

更好的選擇 The Better Choice

Luke 10:38-42

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ATPC

在路加福音的第十章，記載耶穌到馬利亞與馬大的家。這位馬利亞並不是耶穌的母親；她住在伯大尼，又有一位弟弟叫做拉撒路，就是被耶穌復活的那位。馬大接待耶穌到自己的家中，而她的妹妹馬莉亞坐在耶穌腳前，聽他講道。	In Luke 10, Jesus visited the home of Mary and Martha. This Mary was not Jesus' mother; she lived in Bethany and had a brother named Lazarus—the one whom Jesus raised from the dead. Martha welcomed Jesus into her home, and her sister Mary sat at Jesus' feet, listening to his teaching.
這時，馬大因為許多服事而開始煩亂，就請耶穌吩咐馬利亞來幫助她。沒想到，耶穌不但沒有體貼馬大的辛勞，還稱讚馬利亞已經選走了那唯一上好的福份。	At that time, Martha became distracted by many tasks and asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her. Unexpectedly, Jesus not only did not sympathize with Martha's hard work, but also praised Mary for having chosen the one thing that is better.
馬大的不甘願	Martha's Discontent
我還記得在七年前在台灣的雙語夏令營 Shipwrecked，其中一天的聖經故事正是今天禮拜的這段經文。所以在聖經情境站的時候，教材要每一組的小朋友隨機分成馬利亞組和馬大組；	I remember seven years ago at the VBS "Shipwrecked" in Taiwan, one of the Bible stories of the day was this very passage. During the Bible adventure station, each group of children was randomly divided into a Mary group and a Martha group.
馬利亞組的小朋友可以在教室的角落聽站長講繪本，還有糖果可以吃；但馬大組卻要在同時打掃教室，不只要把亂七八糟的桌椅擺好，還要一直掃站長們故意撒下的垃圾。	Children in the Mary group sat in a corner listening to the station leader tell a storybook and enjoyed candy, while the Martha group had to clean the classroom—setting messy tables and chairs straight and sweeping up trash the leaders had deliberately scattered.
當時，一位鼎金教會的小朋友掃地掃到很不甘願，就突然真性情地大喊一句：「馬大就是平常都沒在整理家裡，所以耶穌來才那麼忙！」孩子真誠又真實的反應，讓我們對這段故事能有不同的想法。	At that time, a child at Dingjin Church, clearly fed up with sweeping, suddenly shouted with raw honesty, "Martha just never cleaned her house, that's why she was so busy when Jesus came!" That child's sincere and authentic response helped us see the story from a different perspective.

