

Shining the Light on Christmas 更加了解聖誕節

Matthew 馬太福音 1:1-17

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This year we are look at Christmas through the eyes of those in the Christmas event.
今年，我們會藉著聖誕節事件中的人物的視野來認識聖誕節。

Today we focus on the mothers of Jesus and how they help us see the meaning of Christmas.
我們將關注耶穌的母親們，以及她們如何幫助我們了解聖誕節的意義。

There are three things I want us to see from this list of names this morning:
今天早上，我希望我們從這份名單中看到三件事：

1. **Christmas is good news not good advice** 聖誕節不是好建議是好消息
2. **Christmas turns our values upside down** 聖誕節顛覆了我們的價值觀
3. **Christmas is the promise of ultimate rest** 聖誕節是最終休息的承諾

Notice firstly that CHRISTMAS is GOOD NEWS NOT GOOD ADVICE.
首先，注意，聖誕節不是好建議而是好消息。

It doesn't open with "Once upon a time." That is how **fairy tales**, and legends, and myths begin.
它不是以“從前”來開始。**童話**、**傳說**和神話才是這樣開始的。

Once upon a time sends the signal that this probably **didn't** happen.
“從前”發出一個信息表示這可能**沒有**發生過。

Matthew begins,
《馬太福音》開始時說，

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham.
亞伯拉罕的後裔、大衛的子孫耶穌基督的家譜：

Matthew grounds **who Jesus is** and what **he does** in history. JESUS is not a metaphor. He is real.

馬太把耶穌是誰以及他所做的事情基於歷史上。耶穌不是一個比喻。他是真實的。

The biblical accounts of Christmas are about what actually happened in history.
聖經中記載的聖誕事件是關於歷史上實際發生了的事情。

The birth of the Son of God into the world is a **gospel, good news**, an announcement.
神的兒子降生到世界上是**福音、好消息**和一個宣告。

The birth accounts of Jesus are not telling us what **we should do**, but what **God has done** in history for us.

耶穌出生的記述並沒有告訴我們應該做什麼，而是上帝在歷史中為我們做了什麼。

Jesus is the Messiah, the son of Abraham.

耶穌是彌賽亞救世主，亞伯拉罕的後裔。

Centuries earlier God made a promise to Abraham that all the people of the world will be blessed through him.

在幾個世紀以前，上帝向亞伯拉罕承諾，全世界的人都將會因他得福。

Through a descendent of Abraham God would reverse the devastating impact of sin for all time and eternity.

通過亞伯拉罕的後裔，上帝將永遠和永恆地扭轉罪惡的毀滅性影響。

Matthew declares that the day has come in Jesus. That's what makes this new GOOD.

馬太宣告藉著耶穌那日子已經來到。這就是使這個消息「好」的原因。

Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the fulfilment of God's plan of salvation.

耶穌是彌賽亞。耶穌是上帝救贖計劃的實現。

The heart of the Christian gospel is that you don't save yourself; God came to save us in the person of Jesus on that first Christmas night.

基督教福音的核心是你不可救自己；在第一個聖誕夜，上帝以耶穌的身分來拯救我們。

Christmas tells us that Christianity is unique. I would argue that other religions, and philosophies of life, give advice.

聖誕節告訴我們基督教是獨一無二的。我認為其他宗教和生活哲學會提供建議。

The founders of the great religions say, in one way or another, I am here to show you the way to spiritual reality. DO all this and you will find it.

偉大宗教的創始人以一種或另一種方式說，我在這裡向你展示通往屬靈現實的道路。做這一切，你就會找到它。

That's **advice**, and some of it is quite helpful.

這都是**建議**，而其中有一些是非常有幫助。

Christianity is not primarily about **self-improvement**.

基督教主要不是關於**自我完善**。

We begin with Jesus not by adopting an **ethic**, or by turning over a **new leaf**, or by joining a **community**.

我們從耶穌開始，不是通過採用一種**道德規範**，或翻開**新的一頁**，或加入一個**社區**。

You begin by believing the report about what has happened in history.

你首先以相信關於歷史上發生的事情的**報導**作開始。

Did God really become a human being? Did Jesus really live and suffer and die for you? Did he really rise triumphant from death?

上帝真的變成了人嗎？耶穌真的為你而生、受苦、和為你死嗎？他真的從死裡凱旋復活嗎？

Christmas shows us that Christianity is **not** good advice, it is **good news**.

