

经节：铁磨铁，磨出刃来：朋友相感也是如此。（箴言廿七章17节）

基督徒生活是一段朝圣之旅。道路偶然艰险又寂寞，我们有时可能变得灰心沮丧，甚至想要放弃。在这个时候，神往往会赐给我们一位朋友，与我们并肩前行。在神所赐的宝贵礼物中，其中一项就是鼓励我们、亲切地挑战我们「继续前行」的朋友。

根据圣经，朋友是能够挑战我们成为神所期望的人。约拿单本来可以继承父亲的王位，成为下一任以色列王，但他爱他的朋友大卫，鼓励他的挚友遵从神的旨意，就算这意味着自己会被剥夺王位的继承权（撒母耳记上十九：1—7）。

圣经记述朋友的特征，是他们的友谊能使你更想亲近神。他们『磨』你，并且鼓励你行事正直。真正的朋友会告诉你实话，心里总是顾念着你的利益（箴言廿七：6）。

小心选择朋友！耶稣有智慧地选择自己的密友，祂并没有选择完美的朋友，而是选择愿意衷心跟随神的朋友。检查自己是什么样的朋友，也是同等重要的事。身为朋友，把朋友的需求看得高过自己的需要，是我们所当行的（箴言十七：17）。努力找寻能挑战你成为敬虔的朋友。当你找到他们，要有受教的心，愿照神使用他们的方式来接纳他们，且帮助你灵性更成熟。同时，我们也要努力成为助人更像基督的朋友。

Iron Sharpens Iron

As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend. Proverbs 27:17

The Christian life is a pilgrimage. At times the road is difficult, and we get lonely. Sometimes we may become discouraged and consider abandoning the journey. It is at such times that God will place a friend alongside us. One of God's most precious gifts to us is friends who encourage us and lovingly challenge us to "keep going."

According to Scripture, a friend is one who challenges you to become all that God intends. Jonathan could have succeeded his father to become the next king of Israel. But he loved his friend David, and he encouraged him to follow God's will, even though it meant Jonathan would forfeit his own claim to the throne (1 Sam. 19:1-7).

The mark of biblical friends is that their friendship draws you closer to Christ. They "sharpen" you and motivate you to do what is right. True friends tell you the truth and even risk hurting your feelings because they love you and have your best interests at heart (Prov. 27:6).

Be careful in your choice of friends! Jesus chose His closest friends wisely. He did not look for perfect friends, but friends whose hearts were set to follow God. It is equally important to examine the kind of friend you are to others. As a friend, it is your duty to put the needs of others first (Prov. 17:17). Strive to find godly friends who will challenge you to become the person God desires. When you have found them, be receptive to the way God uses them to help you become spiritually mature. Strive also to be the kind of friend that helps others become more like Christ.

5月16日（星期一）- 标题：在不可能中仍然信实

经文：耶和華观看基甸，说：「你靠着你这能力去从米甸人手里拯救以色列人，不是我差遣你去的吗？」（士师记六章14节）

在基甸的心中，胜过米甸人是不可能的事。他的看法完全正确。米甸人与其联军的军力，大大胜过软弱的以色列人。然而，在神告诉基甸要迎战米甸人时，胜利不再是遥不可及。

当耶稣命令祂自己那一小群跟随者，要使万民作耶稣的门徒（马太福音廿八：19），当时的环境是可能的吗？当然，耶稣说可行就必定可行！当耶稣告诉自己的门徒，要爱他们的敌人，祂的建议是否符合现实？当然，因为祂就是那位借着他们达到与神和好的神（哥林多后书五：19—20）。

你是否认为神的命令难以置信？你是否修改神的话语，好让自己能够合理地解释它？不要把神的大能打折扣，我们靠着神，凡事都能做（腓立比书四：13）。当神指定了一个任务，这个任务不再是不可行，相反地，它是绝对可行。当神赐下一个看似不可能完成的任务，惟一拦阻你达成任务的，是你的不顺服。当神开口时，你可能吓得半死！祂会带领你做些事，是靠你自己绝对做不到的。当你顺服祂的时候，祂会一步一步地带领你，直到得着胜利。你是如何回应那些看似不可能的任务？你是否把那些任务视为难以达成，于是将它们一笔勾销？还是你为了神的启示，立即调整生活，并且观看神如何因著你的顺服，达到祂的目标？神要在你的生活行出不可能的事。祂对你唯一的要求是顺服。