<p>這段故事最大的癥結點是：爲什麼耶穌會稱讚馬利亞，而不是辛苦服事的馬大。</p>	<p>The central tension in this story is: why does Jesus praise Mary instead of Martha, who was working hard to serve?</p>
<p>我們可能都聽過，因爲馬利亞懂得珍惜主的福音，把握機會聽耶穌講道，而馬大則被世俗的事纏累，沒有選擇聽道就是失去了上好的福份；但這樣的說法顯然完全忽略了當時的社會脈絡。</p>	<p>We may have heard that it was because Mary cherished the gospel and seized the opportunity to hear Jesus' teaching, while Martha was distracted by worldly matters and therefore missed the better part. However, such an interpretation clearly overlooks the social context of the time.</p>
<p>我們身爲台灣人或華人，若要招待客人，也都會想盡辦法準備舒適的環境或美味的茶點；更何況是重視照顧出外人的猶太人，怎麼可能不用盡心力來招待遠從加利利來到伯大尼、又十分有名的耶穌呢？</p>	<p>Even in present-day Taiwan, when we host guests, we do our best to prepare a comfortable environment or delicious refreshments. How much more so in Jewish society, which highly valued hospitality—especially toward travelers. It would be unimaginable not to put every effort into hosting someone as renowned as Jesus, traveling from Galilee to Bethany.</p>
<p>確實，在猶太社會中，女性理當服事客人；例如，上主在幔利橡樹向亞伯拉罕顯現時，亞伯拉罕就馬上叫撒拉準備餅。</p>	<p>Indeed, in Jewish society, it was expected that women serve guests; for example, when the Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, Abraham immediately asked Sarah to prepare bread.</p>
<p>所以，馬大做的事只是禮節上最基本的義務，我們反而應該問：馬利亞爲什麼沒有幫忙自己的姊姊盡女性的義務呢？</p>	<p>So, what Martha did was merely the most basic social duty. Instead, we should ask: why didn't Mary help her sister fulfill her responsibility as a woman?</p>
<p>除了招待客人的問題以外，大家可能也自己想過：爲什麼耶穌會委婉的指正馬大的行爲。因爲在經文中清楚描寫馬大「心裡煩亂」，又想藉著耶穌的權威來吩咐自己的妹妹來幫助她。</p>	<p>Beyond the question of hospitality, perhaps we've also wondered why Jesus gently corrected Martha. The passage clearly describes that Martha was 'worried and distracted,' and tried to use Jesus' authority to command her sister to help.</p>
<p>在現代教會，因服事方向不同而產生衝突的情況仍然非常常見；特別在教會，因爲每個人都認爲自己正在「爲主工作」，所以會認爲自己做的才是唯一對的事，又極力地想要對方改變方向來配合自己所做的事。</p>	<p>In today's church, conflicts due to different approaches to ministry are still common. Especially when everyone believes they are 'serving the Lord,' each tends to think their own work is the only right thing, and wants others to change course to align with their efforts.</p>
<p>若從這觀點來看，耶穌對馬大的指責就</p>	<p>From this perspective, Jesus' correction of Martha</p>

<p>變得合理多了；但是，馬利亞沒有好好招待客人耶穌的事實仍然沒有解決，假設馬大與馬利亞都心甘樂意地坐在耶穌的腳前聽他講道，那麼沒人服事耶穌的失責要誰來承擔？</p>	<p>becomes more understandable. Yet, the fact remains that Mary did not properly host Jesus as a guest. If both Martha and Mary had simply chosen to sit at Jesus' feet, who would have taken on the responsibility of caring for him?</p>
<p>今天，讓我們根據經文所提供的家庭背景，來以一個全新的角度來揣摩馬大的心境。在一開始，我們先仔細回想，為什麼邀請一位重要的客人到家裡，是由女性來接待，而不是男主人？</p>	<p>Today, let us reflect on Martha's state of mind from a new perspective, based on the family background provided by the text. First, let us consider why a woman was the one who invited an important guest into the home, rather than a male head of household.</p>
<p>在福音書中，耶穌到過許多人家裡坐席，包括門徒利未、法利賽人和稅吏撒該，但這些故事中，只有馬大是一位女性。</p>	<p>In the Gospels, Jesus dined in many people's homes—Levi the disciple, a Pharisee, the tax collector Zacchaeus—but only in this story is the host a woman.</p>
<p>在新約時代的以色列人，招待客人一定是由一家之主提出的；既然馬大有資格邀請客人，又與妹妹一起住，我們就可以大膽推測這個家庭並沒有父親，也沒有丈夫。</p>	<p>In first-century Israel, it was always the head of the household who welcomed guests. Since Martha could invite a guest and lived with her sister, we can reasonably infer that there was no father or husband in this household.</p>
<p>不管馬大是一位沒有出嫁的女性，或是一位喪夫的寡婦，只要她沒有依附在一位男性之下，就代表她是一位在社會中毫無地位的女性。不管馬大是因著怎樣的理由來接待耶穌，或許是因為他弟弟拉撒路經歷過的神蹟，或是因為妹妹馬利亞打破香膏的敬虔，這都無法掩蓋馬大毫無身份的事實。</p>	<p>Whether Martha was unmarried or a widow, the fact that she had no male guardian meant she held no social standing. Regardless of her reasons for inviting Jesus—perhaps her brother Lazarus had experienced a miracle, or her sister Mary had shown devotion by anointing Jesus—none of that changed the reality of Martha's social invisibility.</p>
<p>換句話說，馬大自己也很清楚，邀請耶穌進到家裡來是不符合自己社會地位的事，甚至是一件羞恥的事。</p>	<p>In other words, Martha herself likely knew that welcoming Jesus into her home was something unfitting for her social position—perhaps even shameful.</p>
<p>身份不符</p>	<p>Social Mismatch</p>
<p>大家一定或多或少都體驗過這種「不符合自己身份」的處境。回想當初，我從普通高中考進中山大學的音樂系時，總覺得自己就像是不小心走錯地方的外星人。</p>	<p>We've all likely experienced the feeling of being in a place that doesn't match our identity. I recall when I entered the music department at National Sun Yat-sen University after attending an ordinary high school—I</p>

