

经节：耶和華對我說：「你再去愛一個淫婦，就是她情人所愛的；好象以色列人，雖然偏向別神，喜愛葡萄餅，耶和華還是愛他們。」

（何西阿書三章1節）

没有一个人能够理解神对祂儿女的爱！人类有限的爱阻碍我们了解神无条件的爱。我们可以由何西阿的一生，大致了解这种爱。

何西阿是义人，但是神要他去爱一个淫妇。何西阿顺服神，娶了歌篾为妻。他珍惜她、尊重她。歌篾从未体验过这种爱，不久她愈来愈不满足，开始迷上其他男人。最后，她整个人沉溺于淫乱，甚至抛弃了何西阿。然而，其他男人根本是利用她。当情夫厌倦她，就把她卖掉作奴隶。此时，神给何西阿一个意想不到的命令，就是「去把她赎回」。何西阿承受歌篾加诸于他身上的伤害，虽然如此痛切，神仍要何西阿宽恕她、付任何代价赎回她。

神的信息十分清楚：当我们拒绝祂、移情别恋，我们的拒绝所带来的痛苦，和淫乱背弃所带来的痛苦，是一样的。在神为我们付出一切之后，我们对祂的背弃是很难令人理解的。但即使我们拒绝、忽视、悖逆祂，神仍然爱我们，这种爱更难令人了解。神的爱完全与我们不同。祂的爱伴随着我们，直到我们从邪恶的渊藪中被拯救出来。当我们远离祂，祂的爱仍然毫不减少，祂紧紧地跟着我们。祂的爱是何等长阔高深！

Relentless Love

Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." Hosea 3:1

No human can comprehend God's love for His children! Our limited experience of human love hinders us from understanding God's unconditional love for us. We can see a picture of this love in the life of Hosea.

Hosea was a righteous man, but God told him to marry a sinful woman. Hosea obeyed and took Gomer as his wife. He cherished her and treated her with dignity and respect. Never before had Gomer experienced this kind of love, but she soon grew dissatisfied. She began giving her affections to other men. She became so involved in adulterous pursuits that finally she abandoned Hosea altogether. Other men used her until she had nothing left to give. Then they sold her into slavery. After this, God gave Hosea an amazing command: "Go and buy her back." Despite the intense pain and hurt that Gomer had inflicted on him, God told Hosea to forgive her and to pay any price to bring her back into his home.

God's message is clear: When we reject Him and turn our devotion elsewhere, our rejection carries the same pain as an adulterous betrayal. After all God has done for us, it is incomprehensible that we should reject Him. It is even harder to fathom that God could love us even after we have rejected, ignored, and disobeyed Him. Yet God's love is completely different from ours. His love follows us to the depths of our sinfulness until He has reclaimed us. His love is undaunted when we run from Him, and He continues to pursue us. What incredible love He has demonstrated to us!

2月15日（星期一）- 标题：**学习去爱**

经文：又愿主叫你们彼此相爱的心，并爱众人的心都能增长，充足，如同我们爱你们一样。……论到弟兄们相爱，不用人写信给你们；因为你们自己蒙了神的教训，叫你们彼此相爱。（帖撒罗尼迦前书三章12节，四章9节）

神是爱（约翰一书四：16）。祂全然的本性是完全的爱。然而，因为罪的缘故，爱不总能自由且自然地临到祂的儿女。你自小生长的环境，可能缺乏爱的表达。也许你曾被所爱的人伤害，于是你的心变得刚硬，好保护自己不再继续受伤害。你可能心里有爱，却不知该如何用言语和行动，表达自己的情感。你可能心灰意冷，因为你被呼召去爱，却不了解该如何去爱。

保罗写信给帖撒罗尼迦的基督徒，鼓励他们在学习彼此相爱时，不要气馁（帖撒罗尼迦前书三：7）。他们不需要保罗教他们如何去爱，因为神自己会教他们如何爱别人。神会赐给他们祂的大爱，当他们跟随祂时，祂会倍增他们的爱。如果他们发现有些人难以去爱，神会使他们靠着圣灵去爱。

