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心灵相簿

The President's Gallery

# 爱人之心为 敬虔之实

## The Heart of Love is The Essence of Piety

会长于2023年3月参观英国基督大教堂时拍摄，卫斯理约翰与查理兄弟先后于这圣殿受按立。  
Photo taken by President at Christ Church Cathedral  
(where John and Charles Wesley were ordained), England, March 2023.



耶稣在马太福音25: 31-46说，当祂再来的日，绵羊和山羊要被分开；一组分别为义人，另一组则是那些没行上帝所喜悦的事的人。两组起初似乎是属一群——都认识主和经历同样的处境，但他们却呈现两种不同的反应。看见有需要的人，一组有所回应并伸出援手。对此耶稣说：“**我实在告诉你们，这些事你们做在我弟兄中一个最小的身上，就是做在我身上了**”。这组人被耶稣称为义人。

另一组同样看见有需要的人，但却毫无反应。这段经文里所用的词汇非常的严厉。第41节说：“**王又要向那左边的说：‘你们这被诅咒的人，离开我！进入那为魔鬼和他的使者所预备的永火里去！’**”读到这段经文，你是否也被吓了一跳？为什么当这些人没有回应他人在肉身上的需要时，带来的却是他们永恒的审判？

我们都喜欢做敬虔的工作。我们喜欢来到教会敬拜上帝、在小组里面有团契、花时间查经、尽力祷告，甚至是禁食祷告。但来到帮补别人的需要时，我们很多时候却有点却步。我们可能认为要把敬虔的事做好了，我们才去做怜悯、帮助人的事。但耶稣要透过这段经文提醒我们不能忽视周围弟兄姐妹和人群的需要。耶稣甚至引用了一个很强的连系来带出祂的教导，说凡做在弟兄中一个最小的身上，其实就是做在祂身上了。就如雅各书所说，真正的敬虔若没有行动，是假的。一个真正爱神、敬畏神的人，一定会产生怜悯、恻隐的心，并愿意去行动。

读这段经文使我感到很扎心，因我知人性可以非常容易陷入在虚伪里。举例，当我们读到一篇让我们感到不舒服的经文时，我们可能会轻易将它搁置在一边，不去实行。若你也有同样的感受，我们要祷告求神怜悯，让我们不陷入人性的软弱里，导致我们忽略周围有需要的人。因为耶稣说，在那一天祂将要以此来审判我们。

不错，我们是凭信心得救。但我们对信心的定义是什么？没有人能靠行为得到神的悦纳以及对罪的宽恕。没有人能不借着耶稣十架的救赎而得救。

十字架的救赎使我们能完全无条件的被接纳。但当我们被接受时，这个信心必要被转化成为我们的行动、我们的生命。

这段经文对约翰卫斯理而言是安慰的话语。他解释说，“这是如此令人感到安慰，因为做在一个弟兄身上，就是做在我主的身上。”这是上帝何等大的应许！你要服侍基督吗？你只要做一个最小的弟兄身上，你就是做在主的身上了。也就是因为对这份爱的认识，才有宣教士愿意从远方来到我们这块地土。他们学习新的语言和生活方式、开始学校教育、也开展了救治的工作。他们用尽方法，在祷告当中，靠着信心和行动来克服重重的困难。

雅各书 2: 14-18 说：“我的弟兄们，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？信心也是这样，若没有行为是死的。但是有人会说：“**你有信心，我有行为。**”把你没有行为的信心给我看，我就藉着我的行为把我的信心给你看。”我们不是靠行为得救，乃是借着我们的行为，把对主的信心指给别人看。这样有外在的行为的信心是可以见证主的。

第19-22节说：“你信上帝只有一位，你信得很好；连鬼魔也信，且怕得发抖。你这虚浮的人哪，你愿意知道没有行为的信心是没有用的吗？我们的祖宗亚伯拉罕把他儿子以撒献在坛上，岂不是因行为得称义吗？可见信心是与他的行为相辅并行，而且信心是因着行为才得以成全的。”这道理不难理解。在情侣或亲子之间的爱若没有行为的印证，这份爱是虚假、不踏实的。当我们说我们相信上帝，但这份信却没带来行为上的转化和改变，不能见证上帝同在的话，这个信心可说是肤浅、甚至虚假的。雅各书之所以告诉我们“**信心是因着行为才得以成全的**”。阐明我们爱人的心，其实是印证我们对上帝的爱。



弟兄姐妹，你爱上帝吗？让我们学习卫斯理约翰。爱上帝其实不难，你就是去爱你周围有需要的人。可能是一片面包、一杯凉水，甚至是穿过的衣服。爱上帝就是爱邻舍。当你爱邻舍，你就是在爱上帝。马可福音12: 30-31 **“你要尽心、尽性、尽意、尽力爱主——你的上帝。”** 第二是：**‘要爱邻如己。’** 再没有比这两条诫命更大的了。” 这诫命重点不是在分第一还是第二；这两条诫命是全律法的总纲，是要同时进行的。约翰卫斯理所教导的卫理宗看重敬虔和怜悯行动，并将两者紧紧的结合在一起，而产生了社会圣洁的运动。这两者是不可被分割的。