	felt like an alien who had wandered into the wrong place.
我大部分的同學都在不同高中的音樂班互相認識，他們有音樂班應該有的背景知識，也有共通的話題與笑點；不管是在課堂中或下課後，我都害怕自己跟不上大家的步調。	Most of my classmates knew each other from specialized music programs in high school. They shared the same background knowledge, common topics, and even similar senses of humor. Whether in class or during breaks, I was afraid I couldn't keep up.
回顧自己在大學的四 year，雖然功課沒有差到被當掉，但因為覺得自己格格不入的擔憂，讓自己不敢和其他同學認識和互動，也好幾次放棄認真聽課，所有的考試都用最敷衍的方式來通過最低標準。	Looking back at my four years in college, although I didn't fail any classes, the anxiety of not fitting in made me reluctant to interact with my classmates. I even stopped paying attention in lectures and took exams in the most half-hearted way possible, just to scrape by.
直到畢業前，才有老師很語重心長的勸我：「不管你從哪裡來，未來要做什麼，你都應該要在每一個當下努力做好目前應該做的事。」	It wasn't until right before graduation that a teacher gave me heartfelt advice: 'No matter where you come from or what you want to do in the future, you should always give your best to the task at hand.'
回頭來看馬大，這種社會階層差距所造成的「身份不符」，很有可能為她帶來無比的壓力。這也能合理解釋，為什麼馬大要讓自己「伺候的事多」，甚至到「心裡煩亂」的程度（10:40）。	Looking again at Martha, this kind of social mismatch likely brought her immense pressure. This can reasonably explain why she burdened herself with “many tasks,” to the point of being “worried and distracted” (10:40).
我們可以想像，馬大了解耶穌是多麼偉大的老師，她可能也曾聽聞法利賽人和文士抱怨耶穌「為甚麼跟稅吏和罪人一同吃喝」（5:30），所以拼了命地極力想用很好的款待來彌補自己地位的不足。	We can imagine that Martha understood what a great teacher Jesus was. She had likely heard Pharisees and scribes grumble, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” (Luke 5:30), so she did her best to compensate for her low status by offering exceptional hospitality.
這對好客的台灣人來說也不難想像，若是有非常重要的客人要來，我們泡好茶後會覺得太失禮，再切好水果後也覺得不夠，最後可能不小心就為了煮滿漢全席而搞得自己人仰馬翻。	For Taiwanese people, who value hospitality, this is easy to relate to. When an important guest is coming, making good tea feels too basic; even after preparing fruit, it still feels lacking. In the end, we might exhaust ourselves trying to serve a full banquet.
正是這種拼了命的預備，讓馬大對自己所做的服事產生了厭惡，這厭惡甚至溢出、波及到了自己的妹妹身上。接待耶	It was precisely this frantic preparation that led Martha to become resentful of her own service—resentment that eventually spilled over onto her sister. Welcoming Jesus

