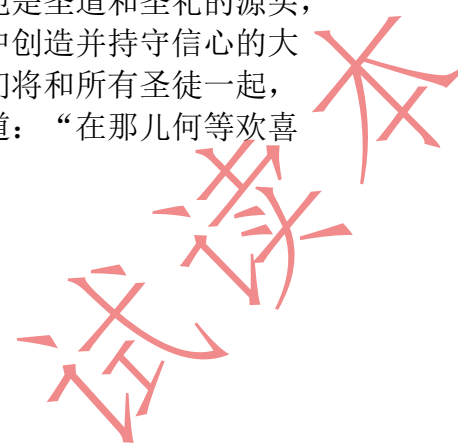
之人的工作，变得更艰难。我们最神圣的服事是为他们祷告，并在我们更容易发脾气的时候努力去感谢他们。

But still there is Christ. Still there is the promise that he will come for us at just the right time. Still there is that faith which clings to his promises, no matter how hard that may be in times of pain and suffering. Gone are the relatively idle questions about degrees of glory in heaven. Gone are speculations about states of the soul here and there or in between. Questions about what we will do when we get there fall to the side. Now there is only the very practical desire to *see him as he is*. The knowledge that we shall see him thus is near at hand. That remains our comfort and our encouragement.

但基督依然在，他对我们的应许依然在，他应许将会在合适的时候接我们回家。那依附于这应许的信心依然在，无论痛苦和受难的日子是多么艰难。关于天堂里有多少不同程度的荣耀，这样无聊的问题消失了。关于灵魂在这儿、那儿或在中间是什么状态的各种猜测消失了。关于当我们到那儿我们将做什么的种种问题被抛在一边。现在，只有一个非常实际的渴望：见到他的本相。我们将会看到他，这样的认识就在眼前了。这依然是我们的安慰和我们的鼓励。

And so, we come to the close of our journey along the narrow middle road. All along the way there have been ditches on the right and the left of that narrow middle road. All along the way there have been temptations from fallen reason to turn a truth into an error by forgetting the rest of the truth. All along the way there have been temptations to take our eyes off of the map, the sacred Scriptures, and off of Christ, the center. To the extent that our eyes wandered, we stumbled and fell. But Christ in his compassion pulled us back again to the middle by the sign of the cross. He held before us his pierced hands and side. He showed us the marks of his love and the price he willingly paid to redeem us. He is the source in Word and sacraments, the content and the goal of our faith. Had it not been for his grace and its creating and sustaining power in the Word and sacraments, we would have perished long ago. And when we finally attain to our blessed end, we will spend an eternity in the company of the saints, worshiping and giving thanks for so great a salvation. As the hymnist sang, "What joy awaits us there!"

就这样，我们沿着狭窄的中路走到了我们旅程的终点。一路上，在这条狭窄中路的左右两边都充满了沟壑。一路上都有从堕落的理性而来的试探，借着忘记其余的真理而将某个真理变成谬误。一路上都有试探让我们的目光离开这指引、离开圣经、离开基督这个中心。当我们的目光开始飘忽不定时，我们会跌倒和堕落。但基督在他的怜悯里，借着十字架的记号，将我们重新拉回中路。他向我们展示他被刺的手和肩。他向我们显明他爱的记号和他为拯救我们甘心情愿付出的代价。他是圣道和圣礼的源头，是我们信仰的内容和目标。若不是他的恩典和他在圣道和圣礼中创造并持守信心的大能，我们早就灭亡了。当我们最终到达我们蒙福的终点时，我们将和所有圣徒一起，为如此大的救恩永远献上敬拜和感恩。正如一个赞美诗作者唱道：“在那儿何等欢喜等候着我们！”



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Will there be dusting to do in heaven? Can we go fishing there or play with a puppy? Will there be seminars with the apostles and prophets and the great church fathers where we can ask questions and listen to the fascinating accounts of their lives of service? Will there be endless reunions with loved ones who will tell us how great the grace of God was to them in events from their lives about which we knew nothing here on earth? Will we take walks with Jesus in a forest of trees ever green and along streams of living water?

在天堂有卫生需要打扫吗？我们可以钓鱼或与小狗玩耍吗？那儿会有使徒、先知和伟大教父们的神学院，让我们可以提问并聆听他们对他们服事的一生精彩的叙述吗？会不会有与所爱之人无数次的重逢，他们会告诉我们，在他们经历的各种我们一无所知的事情上，上帝对他们的恩典是多么地大？我们会不会和耶稣在绿茵里漫步，沿着溪水行走呢？

Imagination runs wild. And whatever it is that we imagine heaven to be like, it will be a thousand times better. Look at the perfection and the power of the One who won it for us! Yes, and even consider how much better life here is than you ever imagined it would be. Oh, yes, how blessed we are to live with Christ here. How blessed we will be to live with him there!

想象力无穷无尽。但无论我们想象天堂是什么样的，它都要好上千万倍。看看为我们赢得了天堂的这一位的完美和大能吧！是的，想想甚至今生的生命比你曾想象的也要好得多。哦，是的，我们今生与上帝一起活着是多么蒙福啊。我们将会在那儿与他一起活着是多么蒙福啊！

We have reached the journey's end. To God be all praise and glory!

