

The God of Ordinary People

平凡人的上帝——

Sermon 7

第七篇讲道

1 Samuel 16:1–13

撒母耳记上 16:1–13

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I want to continue our reflection on 1 Samuel this morning. The theme of this series is the God who frames the stories of our lives. Without that frame, life can seem empty and even pointless, especially when so much of it is taken up with ordinary, mundane things. What I hope we are learning from the people in Samuel is that God is at work in our lives, even when we cannot see clearly what he is doing.

今天早上，我想继续和大家思想《撒母耳记上》。这个系列的主题是：上帝如何为我们生命的故事赋予意义。如果没有上帝这个更大的故事作为框架，生活有时会显得空虚，甚至毫无意义，尤其当我们的日子大部分都被平凡、琐碎的事情占据。我盼望我们从撒母耳记里这些人物身上逐渐明白：即使我们看不清上帝在做什么，祂仍然在我们的生命中工作。

The choices we make can draw us into God's work of salvation in the world—or take us away from it. We can live in the flow of God's grace, or we can choose a life of ungrace. Saul's story reminds us of two things. God's intention is for our good. And even when we choose another way, God does not abandon his saving purposes for humanity and the world.

我们的选择，可以让我们参与上帝在世上的救赎工作，也可以使我们偏离这工作。我们可以活在上帝恩典的流动之中，也可以选择一种远离恩典的生活。扫罗的故事提醒我们两件事：上帝的心意是要我们得益处；即使我们选择走自己的路，祂也不会放弃对人类和世界的救赎计划。

Chapter 16 tells us how David was chosen after Saul failed to live faithfully with the responsibility of kingship. As I mentioned last week, Saul's is a tragic story. He struggled to believe that anyone, including God, could be so generous to him. In trying to secure and possess the gift of kingship for himself, he let that gift slip away.

第十六章告诉我们，扫罗未能忠心承担君王的责任之后，大卫如何被拣选。正如我上星期所说，扫罗的一生是个悲剧。他很难相信，竟然有人——甚至上帝——会如此慷慨地待他。他拼命想把王位这个礼物牢牢抓在自己手里，结果反而失去了它。

We ended chapter 15 with a sense of loss. Saul was going his own way, while God continued to seek the good of his people. Chapter 16 begins with Samuel mourning over Saul.

第十五章结束时，我们感受到一种失落。扫罗走上了自己的路，上帝却仍然在为祂子民的益处工作。第十六章一开始，撒母耳正在为扫罗悲伤。

Perhaps he was disappointed in Saul, and perhaps even in himself for failing to guide him. But God comes to Samuel in his grief and tells him that his work is not finished. He must go to Bethlehem, to Jesse's household, and offer a sacrifice. Samuel is an old man now, making his way to carry out this task.

也许他对扫罗感到失望，甚至因自己未能好好引导扫罗而责怪自己。但上帝在他悲伤的时候来到他面前，告诉他：你的工作还没有结束。你要到伯利恒，去耶西的家献祭。如今撒母耳已经年老，却仍然动身去完成这个使命。

When he arrives, the elders are afraid. Samuel is not someone who casually drops in for tea! He has been a larger-than-life figure in Israel as prophet and judge. If I were one of the elders, I might wonder: Why is Samuel here? What does he want? And will receiving him put us in King Saul's bad books? News of Samuel's break with Saul may well have spread. So they ask, 'Do you come in peace?' Samuel replies, 'I come in peace.' He tells them he has come to sacrifice, and he invites Jesse and his family to join him.

他一到那里，城里的长老就害怕了。撒母耳可不是那种随便来串门、喝杯茶的人！他是以色列一位举足轻重的先知和士师。如果我是那些长老之一，我可能会想：撒母耳为什么来？他想做什么？我们接待他，会不会得罪扫罗王？撒母耳和扫罗决裂的消息，也许早已传开。所以他们问：“你是为平安来的吗？”撒母耳回答：“我是为平安来的。”他告诉他们自己是来献祭的，并邀请耶西和他的家人一同参加。

It is Jesse's family—descendants of Ruth the Moabite—that God has chosen to visit as Samuel searches for Saul's successor. Jesse presents his sons before Samuel, who is eager to discover which one the Lord has chosen.

