

**经节：祂对我说：「我的恩典够你用的，因为我的能力是在人的软弱上显得完全。」
所以，我更喜欢夸自己的软弱，好叫基督的能力覆庇我。**

（哥林多后书十二章9节）

人类的能力是相信基督最强大的阻力。当倚靠自己的能力、机智和知识之时，我们以为自己不用靠神，就可以掌控任何处境。我们容易把问题分成两大类：一类是需要神的帮助，另一类是我们可以自己掌控的问题。

保罗的个性相当顽固，并且拥有异常强壮的意志。当旅行到远方传扬基督的福音，他勇敢地面对愤怒的暴徒。他的前半生是以自己的能力事奉神。然而，当神得到他全心的专注，保罗必须学习去信赖神的能力，而不是自己的力量。

保罗深受一根刺折磨（哥林多后书十二：7）。不管这是一根什么样的刺，它使保罗谦卑下来。他行过许多令人难以置信的神迹，甚至使死人复活，只是他无法挪去神给他的折磨。这个折磨使他倚靠神。世人曾经看到保罗如何靠自己的力量做事，这真使人恐惧！现在神要借着保罗的生命，施展祂的大能。当保罗自以为很有能力的时候，他忽略去倚靠神的力量。保罗在自己的软弱上，只好毫无保留地信任神。

如果你自觉在某方面的能力很强，要小心！妨碍你信任神的，通常是你的优点，而不是你的缺点。神会带领你到一个极软弱的境地，这是让你能信任神的代价。不要轻看你的软弱，因为它会领你信任神的大能。

God's Sufficient Grace

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9

Human strength is a strong deterrent to trusting in Christ. When we rely on our own strength, resources, and knowledge, we assume we can handle situations without help from God. We tend to divide problems into two categories: problems that we know require God's help and problems we think we can handle on our own.

Paul had a tenacious personality and an exceptionally strong will. He courageously faced angry mobs as he traveled far and wide to promote the cause of Christ. He had spent the first half of his life serving God in his own strength. However, once God gained his attention, Paul had to learn to rely on God's strength and not his own.

Paul was afflicted with a thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7). Whatever this was, it humbled him. He had performed incredible miracles, even raising the dead, but he could not remove the affliction that God had given him, an affliction that made him depend on God. The world had seen what Paul could do in his own strength, and it was horrifying! Now God wanted to exercise His power through Paul's life. When Paul thought he was strong, he neglected to rely upon God's strength. Only in his weakness did Paul trust implicitly in God.

If you feel strong in an area of your life, beware! Often your strength, rather than your weakness, hinders you from trusting God. God will bring you to a point of weakness if that is what it takes to bring you to trust in Him. Do not despise your weakness, for it leads you to trust in God's strength.

10月10日（星期一）- 标题：**领袖与经理人**

经文：耶和華對撒母耳說：「百姓向你說的一切話，你只管依從；因為他們不是厭棄你，乃是厭棄我，不要我作他們的王。」（撒母耳記上八章7節）

以色列从前是与众不同的国家，其它国家都有国王或统治者，而以色列的王是神自己！以色列百姓抱怨，想和其它国家一样有地上的统治者！读到这段历史时，我们很稀奇他们的愚蠢，其实我们很容易犯同样毛病，选择自己的智慧高过神的领导。

当今在领袖与管理的课题上有许多研讨。广为流传的教导是认为领袖要有异象，能为百姓或机构设立目标，让大家遵循；管理者的工作则是每日安排他手上所有的资源、财力。在基督徒的生活中，神是我们的生活、我们的家庭、我们教会的领袖。神设立方向，订立生活优先级，神也供应我们所需。我们是管理者，使用祂所赐的资源，做祂要我们做的事。

在圣经中称领袖是「主」。主耶稣有权柄启示我们生活的方向。祂以主的身份订立我们的生涯规划，带领我们认识婚姻的伴侣，帮助我们设立每日作息的优先级。我们要做祂所赐予之灵魂体的好管家。祂是我们的一家之主，知道什么对孩子最好，也知道如何使婚姻坚韧。我们的责任是在祂带领我们建立基督化家庭时，要顺服祂。基督是教会的主，扩展教会是祂的责任。只有祂知道什么对教会最好，我们的任务是忠实地实行祂要我们执行的角色。

Leaders and Managers

And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them."