神的恩典够我们用，祂的恩典在人的软弱上显得完全。祂已经预备好要教导我们如何去爱。没有人是例外的、不能爱的。神能教导，即使是去爱那些最难相处的人。是否有谁让你觉得难以付出爱心？神会帮助你。祂将赐下你从未经历且从未拥有过的爱，去爱你的父母、配偶、小孩、朋友，甚至敌人。如果不知道如何以对方能接受的方式，来表达你的爱，神会教导你怎么做。神是爱的权威。当你与人相交，求神使祂的爱藉着你涌流出来。

Learning to Love

And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you. . . But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another. 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:9

God is love (1 John 4:16). His very nature is perfect love, but because of sin love does not always come freely and naturally to His children. You may have been raised in a home where love was not expressed. Perhaps you were hurt by someone you loved, and your heart became hardened as a defense against further pain. You may love others but not know how to express your love in words or actions. You may feel frustrated because you have been called by God to love, yet you do not understand *how* to love others.

Paul wrote to the Christians in Thessalonica to encourage them not to become disheartened as they learned to love each other (1 Thess. 3:7). They did not need Paul to explain to them how to love, for God Himself would teach them how to love one another. God would give them His love, and as they followed Him, He would cause that love to multiply. If they found someone who was difficult to love, God would enable them to love through His Holy Spirit.

God in His grace has made provision for our human weakness, and He is prepared to teach us how to love one another. There are no exceptions. God can teach us to love even that especially difficult person. Are you struggling to love someone? God will help you. He will enable you to love your parents, your spouse, your children, your friends, or your enemy in a deeper way than you could ever love them on your own. If you do not know how to express your love in a meaningful way, God will teach you how to do this. God is the authority on love. As you relate to others, ask God to make His love overflow to them through your life.

2月20日（星期六）- 标题：**你们是盐**

经文：你们是世上的盐。盐若失了味，怎能叫它再咸呢？以后无用，不过丢在外面，被人践踏了。（马太福音五章13节）

神的百姓是祂的当然代理人，管理这个被罪腐化的堕落世界。神的计划是委托你造福人群，并且持守正直。当今的时代，参与社会是敬虔生活中非常重要的一环。神与你同在，使得其他人也能得着祂。祂的救恩可以释放有不良癖好的人、恢复破碎的家庭、医治过去的伤痛、重建刚愎任性的孩子，以及安慰绝望的人。只要愿意让基督藉着你彰显祂的生命，这所有的一切都可能发生在你周围朋友的身上。

如果我们与主没有正确的关系，耶稣说我们就像失了味的盐，一点用处也没有。如此一来，神给予的恩典与大能，就不能藉着我们传播给其他的人。我们如何检验自己的生命「咸性」仍在？看看我们的家庭。我们是否保护家庭不受外界有害的影响？检验我们工作场所。工作环境是否因我们的缘故，而遏止一些罪恶的影响？观察我们的社区。是否因为我们的参与，使社区变得更好？我们的教会又是如何？我们被神使用，以至于周遭的属灵事物变得更好。这就是我们作盐的证据。如果周遭的人灵性堕落或退步，我们就该到神面前寻求，容许神调整我们的生活，好叫我们能「有味」，成为他人的帮助。

You Are Salt

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. Matthew 5:13

God's people are His preserving agents for a world that is corrupted and degenerating because of sin. Your life is designed and commissioned by God to enhance a community and to preserve what is good and right. There is deep significance today for a godly life that is involved in its community. The presence of Christ in you makes all that He is available to others. His salvation can free an addict, mend a broken home, heal the pain of the past, restore a wayward child, and comfort a grieving heart. All of this is available to those around you as Christ expresses *His* life through you.