Faithful with the Impossible

Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?" Judges 6:14

In Gideon's mind, victory over the Midianites was an impossibility, and he was absolutely right! The Midianites, along with their allies, overwhelmed the feeble Hebrews. Yet the moment God told Gideon to fight them, victory was no longer an impossibility! When Jesus commanded His small group of followers to make disciples of all nations, was that possible (Matt. 28:19)? Certainly, if Jesus said it was! When Jesus told His disciples to love their enemies, was He being realistic? Of course, because He was the One who would achieve reconciliation through them (2 Cor. 5:19-20).

Do you treat commands like these as implausible? Do you modify God's word to find an interpretation that seems reasonable to you? Don't discount what is possible with God (Phil. 4:13). When God gives an assignment, it is no longer an impossibility, but rather it is an absolute certainty. When God gives you a seemingly impossible task, the only thing preventing it from coming to pass is your disobedience. When God speaks, it can scare you to death! He will lead you to do things that are absolutely impossible in your own strength. But God will grant you victory, step by step, as you obey Him. How do you respond to assignments that seem impossible? Do you write them off as unattainable? Or do you immediately adjust your life to God's revelation, watching with anticipation to see how He will accomplish His purposes through your obedience? God wants to do the impossible through your life. All He requires is your obedience.

5月21日（星期六）- 标题：明显的不同

经文：他们见彼得、约翰的胆量，又看出他们原是没有学问的小民，就希奇，认明他们是跟过耶稣的。（使徒行传四章13节）

被神改变的生命，是绝对没有失误的！当耶稣选择门徒时，他们心里又敬畏、又自负虚荣。雅各和约翰想用诡计胜过其他使徒，能够拥有仅次于耶稣的地位（马可福音十：37）。使徒一次又一次显示出，他们并不真的了解耶稣是谁（约翰福音六：7—9；马可福音六：49）。即使在跟随耶稣三年之后，彼得仍然害怕，甚至在一个年轻的使女面前，否认与耶稣同伙的关系（马太福音廿六：69—75）。任何知道这些使徒底细的人，都了解他们毫无本事去建立世界王国。然而，当他们与耶稣在一起之后，事情有所改观。圣灵改变他们，赐给他们新的胆量与智慧。现在他们可以行神迹、放胆讲道和说服群众，甚至他们的敌人也由他们为耶稣作的见证中，注意到他们生命的改变。

有时候，我们渴望有人看到我们变得更圣洁、更委身、更圣灵充满。但对那些真正被基督改变生命的人来说，无须经由他人来辨认其不同之处，因为他们的改变是非常明显的。

不要过分批评自我，老是定睛在自己的身上，察看自己的小改变。当你每日与基督同行，让别人见证你生命的改变，而不是你自己。如果你必须向某人证明神真的已经改变你，事实是你还没被改变。当你的生命因为与基督的关系而改变时，你周围的人自然会认出你的不同。

A Noticeable Difference

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13

There is no mistaking a life transformed by God! The disciples had been vain and fearful when Jesus enlisted them. James and John sought to outmaneuver their fellow disciples in order to gain the places of greatest honor next to Jesus (Mark 10:37). Over and over the disciples' actions showed that they did not truly understand who Jesus was (John 6:7-9; Mark 6:49). Even after three years with Jesus, Peter was afraid to confess Christ before a young servant girl (Matt. 26:69-75). Anyone who knew these men would realize they were not the kind of people on which you build a worldwide kingdom. Yet something happened to them as they were with Jesus. The Holy Spirit transformed them, giving them new boldness and wisdom. Now they could perform miracles and preach fearlessly and persuasively to multitudes. Even their enemies noticed in their changed lives the same power they had witnessed in Jesus.