1 Samuel 8:7

The Israelites were to be a nation unlike any other. Every other nation had a king or ruler, but Israel's king was to be God Himself! Still, the Israelites complained that they wanted to be like other nations and have an earthly ruler! As we read about the Israelites, we marvel at their foolishness. Yet we are prone to make the same mistake, choosing our human wisdom over God's leadership.

There is much discussion these days about leaders and managers. According to popular teaching, leaders have the vision and set goals for people or organizations to follow. Managers handle the day-to-day marshaling of resources under their charge. In the Christian life, God is the leader of our lives, our families, and our churches. God sets the direction; He establishes the priorities; He provides the resources. We are the managers. We take what He gives us and do with it as He directs.

The biblical term for leader is *Lord*. As our Lord, Christ has the authority to reveal the direction for our lives. As Lord, He chooses our careers, leads us to our marriage partners, and helps us set our daily priorities. We are to be good managers of the mind, body, and spiritual life He gives. He is the Lord of our families. He knows what is best for our children. He knows how to make marriages strong. Our responsibility is to obey Him as He leads our families to Christlikeness. Christ is the Lord of our church. He takes responsibility for expanding it (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:18). Only He knows what is best for our church. Our task is to faithfully perform the role He assigns us. Do not foolishly trust in human wisdom and leadership as the Israelites did. Follow your Lord and trust Him alone.

10月15日（星期六）- 标题：**灰心**

经文：他说：「我为耶和華——万军之神大发热心；因为以色列人背弃了祢的约，毁坏了祢的坛，用刀杀了祢的先知，只剩下我一个人，他们还要寻索我的命。」（列王纪上十九章14节）

事奉神可能是极富挑战性的！你可以奉献所有给神的圣工，却精疲力竭。这就是以利亚的写照。神才刚刚使用以利亚，让他吩咐火从天降，壮观地展现神圣的大能。然而，以利亚愉快的心情很快被死亡的威胁所替代，吓得赶紧逃跑保命。现在，他孤独一人，又累又灰心。

神再次来到以利亚的面前。这一回，祂不是以火、大声响或壮观的形式出现，却是以低沉微小的声音向他说话。神的仆人累了，神安慰他。以利亚由定睛神的身上，转到定睛敌挡神的人身上。他让环境压垮自己，使他不能清楚神的意向，并且觉得好寂寞。所以，神鼓励他。神赐下以利沙作他的助手、朋友和同伴。

神把以利亚挪开事工一阵子，让他能够休息，花些时间单独与神相处。当百姓们再看到以利亚的时候，他已经恢复精神，再次专心致力于神与神的圣工。

如果你正被事工压得喘不过气，以至于不再定睛在神的身上。在埋首一堆待做之事中，要让神安慰你。聆听祂温柔的声音。祂会鼓励你，并且提供你所有的需要，预备你面对未来的挑战。如果祂需要把你由目前的事工挪开，祂会如此行的。祂也可能安置一位朋友或同工，在你的身边帮助你，同负重担。神知道该如何激励你。让祂如此行在你的身上。

Discouragement

And he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." 1 Kings 19:14

Kingdom work can be challenging! You can give everything you have to God's service and come away exhausted. This is what happened to Elijah. God had just used Elijah to call down fire from heaven in a spectacular display of divine power. But Elijah's exhilaration was soon replaced by strenuous work followed by death threats, causing him to flee for his life. Now he was alone, exhausted, and discouraged.