If we are not in a right relationship with our Lord, however, Jesus said we are like salt that has lost its saltiness and is, therefore, good for nothing. None of God's saving grace and power can be dispensed through us to others. How do we test the "saltiness" of our life? Look at our family. Are we preserving it from the destructive influences that surround it? Examine our workplace. Are the sinful influences in our work environment being halted because we are there? Observe our community. Is it a better place because we are involved in it? What about our church? The evidence that we have been used by God as a preserving agent is that things are becoming spiritually better around us instead of worse. If people around us are deteriorating spiritually, we need to go to our Lord and allow Him to adjust our lives so that we can be used to preserve others.

2月19日（星期五）- 标题：**跟从我**

经节：于是耶稣对门徒说：「若有人要跟从我，就当舍己。背起他的十字架来跟从我。」（马太福音十六章24节）

我们可以视神的同在为理所当然，也可能以为耶稣会跟随我们到任何所去之处，因为耶稣曾经说过，祂会常与我们同在，直到世界的末了（马太福音廿八：20）。但问题在于：不是耶稣跟随我们，乃是我们跟随耶稣；不是我们邀请耶稣加入事工，而是耶稣邀请我们加入祂的事工。耶稣说：「不是你们拣选了我，是我拣选了你们。」（约翰福音十五：16）跟随耶稣需要完全顺服。祂并不来找我们商量未来合适的方向，祂早已知道什么对我们最好，祂根本不需要找我们商量。

跟随基督会领你体验超过你能想象的经历！当耶稣为陷入罪恶泥沼中的人们悲伤哭泣时，你与耶稣在一起，你会感受到耶稣的痛苦，也会看到那些灵性失明的人第一次眼见神的喜乐；你会看到生命破碎的人，生命重整得以完全，也会看见有人婚姻重建，被绑的得释放，哀伤者得安慰。有时候，跟随耶稣是容易的，但有时候你会被试探，离祂远去。跟随耶稣意谓经历风暴，或是站立在山顶之上。

你可能已经停止跟随耶稣，但现在你愿意再跟随祂。当你停止跟随耶稣，你就以自己作主。当你跟随耶稣，你是全然由祂作主。祂是神，而你不是。你是否无论何时何地、任何情况，都愿意跟随耶稣？那是你跟随祂惟独的一条路。

Follow Me

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. (Matthew 16:24)

We can take God's presence for granted. We can assume that because Jesus said He would be with us *always*, He will follow us wherever we go (Matt. 28:20). Jesus does not follow us; we are to follow *Him*. You do not invite God to join you in your activity. He invites you to become involved in *His* activity. Jesus said: "You did not choose Me, but I chose you" (John 15:16). Following Jesus requires absolute obedience. He does not seek our counsel about which direction we think is suitable. God already knows what is best without ever having to consult with us.

Following Jesus will lead you into experiences you never dreamed of! You will be with Jesus as He weeps over those trapped in sin. You will feel the pain that Jesus feels. You will see those who were spiritually blind experience the joy of coming to see God for the first time. You will see lives that were broken, made whole. You will see marriages restored; those in , released; and those who mourn, comforted. At times it will be easy to follow Jesus. At other times, you will be tempted to abandon Him. Following Jesus can mean going through a storm or standing on a mountaintop.

You may have stopped following Jesus, but now you want to follow again. When you stopped following Jesus, you did so on your terms. But the *returning* to Jesus is strictly under His conditions. He is God, and you are not. Are you willing to follow Jesus anywhere, at any time, under any condition? That is the only way you can follow Him.

