

经节：又有一个门徒对耶稣说：「主啊，容我先回去埋葬我的父亲。」

（马太福音八章21节）

基督徒最大的挣扎，通常不在于作出顺服基督的决定，而在于是否愿意马上顺服。我们可能会承认自己需要跟随基督，及完全委身于神要我们去做的事。然而，当神向我们启示祂的旨意时，就是我们顺服的时刻！神旨意的启示是祂的邀请，需要你立即回应。

有些人自称是基督徒，信誓旦旦要跟随耶稣，但他们却又说自己还没准备好。在耶稣时代，犹太人有责任要奉养年老双亲到他们离世。有一个门徒表示，要等到为父母送终之后，才要跟随耶稣。这似是高尚的延迟，他得在人生重要责任和主的呼召之间选择。神认识这个人，也认识这人的父亲。只要这人跟随耶稣，神会看顾他的父亲。他本来有机会与神子同行，但他对生活的忧虑，超过了自己对神的顺服。

我们顺服的时机，是个重要的关键。由神来的邀请是有回应的限制。如果没有马上领受它，我们会失去一些服事祂的机会。帮助其他信徒的时机稍纵即逝。当神邀请我们为某人代求，我们立即放下手上的工作，调整自己对准神的作为，这是十分重要的。失去事奉主的机会是个悲剧。当你收到神的邀请时，当立即回应。

### **Now!**

*Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."*

*Matthew 8:21*

Often our struggle as Christians is not in deciding whether we should obey Christ but in obeying *immediately*. We may acknowledge our need to follow Christ and commit ourselves to do what He has told us. Yet when God reveals His will to us, that is the time to obey! God's revelation of His will is His invitation to respond immediately.

Some would-be disciples pledged their willingness to follow Jesus, but they told Him they were not ready yet. In Jesus' day, a Jewish man was expected to care for his elderly parents until they died. One man wanted to wait until his father died before going with Jesus. This would be an honorable delay. The man had to choose between this important responsibility and heeding a call from the Lord. Yet God knew this man, and He knew the man's father. God would have taken care of the man's father, if he only would have followed Jesus. This was an opportunity to walk with the Son of God, yet the concerns of this life were competing for priority with obedience to God.

Timing our obedience is crucial. Invitations from God come with a limited opportunity to respond. Some opportunities to serve Him, if not accepted immediately, will be lost. Occasions to minister to others may pass us by. When God invites us to intercede for someone, it may be critical that we stop what we are doing and immediately adjust our lives to what God is doing. Missing opportunities to serve the Lord can be tragic. When an invitation comes from God, the time to respond is *now*.

8月8日（星期一）- 标题：**献上最好**

**经文：凡有残疾，或有什么恶病的牛羊，你都不可献给耶和华——你的神，因为这是耶和华——你神所憎恶的。（申命记十七章1节）**

神的爱促使祂牺牲自己最宝贝的独子。如果真的了解祂对我们的爱，我们的回应必是渴望把自己最好的献给神。

旧约圣经揭示，神定规献给祂的祭必须符合最高标准。百姓要花上一些代价，才能付出有价值的献礼。但百姓的心远离神，开始舍不得献给神贵重的礼物。他们带来瞎眼、瘸腿和有残疾的牲畜，以为神分不出它们的不同（玛拉基书一：8）。神看到他们的行为，宣告他们的献祭无效（玛拉基书一：10）。在整个旧约时代，神为祂的爱子铺设舞台，祂那最完美、无罪的爱子，要成为全人类罪之献祭。

我们对神的献礼反映出我们的心态。一颗对神的大爱洋溢着感恩的心，会无私地献上礼物。如果不想献上自己的时间、所有物、金钱和精力，显示出我们并没有照神的希望，回应祂的爱。神所喜悦的人，是那些全心乐意奉献的、了解神是其所有之源头的、知道神会赐予比献礼更丰盛的（哥林多后书九：8）。

如果舍不得把自己最好的东西献给神，不妨稍微停下来，默思神为你付出牺牲的代价。相信祂，并且把最好的献给祂，因为你全心全意地爱祂。

### **Giving Your Best**

***You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God a bull or sheep which has any blemish or defect, for that is an abomination to the LORD your God. Deuteronomy 17:1***

God's love moved Him to sacrifice that which meant the most to Him—His only Son. Our response, if we truly understand His love for us, is the desire to give back to God that which means the most to us.

