出人意外的平凡 Extraordinarily Ordinary

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| Luke 2:41-521st Sunday After Christmas Day | December 29, 2024 ATPC |

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| 聖誕節剛過。每次我們想像耶穌的降生，我們大概都是一位置身事外的旁觀者，看著約瑟和馬利亞忙著旅遊、接待客人、避難、和受到一堆驚嚇。不知道大家有沒有想過，假如我們就是約瑟和馬利亞，而耶穌就是我們自己的小孩，那整個故事會有什麼不同呢？我們教得出一位彌賽亞嗎？ | Christmas has just passed. Whenever we imagine the birth of Jesus, we often view it as outsiders, observing Joseph and Mary as they travel, host visitors, seek refuge, and endure many surprises. But have you ever wondered what it would be like if we were Joseph and Mary and if Jesus were our child? Could we raise a Messiah?  |
| 今天，讓我們透過耶穌青少年時期的一件小插曲來重新思考耶穌的降生和成長對我們生命和選擇的意義。 | Today, let us reflect on what the birth and growth of Jesus mean for our lives and choices by exploring an incident from His teenage years. |
| 經文背景 | **Scripture Context** |
| 在馬可福音的第二章，首先記載了耶穌的降生、割禮和四十天後到聖殿將長子獻給主，接著在第四十節說「孩子漸漸長大，強健起來，充滿智慧，又有上帝的恩典在他身上」之後，耶穌就在這一節當中從一歲跳到十二歲了！ | The Gospel of Luke, chapter 2, first recounts the birth of Jesus, His circumcision, and His presentation at the temple after forty days, as the law required. Luke 2:40 says: *"*The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.*"* Then, suddenly, the narrative leaps forward, and Jesus is twelve years old! |
| 雖然聖經並沒有記載耶穌的童年，也沒有太多青年時期的事蹟，但路加福音卻獨家記載今天的事件。 | Although the Bible doesn’t document much of Jesus’ childhood or youth, Luke uniquely records the event we focus on today.  |
| 從第二章的第41節開始，12歲的耶穌原本只是平凡地跟著家人們去一年一度的耶路撒冷逾越節的旅程，結果，沒想到在約瑟和馬利亞回程的一天後，他們發現耶穌不見了！直到三天後，他們才在聖殿裡找到耶穌。 | Starting in Luke 2:41, the story describes how twelve-year-old Jesus joined His family for their annual journey to Jerusalem for the Passover. However, as Joseph and Mary began their return journey, they realized, after a day, that Jesus was missing! It took them three days to find Him in the temple. |
| 父母的感受 | **The Parents’ Feelings** |
| 今天，我沒有想要討論為什麼他們可以丟失耶穌卻一天沒有發現，或是為什麼耶穌要嚇他的父母；我更想要邀請大家一起深入體會馬利亞的感受。 | Today, I don’t want to focus on why Joseph and Mary didn’t notice Jesus was missing for a day or why Jesus chose to alarm His parents this way. Instead, I want to explore Mary’s emotions in this situation. |
| 首先，請問在座身為父母的弟兄姊妹們有沒有體會過孩子不見的狀況？不要說三天了，應該連三分鐘都會嚇到放下所有事情、用全力想辦法找出孩子。這樣，大家應該不難同理約瑟和馬利亞的感受，尤其是他們已經步行一整天，不管是身心靈都非常疲憊的狀態下還要緊張地找耶穌。 | To all the parents here, have you ever lost track of your child, even for a short time? Even a few minutes can be terrifying enough to drop everything and search with all your might. Imagine Joseph and Mary’s fear and exhaustion—they had already walked an entire day and now had to retrace their steps in anxiety, looking for Jesus. |
| 雖然我沒有小孩，但是我永遠記得當我的第一隻狗Ida第一次掙脫項圈並且朝著住宅區的巷子跑進去的感受。 | Although I don’t have children, I’ll never forget the panic I felt when my first dog, Ida, slipped out of her collar and darted into a neighborhood alleyway. |