2月16日（星期二）- 标题：**赦免人，也被赦免**

经节：免我们的债，如同我们免了人的债。（马太福音六章12节）

很少有事物比接受赦免更为宝贵。在背负罪的重担时，若是被所得罪的人完全赦免，是多么令人心旷神怡的事！耶稣告诉祂的门徒，每次祷告都要求神赦免自己的罪，因为耶稣知道我们会不可避免地会做出不合神尺度的事，所以我们每日得罪神。我们不能匆匆错过一天，而不要求神免了我们的债。

耶稣警告我们，若不饶恕人的过犯，神也不饶恕我们的过犯（马太福音六：15）。饶恕是神的天性（出埃及记卅四：6—7）。如果要作祂的门徒，一定要效法祂的榜样。神能饶恕最冷酷的敌人，我们也当如此行。耶稣并没有说某些侮辱是不值得饶恕的，圣经中也无任何根据允许我们心怀怨恨及不饶恕人。

若对某人怀怨在心，你的敬拜与祷告都是徒劳无益的（马太福音五：23—24）。祷告求神让你明白生命中的黑暗处，以及你是否对人心怀憎恨。敏锐地洞察自己有被饶恕的需要，会使我们合宜地处理别人所加诸的侮辱。求神使你像基督，即使被迫害时，你也能说：『父啊！赦免他们。』

Forgive to Be Forgiven

And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. Matthew 6:12

Few things are more precious to receive than forgiveness. After carrying the burden of our sin, it is wonderfully freeing to know that the one we have wronged has completely forgiven us. Jesus told His disciples to ask God for forgiveness every time they prayed. Jesus knew that we would daily incur debts against God, as we inevitably fall short of God's standard. A day does not go by that we do not need to ask God to remove our debt against Him.

Jesus warned that we should expect forgiveness from God as we forgive those who sin against us, for God will forgive us in the same way we forgive others (Matt. 6:15). God's nature is forgiveness (Exod. 34:6-7). If we are to be His disciples, we must follow His example. If God will forgive our most relentless enemy, we can do nothing less. Jesus did not say that certain offenses are unworthy of our forgiveness. We have no biblical excuse for allowing unforgiveness in our hearts.

If you choose to withhold forgiveness from someone, your worship and prayers are futile (Matt. 5:23-24). Ask God to make you aware of those dark corners in your life where you are harboring resentment. A keen awareness of your own need for forgiveness will put the offenses of others in their proper light. Ask God to make you like Christ so that, even when you are being persecuted, you can pray "Father, forgive them."

2月17日（星期三）- 标题：**舍己**

经节：于是耶稣对门徒说：「若有人要跟从我，就当舍己，背起他的十字架来跟从我。」（马太福音十六章24节）

罪使我们自我中心，将我们的心由以神为中心，转变成以自我为中心。救恩的本质是以自我为中心一百八十度地转到以神为中心。基督徒一定得终生舍己。我们跟随耶稣最大的试探是肯定自己的地位。雅各与约翰跟随耶稣的时候就是如此，他们要求耶稣国度中最显赫的两个位子（马可福音十：35—37）。雅各与约翰想要的，是一个不会妨碍他们个人欲望和宏愿的门徒身分。就像他们一样，我们也说：「主啊！我是想要讨祢的欢喜，但是我想要生活一切保持原状。」

自我中心的人想要保持生活平静、不受搅扰、安全没有危险。我们的试探是把时间与精力投资在这个世界的目标。然而，得到了属世的成功，把自己的成功归功于神，把神带进自己的世界，我们说：「现在，我已经得到事业（或运动、政治、家庭，甚至是基督教事工）的成功，我要归所有荣耀给神！」神却没兴趣从我们的活动中接受二手的荣耀。神藉着我们的生活，以祂自己的作为彰显祂自己的荣耀。

这个世界会引诱你接受它的目标，并且将时间及精力投资于短暂的事物。与其抵挡这些追求自我目标、求神祝福个人志向的试探，倒不如舍己、加入神向你启示的工作。

Deny Yourself

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew 16:24

Sin causes us to be self-centered, shifting our hearts from God to self. The essence of salvation is an about-face from self-centeredness to God-centeredness. The Christian must spend a lifetime denying self. Our great temptation will be to affirm ourselves while we follow Jesus. James and John did this when they chose to follow Jesus but asked for the two most prominent positions in Jesus' kingdom (Mark 10:35-37). James and John wanted a discipleship that would not impede their personal desires and aspirations. Like them, we say, "Lord, I want to be pleasing to you, but I want to stay where I am."