聖誕節向我們表明，基督教不是好建議，而是好消息。

Secondly, we see here that Christmas turns all of our values upside down.

其次，我們在這裡看到聖誕節顛覆了我們所有的價值觀。

We live in an individualistic culture where we commend ourself through performance and accomplishments.

我們生活在個人主義文化中，我們通過表現和成就來表揚自己。

That is not how you did it in the **first century** in the Middle-East.

在第一世紀的中東，你不是這樣做的。

A family-tree operated like a **resume** in the first century. Your **heritage**, your **clan**, your **family**, your **pedigree** constituted your resume.

在第一世紀，家譜就像簡歷一樣運作。你的**血統**、你的**氏族**、你的**家庭**、你的**身世**構成了你的簡歷。

And as they do now, people adjusted their resumes to leave out the parts that might be an embarrassment, or a little less impressive.

就像現在一樣，人們調整了自己的簡歷，去掉了可能令人尷尬或不那麼令人印象深刻的部分。

We know that Herod the Great eliminated many names from his public genealogy because he did not want anyone to know that they were connected to him.

我們知道希律大帝從他的公開家譜中刪除了許多名字，因為他不想讓任何人知道他們與他有聯繫。

It's like the story I heard, ONCE UPON A TIME, where the children of a prominent family were assembling a book of the family's history as a birthday present for the family patriarch.

這就像我聽過的故事，從前，一個顯赫家庭的孩子們正在組裝一本家族歷史的書，作為給家族族長的生日禮物。

They commissioned a professional biographer, and were carefully to warn them of the family's "black sheep" problem.

他們委託了一位專業的傳記作家，並小心地警告他們家庭的“害群之馬”問題。

Uncle George, was a convicted criminal who had been executed by electric chair for murder.

喬治叔叔是一名被定了罪的罪犯，因謀殺被以電椅作處決。

The biographer assured the children that he could handle the situation so that there would be no embarrassment to the family.

傳記作者向孩子們保證，他可以處理這種情況，以免給家人帶來尷尬。

This is what he wrote about Uncle George:

關於喬治叔叔，他是這樣寫的：

Uncle George occupied a chair of applied electronics at an important government institution. He was attached to his position by the strongest of ties, and his death came as a real shock.

喬治叔叔在一家重要的政府機構擔任應用電子學坐席。他被最強大的束縛依附在他的位置上，他的死真令人震驚。

We cover over the skeletons in our closet too. We do it because we suspect people will value us less if they saw the TRUE US. *WARTS AND ALL* as we say.

我們也把衣櫥裡的骷髏蓋起來。我們這樣做是因為我們懷疑如果人們看到真正的我們，全無保留的，他們會降低對我們的評價。

Matthew does the exact opposite with Jesus, and it helps us see that God's value system is different.

馬太以完全相反的來處理耶穌，幫助我們看到上帝的價值體系是不同的。

First of all, notice there are **five women** listed here. All mothers of Jesus.

首先，請注意這裡列出了**五位女性**。都是耶穌的母親。

In **ancient patriarchal societies**, a woman was virtually never named in a list like this. Let alone five of them.

在古代父權社會中，女性幾乎從未出現在這樣的名單中。更不用說他們五個了。

Women were ‘gender outsiders’ in those cultures. They had no legal rights. They couldn’t inherit property or give testimony in court.

在這些文化中，女性是“性別局外人”。他們沒有合法權利。他們不能繼承財產或在法庭上作證。

Yet they are named in Jesus’ genealogy.

然而，他們在耶穌的家譜中被命名。

What’s more, three of the women are Gentiles - **Tamar, Rahab and Ruth**.

更重要的是，其中三個女人是外邦人——她瑪、喇合和路得。

To the ancient Jews these women were regarded as ‘unclean’.

對於古代猶太人看來，這些婦女被視為「不潔」。

They were racial and religious outsiders.

他們是種族和宗教上的不受歡迎的人。

Yet Matthew deliberately includes them in the family tree of the long awaited **Jewish Messiah**.
然而，馬太故意將他們包括在期待已久的猶太彌賽亞的家譜中。

By deliberately including them Matthew recalls some of the most **sordid, nasty, and immoral** occasions in the Bible.

馬太故意將它們包括在內，使人想起聖經中一些最骯髒、最下流和最不道德的場合。

It says in v3 that Judah was the father of **Perez and Zerah**, and the mother was Tamar.