The Old Testament reveals that God set forth high standards for the sacrifices He required of His people. A worthy sacrifice had to cost the people something. As their hearts shifted away from God, the people began struggling to give God costly offerings. They would bring blind, lame, and sick animals, assuming God could not tell the difference (Mal. 1:8). God saw what they were doing and declared their offerings to be in vain (Mal. 1:10). Throughout the Old Testament period, God was setting the stage for the ultimate, perfect, and sinless sacrifice of His Son for the sins of humanity.

The offerings we give back to God reveal our hearts' condition. A heart that overflows with gratitude for God's love will respond in selfless devotion. If we are unwilling to sacrifice our time, our possessions, our money, or our energy, we indicate that we do not love God as He desires. God takes delight in the person who gives to Him cheerfully out of a loving heart, a person who understands that God is the source of everything he has and who knows that God will more than compensate for whatever is sacrificed for Him (2 Cor. 9:8). If you struggle in giving your best offerings to God, pause and reflect on what God sacrificed for you. Trust Him and give Him the best that you have because you love Him with all your heart.

8月13日（星期六）- 标题：**有恩慈**

**经文：并要以恩慈相待，存怜悯的心，彼此饶恕，正如神在基督里饶恕了你们一样。（以弗所书四章32节）**

以弗所书叙述的行为，应该可以描绘出基督徒彼此相交的特性。我们的行为应该要有恩慈。恩慈是以实际的方式表达爱，是考虑别人的需要高过自己的需要。恩慈是用心思考如何满足他人的需要。

拥有温柔的心，表示我们能够敏锐地得知其他人的感受。当主内弟兄姊妹悲痛时，我们的心也跟着悲痛（哥林多前书十二：26）。当另一位主内弟兄姊妹快乐时，我们也快乐。拥有温柔的心，表示我们对周遭的人热情洋溢。

我们能够饶恕人，因为我们也没有达到神完美的理想。当有人冒犯我们，我们愿意原谅人，因为我们知道神已满有恩慈地，把我们由毁灭中拯救出来。比起对待非基督徒，我们通常对自己主内的肢体更没耐心。我们对基督徒期望较高，当他们有负于我们，我们觉得自己被出卖。发生这种事的时候，我们更要靠近十字架，并且回想自己在那儿所得到的赦免。我们一定要停止自义的态度，不然，会变得没耐性及好批评。

耶稣并没有说世人会因我们行神迹、作震撼人心的见证，或因我们广传的圣经知识而认识祂。世人是因基督徒之间彼此相爱的心，而认识祂（约翰福音十三：35）。你是否经常与人发生冲突？你当求神赐给你恩慈、一颗温柔的心，和饶恕的灵。当容许圣灵在你的身上建立这些特质，你的生命会成为周围所有人的祝福。

### **Showing Grace**

***And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32***

The Book of Ephesians describes the behavior that ought to characterize Christians as they relate to one another. Our actions ought to be permeated with kindness. Kindness is love expressed in practical ways; it is putting the needs of others before our own. It is intentionally considering ways to meet other people's needs.

Being tenderhearted means that we are keenly sensitive to the feelings of others. When a fellow Christian experiences sorrow, we grieve also (1 Cor. 12:26). When another believer is joyful, we, too, rejoice. Being tenderhearted means showing compassion toward those around us.

We show forgiveness because we, too, fall short of God's ideal. Knowing that God has graciously saved us from destruction motivates us to forgive others when they offend us. Often we are less patient with our fellow Christians than we are with nonbelievers. We expect more of Christians, and we feel betrayed when they fail us. When this happens, we need to look closely at the cross and remember the forgiveness we received there. We must set aside the self-centered attitude that leads to impatience and criticism of others.