Again, God came to Elijah. his time, He came not in fire or in a loud, spectacular way, but in a still, small voice. God's servant was tired, and God brought him comfort. Elijah's focus had shifted from God to God's enemies. He had allowed his circumstances to overwhelm him, leaving him disoriented to God and feeling alone. So God encouraged him. God provided Elisha for him as a helper, friend, and companion. God removed Elijah from the activity for a time, so that he could rest and spend time with God. When the nation next saw Elijah, he was rejuvenated and refocused on God and His assignment.

If you are overwhelmed by kingdom work so that your focus is no longer on God but on all that there is to do, let Him comfort you. Listen to His gentle voice. He will encourage you and provide exactly what you need to prepare you for what comes next. If He needs to remove you from your work for a time, He will. He may place a friend or co-laborer beside you to help carry the load. God knows exactly how to encourage you. Let Him do so.

10月14日（星期五）- 标题：**胜利与失败**

经文：仇敌起来攻击你，耶和华必使他们在你面前被你杀败；他们从一条路来攻击你，必从七条路逃跑。……耶和华必使你败在仇敌面前，你从一条路去攻击他们，必从七条路逃跑。你必在天下万国中抛来抛去。（申命记廿八章7、25节）

当以色列人预备进入应许之地时，神给他们一个选择：留心注意祂的声音、遵行祂的命令，并且经历连续的胜利；或是背离神、不遵行祂的话，并且一再经历严重失败。这是个容易的选择。而他们在战场上胜负的结局，明确地表明出他们的选择是什么。

胜利的保证并不代表以色列人不需要束上盔甲、上战场，也不是指他们可以不用任何代价，就得到胜利。有时候，他们的敌人猛烈地攻击，战争反反复复、一再激烈地进行。然而，当以色列人亲密地与神同行，他们知道自己的努力将得到最后的胜利。

神给我们的选择，与当时以色列人相同。若与祂同行及遵行祂的命令，祂会与我们站在同一边，保证我们必可战胜所面对的挑战。我们一定得面对战争，只要一直在祂的旨意中，神应许我们会得胜利。然而，如果我们行事的抉择与神不相干，当然会被困难给压垮。诚如以色列人一样，事情的结局将明确地表明我们的选择是什么。如果你所经验的每个挑战都失败，你的心可能已经远离神了。要聆听神，遵行祂向你显明的旨意。不论遭遇何事，你会得到胜利的。

Victory Versus Defeat

The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. . . . The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them. Deuteronomy 28:7, 25

As the Israelites were preparing to enter the Promised Land, God set before them a choice: Heed His voice, obey His commandments, and experience continued victory. Or turn from God, disobey His word, and experience repeated and resounding defeat. It was a simple choice. The choice they made would be evident by the results on the battlefield.

The assurance of victory did not mean that the Israelites would not have to strap on their armor and go to battle. It did not assure them of effortless victory. At times their enemies fought fiercely, and the battles raged back and forth. Nevertheless, as the Israelites walked closely with God, they knew that their efforts would always result in victory.

God gives us the same choice He gave the Israelites. If we walk with Him, obedient to His word, He will stand with us and ensure victory over our challenges. We must face the battle, but God promises us victory if we remain in His will. However, if we choose to disassociate from God, we surely will be overtaken by difficulties. As with the Israelites, our decision will be evident by the outcome. If you are continually being defeated by everything you face, your heart has departed from God.

If you have been experiencing defeat in the challenges you face, examine your heart. When you are buffeted by the crises of life, your heart may have shifted away from God. Choose to listen to God. Then obey what He tells you, no matter what you face, and you will experience victory.