<p>耶穌來到自己的家裡，不論是坐下聽道，或是忙著處理庶務，原本都是件美得無比的服事；但因為社會的隔閡，這美好的服事卻成了無比的重擔。</p>	<p>into one's home, whether by sitting to listen or by managing household duties, was supposed to be a beautiful act of devotion.</p>
<p>這不代表馬大並不了解耶穌所賜的祝福，邀請耶穌來自己的家，代表她仍然相信耶穌。但在這一刻，社會階級的差異所造成的焦慮已經勝過了耶穌的臨在。</p>	<p>But because of the barriers imposed by society, that beautiful act became an unbearable burden. This does not mean that Martha didn't understand the blessings Jesus offered. Her invitation shows that she still believed in him. But in that moment, the anxiety caused by class difference overshadowed Jesus' presence.</p>
<p>我們也可以說，處於社會最底層所帶來的羞辱已經蒙蔽了馬大的眼，使她無法看見當耶穌臨在時所帶來的安慰，也無法發現耶穌已經將他們從社會的限制中解放出來。</p>	<p>We could say that the shame of living at the bottom of society had clouded Martha's eyes, so that she could no longer see the comfort brought by Jesus' presence, nor perceive that he had already liberated them from society's constraints.</p>
<p>反觀馬利亞，她大概也明白自己的家庭是社會的邊緣，但在耶穌的腳前，她無需任何掩飾，自在地聽著耶穌傳講真道。</p>	<p>In contrast, Mary likely also knew that her family stood at the margins of society. Yet at Jesus' feet, she needed no pretense. She freely listened to him teach the truth.</p>
<p>即使這個世界說「女性不配像門徒一樣坐在老師腳前聽道」，甚至連自己的姊姊馬大也來向耶穌抱怨「女性就應該去服事客人就好了」，馬利亞仍享受在耶穌的道中。這種不受世界動搖的平靜安穩，不正是「上好的福份」嗎？</p>	<p>Even if the world said, "Women don't deserve to sit like disciples at a teacher's feet," and even if her own sister Martha complained to Jesus, "Women should be serving the guest instead," Mary remained absorbed in Jesus' words. Is this deep peace, unmoved by the world, not the "better part"?</p>
<p>在現代的教會中，人們看似充滿幹勁地來親近神，但卻也同時背負著社會所加給我們的重擔，使我們即使努力尋求耶穌的同在，卻總覺得好像沒有完全的平安。</p>	<p>In today's church, people may seem full of zeal as they seek God, but they are also burdened with the weight society places on them. So even though we try to pursue Jesus' presence, we often feel no true peace.</p>
<p>或許，我們每個人在某種程度上都是馬大，因為這個世界會不斷地提醒我們：你的學校成績爛透了、你的收入少得可憐、你的打扮沒品味、你的工作不成材、你的婚姻丟人現眼、你的家庭不完</p>	<p>In some way, each of us is like Martha, because the world constantly reminds us: your grades are terrible, your income is pitiful, your appearance is unfashionable, your job is unimpressive, your marriage is shameful, your family is broken... So forget the gospel for now—</p>