Jesus did not say that the world will know Him by our miracles, by our grand testimonies, or by our vast Bible knowledge. The world will know Him by the love that Christians show to one another (John 13:35). Are you constantly in conflict with others? Ask God to give you kindness, a tender heart, and a forgiving spirit. As you allow the Spirit to build these qualities into you, your life will be a blessing to others around you.

8月12日（星期五）－标题：**那因认识基督而有的香气**

**经节：感谢神！常率领我们在基督里夸胜，并藉着我们在各处显扬那因认识基督而有的香气。因为我们在神面前，无论在得救的人身上或灭亡的人身上，都有基督馨香之气。（哥林多后书二章14~15节）**

罗马人每次在军事上得到大胜利，就会举行盛大的游行来庆祝。指挥的将领会站在一辆豪华双轮战车上，在整个游行队伍的最前方引导。他的后面则跟着士兵、乐师和其他军官。然后，士兵会领着被俘战败的敌人穿过城市大街。除此之外，罗马人在祭坛上烧香，也是庆典的一部分，整个城市会充满令人愉悦的香气。即使那些不能亲眼看见胜利行伍的人，也能听到胜利凯旋的音乐，闻到令人愉悦的气息。每个人都会知道，自己的军队已经得胜，凯旋归来。这个特别的香气，对每个闻到的人象征着胜利。

保罗用这个生动的比喻，来说明基督徒对世界的影响。根据保罗所说，神要在我们身上充满那因认识基督而有的香气。无论去那里，我们的生命应该向人展示出耶稣是得胜者。当未信者看见我们的生命，他们会知道基督得胜的大能。当其他的基督徒亲眼看基督的大能，使我们战胜自己的罪，他们也能庆祝欢喜主的胜利，并且确信基督同样也可以使他们拥有得胜的生命。

最令人信服的证据是基督活着，并且祂在祂的百姓身上彰显自己得胜的作为。有基督的馨香之气，是何等地荣幸！借着拥有基督的馨香之气，他人可以知道基督拥有战胜罪恶、改变人生命的大能。你的生命应该是使人信服的确据，使人看到神今日仍在祂百姓身上行大能的作为。

### **The Fragrance of His Knowledge**

***Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 2 Corinthians 2:14-15***

Whenever the Romans won a major military victory they would celebrate with a spectacular parade. The commanding general would lead the procession in a magnificent chariot, followed by his soldiers, musicians, and other officials. Then, soldiers would lead the defeated enemies through the city in bondage. As a part of the celebration, the Romans would burn fragrances on altars, filling the entire city with a pleasant aroma. Even those who could not witness the triumphal procession could hear the victory music and smell the pleasing incense. Everyone would know that their army had been victorious. The special fragrance came to symbolize victory to anyone who smelled it.

Paul used this vivid imagery to describe the effect that Christians should have in the world. According to Paul, God permeates our lives with the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ. Everywhere we go, our lives should demonstrate to others that Christ is victorious. As unbelievers observe our lives, they should become aware of the victorious power of Christ. As other Christians witness the victory Christ gives us over our sin, they can rejoice in the triumph of their Lord and gain confidence that Christ will bring victory in their lives as well.

The most compelling evidence that Christ is alive and triumphant is His activity in the lives of His people. It is a privilege to be the fragrance of Christ by which others learn of God's life-changing power over sin. Your life ought to be convincing proof that God continues to work powerfully in the lives of His people.

8月9日（星期二）－标题：**除去邪恶**

**经节：这样，就把那恶从你们中间除掉。（申命记廿二章21节下）**

不把试探放在眼里是十分危险的，你得为自己的错误付上昂贵的代价。许多人自以为心灵强健，可以抵御试探，最后屈服于罪的引诱，这是最可悲的事。神要祂的百姓从自己当中除去罪（申命记廿一：21）。除去环境中任何引诱你犯罪的事物，是个好方法。当邪恶充斥你的四周，你会渐渐麻木，趋向毁灭的危险。永远不要自以为可以免受试探，不要小看恶者的狡诈。

神决不宽容邪恶，因为邪恶使祂的爱子付上死亡的代价。罪恶毁灭任何碰它的人，并使他陷入无穷的痛苦。轻看罪显示出漠视神救赎大工的愚昧。诚实检讨自己的生活，会揭露出哪些是你应该除去的试探，譬如一些不良娱乐或不敬虔的关系。当神使你悔悟你们当中的邪恶，马上除去它！