撒母耳在寻找扫罗的继承人时，上帝要他探访的，就是耶西这一家——他们是摩押女子路得的后裔。耶西把儿子们带到撒母耳面前，而撒母耳急着想知道，上帝究竟拣选了哪一个。

The first son is Eliab: tall and handsome, a man's man. In many ways, his stature reminds Samuel of Saul. You can almost imagine him commanding attention as he enters the room. Surely Samuel thinks, 'This is the guy!' I mean, just look at him.

第一个出场的是以利押：身材高大、相貌英俊，很有男子气概。他的身材在许多方面使撒母耳想起扫罗。你几乎可以想象，他一走进房间就吸引所有人的目光。撒母耳心想：“肯定就是他了！”你看看他那个样子！

We are often told that first impressions influence hiring decisions, sometimes within moments. And outward appearance matters greatly in our culture. Otherwise, why would we spend so much on cosmetics and fashion? Even the prophet Samuel is easily impressed by what he sees.

我们常听人说，第一印象会影响招聘决定，有时候短短几秒钟就已经形成判断。在我们的文化里，外表确实很重要。不然，我们为什么会在化妆品和时装上花那么多钱呢？连先知撒母耳，也很容易被眼前所看见的吸引。

Jesse then brings Abinadab, Shammah, and five other sons before him. Perhaps Jesse has presented them in the order he considers most promising. Yet none is chosen. Imagine his confusion, especially when the sons he is most proud of are passed over.

接着，耶西把亚比拿达、沙玛，以及另外五个儿子带到撒母耳面前。也许耶西是按照自己认为最有希望的次序来介绍他们。然而，没有一个被拣选。试想想他的困惑，尤其是当他最引以为傲的儿子一个个被略过的时候。

Finally Samuel asks, 'Are these all your sons?' What a revealing question! We do not know how much time has passed, but Samuel must be wondering why the one God has chosen is not among them. And the fact that he has to ask suggests that Jesse did not think David worth mentioning. Surely anyone of importance in the family was already in the room!

最后，撒母耳问：“你的儿子都在这里了吗？”这是个多么耐人寻味的问题！我们不知道过了多久，但撒母耳一定在想：为什么上帝所拣选的人不在他们当中？而他竟然需要开口问，也让我们感觉到，耶西根本没想过有必要提起大卫。家里凡是重要的人，不是都已经在房间里了吗？

'Well, yes,' Jesse replies. 'There is one more—the youngest. He's out looking after the sheep.' The one left out of the gathering is the one God has in mind. Norman Archer, in his commentary on David, makes this observation:

耶西回答：“还有一个，就是最小的，现在正在放羊。”那个没有被邀请参加聚会的人，偏偏就是上帝心里所拣选的人。诺曼·阿彻在论述大卫的著作中，作了这样的观察：

“...it would seem to me that David lived in a family that ignored him, did not understand him, and did not sympathize with his dreams...It is my opinion that David was in the unfortunate predicament of being the unblessed son...

“在我看来，大卫似乎生活在一个忽视他、不理解他，也不体谅他梦想的家庭里.....我认为，大卫不幸处在一个得不到祝福的儿子的境况中.....”