整……，所以先別管福音了，請先拚了命地達到社會的標準。	just try harder to meet society's expectations.
但馬大和馬利亞的故事提醒我們：千萬不要落入這種「你不配得福音」的陷阱，這世界的眼光將會阻礙我們與主親近的美好。因為耶穌從來就沒有要求我們要達到社會所立的標準。	But the story of Martha and Mary reminds us not to fall into the trap of thinking “you are unworthy of the gospel.” The world's gaze can block the beauty of drawing near to the Lord. Jesus has never required us to meet the standards set by society.
只要我們誠實面對，沒有擺爛自己該做的事，你的學業、收入、外表、工作類型、婚姻和家庭都不需要符合社會所立的標準。從這角度來看，耶穌要賜給我們的福份，就是讓我們從世界的眼光得到釋放，使我們不再需要白費力氣，追求那些我們永遠達不到的目標。	As long as we honestly face our responsibilities and do not give up on what we must do, then our grades, income, appearance, job, marriage, and family do not need to meet social expectations. From this perspective, the blessing Jesus offers is the freedom from society's judgment—so we no longer need to waste energy chasing unreachable goals.
脫去身份焦慮	Shedding Identity Anxiety
上禮拜，若「撒瑪利亞人憐憫鄰舍的比喻」提醒我們對社會政治的敏感和對信仰的實踐；那麼，今天馬大與馬利亞的對比更提醒我們：若不觀察到社會如何塑造我們身份的焦慮，那麼福音就沒辦法進入我們的心中。	Last week, the parable of the Good Samaritan reminded us to stay sensitive to social and political realities and to live out our faith. This week, the contrast between Martha and Mary reminds us that unless we are aware of how society shapes our identity anxieties, the gospel cannot truly take root in our hearts.
我們可以想像，要是上禮拜經文中被打得半死的人是猶太人；這位撒瑪利亞人就可能因為自己的血統不純正而認為自己的身份不配救那位受傷的人；那麼，他就更不可能用他的牲畜載送那半死的人，甚至還帶他到猶太人地區的旅店，跟老闆賒帳。	Imagine if the man beaten half to death in last week's parable were a Jew. The Samaritan might have believed, because of his “impure” ancestry, that he was not worthy to help that wounded man. He might not have dared to lift him onto his animal or take him to an inn in Jewish territory, much less leave a deposit.
換句話說，不只位高權重的人會忽略要愛自己的鄰舍；那些在社會所謂「正常」之外的邊緣人，也有可能「不敢」遵守愛鄰舍的教訓。	In other words, it's not only the privileged who ignore the call to love their neighbor—those on the margins may also “dare not” fulfill this teaching.
所以，總結來說，人不接受福音並不是因為人「不想聽」，而是這世界各式各樣的分類讓人覺得自己不符合福音而「不敢	In summary, people do not reject the gospel because they “don't want to hear it,” but because society's many labels make them feel they are unworthy of it—and so

聽」。	they “dare not listen.”
難道馬大不想坐在耶穌的腳前嗎？別忘了，她才是那位邀請耶穌進到家裡的人；難道馬大不懂耶穌的福音嗎？別忘了，她才是那位盡心盡力照顧鄰舍、接待出外人、服事耶穌的人。	Did Martha not want to sit at Jesus’ feet? Don’t forget—she was the one who invited Jesus into her home. Did Martha not understand the gospel? Don’t forget—she was the one who wholeheartedly cared for her neighbor, welcomed the outsider, and served Jesus.
但是聽到這，我們也不用爲了馬大而對這世界感到忿忿不平，因爲耶穌也爲馬大預備了美好的計畫。當馬大和耶穌抱怨時，耶穌大可以破口大罵，指責她膽敢打斷耶穌的講道；但耶穌不但沒有斥責，反而溫柔地呼喚「馬大，馬大」。	But even as we reflect on this, we need not be indignant on Martha’s behalf, for Jesus also had a beautiful plan for her. When Martha complained to Jesus, he could have scolded her harshly for interrupting his teaching. But instead, Jesus gently called her by name: “Martha, Martha.”
因爲耶穌完全明白馬大的內心正「爲許多事操心忙亂」，所以耶穌提醒她：「不可缺少的只有一件」，那就是接受自己的身份，放下人們對自己社會角色的指指點點，並專心尋求耶穌的同在。	Jesus fully understood that Martha was “worried and distracted by many things,” so he reminded her, “There is need of only one thing.” That one thing is to accept our identity, let go of the world’s judgment on our social roles, and focus on seeking Jesus’ presence.
當有一天，我們發現自己所有的身份都不會阻礙我們去坦然地接受福音，那正是無人能奪去的福份。	When we finally discover that none of our identities can prevent us from confidently receiving the gospel—that is the blessing that no one can take away.
回想到四年前的夏令營。我發現，原來馬大那麼忙，不是因爲平常沒在打掃，而是因爲社會使她失去領受福音的自信。	Thinking back to that summer camp four years ago, I realized Martha wasn’t busy because she didn’t usually clean—she was busy because society had robbed her of the confidence to receive the gospel.
在我重新閱讀這段經文後，要是我回到當初的教室內，我應該會和孩子說：「馬大並沒有偷懶，她愛主的心甚至比我們還多；但她誤以爲自己沒有資格領受福音，所以才會躲在繁忙的工作中。」	After rereading this story, if I could return to that classroom, I would tell the children: “Martha wasn’t lazy. Her love for the Lord may have been even greater than ours. But she mistakenly believed she wasn’t worthy of receiving the gospel, so she hid herself in her work.”
這個故事的結尾並沒有提到馬大的反應，因爲在現代社會中，同樣身爲馬大的我們，必須要親自爲這故事寫下結局。	The story ends without telling us how Martha responded—because in today’s world, we who are like Martha must write the ending ourselves.
在聽見耶穌溫柔地提醒後，你會選擇轉	After hearing Jesus’ gentle reminder, will you return to