| 接著，在好不容易花了三天走回聖殿看到自己的小孩，假如是你，你的第一個反應是什麼？我敢說，約瑟和馬利亞雖然會感到如釋重負和感謝孩子還活得好好的，但應該更多會感受到憤怒和疑惑。假如是在台灣的八點檔，約瑟或馬利亞應該會在見到耶穌後馬上賞他一巴掌。 | When Joseph and Mary finally found Jesus in the temple after three days, how would you have reacted? Relief and gratitude that He was safe, yes, but probably also frustration and anger! If this were a soap opera in Taiwan, Joseph or Mary might have scolded Jesus or even smacked Him. |
| 我猜，這也是為什麼當所有在聖殿的人「對他的聰明和應對感到驚奇」（2:47）馬利亞卻像許多媽媽說出一樣的話：「我兒啊，為甚麼對我們這樣做呢？看哪，你父親和我很焦急，到處找你！」（2:48） | This likely explains why, while those in the temple were astonished at Jesus’ wisdom and answers (2:47), Mary exclaimed with a mother’s exasperation: “Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety!” (2:48). |
| 雖然有些學者會討論為什麼馬利亞看不出耶穌的聰明才智，反而問出這種「無關緊要」的問題，但我認為這些人從來就沒有顧過小孩。當小孩不見又找回來的時候，誰還管他說了些什麼智慧的話，心裡急躁都來不及了！ | Some scholars wonder why Mary failed to recognize Jesus’ wisdom and instead asked what they deem a trivial question. But as anyone who has cared for a child knows, in moments of such intense emotions, wisdom often takes a back seat to worry! |
| 這樣的反應讓我想到一個美國很傳神的詞——Helicopter Parents，直升機父母。現代的教育因為有很完善的理論基礎，我們都很科學地知道什麼能做、什麼不能做才是對小孩最好的。所以，我們常常把小孩當作寵物在養，而且是關在小小籠子裡的寵物，生怕一個錯誤就耽誤了小孩。我們規定小孩能做什麼、該學什麼、能吃什麼、能教怎樣的朋友，甚至在他們熱的時候還要多穿幾件衣服。 | This scene reminds me of the term “Helicopter Parents.” Due to holistic scientific theories, modern parenting often emphasizes structured schedules and rules, leaving little room for error. It is like keeping a pet in a small cage for the sake of safety. Out of fear of imperfection, we may regulate everything—from what children learn to who their friends are, even adding extra clothing when they feel warm! |
| 在美國，有誇張的家長每隔15分鐘就傳簡訊問小孩在做什麼，或是有人開11個小時的車就為了到小孩的大學宿舍幫忙洗衣服。 | Some parents in the U.S. text their children every 15 minutes or drive 11 hours just to do their college-aged child’s laundry. |
| 沒有小孩的也不用高興得太早，就算沒有小孩可以管，我們也早就把自己受過的規則內化並創造出自己的一套規則。我們常常在生活習慣上、時間、飲食、或其他各方面嚴格管理自己。命真的就只是這樣嗎？ | For those without children, don’t feel too relieved just yet. Even if you don’t have kids to manage, chances are you’ve already internalized the rules you were taught and created your own set of regulations. Often, we rigorously manage ourselves in areas like daily routines, time, diet, or other aspects of life.  |
| 雖然這樣的行為確實是一種紀律，但反過來看，這樣的控制是因為我們以為透過這些規定，我們就能創造出小孩或自己的完美人生。可是，上帝所創造的生 | While such behavior can be seen as discipline, from another perspective, this control stems from the belief that by adhering to these rules, we can craft the perfect life for ourselves—or for a child. But is this really the kind of life that God created us to live? |
| 一條路或整片地圖？ | **A Path or a Map?** |