It is fascinating to read the psalms and see how they express the turmoil of David's heart...Psalm 51, he writes...'...Behold I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me....'; Psalm 25:7 "Remember not the sin of my youth Psalm 27:10... When my father and mother forsake me...;..." David, Norman Archer, p. 12 -14)

“读诗篇是一件很有意思的事，因为我们可以从中看见大卫内心的挣扎.....在诗篇51篇，他写道：‘我是在罪孽里生的，在我母亲怀胎的时候就有了罪。’.....诗篇25:7：‘求你不要记念我幼年的罪愆。’诗篇27:10：‘我父母离弃我.....’”（引自诺曼·阿彻，《大卫》，第12–14页）

Archer's reading invites us to wonder what it was like for David growing up in Jesse's household. The psalms speak honestly of sin, loneliness, and anguish, though they do not tell us for certain how David was treated as a child. But notice what happens here. Jesse has brought seven sons before Samuel, and David isn't among them.

阿彻的解读让我们不禁想：大卫在耶西家中成长的日子究竟如何？诗篇坦诚地表达了罪、孤独和痛苦，但这些诗篇并不能让我们确定大卫小时候受到怎样的对待。不过，请留意这里发生的事。耶西已经带了七个儿子来到撒母耳面前，大卫却不在其中。

Samuel has to ask if there is another. Isn't that revealing? David was old enough to be entrusted with the family's sheep—an important part of their livelihood—yet apparently not

considered important enough to be brought before Samuel. We cannot say that Jesse did not love him. But on this occasion, David was clearly overlooked.

撒母耳还得问：“还有别的儿子吗？”这不是很说明问题吗？大卫已经大到可以受托照顾家里的羊群——那可是全家重要的生计——却似乎还不够重要，不值得被带到撒母耳面前。我们不能因此断定耶西不爱他。但是，在这件事情上，大卫显然被忽略了。

Eugene Peterson makes this commentary: “...the Hebrew word is baby brother – haqqaton - .. carries undertones of insignificance, of not counting for very much – certainly not a prime candidate for prestigious work. The family runt.”

尤金·毕德生这样评论：“这个希伯来词指的是‘小弟弟’——haqqaton——带有不起眼、无足轻重的意思；显然不是担任重要职位的理想人选。就是家里那个最不起眼的小家伙。”

And that gives weight to Peterson's observation, doesn't it? The youngest, the one who didn't seem to count for very much, was the very person God had come looking for. Samuel insists that they send for David. When David arrives, the Lord makes it clear: this is the one he has chosen. Not because being overlooked makes someone more worthy, but because God's choice is not governed by the outward measures that impress us. As we will see, the Lord looks at the heart.

这样一来，毕德生的观察就更有分量了，不是吗？这个最小的、似乎不被重视的孩子，竟然正是上帝要寻找的人。撒母耳坚持要他们把大卫叫回来。大卫一来，上帝就清楚表明：这就是祂所拣选的人。不是因为一个人被忽略，就变得更配被拣选，而是因为上帝的拣选不受那些令我们眼前一亮的、外在标准支配。接下来我们会看见：上帝看的是人的内心。

This choice brings to mind Paul's words to the Corinthian church. Among their many struggles, the Corinthians argued over who was most spiritual. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:28–29:

这个拣选使我想到保罗写给哥林多教会的话。哥林多教会有许多问题，其中一个就是争论谁更属灵。保罗在哥林多前书1:28–29写道：

God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,²⁹ so that no one may boast before him¹

上帝拣选了世上卑贱的、被人厌恶的，以及那算不得什么的，为要废掉那些自以为了不起的，使一切有血气的人，在上帝面前一个也不能自夸。

David, the youngest in Jesse's family—haqqaton, the one left outside with the sheep—is anointed to become king. His story will occupy a remarkable place in the biblical narrative. And through David's family line, the story will eventually lead us to Jesus.

大卫是耶西家最小的儿子——haqqaton，那个被留在外面看羊的孩子——却被膏立，将来要作王。他的故事在整部圣经中占有极其重要的位置。而且，透过大卫的家族，这个故事最终会把我们带到耶稣面前。

¹The Holy Bible : Today's New International Version. 2005 (1 Co 1:28-29). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

So what does David's story tell us about our story in God's greater story?