10月11日（星期二）- 标题：**灵性的预备**

经文：她们去买的时候，新郎到了。那预备好了的，同他进去坐席，门就关了。（马太福音廿五章10节）

灵性的预备是没有代替品的。灵性的预备装备你面对意料之外的危险及良机。如果你尚未预备好，你将容易因生命中意外事件的发生，而受到伤害。

耶稣曾经以一个比喻来教导这个真理。十个童女等待新郎的到来，好与新郎及新娘一起庆祝。其中五个童女已经为自己的灯，准备好足够的油，另外五位并没有准备好，所以她们仓促地跑出去买油。当她们离开的时候，新郎到了。那五个预备好的童女就与新郎一同进去房子里庆祝。等那五位买油的童女回来时，大门已经关上，她们无法进去一同庆祝。

倘若危险来临时，你的灵性已经预备妥当，你就不用临时再拚命去与基督建立良好的关系，好帮助自己熬过这段死荫幽谷。倘若你突然有机会向未信者分享自己的信心，你会被装备好面对这个机会。倘若在崇拜时，你的灵性已经预备好，你绝对不会错过迎见神的机会。倘若你遇见一个心灵忧伤的人，你被圣灵充满，你将能提供更多的帮助。倘若你的生命已经建立了预防措施，你将不会被试探所引诱。

基督徒失去许多经历神的机会，因为他们不愿意花时间与神建立关系。如果你尚未养成每日祷告读经的习惯，何不现在就开始呢？这么一来，你就预备好，可以面对人生的挑战。

Spiritual Preparation

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Matthew 25:10

There is no substitute for spiritual preparation. Spiritual preparation equips you for unforeseen crises or opportunities. However, if you are unprepared you will be vulnerable in life's unexpected events.

Jesus told a parable that teaches this truth. Ten virgins were awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom so that they could celebrate with him and his bride. Five of them prepared in advance and brought an adequate supply of oil for their lamps. The other five were not prepared, so they rushed out to buy additional lamp oil. While they were gone, the bridegroom arrived. The five who had planned ahead entered into the house with him, but the door was closed against the five who were not ready, and they missed the celebration.

If you are spiritually prepared when a crisis comes, you will not have to try to develop instantly the quality of relationship with Christ that can sustain you. If you suddenly have an opportunity to share your faith with an unbeliever, you will be equipped to do so. If you enter a time of worship spiritually prepared, you will not miss an encounter with God. If you are spiritually filled when you meet a person in sorrow, you will have much to offer. If you have established safeguards in your life in advance, you will not give in to temptation. Christians lose many opportunities to experience God's activity because they have not devoted enough time to their relationship with God. If you have not yet developed the habit of daily prayer and Bible study, why not begin now, so that you will be equipped for whatever life brings?

10月12日（星期三）- 标题：**敬虔与迫害**

经文：不但如此，凡立志在基督耶稣里敬虔度日的也都要受逼迫。

（提摩太后书三章12节）

活出敬虔的生命并不能够使你免受苦难。保罗说，你的生活愈是没有瑕疵，你愈有可能受逼迫。根据保罗所说：「只是作恶的和迷惑人的，必越久越恶，他欺哄人，也被人欺哄。」（提摩太后书三：13）当这个世界愈来愈沉溺于罪恶，世人会愈来愈无法忍受敬虔。黑暗不能忍受光；当你的生命愈加显出神同在的同时，你心里要有数，自己将面对黑暗的反势力。你那像基督的性情会冒犯那些悖逆神主权的人。

你可能最近才悔改，向着顺服神迈开新的一步。也许因为祂才刚嘉许你的顺服，你正期待能马上经历神的祝福。然而，你反而遇见反对势力。那些迫害甚至可能是从其他基督徒的误解而来。也许你顺服神，而你的行动还是受指责，没有人称赞你。

如果你是真诚地跟随主，不要灰心。保罗警告那些想敬虔度日的人，会遭受逼迫。当这些事发生在你的身上时，不要惊讶。这个世界将神的儿子钉在十字架上，它当然也会敌视任何活在圣灵大能下的人。迫害可能是你基督徒生活的最佳明证。耶稣曾经警告，世人憎恨祂——世人的救主。所以，祂的门徒被误解或错待，是不可避免的（约翰福音十五：18）。

