

Sermon 讲道信息

February 二月 1, 2025

It's Time for a Change – Changing Our World 是时候改变——改变我们的世界

In this series on “change” we have noted that Jesus came announcing a “new” way of knowing and experiencing God.

在这系列关于“改变”的信息中，我们已经提到：耶稣来到世上，宣告了认识和经历上帝的“新方式”。

We agreed that God is in the “change business” as He transforms us into His glorious image.

我们认同上帝是一位“带来改变的上帝”，祂不断把我们塑造成祂荣耀的形象。

We saw how, as God changes our attitudes and heart, He is also changing the church, for we are the church!

我们看到，当上帝改变我们的态度和内心时，祂也如何在改变教会——因为我们就是教会！

Today, we must take the next step as we agree that as God changes me and changes my church for the good and His glory, He can use me and my church to change the world.

今天，我们必须迈出下一步。我們同意当上帝改变我，並为着美善与祂的荣耀改变教会，祂就能使用我和我的教会去改变这个世界。

In 2006 artist and musician John Mayer released the Grammy-winning song, “Waiting on the World to Change.” It expressed the angst of a younger generation who felt powerless to change a world for good. The lyrics, in part, go like this:

2006 年，艺术家兼音乐人约翰·梅尔 (John Mayer) 发行了获得格莱美奖的歌曲 “Waiting on the World to Change” 《等待世界改变》。这首歌表达了年轻一代的焦虑与无力感，他们渴望世界变好，却觉得自己无能为力。歌词中有这样一段：

Me and all my friends
We're all misunderstood
They say we stand for nothing and
There's no way we ever could
Now we see everything that's going wrong
With the world and those who lead it
We just feel like we don't have the means
To rise above and beat it

So we keep on waiting,
Waiting on the world to change

我和我的朋友们
总是被误解
他们说我们毫无立场
永远不可能有
如今我们目睹万物崩坏
世界与那些掌权者皆如此
我们深感无力
无法去超越战胜困境

所以我们继续等待
等待世界改变

Positive change is not spontaneous. It requires hard work, intention, sacrifice, and commitment. But I am convinced that God has called us, His children, to be “change agents” in a world drenched in sin, injustice, and suffering.

正面的改变从来不是自然而然发生的。它需要付出努力、明确方向、牺牲奉献与持续委身。但我深信，上帝已呼召我们——祂的儿女——在这充满罪恶、不公与苦难的世界中，成为“改变推动者”。

In that greatest of sermons, the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus declares that we, his disciples, are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” (Mt.5:13-14).

在那最伟大的讲道——登山宝训中，耶稣宣告我们（他的门徒）是“世上的盐”和“世上的光”（太 5:13-14）。

Like salt and light, we are catalysts for change as we are empowered by His Holy Spirit, filled with His presence, and walk in obedience to His will.

就像盐和光一样，当我们被圣灵赋予能力、被祂的同在充满、并且顺服祂的旨意而行时，我们就成为带来改变的催化剂。

We have a great role model in this in the person of Joseph, the husband of Jesus' mother, Mary.

在这方面，在耶稣母亲马利亚的丈夫约瑟身上，我们找到了绝佳的榜样。

I'm sure you would agree with me that, because of his faithful actions, his world, our world, the world, was changed for good and for God!

我想你会同意：正因为他的忠心行动，他的世界、我们的世界、甚至整个世界，都被改变——為了美善、為了上帝！

What was it about Joseph that made him such an effective “change agent”? He can be a role model for us.

究竟是什么特质使约瑟成为如此有效的“改变推动者”？他可以成为我们的榜样。

Note that Joseph was... 请注意，约瑟是这样一个人：

1. Good character 品格端正的人

“Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law...” (19); “was a righteous man.” (NLT, et.al.)

“她丈夫约瑟是个义人”（太 1:19，根據多個中文翻譯本）。

Joseph was mindful of the Law of God and the laws of His religion. Not wanting to cause Mary unnecessary shame, he was willing to follow the custom of His religion and “divorce her quietly”.

约瑟尊重上帝的律法和信仰中的规条。为免马利亚蒙受不必要的羞辱，他愿遵从宗教习俗，“暗暗地休了她”。

The concept of pious righteousness might ring as cold and legalistic. But the word as it is used in the NT carries a more expansive perspective. It means to “be [made] right” with God. That is, to be “at peace” with God through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ.