那么，大卫的故事，在上帝更宏大的故事中，对我们自己的故事有什么启发呢？

For me, one important lesson is this:

对我来说，其中一个重要的功课是：

1. God chooses ordinary people for extraordinary work.

一、上帝拣选平凡的人，去成就不平凡的事。

That matters because many of us feel that we do not quite measure up. Think about standing in line at the grocery store, surrounded by magazine covers of impossibly beautiful people. None of those people seems to be standing in our line at Superstore! The people around us—and perhaps we ourselves—look nothing like those polished photographs.

这一点很重要，因为我们许多人常觉得自己不够好。试想你在超市排队，周围的杂志封面上都是美得几乎不真实的人物。但奇怪的是，在Superstore排队的时候，似乎从来没有碰见过这些人！身边的人——也许包括我们自己——看起来都和那些精心修饰的照片相差很远。

But this passage reminds us that, in God's economy, we all matter. Ordinary people, without status or recognition, have a place in his purposes. God's choice is not a popularity contest. It is not based simply on appearance, credentials, or the abilities we think someone might have.

但这段经文提醒我们：在上帝眼中，我们每一个人都有价值。那些平凡、没有地位、也没有名气的人，在上帝的计划中同样有一席之地。上帝的拣选不是一场人气比赛，也不是单凭外貌、文凭，或我们认为某个人具备的能力来决定。

That is very different from the values of our culture. We judge people by appearance, but also by titles and qualifications, as though having more degrees automatically makes a person wiser or more capable.

这和我们文化中的价值观很不一样。我们不仅凭外表判断人，也看头衔和资格，好像一个人拥有更多学位，就一定更有智慧、更有能力。

Those with the right credentials become the 'experts.' In the church, we sometimes make a similar distinction between 'clergy' and 'laity,' as though clergy were expert Christians. Yes, clergy may have the opportunity for focused training and study of God's Word. But that does not make us spiritual experts. We are fellow pilgrims, set apart by our communities of faith, called to devote time to Scripture and prayer for the good of God's people.

有了合适资格的人，就成了所谓的“专家”。在教会里，我们有时也把“圣职人员”和“平信徒”分得很清楚，好像牧者就是基督徒中的专家。不错，牧者可能有更多机会接受专门训练，深入研读上帝的话语。但这并不使我们成为属灵专家。我们也是同路的朝圣者，蒙信仰群体分别出来，为了上帝子民的益处，特别花时间研读圣经、祷告。

I have studied theology for most of my adult life. When I was younger, I was much more confident that I understood God and his ways. But the older I get, and the more I learn, the more I realize how little I know. God is more mysterious to me now than he was in my

youth. And I find that I need more faith, not less, to continue this journey. So 'expert' is not a word I would use for clergy. When it comes to God, we are all learners.

我成年之后大部分时间都在学习神学。年轻的时候，我比较有把握，觉得自己明白上帝，也明白祂行事的方式。但年纪越大、学得越多，我越发现自己知道得多么少。对我来说，现在的上帝比年轻时更加奥秘。我也发现，要继续走这条信仰的路，我需要的不是更少的信心，而是更多。所以，我不会用“专家”来形容牧者。说到认识上帝，我们都是学习的人。

Eugene Peterson makes this observation: “Our culture holds experts and professionals in a regard that’s inflated out of all proportion to reality. The corollary of this is that we regard the lay person as a near idiot, competent only when consulting with or deferring to the expert. The consequences aren’t encouraging...” (Leap Over a Wall, p. 18). He goes on to ask whether surrendering so much of our judgment to experts and professionals—including religious experts—has really made our lives better.

尤金·毕德生这样观察：“我们的文化对专家和专业人士的推崇，远远超出了实际应有的程度。相应的结果，就是我们几乎把普通人看作无知之辈，仿佛他们只有咨询专家，或听从专家的意见，才能做对事情。这样的后果实在不令人乐观……”（《跨越高墙》，第18页）他接着问：我们把这么多判断权交给专家和专业人士——包括宗教专家——我们的生活真的因此变得更好吗？

Think of the economic crisis that surrounded the original writing of this sermon. Who led people into that mess? It was not people like my in-laws, who saved and spent only what they had. Many of the damaging decisions came from people regarded as experts in mortgages, financial products, and markets. Expertise has its place, of course. But we should not confuse expertise with wisdom.