| 在基督教語言中，每當我們想到上帝的引導、攝理或命定，我們都會用一條路來想像。像是詩歌《恩典之路》也是用路的意象來象徵上帝的愛和手是帶我們走上一條路。 | In Christian imagery, we often liken God’s guidance to the right path—like the hymn *Amazing Grace,* which uses the image of “lost and found” to symbolize God’s love and direction.  |
| 這樣的意象雖然帶給我們安全感，讓我們感覺自己的生命走在「對的」路上。但是，這樣的想法卻很明顯不是我們所經歷的生命。要是生命真的能那麼容易就安排妥當，為什麼我們每天還是會經歷那麼多的挑戰和意外呢？ | While comforting, this metaphor doesn’t fully reflect our lived experiences. If life were as straightforward as following a path, why do we encounter so many challenges and unexpected turns? |
| 對我來說，上帝的引導、攝理或命定更像是像是寵物公園！這禮拜，我都在幫一位同學的朋友顧狗，我也很開心第一次有機會到美國的寵物公園。在寵物公園裡，沒有什麼是「正確的道路」或「正確的活動」，只有自由自在的狗和終於可以坐著休息、不用跟著跑的主人。 | To me, God’s providence is more like a wide-open park. This past week, while dog-sitting for a friend, I visited an American dog park for the first time. In such parks, there are no “right paths” or “correct activities”—just dogs running freely and their owners sitting back to relax. |
| 這樣看起來，上帝的引導是一大片的地圖，並且保護我們不會遇到最危險的狀況。 | God’s guidance, then, is like a map—an expansive area full of opportunities and protections from the most dangerous situations. |
| 在故事中，不管看起來多錯的事情，都在上帝的掌握中。耶穌並沒有走上約瑟和馬利亞看為正確的路，馬利亞並沒有問出上帝或耶穌看為對的問題，耶穌也沒有回答一個正常一點的答案。但是，馬利亞仍然教出一位彌賽亞，耶穌依然完成上帝的計劃。 | Even in this story, where things seem to go “wrong,” everything is under God’s control. Jesus doesn’t follow the path Joseph and Mary thought was right, Mary asks a question that doesn’t seem “wise,” and Jesus gives an unusual answer. Yet, Mary still raised the Messiah, and Jesus still fulfilled God’s plan. |
| 再次強調，上帝的引導中，沒有一條「正確的道路」，只有無止盡的探索。 | In God’s guidance, there isn’t one “correct” path—only unlimited exploration. |
| 持守一切 | **Treasuring All Things** |
| 在幾年前，有一位在青少年團契熱心服事的高中同工對教會的團契感到很挫折。當時，這位同工非常盡心在一間中型教會帶領聚會，但青年聚會常常只有兩三個人，就算準備很有深度的聚會也沒什麼人有興趣。雖然他對這個團契很有負擔，但是他也已經服事地很挫折也很疲憊。 | Years ago, a dedicated high school ministry volunteer became deeply frustrated with their fellowship group. Despite their efforts to lead meaningful sessions, attendance remained low, and members showed little interest.  |
| 有一天，他有點帶著情緒地對我開玩笑說：「好想要放棄、直接離開團契喔！」我沒有思考就直接笑著說：「那就走啊！離開讓自己休息一段時間呀！」 | One day, the volunteer half-jokingly told me, “I feel like quitting the group altogether!” Without thinking, I replied, “Then go ahead! Take a break!” |
| 他以為我在開玩笑，但其實我當時是認真的。為什麼離開團契就一定是錯的道路？為什麼團契沒人來就一定是錯的道路？為什麼一位上帝需要一位高中生在教會忍受倦怠感就只為了修正這些「錯誤的路」？ | My response wasn’t a joke—it was serious. Why must leaving a ministry be “the wrong path”? Why must a struggling fellowship be viewed as a failure? Even if that volunteer had left, I believe they wouldn’t have stepped out of God’s care. |
| 我相信，就算他當時離開教會，他也不會離開上帝的照顧——或是「寵物公園」。雖然我不知道拐個彎的下一步會遇到什麼，但我相信只會有更多精彩地探險等著我們。既然如此，基督徒要做的努力就不是找出哪一條路是對的，而是感受每一個看似正確和錯誤的選擇。 | I trust that even if they had left, God’s care would not have abandoned them. Life’s detours lead to new adventures. As Christians, our task is not to find the "right" path but to embrace all choices, trusting that God works through them. |