Sometimes we desperately want others to believe that we have changed, that we are more godly, more devoted, more Spirit-controlled. It is not necessary, however, for those who have been truly transformed by Christ to convince others of the difference; the change will be obvious. Don't become too introspective, always focusing on yourself and the small changes you see happening over time. As you walk with Jesus daily, let the witness of the changes taking place in you come from others and not from you. If you have to prove to someone that God has really changed you, He has not. Those around you will surely notice when your life has been transformed by your relationship with Jesus.

5月20日（星期五）- 标题：一步步地顺服

经文：这些事以后，神要试验亚伯拉罕，就呼叫他说：「亚伯拉罕！」他说：「我在这里。」神说：「你带着你的儿子，就是你独生的儿子，你所爱的以撒，往摩利亚地去，在我所要指示你的山上，把他献为燔祭。」（创世记廿二章1-2节）

我们的困难不在于不晓得神的旨意，我们的苦恼是明白神的旨意，可是不想做！

当神第一次向亚伯拉罕说话时，祂的指示相当直截了当，祂说：「往我所要指示你的地去。」（创世记十二：1）接下来的许多年，神领亚伯拉罕经历一些试验。当亚伯拉罕等了廿五年，才等到神给自己儿子的应许，他学习到耐心。在与诸王的战役和毁灭所多玛、蛾摩拉这件事情上，亚伯拉罕学习到信任神。亚伯拉罕信心之旅的最顶峰，是神要他献上自己最心爱的一样东西。亚伯拉罕过去的顺服，让我们看到他愿意立即献上自己所有，而这回他是否预备好了？神并没有在一开始，就要求亚伯拉罕作出偌大的牺牲，这是发生在亚伯拉罕与神同行三十年之后的事。

在你的基督徒之旅中，神会逐渐向你显明祂自己的作为。你对神的信任会愈来愈深，就像亚伯拉罕一样。当你刚成为基督徒，你主人可能给你相当基本的指示，像受洗及改变生活的方式等。当你更进一步相信神，祂会培育你的个性，好让你面对更大的试验。那最大的试验会让你明白神的大爱，并更清楚神的作为。你是否预备好遵循神下一个指示呢？

Obedience Step by Step

Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you. Genesis 22:1-2

Our difficulty is not that we *don't* know God's will. Our discomfort comes from the fact that we do know His will, but we do not want to do it! When God first spoke to Abraham, His commands were straightforward. "Go to a land I will show you" (Gen. 12:1). Then God led Abraham through a number of tests over the years. Abraham learned patience as he waited on God's promise of a son, which took twenty-five years to be fulfilled. Abraham learned to trust God through battles with kings and through the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The pinnacle of Abraham's walk of faith was when God asked him to sacrifice the one thing that meant more to him than anything else. Abraham's previous obedience indicated that he would have quickly and decisively sacrificed anything else God asked of him, but was he prepared for this? God did not ask Abraham to make such a significant sacrifice at the beginning of their relationship. This came more than thirty years after Abraham began walking with God.

As the Father progressively reveals His ways to you in your Christian pilgrimage, you, like Abraham, will develop a deeper level of trust in Him. When you first became a Christian, your Master's instructions were probably fundamental, such as being baptized or changing your lifestyle. But as you learn to trust Him more deeply, He will develop your character to match bigger tests, and with the greater test will come a greater love for God and knowledge of His ways. Are you ready for God's next revelation?