敬虔的义這概念，或许听来冷漠刻板或較律法主义；但在新约中，它的含义更加宽广，指的是在上帝面前被称为義，就是与上帝和好——借着耶稣基督的恩典与怜悯而得的和好。

The Greek word literally means to “be innocent, above reproach, or holy”. “The faith thus exercised brings the soul into vital union with God in Christ, and inevitably produces righteousness of life, that is, conformity to the will of God.”

希腊原文的字面含义是“无辜、无可指责、或圣洁”。“如此实践的信心使灵魂在基督里与神建立生命联合，必然结出生命中义的果子，即顺服神的旨意。”

In today's world, money and power often overshadow character.

在当今世界，金钱与权力常常压倒品格。

We have come to believe that “might is right”. But God's Word teaches us otherwise. Good character counts. Only good character can change our world for good!

我们逐渐相信“强权即公理”。但上帝的话语教导我们：良好的品格至关重要。唯有良好的品格才能为世界带来真正良好的改变！

Where would we be today if Joseph had not been a man of “good character”?

若约瑟不是“品格端正”之人，今日我们又将处于何境况？

2. Compassionate 有怜悯的人

We have noted that Joseph was one who took the “law” seriously. He did his best to keep it to the letter. Yet, he was not legalistic.

我们注意到约瑟严肃对待“律法”。他竭力恪守律法的字面规定，却并非律法主义者。

He well knew that the “letter of the law” allowed - even expected - him to divorce Mary, publicly disgracing her.

他深知“律法条文”允许，甚至期待他去休掉马利亚，令她蒙受公开羞辱。

But he sought another, more compassionate alternative, thus sparing her from public scorn which would have scarred her for life.

但他选择了一条更富有怜悯的出路，使她免于遭受足以成为终生烙印的公众鄙夷。

The Apostle Paul, who at one time was a fervent legalist, and who famously denounced legalism when he was confronted with God’s grace and mercy in Jesus, also pointed out to his protégé, Timothy, that “the law is good” (1 Tim.1:8), but we must note his condition:

使徒保罗曾是狂热的律法主义者，当他在耶稣里遇见神的恩典与怜悯后，便公开谴责律法主义。他同样向他的门徒提摩太指出：“律法是好的”（提前书 1:8），但须注意其前提：

“the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels” (1:8-9).

“只要人善用律法，律法是好的；因为知道律法不是为义人订立的，而是为不法和叛逆的”（1:8-9）。

The law has its place, but I’m convinced that it is grace and compassion that will bring about real and good change in our world!

律法自有它的位置，但我深信，唯有恩典与怜悯才能为世界带来真实而美好的改变！

3. Reflective 懂得反思的人

“But after he had considered this” (20). The word “considered” literally means that he “pondered; thought on; meditated over” his alternatives before deciding on a plan of action. Joseph demonstrated remarkable self-restraint.

“正考虑这些事的时候”（太 1:20）。 “考虑”一词指的是“深思、权衡、反复思想”各种选择后才制定行动方案。约瑟展现了极大的自制力。

The law was on his side, and let’s face it, he had all the power in the relationship, yet he chose a better way.

虽然律法站在他那一边，他在这段关系中掌握着主动权，但他选择了更美好的方法。

The Apostle Paul would later teach us that “self-control” is a “fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:23), the evidence of God in us and a mark of the mature Believer.

后来，使徒保罗教导我们：“节制”是“圣灵的果子”（加 5:23），是神在我们生命中的证据，也是成熟信徒的标志。

Joseph simply did not do what was expected. He counted the cost and went against majority culture for the sake of righteousness, goodness, and compassion.

约瑟只是没有随波逐流，他计算代价，为了公义、良善与怜悯，逆流而行。

In his final year on earth, what we call the “year of popularity”, Jesus was hounded by great crowds who claimed they wanted to be his disciples.

耶稣在世最后一年、也被称为“人气最高的一年”，吸引了大批人群蜂拥而至，声称要成为祂的门徒。

But Jesus warned them to “count the cost” before they “signed on” with Him.

但耶稣警告他们，在决定跟随祂之前务必先“计算代价”。

He cautioned them that, if they got serious about following Him, they would find themselves going “against the current” of popular culture, religion, legalism, and the expectations of society.