Self-centered people try to keep their lives unruffled and undisturbed, safe and secure. Our temptation is to give our time and effort to the goals of this world. Then, when we are successful in the world's eyes, we seek to bring God into our world by honoring Him with our success. We may say, "Now that I have succeeded in business [or sports, or politics, or with my family, or even Christian ministry], I want to give God the glory for it!" God is not interested in receiving secondhand glory from our activity. God receives glory from *His* activity through our lives.

The world will entice you to adopt its goals and to invest in temporal things. Resist the temptation to pursue your own goals, asking God to bless them. Rather, deny yourself and join the activity of God as He reveals it to you.

2月18日（星期四）- 标题：**背起你的十字架**

经节：于是耶稣对门徒说：「若有人要跟从我，就当舍己。背起他的十字架来跟从我。」（马太福音十六章24节）

不管代价如何，你的「十字架」是神的旨意。背起你的十字架是个抉择，你绝不会被逼背起十字架。你可能有身体上的问题、有一个悖逆的孩子、或面对经济的压力，然而千万不要将这些当作是你要「背负的十字架」。你的十字架不是你所面对的环境，也不是你自己错误行为的后果。你的十字架乃是自愿一同与祂受苦，如同祂为我们死而达成救赎的目的（腓立比书三：10）。保罗说自己受苦倒觉得喜乐，因为他知道借着这些痛苦，可以帮助其他人得到灵性的成熟（歌罗西书一：24）。

我们倾向于想立即由「舍己」跳到「跟随耶稣」。然而，除非先背起自己的十字架，否则永远不可能跟随耶稣。在某些方面，神的救赎大工惟有藉着苦难才能达成。诚如基督要忍受苦痛才能带来救恩，你也必须经历一些苦难，好让神把救恩带给你周遭的人。直到门徒知道耶稣是基督，耶稣才与门徒谈及十字架（马太福音十 六：21）。若不先确信耶稣是基督，你将永远不可能忍受十字架的苦楚。一旦与基督的关系稳固，祂会让你知道你的十字架是什么。

基督教不可能没有十字架。如果你期待与神的关系，是永远不需要忍受苦难或不招惹麻烦的，那么你绝不能以基督为榜样。十字架是神的旨意。首先，你得先背起自己的十字架，然后才能跟随基督。

Take up Your Cross

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew 16:24

Your "cross" is God's will for you, regardless of the cost. Taking up your cross is a choice; it is not beyond your control. You may have health problems or a rebellious child or financial pressures, but do not mistake these as your "cross to bear." Neither circumstances you face nor consequences of your own actions are your cross. Your cross will be to voluntarily participate in Christ's sufferings as He carries out His redemptive purposes (Phil. 3:10). Paul said he *rejoiced* in his sufferings because he knew that by them he was able to participate in the suffering required to bring others into Christian maturity (Col. 1:24).

We tend to want to go immediately from "denying ourselves" to "following Jesus." But you can never follow Jesus unless you have first taken up your cross. There are aspects of God's redemptive work that can be accomplished only through suffering. Just as Christ had to suffer in order to bring salvation, there will be hardships you may have to endure in order for God to bring salvation to those around you. Jesus did not talk with His disciples about the cross until they had come to know He was the Christ (Matt. 16:21). You will never be able to endure the suffering of the cross unless you have first been convinced that Jesus is the Christ. Once you have settled your relationship with Christ, He will introduce you to your cross.

There is no Christianity without a cross. If you are waiting for a relationship with God that never requires suffering or inconvenience, then you cannot use Christ as your model. God's will for you involves a cross. First, take up your cross, then you can follow Him.