

【人生如歌 Life is a song】平凡生活的力量 The Power of Ordinary Living

「住」的使命 The Mission of Dwelling

基督徒上班上學養兒育女，住在一個地方過著平凡的日子，不像傳道人那樣上台講道，不像宣教士那樣出去宣教，這樣的生活能夠領人歸主嗎？答案是肯定的。基督徒帶領左鄰右舍、親人朋友信主的人數，遠超佈道家、傳道人、宣教士領人歸主的總和。大多數人信主不是因為牧師，不是因為宣教士，而是因為住在附近的基督徒。在他們的生活圈子裡有基督徒接觸了他們，他們才信主的。住，是傳福音最主要的方法。住在人群中的基督徒，是引人歸主最主要的媒介。

聖經強調「住」的重要性。神與人同住：「又當為我造聖所，使我可以住在他們中間。」（出 25:8）耶穌與人同住：「道成了肉身，住在我們中間，充充滿滿的有恩典、有真理。」（約 1:14）使徒與人同住：「就吩咐奉耶穌基督的名給他們施浸，他們又請彼得住了幾天。」（徒 10:48）保羅和巴拿巴在安提阿住了一年，人們開始稱門徒為基督徒：「他們足有一年的工夫和教會一同聚集，教訓了許多人。門徒稱為基督徒，是從安提阿起首。」（徒 11:26）有人問耶穌住在哪裡？耶穌說：「你們來看！」他們就去看他在那裡住，這一天便與他同住。（約 1:39）

弟兄姊妹，我們不要小看「住」。住下來，才有「接觸的機會」和「深度的認識」。門徒與耶穌同進同出，一起生活了三年多，每天聽主說話，看主做事，對主的認識逐日加深。保羅在以弗所住了三年，當地的信徒大得造就。（徒 20:31-35）如果沒有住下來，只是和人擦肩而過，打個招呼，人家很難認識你的神。住下來了，生活與人有了接觸，別人就有機會認識你的神。

「住」的本身就是使命，「與人同住」就是「使命執行中」。我們不是住在洛杉磯等待神的使命，而是住在洛杉磯執行神的使命。弟兄姊妹，不要輕看你的日常生活，神要在你的生活中彰顯他的榮耀。有如以利亞，神差遣他去住在西頓，神也差遣你去住在目前的地方。神要藉著你那看似平凡的生活，顯出他的不平凡。

麵和油 Bread and Oil

以利亞住在西頓的時候，「罈內的麵不減少，瓶裡的油不缺短」，人家因此而認識他的神。如果以利亞只是「住」，卻沒有「麵和油」，人家不會認識他的神。同樣的，如果我們只是住，卻沒有麵和油，人家也不會認識我們的神。那麼，甚麼是「麵和油」呢？

麵和油是神所供應的糧食，在貧乏之地出現，如同曠野中的嗎哪。耶穌曾經以嗎哪為例，教導百姓甚麼才是「天上來的真糧」。耶穌說：「我就是生命的糧，到我這裡來的必定不餓，信我的永遠不渴。」（約 6:31-35）親愛的弟兄姊妹，耶穌是生命的糧，我們的「麵和油」就是主自己！

生命的糧不是宗教，而是耶穌。不是基督教，而是基督。基督徒是「與耶穌基督建立起生命關係的人」，不是與基督教建立起關係的人。一個宗教化的信仰沒有生命，唯有基督才有生命。宗教

是死的，神是活的，活的神與信他的人同在。以色列人有宗教，神卻不與他們同在，只與以利亞同在。以色列連年大旱，遍地飢荒，以利亞卻得到麵和油的供應。基督徒也是一樣。有耶穌的人得到生命之糧的供應，沒有耶穌的人卻要面對生命的飢荒，得不著供應。

我們以信心接受耶穌為主，生命與主相連。我們按照主的吩咐，學習遵守他的話語，主就與我們同在。（太 28:20）主藉著我們的日常生活，將他自己彰顯出來。這並不是說，我們會像耶穌一樣完美無缺。這是說，我們會和周圍的人一樣，有人性軟弱的一面，但卻得著供應，有力量勝過軟弱。我們能夠做出一些周圍的人想做卻做不到的事，令他們感到羨慕。不是我們很完美，令他們感到羨慕。而是我們明明和他們一樣軟弱，生活的環境也完全相同，可是我們卻能夠過得比他們好，令他們感到羨慕。