| 這也和馬利亞在被耶穌搞得迷糊後的反應一樣。可憐的馬利亞，在路加福音的短短兩章內，就受驚嚇了好多次。從她未婚懷孕的「好消息」（1:29）、在外地馬槽生孩子（2:7）、意外被不認識的牧羊人造訪（2:19）、在聖殿被西面和先知亞拿祝福預言（2:33）後，耶穌的回答——「為甚麼找我呢？難道你們不知道我應當在我父的家裏嗎？」（2:49）讓她再次疑惑。 | This reaction is similar to Mary’s feelings. The poor Mary, in Luke, was so confused and scared in the first two chapters. Starting from the “good news” of being pregnant before marriage (1:29), not giving birth at hometown and not even on a bed (2:7), being visited by strangers (2:19), and being blessed by Simeon and Prophet Anna at the temple (2:33), and end up with Jesus’ response: “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” (2:49). It was all confusing to Mary. |
| 直得注意的是，馬利亞「把這一切的事都存在心裏」（2:51）。這裡的動詞「存」不只是囤物症的那種存著，好像放在那邊沒有用也沒關係；在希臘原文，存在心裡的動詞διετήρει是「持續地」且「小心地」保留。這和《腦筋急轉彎》系列當中所描繪的的彩色水晶球一樣（為了不要劇透，有興趣請一定要看這部精彩的系列電影！）。 | Despite her confusion, Luke records that Mary “treasured all these things in her heart” (2:51). The Greek verb for "treasured," διετήρει, implies a continuous and careful preservation—like the colorful memory orbs in the Inside Out movie series. (No spoilers, but please watch these brilliant movies!) |
| 而馬利亞即使是被嚇著、被搞迷糊了，她也沒有執著在找出「對的答案」，而是把每個當下看似負面的經歷都像水晶球一樣小心翼翼地存起來。 | Even though Mary was startled and confused, she did not fixate on finding the "right answer." Instead, she carefully preserved each seemingly negative experience, like storing delicate crystal orbs. |
| 用更廣的角度來看，馬利亞即使不明白耶穌在說什麼，更不明白上帝的旨意，但回頭看她的一生，一切都在上帝的掌握中。 | Looking at it from a broader perspective, even though Mary did not understand what Jesus was saying, nor did she fully grasp God’s will, her entire life, in hindsight, was under God’s sovereign care.  |
| 即使她的生命看似充滿錯誤——未婚懷孕、即使把小孩忘在耶路撒冷聖殿、即使目擊自己的小孩死在十字架上，但在上帝的眼中，她的生命也從未出錯。 | Even when her life seemed filled with mistakes—being pregnant out of wedlock, leaving her child behind in the temple of Jerusalem, or witnessing her child’s death on the cross—in God’s eyes, her life was never a mistake. |
| 我們教得出耶穌嗎？ | Raising Jesus |
| 回到一開始的問題，假設我們就是耶穌的父母，那我們教得出彌賽亞嗎？很明顯地，答案是可以的。因為上帝的計劃不是要我們走在一條唯一正確的道路上，而是在一片大地圖中不停的探索。所以就算目前的計劃行不通，甚至我常開玩笑說：就算當時希律真的殺了耶穌，上帝也會準備第二個耶穌。 | Returning to the original question: If we were Jesus’ parents, could we raise the Messiah? The clear answer is yes. God’s plan does not require us to walk a singularly “correct” path but instead invites us to explore across a vast map. So even if our current plans fail—or as I often jokingly say, even if Herod had succeeded in killing Jesus—God would have prepared another way, even another Jesus. |
| 相同的，我們自己的生命也是由各種看起來正確和錯誤的選擇組成的。回顧這一年，或許我們都做了一些很棒或很蠢的決定，或許我們祝福了一些人也傷害了不少人，或許我們有快樂的記憶和很難過的經驗，但這些都造就了這一年的我們，成為我們生命中的一段彩色水晶球。 | Likewise, our own lives are composed of what seem to be both right and wrong choices. Reflecting on the past year, perhaps we made some excellent decisions and some foolish ones, perhaps we blessed some people while hurting others, and perhaps we had moments of joy alongside painful experiences. Yet all these moments contribute to who we are today, forming a segment of our life’s colorful crystal orb.  |