然而，有时候你会无力对抗不敬虔的影响。所以，你一定要在生活中除去试探。保罗极力劝告我们，要禁戒不做任何的恶事（帖撒罗尼迦前书五：22）。当约瑟被怂恿与自己主人的妻子通奸时，他马上逃离现场（创世记卅九：12）！

不要失去你对罪的憎恶。要勤于驱除任何试探，使它远远离开你的家、离开你的人际关系和离开你的意念。只有维系你与神之间爱的关系，才可能驱除任何试探。你要认清一个事实，就是靠着自己的力量，你不可能胜过试探。除非以神的眼光看待罪，你不可能与神亲密同行。黑暗与光明不可能同时存在。逃离黑暗，迈向光明！

### **Put Away Evil**

***So you shall put away the evil from among you. Deuteronomy 22:21b***

It is a dangerous and costly mistake not to take temptation seriously. The sad testimony of many who have succumbed to sin's enticements is that they thought they were strong enough to remain in the midst of temptation and resist it. God requires that His people remove evil from their midst (Deut. 21:21). One way to do this is to remove anything in your environment that may tempt you to sin. When wickedness surrounds you, you are in danger of becoming anesthetized to its destructive potential. Never assume that you are immune to temptation. Do not underestimate the craftiness of the evil one.

God does not tolerate evil, for evil cost the death of His Son. Sin causes untold pain and destruction to everyone it touches. Treating evil lightly shows foolish disregard for God's redemptive work. An honest evaluation of your life will reveal temptations that you should remove, such as some forms of entertainment or ungodly relationships. When God convicts you of evil in your midst, remove it immediately!

There are times, however, when you are powerless to remove ungodly influences, so you must remove yourself from the temptation. Paul urges us to avoid every kind of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). When Joseph was enticed to commit adultery by his master's wife, he fled immediately! (Gen. 39:12).

Do not lose your abhorrence of sin. Be diligent to keep any form of temptation out of your home, out of your relationships, out of your mind. You can do this only by maintaining your love relationship with God, recognizing that you are powerless to resist temptation in your own strength. You will not be able to walk closely with God unless you see sin as He sees it. Darkness and light cannot coexist. Run from the darkness to the light!

**经节：**「我在这里，你们要在耶和华和祂的受膏者面前给我作见证。我夺过谁的牛，抢过谁的驴，欺负过谁，虐待过谁，从谁手里受过贿赂因而眼瞎呢？若有，我必偿还。」众人说：「你未曾欺负我们，虐待我们，也未曾从谁手里受过什么。」（撒母耳记上十二章3~4节）

不需要隐藏是一种自由。正直的生活使你得到这个自由。正直与否不在于你怎么说自己，而在于神与人们怎样说你。撒母耳终其一生住在神的百姓之中，当时国家高位的领袖既不正直又腐败；对撒母耳来说，与他们相交时是很容易妥协让步的。然而，撒母耳胆敢站立在他的同胞面前，要他们说出自己是否侵犯过他们。百姓们一点也想不出来。

撒母耳身为领导，大可占百姓的便宜。然而，因为他谨守自己的动机及保持清白的人际关系，撒母耳能够毫无所惧地，要百姓说出自己是否曾经虐待他们。要公然开放自己的生命，让众人仔细检验自己，是极需勇气的，但撒母耳丝毫不怕众人如何说他。他不逃避任何他所触犯与伤害的人。他的信心是来自坚守过无瑕疵的生活。

如果你曾经冒犯某人，你不可能改变过去，但是从今天开始，你可以选择过完全正直的生活。过公义的生活可以释放你，使你毫不羞愧面对任何人，因为你确知自己的行为像基督一样。如果你的名誉有玷污，当寻求被你冒犯的人宽恕你。求神每日指引你处理人际关系，好叫你与他人相交毫无抱愧。

### **The Testimony of Others**

***"Here I am. Witness against me before the LORD and before His anointed: Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken, or whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed, or from whose hand have I received any bribe with which to blind my eyes? I will restore it to you." And they said, "You have not cheated us or oppressed us, nor have you taken anything from any man's hand."***

***1 Samuel 13:3-4***

There is a freedom that comes in having nothing to hide. Living a life of integrity allows you this freedom. Your integrity is measured not by what you say about yourself but by what God and people say about you. Samuel had lived all his life among the people of God. Leaders who preceded him were dishonest and corrupt; it would have been easy for Samuel to compromise in his dealings as well. Near the end of his life, however, Samuel could boldly stand before his nation and ask them to reveal any offense he had committed against any of them. They could not think of one.