想想这篇讲章最初写作时发生的经济危机。是谁把人们带进那场困境？不是像我岳父岳母那样，量入为出、有多少钱才花多少钱的人。许多造成严重后果的决定，反而出自那些被视为房贷、金融产品和市场专家的人。当然，专业知识有它的价值，但我们不能把专业知识和智慧混为一谈。

Thankfully, God sees ordinary people. And it is often among people who seem to have little to offer that God does remarkable things. David is called and set apart while he is still the youngest son, out tending sheep. The passage gives us no reason to think that God has chosen the wrong person.

感谢上帝，祂看见平凡的人。很多时候，正是在那些看起来没什么可贡献的人身上，上帝成就了奇妙的事。大卫仍然只是家里最小的儿子，在外面牧羊，上帝就在那时呼召他，把他分别出来。这段经文没有给我们任何理由认为上帝选错了人。

David—the one outside, the one easily overlooked—is anointed as Israel's future king. And from his family line will come Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of the world. Who in Jesse's household or in Bethlehem could have imagined that?

大卫——那个在外面、容易被忽略的人——被膏立为以色列未来的君王。而且，从他的家族中，将要诞生拿撒勒人耶稣，世界的救主。耶西家里的人，或伯利恒城里的人，有谁想象得到呢？

The challenge for Samuel, and for us, is to look beyond appearances. We are quick to form judgments about people, often before we know them. But people are more than what meets the eye. We need to listen, to pray, and to make room for a person's heart and character to become known. And that, my friends, takes time.

对撒母耳来说，也是对我们来说，挑战就是要越过外表去看人。我们往往很快就对别人下判断，甚至还没真正认识他们。但人并不只是我们眼睛所看见的。我们需要聆听、祷告，也要给人空间，让他的内心和品格慢慢显露出来。朋友们，这需要时间。

That brings me to the second observation:

这就带出我的第二个观察：

2. God looks at the heart. In verse 7 we read:

二、上帝看人的内心。第七节这样说：

“Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things human beings look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7)

“不要看他的外貌和他身材高大，我不拣选他。耶和华不像人看人；人是看外貌，耶和华是看内心。”（撒母耳记上16:7）

If the heart is what God looks at, then surely we ought to give attention to cultivating it. However, our hearts can deceive us. Jeremiah describes the human heart as deceitful and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). But that is not the end of the story. By God's Word and Spirit, our hearts can be shaped toward trust, joy, and goodness. Listen to these passages from the Psalms:

如果上帝看的是人的内心，那么我们当然应当认真地栽培自己的内心。不过，我们的心也会欺骗我们。耶利米形容人心诡诈，坏到极处（耶利米书17:9）。但故事并没有停在这里。借着上帝的话语和圣灵，我们的心可以逐渐被塑造，学会信靠，充满喜乐和良善。请听诗篇的这些话：

7 I will praise the Lord, who counsels me even at night my heart instructs me.8 I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure

“我要称颂那指教我的耶和华；我的心肠在夜间也警戒我。我将耶和华常摆在我面前；因祂在我右边，我便不至摇动。因此，我的心欢喜，我的灵快乐；我的肉身也要安然居住。”（诗篇16:7-9）

Psalm 77:3-6

诗篇77:3-6

3 I remembered you, God, and I groaned; I meditated, and my spirit grew faint.4 You kept my eyes from closing; I was too troubled to speak.5 I thought about the former days, the

years of long ago;⁶ I remembered my songs in the night. My heart meditated and my spirit asked:

“我想念上帝，就烦躁不安；我沉思默想，心灵便发昏。你使我不能闭眼；我烦乱不安，甚至不能说话。我思想古时的日子，上古的年岁。我想起夜间所唱的诗歌；我的心默默思想，我的灵仔细省察。”

Psalm 119:9 - 11

诗篇119:9-11

9 How can those who are young keep their way pure? By living according to your word.¹⁰ I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

“少年人用什么洁净他的行为呢？是要遵行你的话！我一心寻求了你；求你不要叫我偏离你的命令。我将你的话藏在心里，免得我得罪你。”

Training our hearts is perhaps one of the most important disciplines we can develop in our spiritual lives. Why is this important? Henri Nouwen notes that our hearts are naturally crowded with what he calls the "false self"—the part of us that tries to prove our worth through what we do, what we have, and what people think of us. It takes time to train your hearts. It takes solitude and prayer in God's word to slowly root out the false self...It does not take more knowledge, but more time - not more studying but more praying God's word. 操练我们的内心，也许是属灵生命中最重要操练之一。为什么这么重要？卢云指出，我们的心常常挤满了他所谓的“虚假自我”——就是那个不断想借着自己的成就、拥有的东西，以及别人对我们的看法，来证明自己价值的部分。操练内心需要时间。我们需要独处，需要在上帝的话语中祷告，才能慢慢把这个虚假自我连根拔起。所需要的，不是更多知识，而是更多时间；不是更多研究，而是更多用上帝的话语来祷告。

David spent many days with the sheep, away from the bustle of his family. I imagine he had time to ponder, to pray, and to play. In the psalms associated with David, we encounter struggles with sin, questions of faith, doubts, and fears. Perhaps that is why the psalms bring us such comfort. They speak so openly about the human struggle, yet again and again point us toward hope in God. We cannot know exactly how those early days shaped David, but they remind us that time spent out of public view is not necessarily time wasted. God can be at work there, too.

大卫有许多日子和羊群一起度过，远离家里的忙碌。我想象他有时间思想、祷告，也有时间玩耍。在与大卫有关的诗篇中，我们看见他与罪挣扎，对信仰有疑问，也经历怀疑和恐惧。也许这正是诗篇带给我们安慰的原因：它们如此坦诚地表达人的挣扎，却一次又一次把我们引向在上帝里面的盼望。我们无法确切知道早年的牧羊生活怎样塑造了大卫，但这提醒我们：那些不被人看见的日子，并不一定是浪费的时间。上帝也可以在那里工作。

If ever we needed to cultivate our hearts, it is in this noisy, hurried, competitive world. Left unattended, the heart can become overgrown. But with care, and by God's grace, it can become a place where goodness grows. Let me tell you a story.

如果说什么时候最需要栽培我们的内心，那就是现在这个嘈杂、匆忙、竞争激烈的世界。若无人照料，心田就可能杂草丛生。但若用心耕耘，靠着上帝的恩典，它就能成为良善生长的地方。我想给大家讲一个故事。

My wife grew up on a beautiful piece of property. When I was dating her, I used to visit her at her parents' home. I had never walked on grass so soft. We would go barefoot, and the grass was so lush that you could see our footprints. In front of the renovated farmhouse was a large garden that produced the sweetest corn I have ever tasted. Our children grew up playing on that wonderful land. Apples and pears, raspberries and strawberries seemed to grow everywhere. There were roses, dahlias, tulips, and sunflowers. In spring and summer, the property was full of colour.

我太太在一块非常美丽的土地上长大。当年我们谈恋爱的时候，我常常到她父母家探望她。我从来没有踏过那么柔软的草坪。我们会赤脚在草地上走，草长得十分茂密，踩过的地方连脚印都看得见。翻修过的农舍前面有一大片菜园，种出的玉米，是我吃过最甜的。我们的孩子也在那块美丽的土地上玩耍长大。苹果、梨子、覆盆子和草莓，仿佛到处都有。那里还有玫瑰、大丽花、郁金香和向日葵。每逢春夏，整块土地色彩缤纷。

Eventually my in-laws retired and sold the property to someone who promised to care for it. But the buyer wanted to develop the land. When it became clear that it could not be subdivided or developed, the new owner lost interest. Grace went back to walk around the property some time later. The flowers were gone. The house was gone. Many of the fruit trees were gone. The raspberries, the lawn, the garden—all gone, replaced by wild grass. Only the great cedar and spruce trees remained. It was almost as if no one had ever lived there.