上帝不单是透过敬虔之工——例如祷告、读经和圣餐——来赐下祂的恩典。当你愿意按照上帝的心意去爱人如己时，你也会体会上帝的恩典临到你身上，圣化你的生命。帮助人并不容易，它常会叫我们操练我们圣灵的果子，如忍耐、节制、温柔。当你去行怜悯之工，你不但是帮助对方体会到上帝的爱和恩典，你也要经历到上帝的恩典、生命的成圣。

这就是卫理公会。你会发现卫理公会无论在哪里，都会去做关怀群体的工作。我们不只是在帮他们，我们其实是在帮助我们自己，使我们不离开主，使我们不成为只有卫理公会宗派的外表，却没有实质的属灵能力。弟兄姐妹，爱人之心为敬虔之实，让我们去行怜悯之工，经历上帝的同在。

In Matthew 25: 31-46, Jesus speaks of how sheep and goats will be separated when He comes again. The former will be deemed righteous while the latter as those who have not acted in ways that please God. The two groups may, at first, seem like they belong together—both knew the Lord and had encountered someone in need. Yet, their responses differed. One group responded through practical acts of provision, to which Jesus comments: **“Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me”.**

The other group, however, turned a blind eye. We see the use of very stern words in this passage. Verse 41 says: **“Then he will say to**

**those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’** Were you taken aback upon reading this? How was it that eternal condemnation was brought upon these people because of their failure to attend to the physical needs of others?

We love to do works of piety. We like to gather in church to worship God, fellowship with our small groups, and spend time studying scriptures and praying—we may even engage in fasting and praying. But when it comes to acts of mercy, we often find ourselves holding back. Perhaps we may think that acts of piety should take priority over acts of mercy. However, Jesus reminds us through this passage that we must not neglect the needs of those around. Jesus brings this point across by citing a very strong connection, that is, whatever is done to the least amongst us is as being done unto Jesus himself. As the book of James echoes, a piety that is not accompanied by outwardly works, is false. Works of mercy and compassion ought to be a product of a person who truly loves and reveres God.

My heart aches as I read this passage because I know how easy it is for human nature to sink into hypocrisy. Take for instance our tendency to want to brush off a teaching like this that puts us in discomfort. If you find this relatable, we need to ask God for mercy so that we may not fall into the depths of human nature and become indifferent to people in need. For as Jesus warns, we will be judged according to these parameters when the day comes.

It is true that salvation is by faith. But how is faith defined? No one can earn God’s favour and the forgiveness of sins by their works. Nobody can receive salvation unless through the Cross of Jesus Christ, before which we have been unconditionally accepted. But the faith we profess in Christ must be translated into actions and into the way we live.

This scripture passage was a word of comfort to John Wesley because he recognised



that if he were to do something for the least among them, he would be serving God Himself. How great of a promise of God this is! Would you like to serve Christ? You can do so simply by serving the least among you. It was precisely the awareness of this love that caused the missionaries to arrive on our land. They learnt new languages, adopted new cultures, started schools and more. By faith, prayer, and whatever means they had, they worked through their obstacles.

James 2:14-18 writes: **“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”** While we are not saved through works, it is through it that our faith is demonstrated and can be a witness for Christ.

James 2:19-22 further reads: **“You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works”.** This truth is not difficult to comprehend. If the love between couples or parents and children is not verified by corresponding behaviours, that said love is false and unreliable. Likewise, when we profess faith in Christ, yet our lives and actions remain untransformed, that faith is either shallow or not true at all. The book of James tells us that faith is made complete by our actions. And so our love for others is actually a testament to our love for God.

My brothers and sisters, do you love God? Let us follow in the footsteps of John Wesley in

responding to the needs of those around us. It could simply be a slice of bread, a cup of water, or a pre-loved piece of clothing. Love God is loving your neighbour. Jesus exhorts in Mark 12:30-31 that **“you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”** The second is this: **‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”** The commandments are not to be mistaken as divided or sequential; their summation forms the foundation of all of God’s laws and are to be carried out simultaneously. The Methodism that John Wesley advocates highlights both acts of piety and acts of mercy. We held them so closely together that it began the movement of social holiness.

God extends his grace to us not just through acts of piety such as praying, reading scriptures and holy communion. When you submit yourself to the will of God in loving others, you will also experience the grace of God coming upon you, sanctifying you. The work of helping others often requires us to practice the Fruit of the Spirit, such as patience, self-control and gentleness. When you do so, not only are you helping someone to experience the love and grace of God, you get to experience his sanctifying grace upon your life as well.

This is Methodism. The Methodist movement is commonly seen getting involved with the needs of society. But we are not simply helping them, we are also helping ourselves – that we may not venture away from God, or become a Methodist by name but lacking in real spiritual power. Brothers and sisters, the heart of love is the essence of piety. Let us step out in acts of mercy, and through it, experience the presence of God in our lives.

本文摘录自直落亚逸堂134周年庆典崇拜证道。  
Above article is an abridged version of the sermon given by President at TACMC’s 134th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service.

Translator: Rev Jasper Ngoh