In his position of leadership, Samuel could have taken advantage of people. Yet because he carefully guarded his motives and kept his relationships blameless, Samuel could fearlessly ask the people to report if he had mistreated them in any way. It takes courage to open your life up to the scrutiny of others, but Samuel did not fear what others would say about him. He did not have to avoid anyone whom he had offended. He had a confidence that comes from living a blameless life.

If you have mistreated others, you cannot change the past, but you can choose to live with absolute integrity from this day forward. Living righteously frees you to face any person unashamedly, knowing you have behaved in a Christlike manner. If your reputation is stained, seek forgiveness from those you have offended. Ask God to guide you daily in your relationships so that you have no regrets about your treatment of others.

**经节：**我现在是要得人的心呢？还是要得神的心呢？我岂是讨人的喜欢吗？若仍旧讨人的喜欢。我就不是基督的仆人了。（加拉太书一章10节）

有时候，你得在讨神欢喜与讨人欢喜之间，有所抉择，因为神的道路非同人的道路（以赛亚书五十五：8-9）。努力维持良好的人际关系固然重要，但与神维持坚固及顺服的关系，更是重要。不顺服神，只与人和好，是没有智慧的行为。与神和好，永远是最重要的事。

耶稣警告我们，顺从祂可能会引起你人际关系的冲突（马太福音十：35~36）。如果保罗主要的目的是讨好人，他永远不能成为耶稣基督的使徒。有时候，顺服神使得家人彼此有冲突（马太福音十：35~36）。当你臣服于耶稣的主权，亲人可能误会你，甚至反对你，然而，你对神的顺服反映出你是神儿女的身分。耶稣说，那些遵行祂旨意的人，是祂的弟兄和姊妹（路加福音八：21）。神并不想在你的家庭中造成纷争，而是祂把顺服祂的重要性，置于家庭和谐之上。

在宁静中与神相交是非常重要的，如此一来，你才能了解什么事可以以讨神的欢喜。当你不清楚神的心意，属世的思维很容易会误导你。彼得曾视女仆的看法高过主的赞同，后来他为此悲痛异常。如果想讨好人的意愿，导致你想妥协神要你做的事，要记取彼得的错误。要定意讨主的欢喜，不管他人的想法。

### **Pleasing God, Pleasing Others**

***For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. Galatians 1:10***

At times you will have to make a choice between pleasing God and pleasing those around you, for God's ways are not man's ways (Isa. 55:8-9). As important as it is to strive for good relations with others, it is even more important to maintain a steadfast and obedient relationship with Christ. Disobeying God to keep peace with other people is never wise. Peace with God is always paramount.

Jesus warned that obeying Him might cause division in your relationships (Matt. 10:35-36). If Paul's primary goal had been to please others, he would never have become an apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul went completely against the wishes of his colleagues in order to obey Christ. At times, obedience to God sets family members at odds with each other (Matt. 10:35-36). When you follow Jesus' Lordship, your family may misunderstand, or even oppose you, yet your obedience to God reflects your identity as His child. Jesus said that those who obey His will are His brothers and sisters (Luke 8:21). God does not intend to divide the home, but He places obedience before domestic harmony.

It is important to get alone in quietness with God so that you understand what pleases Him. The world's thinking will mislead you more easily when you are not clear about what God desires. It broke Peter's heart to know that the opinion of a servant girl had mattered more to him than the approval of his Lord! If the desire to appease others tempts you to compromise what you know God wants you to do, learn from Peter's mistake. Determine that you will please your Lord regardless of the opinions of others.