祂告诫众人：如果真的要跟随祂，他们必将发现自己正逆流而行，对抗着流行文化、宗教形式、律法主义及社会期待的洪流。

If they failed to prepare in heart and mind, they might otherwise abandon Him when following Him required a price (Luke 14:25-33). This is exactly what happened at the cross!

如果心志未作准备，当跟随祂时需要付出代价，他们便可能弃祂而去（路 14:25-33）。这正是十字架上发生的事件！

History has shown us that “world changers” have considered the cost yet are willing to pay the price for good change.

历史告诉我们，真正“改变世界者”都是计算过代价，却仍愿为美好的改变付出代价的人。

Consider the civil rights activists of the past generation, or those who are willing to risk even their lives today to take a stand against toxic populism, fascism, and evil in all its forms.

看看无论是过去的民权运动者，还是今天甘愿冒生命危险，对抗民粹主义、法西斯主义与各种邪恶的人。

4. Connected 與君王相連的人

“an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David....” (20).

“主的使者在约瑟梦中向他显现，说：“大卫的子孙约瑟.....”（20 节）。

Why address Joseph in this more formal title? It benefits us, who we are reading the story much later, as it confirms that Jesus was of the royal line of David and was the rightful heir to the throne, both through His earthly father and his biological mother.

为何要如此正式称呼约瑟？这对我们这些后世读者大有裨益，因为它证实了耶稣的身份：祂通过地上的父亲和肉身的母亲，承袭了大卫的王室血脉，是王位的合法继承人。

But I think something more is going on here. The Angel was reminding and reassuring the confounded Joseph of who he was: though he may have only been a lowly carpenter living in a small town to everyone else, He was a descendant of the royal family!

但我认为这里还有更深的含义。天使在提醒并安抚困惑的约瑟，他真正的身份：尽管在世人眼中他不过住在小镇上的卑微木匠，他实则是王室后裔！

We as Believers in Christ also need to be reminded of who we are from time to time, especially when we are tested in our faith and walk. Paul declared:

我们这些基督的信徒也需要时常提醒自己的身份，尤其当信仰与生命经历试炼时。保罗宣告：

“you are [God's] sons and daughters...so you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir” (Gal.4:6,7).

“因為你们是[神的]儿女……可见，你不再是奴隶，而是儿女了，既然是儿女，就靠着神也成为后嗣了”（加4:6-7）。

John tells us that, by virtue of our faith in Jesus and his work of salvation in us, we have “the right to become children of God”, for we are “born of God” (John 1:12-13).

约翰告诉我们，因着对耶稣的信心与祂在我们生命中的救赎之工，我们有“权柄作神的儿女”，因我们“是从神生的”（约 1:12-13）。

With this truth as his basis Peter then declares of God's children:

彼得以此真理为根基向神的儿女宣告：

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession.” (1Peter 2:9)

“你们是被拣选的一族，是君尊的祭司，是神圣的国度，是属神的子民”（彼前 2:9）。

Since we are connected to the King of the Universe we have a high calling: “that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1Peter 2:9).

既然我们与宇宙的君王相连，我们就肩负着崇高的使命：“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）。

Let's turn on the light of goodness, love, grace, compassion, righteousness, and kindness in our darkened world!

让我们在黑暗的世界中，点亮良善、爱、恩典、怜悯、公义与慈爱之光！

5. Courageous 有勇气的人

As he did to Mary, the angel exhorted Joseph: “do not be afraid” (20) What could Joseph be afraid of?

正如对玛利亚所言，天使也劝勉约瑟：“不要怕”（20）。约瑟究竟害怕什么呢？

I'm sure he's wondering if Mary is of a trustworthy character. He is afraid to receive a child not his own, as his own.

他定然在思量玛利亚是否可信的端正品行。他害怕要将一个不是自己亲生的孩子视如己出。

He knows the wagging tongues of a small community that will make it difficult for him and Mary to enjoy any normal family life.

他深知小社区里流言蜚语的讥讽，将使他和玛利亚难以享受正常的家庭生活。

People will consider that taking Mary as his wife would be a tacit admission that the child is his, or that he is a pushover and easily manipulated by Mary, or that he's not so righteous a man, since the Law of God required him to dissolve the marriage because of infidelity.