Godliness and Persecution

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12

Living a godly life will not insulate you from hardship. Paul said that the more blameless your life, the more likely you will be persecuted. According to Paul, “evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse” (2 Tim. 3:13). As the world increasingly embraces sin, worldly people are becoming increasingly intolerant of godliness. Darkness cannot tolerate light; the more your life illuminates the presence of Christ, the more you should expect opposition from the forces of darkness. Your Christlike nature will be offensive to those in rebellion against Christ’s Lordship.

You may have recently repented of your sin and taken a new step of obedience to God. Perhaps you expected to experience God’s blessing immediately as He demonstrated His approval of your obedience. Instead, you were met with opposition. The persecution may have come even from other Christians who misunderstood your motives. Perhaps you obeyed God, and still your actions were met with criticism instead of praise.

If you are sincerely following the Lord’s direction, don’t be discouraged. Paul warned that those who seek to live godly lives will suffer persecution. Do not be surprised when this happens to you. If the world crucified the Son of God, surely the world will be hostile to anyone who lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. Persecution may be the best evidence that your life is like that of Christ. Jesus warned that the world hated Him, the Savior, and so it would certainly misunderstand and mistreat His disciples (John 15:18).

10月13日（星期四）- 标题：**没有秘密**

经文：因为掩藏的事没有不显出来的：隐瞒的事没有不露出来被人知道的。

（路加福音八章17节）

撒但狡猾的欺骗伎俩之一，就是让你自以为可以偷偷地背着别人做事，不让人知道。事实上，根本不是如此。圣经上强调，每一件在暗地里行的事，会在光明中被揭露。所以，在你动手做一些不诚实的事之前，要慎重地问自己：「我是否希望周围的人知道我在做什么？我是否希望神看到我加入这个行动？」

知道神观看我们的所作所为，并且为自己所有的言行负责任，这会劝阻我们犯罪（哥林多后书五：10）。然而，我们可能已经远离神，以至于这项认知根本不能吓阻我们。神保证祂会公开揭露我们的罪行，因此，务必为言行举止所带给人的影响，负起责任来。我们所做的每一件事，最后都会在审判日显露出来。

尽管如此，有些人相信自己可以犯罪，得罪神、得罪自己的家人、得罪自己的雇主、或是得罪自己的朋友，而永远不被察觉。神提供了一个防止人犯罪的保护措施：必然地公开揭发。圣经命令我们晓得黑暗的行为时，要揭发它们（以弗所书五：11）。身为基督徒的我们，要在这个世界上作光，驱逐黑暗。罪恶不可能生存于基督徒的生活体验中，因为光不可能住在黑暗中。保证罪行不被显露的惟一方法，就是过无瑕疵的生活。

No Secrets

For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. Luke 8:17

One of Satan’s subtle deceptions is that you can do things in secret that will never be revealed. This is simply not so. The Bible stresses that everything done in darkness will one day be brought to light. So before you commit yourself to do anything questionable, seriously ask yourself, “Am I willing for those around me to know what I am about to do? Am I willing for God to watch me participate in this activity?”

The knowledge that God sees what we do, the certainty that we are accountable for every word and action, ought to dissuade us from sin (2 Cor. 5:10). But we can become so alienated from God that even this knowledge does not deter us. God promises that He will publicly expose our sin so that we must give an account to others for our actions. Ultimately, everything we do will be exposed on judgment day.

Still, some people believe they can sin against God, their families, their employers, or their friends and never be discovered. God has provided a safeguard against sin: the certainty of disclosure. Scripture commands us to expose the deeds of darkness as we become aware of them (Eph. 5:11). As Christians we are to be the light that dispels darkness in our world. Sin cannot continue in the Christian’s experience, for light cannot dwell with darkness. The only insurance against having your sins exposed is living a blameless life.