權能生活 Power Living

傳福音不但是話語，也是生活。你過得比別人好，人家就想聽你的話。你和大家一樣，有誰要聽你的話？大家都沒有糧食吃，你卻有麵和油，人家就想認識你的神。你和別人一樣沒有糧食吃，有誰要認識你的神？我們以信心接受基督為主，主的話常在我們裡面（約 15:7），我們就能結果子，和別人不一樣。主話語的內住，改變了我們舊有的觀念。我們的舊觀念是從世界來的，和世界很合拍，和主的教訓卻格格不入。我們信主之後，將新酒裝在新皮袋裡，將主的教訓裝在新生命裡，（太 9:17）使我們得以過權能生活。權能生活彰顯出神的美好，使周圍的人羨慕：

- 現代人很忙、很累、為許多事操心。他們羨慕安息，基督徒有安息。（太 11:28）
- 現代人虛偽，勾心鬥角，但卻渴望真誠。他們以為人間沒有真誠，沒想到在基督徒中間找著了久違的真誠。
- 現代人追求成功，崇拜財富，卻缺少自我的肯定。他們無視身邊的小人物，沒想到自己卻被別人所無視。他們渴望得到肯定，基督徒有這個肯定。在神的家中，麻雀找著了房屋，燕子找著了抱雛之窩。（詩 84:3）
- 現代人漂浮，缺少定見。他們認為一切都是相對的，只有不同的看法，沒有絕對的真理。他們為自己的「知識」感到自負，時間久了卻感到很累。他們羨慕安定，發現那些相信絕對真理的基督徒，有這份安定。（約 14:6）
- 現代社會分化極深，族裔之間彼此排斥，團體之間築起高牆，人與人分門別類，心中卻渴望「和睦同居」。基督徒彼此接納，和睦同居。（弗 2:14; 羅 15:7）
- 現代社會富者越富，貧者越貧，獎勵強者，打擊弱者。弱者變強之後，也去打擊弱者，因為當初別人就是這樣打擊他。貧者變富之後，也去剝削貧者，因為當初別人也是這樣剝削他。人心渴望不被剝削，不受歧視。在基督徒當中，他們找著了公義、慈愛、尊重。

平凡生活的力量：

1. 神要我們與人同住，過權能生活，顯出他的美好
2. 耶穌是我們生命的糧，是我們力量的來源，使我們的生活吸引人

【Life is a Song】 The Power of Ordinary Living

The Mission of Dwelling

Christians live their daily, normal lives going to work and raising up children, unlike ministers and missionaries who preach from the pulpit or go out on missions. Can such ordinary living bring others to know Christ? The answer is a resounding yes. In fact, the number of people who come to Christ because of their Christian neighbors and friends far exceed those who believe as a result of ministers and evangelists. The majority of believers came to know the Lord not through ministers and missionaries, but because of Christians who lived among them and befriended them. The Christian who lives among the people is the most effective channel of the gospel.

The Bible emphasizes the importance of “dwelling”. The Lord dwelt among men: “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.” (Exodus 25:8) Jesus dwelt among men: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14) The apostles dwelt among men: “So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.” (Acts 10:48) Paul and Barnabas lived in Antioch for a year, and others started to call them Christians. “So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” (Acts 11:26) Someone asked Jesus where he was staying, and he replied “Come and you will see.” So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. (John 1:39)

Brothers and sisters, do not underestimate the power of “dwelling”. Living among the people gives us the opportunity to make friends and build deeper relationships. The disciples were with Jesus every day for three years. They listened to his teaching and saw him in action daily, and their relationship with him grew stronger by the day. Paul lived in Ephesus for three years, and the disciples were greatly built up in their faith as a result (Acts 20:31-35). Superficial greetings and shallow acquaintances do not give us the opportunity to share the gospel. If we don’t dwell among the people, it will be tough for them to know our God. If we live among them and build relationships with them, then they will have the opportunity to know our God.