5月17日（星期二）- 标题：有权柄地说话

经文：众人很希奇祂的教训；因为祂教训他们，正像有权柄的人，不像文士。

（马可福音一章22节）

耶稣不是惟一向门徒传讲圣经道理的人。在耶稣时代的人们，听过其它教师传讲圣经。耶稣与他人的教导不同之处，是祂有权柄地传讲道理。对许多文士而言，经文没有什么意义，经文本身只是一堆枯燥的神学臆测所堆砌的，而耶稣的教导是活泼的道。施洗约翰宣称，若不是从天上赐下，人就不能得什么（约翰福音三：27）。当那些宗教领袖阅读经文时，他们空手而归。然而，耶稣读同样的经文，天父赐下祂自己完全的智能和权柄。

从事宗教活动及分享由神直接的领受，是彻底不同的。以世人的推理及直接领受神的话语来处理问题，也是迥然异。是否可能由圣经教导信息，而这信息却不是从神而来？是的，这绝对是可能的。文士与法利赛人就常常如此，以至于他们的听众闹属灵饥荒。是否可能给人很合理、恰到好处的建议，而建议的本身却与神的话语相反？当然可能！

无论你是教导、协谈或分享鼓励人的话语，要非常小心你的话是真的由神领受，不是你自己的想法，否则你就变成假先知（申命记十八：20-22）。神应许祂所说的每一句话必定成就（以赛亚书五十五：10-11），你可以满怀信心地分享由神而来的话语！

Speaking with Authority

And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Mark 1:22

Jesus was not the first person to teach the Scriptures to a group of disciples. The people in Jesus' day had heard other teachers of the Scriptures. What set Jesus apart was that He taught with authority. To many of the scribes, the Scriptures were meaningless, dry collections of theological speculation, but Jesus taught them as the living words of God. John the Baptist claimed that a man could only receive that which had been given to him by God (John 3:27). When the religious leaders searched the Scriptures, they came away empty-handed. When Jesus read the same Scriptures, the Father gave Him a full measure of His wisdom and His authority.

There is a radical difference between practicing religion and sharing a word directly from the Lord. There is a significant difference between worldly reasoning and counsel that comes straight from the living word of God. Is it possible to teach a message from the Bible but not from the Lord? Yes! The scribes and Pharisees did this regularly and left their listeners spiritually destitute. Is it possible to counsel someone with advice that seems appropriate and reasonable and yet is contrary to God's word? Of course!

Whenever you teach, counsel, or share a word of encouragement, be very careful that the words you share are indeed from the Lord and are not just your own thinking. Otherwise, you could become a false prophet (Deut. 18:20-22). God promises to stand by every word He has ever spoken (Isa. 55:10-11). When you share a word that has come from God, you can do so with utmost confidence!

5月18日（星期三）- 标题：**他人的代价**

经文：站在耶稣十字架旁边的，有祂母亲与祂母亲的姊妹，并革罗罢的妻子马利亚，和抹大拉的马利亚。（约翰福音十九章25节）

没有十字架就没有基督教。你不可能拒绝背起自己的十字架，而成为耶稣的门徒。十字架是痛苦，它会永远改变你的一生。有时候，付出最大代价的不是你自己，而是你所爱的人。你可能已经预备好，无论付上任何代价都要遵循神的命令，因为你已经与神同行，知道神的道路永远是最好的。然而，你所爱的尚未有同样的经历，也没有像你一样清楚听到神的旨意。

耶稣了解天父要带祂上十字架的旨意。十字架对耶稣来说，代表痛苦的死亡；同时，十字架也把痛苦带给祂周围的人。因为十字架，耶稣的母亲痛苦地看着自己的儿子被公众羞辱、刑求与谋杀。而耶稣其它的亲友也亲眼看见耶稣受肉体的折磨，祂的门徒惊慌地四散逃跑，他们在自己生命中最黑暗的夜晚，茫茫不知所措。因着耶稣的顺服，祂每个门徒都有自己的十字架。

你对主的顺服将影响其他人（路加福音十四：26）。不要因为怕家人所付的代价太高，而拒绝神对你的指示。要谨慎，以免你阻碍了自己心爱的人，去背起他们自己的十字架。绝对不要违背神的旨意，来保护你心所爱的人，因为违背神的代价太高。宁可仰望你的榜样耶稣，观察因为耶稣的顺服，祂周围的人付上什么代价。

The Cost to Others

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. John 19:25

There is no Christianity without a cross, for you cannot be a disciple of Jesus without taking up your cross. Crosses are painful, they forever change your life, but sometimes the greatest cost will not be to you but to those you love. You may be prepared to obey the Lord's commands, whatever they are, because you've walked with Him and know that His way is best. Yet there will be those close to you who have not related to Jesus in the same way and have not heard His voice as clearly.