<p>身回到廚房，嘗試用自己的力量繼續以無止盡的忙碌來掩蓋自己的不足；或是你會願意謙卑屈膝坐在耶穌腳前、安靜自己，並接受自己目前所擁有的一切，正如耶穌那樣無條件地接受我們嗎？</p>	<p>the kitchen and continue to use endless busyness to hide your sense of inadequacy? Or will you humbly kneel at Jesus' feet, quiet your soul, and accept everything you are—just as Jesus accepts you unconditionally?</p>
<p>我們一起來禱告：</p>	<p>Let us pray together:</p>
<p>公義又信實的主，你全然了解我們的心思意念。你知道我們在這世界中有許多複雜的身份，有些身份讓我們感到驕傲與光榮，但有更多的身份，是我們不敢讓人看見的。這些讓我們抬不起頭的身份，不斷否定著我們生命的意義，使我們誤以為自己總是做不夠。</p>	<p><i>Righteous and faithful Lord, you fully know our thoughts and intentions. You know we carry many complex identities in this world—some make us feel proud and honored, but many more are the ones we hide in shame. These burdens make us hang our heads, constantly denying our worth, leading us to believe we are never enough.</i></p>
<p>但你告訴我們，不可缺少的只有一件事，那就是把眼光專注在你身上。對你而言，世上所有的標準都不可能完全符合你的公義；因此，只要我們專注於你，我們就不再受那些身份的評價與指責。</p>	<p><i>But you have told us: there is need of only one thing—that we fix our eyes on you. To you, no earthly standard can ever fully meet your justice; therefore, as long as we focus on you, we are no longer bound by identity-based judgment or condemnation.</i></p>
<p>求主在我們為了這些身份焦躁煩亂時，也像呼喊馬大那樣溫柔地提醒我們。使我們不再專注社會的標準，不再以無謂的要求鞭策自己，不再否定自己的價值。</p>	<p><i>Lord, when we are anxious and troubled by these identities, gently remind us as you did Martha. Help us stop focusing on society's standards, stop driving ourselves with unrealistic demands, and stop denying our value.</i></p>
<p>也求主幫助我們，不再以這種眼光來看待我們的鄰舍，使我們互相稱呼弟兄姊妹時，就真的只看見你在我們身上所的美好形象。</p>	<p><i>Also help us see our neighbors not through those same critical lenses, so that when we call one another brother or sister, we truly see your beautiful image in each of us.</i></p>
<p>禱告是奉那進到我們生命中，又溫柔呼喊我們名字，賞賜那無人能奪去的福份的主耶穌基督的名求。阿們。</p>	<p><i>We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who entered our lives, gently called us by name, and offers us the blessing that no one can take away. Amen.</i></p>