| 沒有一顆水晶球是對的或錯的，對未來的我們來說，各樣的水晶球只是顏色和詮釋意義的不同。 | None of these “crystal orbs” is inherently right or wrong. From the perspective of our future selves, each orb simply carries a different hue and meaning. |
| 上帝國就這樣透過一個平凡到令人想不到的家庭臨到這個世界上。那麼即使我們自己的生命、家庭和生活當中充滿許多我們眼光的不完美時，憑什麼我們不相信也同樣能讓福音不斷地顯現出來呢？ | The kingdom of God was born into the imperfections of a humble family. Even when our lives seem far from perfect, the Gospel continues to unfold through us. May the story of Jesus forgetting to return home inspire us to treasure every moment of our journey, embrace our emotions, and trust God’s presence in every step. |
| 希望透過今天耶穌忘記回家的故事，讓我們再次思考自己是不是也能像馬利亞一樣，謙卑尊重、小心保存自己的每一段經歷，並接納自己的每一個感受。在我們結束禱告前，假如你方便的話，我想邀請大家先閉上眼睛，並讓身體找到舒服的姿勢，調整呼吸。 | Through today’s story of Jesus forgetting to return home, may we reexamine whether we, like Mary, can humbly honor and carefully preserve each of our experiences, embracing every emotion they bring. Before we conclude with prayer, if you feel comfortable, I’d like to invite you to close your eyes, find a comfortable position, and steady your breathing.  |
| 我想邀請大家思考自己這一年當中最重大的三件事。這三件事發生的時候，你當時的感受是什麼？當你回想的時候，假如是不好的回憶，你是否有刻意去忘掉這段記憶呢？你是否覺得這些事已經超出上帝的範圍了呢？ | I invite you to reflect on the three most significant events in your life this past year. How did you feel at the time? When you recall these moments—especially if they are painful memories—did you intentionally try to forget them? Did you feel these events were somehow beyond God’s reach? |
| 在調整呼吸當中，我們一起來禱告： | Let us pray: |
| 創造與管理萬物的主，你是世界唯一的全能者，你知道萬物的原因與結果。在耶穌的青年時期，我們看見生命充滿意外和不確定性；因為我們的有限，這些意外常常讓我們感到焦慮和悲傷。 | Creator and Sustainer of all, You alone are almighty. You know all causes and outcomes. In Jesus’ adolescence, we see a life full of surprises and uncertainties. These often bring us anxiety and sorrow.  |
| 求主幫助我們，讓我們勇敢面對，而不是逃避這些情緒；幫助我們保存，而不是丟棄這些記憶；幫助我們接納那自己所有看似錯誤的決定，而不是騙自己那些都不屬於自己。求主讓我們學像耶穌，也學像馬利亞，特別是在困惑或惶恐的時候，並明白你也接納我們的焦慮與不安。 | Help us face these feelings with courage, preserving our memories instead of discarding them, and accepting our choices without denial. May we learn from Jesus and Mary, especially in moments of confusion or fear, trusting that You embrace our doubts and insecurities.  |
| 在新的一年臨到時，我們也祈求你繼續帶領我們闖蕩、經歷和體會更豐富的自己，並從中看見你的創造多麽美好。禱告是奉那位在青年時忘記跟著父母回家，卻仍受到你眷顧的耶穌基督的名求。阿們。 | As a new year approaches, lead us into deeper adventures and fuller selves, revealing the beauty of Your creation in us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who once forgot to follow His parents home but remained under Your loving care. Amen. |