我们已经到达了这段旅程的终点。一切赞美和荣耀归给上帝！

敬拜

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## Appendix 附录

### A Portion of a Sermon by C. F. W. Walther

#### C.F.W.华达讲道摘录

(Translated from *Licht des Lebens—Ein Jahrgang von Evangelien-Predigten aus dem Nachlass des seligen D. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, gesammelt von C. J. Otto Hauser*; Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1905; pp. 351,352)

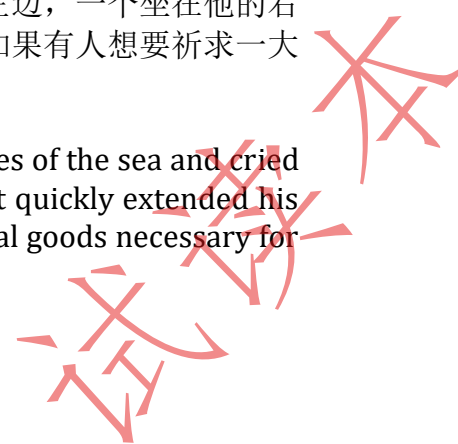
Here, however, perhaps many say in their hearts: “How can I believe that God will certainly listen to me when I see that God nevertheless does not give so much prayed for in faith?” To this we answer: “If we ask God for that for which he has given us a promise, then God most certainly keeps his Word. But he has certainly not promised that it should always go well for a Christian according to the flesh. Only this he has promised, that he at the Christian’s prayer wants to give him grace to help him through every need, to grant him what is necessary in temporal things, and one day to make him eternally blessed in Christ.”

然而，在这儿，也许有很多人在心里说：“当我看到上帝并没有照我在信心里所求的赐给我，我怎能相信上帝确实在听我祷告呢？”对此我们的回答是：“如果我们向上帝祈求他已经赐下应许的事，那他必定会遵守他的道。但是他确实没有应许一个基督徒按其肉体凡事顺利。唯有这件事他已经应许了，即，在基督徒的祷告中，他想要赐恩给他，帮助他度过一切的缺乏，授予他现世的必需品，并在某一天让他在基督里得到永远的祝福。”

If we now ask something according to God’s will and promise, then he hears us; when, however, for example, the mother of John and James asked the Lord to let her sons sit in his kingdom, one on his right and the other on his left, this petition failed; she had no promise for that sort of thing. If, therefore, anyone would want to ask for a great sum of money or for a high position of honor, then also this request would fail.

现在，我们若照上帝的旨意和应许求什么，他就听我们；然而，比如，当约翰和雅各的母亲祈求主让她的两个儿子，在上帝的国里，一个坐在他的左边，一个坐在他的右边，这一请求并未成就；对这样的事她没有任何应许。因此，如果有人想要祈求一大笔钱或一个很高很荣耀的地位，那这一请求也将失败。

When, however, Peter at Christ’s command jumped into the waves of the sea and cried when death threatened: “Lord, help me, I’m sinking!” then Christ quickly extended his hand to him. When accordingly now a Christian prays for spiritual goods necessary for



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salvation, then God listens to him; yes, also if he asks for something temporal—that God would give him food and clothing, would not let him be tempted beyond his ability to resist, and would not let him be ruined in time of need.

然而，当彼得在上帝的吩咐下跳到海浪中，并在死亡的威胁下呼喊：“主啊，救救我，我要沉下去了！”然后耶稣就立刻伸手拉住他。相应的，当一个基督徒此时为救恩祈求必要的属灵益处时，上帝就听他；是的，即便是他祈求某些今生的东西——上帝也会赐他食物和衣服，不让他忍受超出他能力的试探，也不让他在缺乏的日子遭受毁灭。

If, however, the Christian prays for other temporal goods for which he does not have a promise, he should, if the request does not contradict the Word of God, pray in firm faith. But he should leave it to God how he may wish to fulfill his petition; he should prescribe to God neither the time nor the measure nor the place but always with Christ add to his prayer: “Still not my will but your will be done.” You know best of all, dear Father, what is good and beneficial for me; only let me have your grace, only make me blessed [i.e., save me]. Such a petition is never left unheard. If God also does not do as we think he should, nevertheless he does what agrees with his honor and our well-being.

然而，如果基督徒为其他，他并没有应许的今生的益处祷告，如果这请求并不违背上帝的道，他应该在坚定的信心里祈求。但是对于他想要如何实现他的请求，他应该留给上帝；他不应该向上帝规定时间、方式或地点，却总是和基督一样，在他的祷告中加上：“然而不是照我所愿的，而是照你所愿的。”你知道一切中最好的，亲爱的天父，你知道什么对我是良善的和有益的；单单让我有你的恩典，单单让我蒙福（比如，拯救我）。这样的请求从不被拒绝。如果上帝没有照我们认为他应该做的去做，他做的一切都符合他的荣耀和我们的福祉。

Now then, recognize from all this the shoals on which your prayer can easily be shattered. Never forget it: God has commanded that you pray; second, he wills that your prayer be acceptable in the name of Jesus; and finally, he has promised also that he will certainly listen to it. Do not believe that you will ever truly be able to pray without a battle; when you pray, you are fighting against your flesh, the world, and Satan; therefore, grab hold always of the weapons of God and confidently dare even to wrestle with God as Jacob did. Just don't give up; pray, sigh, seek, knock, and think of nothing other than: “I will not let you go until you bless me!” God will gladly let himself be overcome by you; and when you close in faith with Amen, then God will always answer in heaven: “Yes, yes, thus shall it be.” Amen.

现在，请从这一切中认出你的祷告很容易被搁浅的沙洲。永远不要忘记：上帝吩咐了你要去祷告；第二，他愿意你奉耶稣之名的祷告蒙悦纳；最后，他也应许了他必定会听你的祷告。不要相信你真的能够不带争战的祷告；当你祷告时，你是在和你的肉体、这个世界和撒旦争战；因此，永远抓住上帝的兵器，如雅各一样确信勇敢的与上帝摔跤。不要放弃；祷告、叹息、寻求、敲门，单单这么想：“你不给我祝福，我就不让你走！”上帝会很乐意让他自己被你征服；当你在信心中用阿门结束你的祷告时，上帝总是在天上回答：“是的，是的，必将如此成就。”阿门。