“Dwelling” is in itself a mission. “Dwelling among the people” is the mission in action. We are not living in Los Angeles awaiting the mission from God, rather, we are living in Los Angeles carrying out our mission from God. Brothers and sisters, do not underestimate what God can do through your daily life. God wants to use your life to display His glory. Just like Elijah, whom God sent to live in Sidon, God has also sent you to live in the place where you currently reside. God wants to use your seemingly ordinary life to showcase His extraordinary ways.

Bread and Oil

When Elijah lived in Sidon, “the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry”, and others came to know his God because of this. If Elijah had merely lived there without “flour

and oil”, others would not have known about his God. In the same way, if we just live here without “flour and oil”, others will not know our God. So what is this “flour and oil”?

The flour and oil were the Lord’s supply in a land of famine, just like the manna in the desert. Jesus once used manna as an example to teach about the “true bread from heaven”. He said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” (John 6:31-35) Dear brothers and sisters, Jesus is the bread of life, and our “flour and oil” is the Lord Jesus Himself!

The bread of life is not religion, but Jesus. Not Christianity, but Christ. Christians are people who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, not an affiliation with the Christian religion. Having faith in a religion does not give life, only Jesus gives life. Religion is dead, but God is living, and the living God dwells among those who believe in Him. The Israelites held on to a religion, but God was not with them. God was only with Elijah. Israel went through years of drought and famine, yet Elijah was supplied with flour and oil. It is the same with Christians. Those who have Jesus receive their supply from the bread of life, but those without Jesus will face the famine of life.

By faith, we trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, and our lives are connected to His. When we listen to the word of the Lord and obey His teachings, the Lord is with us (Matthew 28:20). The Lord reveals Himself through our daily lives. This is not to say that we will be perfect and without blemish like Jesus. We will be like those around us, weak in our human nature, but we will be supplied with strength to overcome our human weakness. Others may envy us because we will be able to accomplish some things that ordinary people cannot. They are envious not because we are any better than them. Rather, it is because we are clearly just as weak as them, living in the same circumstances as them, and yet we are able to live better.

Power Living

Evangelism is not just by words, but also by living. When you are living better than others, others will want to listen to you. If you are living in the same way as others, nobody will listen to you. When food is scarce in the whole land, yet you have flour and oil, others will want to know your God. If you are also starving and without food, who will want to know your God? When we trust in Christ as our Lord, His word remains in us (John 15:7), and we are able to bear much fruit, to be set apart from others. The word of God transforms our former ways of thinking. Our old ways of thinking were dictated by the world, and was in tune with the world, but contradictory to the Lord’s teachings. After we come to know Christ, we pour the new wine into new wineskins, and fill our new lives with the Lord’s teachings (Matthew 9:17), which enables us to live our new lives powerfully. Such power living displays the goodness of the Lord, and attracts the envy of those around us.

- People in today’s world are always busy, tired, and worried about many things. They desire rest. Christians have rest. (Matthew 11:28)

- People in today's world are insincere and manipulative, yet they desire authenticity. They used to think that honesty and sincerity no longer existed, but among Christians, they finally found what they had long sought after.
- People in today's world pursue success and worship wealth, but lack self-validation. They look down on those they think are lesser than them, but found that they are also looked down upon by others. They seek to be validated. Christians have found such validation. For in God's house, even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself. (Psalm 84:3)
- People in today's world drift along without firm convictions. To them, everything is relative and there is no absolute truth. They are proud of their "knowledge", yet holding on to such "knowledge" causes them to tire as time passes. They desire stability and find that Christians who believe in absolute truth have such stability. (John 14:6)
- Today's society is deeply divided. There is racial discrimination. There are barriers between people. There are dividing walls of hostility. People desire to live in harmony with one another. Christians accept one another, and live in peace with each other. (Ephesians 2:14; Romans 15:7)
- Today's society has a deep rift between the rich and the poor. The rich become richer, and the poor become poorer. The strong are rewarded, while the weak are struck down. When the weak become strong, they in turn strike down the weak, because that was how they were treated when they were weak. When the poor become rich, they in turn exploit the poor, because that was how they were treated when they were poor. People desire not to be exploited and discriminated against. Among Christians, they find righteousness, kindness, and respect.

The power of ordinary living:

1. God wants us to dwell among the people, to live an ordinary life powerfully, so as to display His goodness.
2. Jesus is the bread of life, and our source of strength. He is what makes our lives attractive to others.