人们会认为娶玛利亚为妻等于默认孩子是他的，或是他懦弱易受玛利亚摆布，又或是他并非所認為的义人，毕竟上帝律法要求他因不忠解除婚姻。

I wonder if he is afraid that such attitudes towards him will negatively impact whether people will hire him as a carpenter? Will he have to leave his established business and start again elsewhere?

不知他是否担忧这些偏见会影响他木匠的生意？他是否將要放弃根基已深的产业，從新另谋生路？ Nelson Mandela, who had every reason to fear, shared this thought regarding his time in a South African prison:

曾有充分理由去害怕的南非前总统纳纳尔逊·曼德拉，分享他在监狱中的反思時說：

“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”

“我领悟到勇气并非没有恐惧，而是战胜恐惧。勇士并非无所畏惧，而是征服恐惧之人。”

We can be sure that Joseph had many fears, yet he was courageous. Consider the courage it takes to

raise a child, much less a child who was not his own, and who his mother claimed was the Son of God!

我們可以肯定约瑟有不同的恐惧，但他选择勇敢。试想养育一个孩子需要何等勇气，何况是非自己亲生的孩子，甚至是孩子母亲宣称這是上帝的兒子！

It is courageous people, people free of pride and the fear of man, who bring about real change for good in the world!

正是这些勇敢之人，摆脱骄傲与不畏惧他人，为世界带来了真正的美好改变！

6. Co-operative. 有合作精神的人

“When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him...” (24).

“约瑟醒来，就遵照主的使者的吩咐……” (24 节)

Joseph is the embodiment of the teachings of the Apostle James, who claims that good deeds are the “life breath” of faith: “just as the body is dead without breath so also faith is dead without good works.” (2:26)

约瑟活出了使徒雅各的教导。雅各宣称行為是信心的“生命气息”：“就如身体没有灵魂是死的，信心没有行为也是死的” (2:26) 。

He asks: “what good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Suppose you see a brother a sister has no food or clothing and you say “goodbye, have a good day, stay warm and eat well”, but then when you don't give that person food or clothing what good does that do?” (2:14-17NLT).

他质问：“我的弟兄姊妹们，若有人说自己有信心，却没有行为，有什么益处呢？这信心能救他吗？若是弟兄或是姊妹没有衣服穿，又缺少日用的饮食；你们中间有人对他们说：“平平安安地去吧！愿你们穿得暖，吃得饱”，却不给他们身体所需要的，这有什么益处呢？” (雅 2:14-17)

The Apostle Paul and his colleagues claimed to be “coworkers” of God and considered all believers as “co-workers in God's service” (2Cor.6:1; 1Cor.3:9).

使徒保罗及其同工自称是神的“同工”，并视所有信徒为“在神的事工上同工的人” (林后 6:1；林前 3:9) 。

On God's behalf we are to be agents for good in a bad world. When we work with God, and when we work for God, real and lasting change for good will take place in our world today!

在败坏的世界中，我们是代表上帝作为行善的使者。当我们与神同工、为神做工時，这个时代便会迎来真实而持久的美好改变！

In Luke chapter 12 we read a parable from Jesus about “servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet.”

在路加福音 12 章，我们读到耶稣讲的一个比喻，关于“仆人等候自己的主人从婚宴上回来”。

The servants do not know when the master may return and so they are warned to be “dressed ready for service and with your lamps burning.”

仆人不知道主人何时回来，因此被警告要“束紧腰带，灯也要点着”。

For far too long I interpreted this parable through the lens of what I now call “escapist theology”. I thought that Jesus was calling us to get ready for Him to “snatch” us out of this old, troubled world.

很长一段时间里，我曾用现在称为“逃避式神学”来解读这个比喻。我以为耶稣呼召我们要预备好，等候祂将我们从这陈旧困苦的世界“接走”。

One day Jesus is going to do that! But now I see that Jesus is also challenging us to be busy about the work of the Lord until he comes back.

将来耶稣确实会如此行！但如今我更明白，耶稣也在挑战我们：在祂再来之前，忠心投入主的工作。

Are you “waiting for the world to change”? Have you given up that it ever will? Remember the encouraging words of Paul:

你是否在“等待世界改变”？甚至已经放弃改变的希望？请记住保罗的勉励：

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline.” (2Tim1:7).

“因为神赐给我们的不是胆怯的心，而是刚强、仁爱、自制的心”（提后 1:7）。

We can be world changers!

我们可以成为改变世界的人！