Jesus understood that His Father's will for Him led to a cross. The cross would mean a painful death for Jesus, and it would also bring suffering to those closest to Him. Because of the cross, Jesus' mother would watch in agony as her son was publicly humiliated, tortured, and murdered. Jesus' aunt and close friends would witness His excruciating death. His disciples would be scattered in terror and confusion in what would be the longest, darkest night of their lives. Because of Jesus' obedience, there would also be a cross for each of His disciples.

Obedience to your Lord's commands will affect others (Luke 14:26). Don't refuse to obey what you know God is asking because you fear the cost to your family will be too great. Beware lest you seek to prevent those you love from taking up the cross God has for them. Don't ever try to protect those you love by disobeying God. The cost of disobedience is always far greater. Rather, look to Jesus, your model, and see what it cost those around Him for Him to be obedient to His Father.

5月19日（星期四）- 标题：**有必要地调整自己**

经文：但愿我的头为水，我的眼为泪的泉源，我好为我百姓中被杀的人昼夜哭泣。（耶利米书九章1节）

神呼召耶利米作哭泣的先知。他正处于一个动荡苦闷的时代，当时他所属的社会普遍地灵性与道德低落。犹太国已经远远地离弃神，很快就要面对祂可惧的审判。这不是狂欢作乐的时候，是该悲哀哭泣的时候。在这个凄楚的时代，神在寻找某个人，愿意让他磨塑成合用的先知。祂找到了耶利米。耶利米付出极重的代价，为了传达神的信息，他牺牲年轻时代许多的自由。他的家庭与名誉被剥夺，忍受人们的误解、辱骂与迫害。他被关进监狱，遭受人们的嘲笑，因为他向他们警告神将要来的审判。

撒但会想尽办法，令你相信顺服的代价太高。然而，祂却从不告诉你违背神的代价。倘若你想被神使用，你要心里有数，得调整自己的生活。你能否衡量天堂宏伟的宝座，与伯利恒简陋的马槽之间有何差异？创造宇宙之主的身分与十字架的距离，有多么远呢？不要以为顺服是不用付出代价的。

神要你作怎样的自我调整呢？当你密切配合神的旨意时，是否会遇见反对势力与艰难？耶利米深深满足于成为神深爱忠诚的仆人。当你不管得付上多少代价，仍然愿意完全顺服神的时候，你的回报与耶利米是一样的。

Making Necessary Adjustments

Oh, that my head were waters, And my eyes a fountain of tears, That I might weep day and night For the slain of the daughter of my people! Jeremiah 9:1

Jeremiah was invited by God to be a weeping prophet. His call came during turbulent, agonizing times as his society suffered from pervasive moral and spiritual decay. The nation of Judah had turned so far from God that it was soon to face His fierce judgment. This was not a time for merrymaking but for weeping. God looked for someone He could mold into the kind of prophet needed for such a bleak time. He found Jeremiah. The cost to Jeremiah was intense; he sacrificed much of the freedom of his youth in order to be God's messenger. He forfeited family and reputation. He endured misunderstanding, ridicule, and persecution. He was imprisoned and mocked by those to whom he had come to warn of God's impending judgment.

Satan will try to convince you that obedience carries much too high a price, but he will never tell you the cost of not obeying God. If you are to be used in God's service you must expect to make adjustments in your life. Can you measure the distance between the throne room of heaven and a cattle shed in Bethlehem? How far is it from the Lordship of the universe to the cross? Don't be deceived into thinking there is no cost involved in obedience.

What adjustments is God asking you to make? Will you face the hardships and opposition that will come when you align your life with God's will? Jeremiah had the deep satisfaction of knowing he was a faithful and beloved servant of God. Your reward will be the same when you choose to fully obey Christ, regardless of the cost.