后来，我岳父岳母退休，把房产卖给一个答应会好好照顾它的人。但买主其实想开发那块土地。后来发现土地不能分割，也不能开发，新主人便失去了兴趣。过了一段时间，Grace回去走了一趟。花没有了，房子没有了，许多果树也没有了。覆盆子、草坪、菜园——全都消失了，取而代之的是野草。只剩下高大的雪松和云杉。那地方看起来，几乎像从来没有人在那里生活过一样。

That garden did not become beautiful by accident. Someone had cared for it, year after year. And when that care stopped, it slowly disappeared. Our hearts also need tending. Jeremiah's warning about the deceitful heart is serious, but it need not be the final word. With the help of God's Word and Spirit, our hearts can be changed into hearts that trust God and love what is right.

那个花园并不是偶然变得美丽的。有人年复一年地悉心照料。一旦照顾停止，它就慢慢荒废、消失了。我们的内心同样需要耕耘。耶利米关于人心诡诈的警告是严肃的，但不必成为最后的结论。靠着上帝的话语和圣灵的帮助，我们的心可以改变，成为信靠上帝、喜爱正直的心。

As we continue David's story, we will discover that he is a man like us, with many faults. He does not always get things right. Yet one important difference between David and Saul is the way David responds when confronted with his wrongdoing. David, too, can resist and fail; but he eventually acknowledges his sin and seeks God's mercy. We will explore that more in the weeks ahead.

随着我们继续看大卫的故事，就会发现他和我们一样，是一个有许多缺点的人。他并不是每件事都做得对。不过，大卫和扫罗之间有一个重要的区别，就是当别人指出他的错时，他如何回应。大卫也会抗拒，也会失败；但最终，他承认自己的罪，寻求上帝的怜悯。接下来的几个星期，我们会进一步思想这一点。

The point is not that David is a superhuman being. It is that God works through ordinary, flawed people whose hearts remain open to correction and change. May we learn to cultivate the hard ground of our hearts so that the seed of God's Word, watered by the Holy Spirit, may bear fruit for God's glory and the good of others. Amen.

重点不是大卫有什么超人的本领，而是上帝透过平凡、有缺点、却仍愿意接受纠正和改变的人来工作。愿我们学会耕耘自己心中坚硬的土地，让上帝话语的种子，得着圣灵的浇灌，结出果子，使上帝得荣耀，也使别人得益处。阿们。

Before we participate in communion, I want to ask you and I to look into our own hearts. 在我们领受圣餐之前，我想邀请大家，也包括我自己，一起来省察自己的内心。

1. 1. Imagine your heart opened before the Lord this morning. What would he see?

一、想象今天早上，你的心完全敞开在主面前。祂会看见什么？

- As you examine your heart, where do you need to invite the Spirit of God to help you?

当你省察自己的心时，在哪些地方，你需要邀请圣灵来帮助你？

- Are there issues you need to release?

有没有什么事情，是你需要放下的？

- Are there wounds that need healing?

你的心里有没有伤口需要医治？

- Is there someone you need to forgive?

有没有什么人，是你需要饶恕的？

- Is there someone you need to ask for forgiveness?

有没有什么人，是你需要向他请求原谅的？

- Do you need to believe again?

你是否需要重新学习相信，重新拾起信心？

Think about the people in your life. How might you look beyond appearances and see the person beneath the surface?

二、想一想你生命中的人。你怎样才能越过外表，看见表面之下那个真实的人？