第3節說猶大從她瑪氏生法勒斯和謝拉。

Tamar was **Judah's** daughter in law, and she tricked him into sleeping with her.

她瑪是猶大的兒媳，她誘騙他和她上床。

It was an act that was against the law of God.

這是違反上帝律法的行為。

And even though Jesus was a descendant of Perez and **not** Zerah, Matthew includes them both, and **both** Judah and Tamar, so that we remember the whole story.

儘管耶穌是法勒斯的後裔而不是謝拉的後裔，但馬太把他們都包括在內，還有猶大和她瑪，所以我們記得整個故事。

The Saviour of the world came from a **dysfunctional family**.

世界的救主來自一個功能失調的家庭。

Remember Rahab, who is mentioned in v5. She wasn't just a Canaanite - a Gentile - she was also a **prostitute**.

記得喇合，她在第5節中被提及。她不僅是迦南人——外邦人——她還是妓女。

But the most interesting story is in v6. It mentions King David. **Royalty** in the family tree.

That's good!?

但最有趣的故事是在第6節中。提到大衛王。家譜中的皇室。那挺好的!?

Except, in one of the great, ironic understatements of the Bible, Matthew adds that David was the father of Solomon, **whose mother had been Uriah's wife**.

除了，在聖經中一個偉大的、具有諷刺意味的輕描淡寫中，馬太補充說大衛從烏利亞的妻子生所羅門。

Her name was **Bathsheba**. By not naming her - and mentioning her first husband URIAH - Matthew is calling us to remember this tragic and terrible chapter in Israel's history.

她的名字是拔示巴。通過不提她名——並提到她的第一任丈夫烏利亞——馬太呼籲我們記住以色列歷史上這一悲慘而可怕的篇章。

Before he was King, David was a fugitive running for his life from King Saul. A group of 37 loyal men went on the run with him.

在他成為國王之前，大衛是從國王掃羅逃離的一個逃亡者。一群 37 名忠誠的男人和他一起逃跑了。

They put their lives on the line in order to protect David. Uriah was one of them (2 Samuel 23). 為了保護大衛，他們冒著生命危險。烏利亞就是其中之一（撒母耳下 23 章）。

When David was finally made King years later, he saw Uriah's wife, and he wanted her. He took her, she got pregnant, then he arranged to have **Uriah** killed in order to marry her. 多年後，大衛終於登基，他見到了烏利亞的妻子，他想要她。派人去把她接來，與她同寢，使她懷了孕，然後他安排將烏利亞殺死以娶她。

It was out of this **dysfunctional family**, and this **deeply flawed man**, that the saviour of the world came.

正是從這個**功能失調的家庭**，這個有**嚴重缺陷**的人，世界的救世主出現了。

The list of names includes **moral outsiders**, and **cultural outsiders**, and **racial outsiders**, and **gender outsiders**.

名單包括**道德**、**文化**、**種族**和**性別**不受歡迎接納的人。

Rather than being excluded or covered over they are public acknowledged as ancestors of Jesus. 他們沒有被排斥或掩蓋，而是被公眾承認為耶穌的祖先之一。

It is such an unusual genealogy. Why include it when he didn't have to?

這是一個如此不同尋常的家譜。為什麼在他不需要的情況下也包括他們？

There is a verse in the Bible that gives us a clue: ***God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*** (2 Corinthians 5:21)

聖經中有一節給我們啟示：**上帝使那無罪的，替我們成為罪，好使我們在他裏面成為上帝的義。**（哥林多後書 5:21）

The Saviour of the world jumped right in the **middle** of the **sinful, sordid, evil, unjust** affairs of human existence, in order to rescue us from it.

救世主跳入人類存在的**罪惡**、**骯髒**、**邪惡**、**不公正**的當中，以將我們從其中拯救出來。

He identifies with our **weakness**, and **brokenness** and **sinfulness** in order to rescue us out of it. 他能體恤我們的**軟弱**、**破碎**和**罪惡**，以拯救我們脫離它。

The **Christian message** is that if you repent and believe in Jesus Christ, his grace covers your sin and unites you with him and his saving work.

基督教的信息是，如果你悔改並相信耶穌基督，他的恩典就會遮蓋你的罪，並使你與他和他的拯救工作聯合起來。

There is **not a single great individual** who doesn't need his grace... and there is **not a single rotten individual** who can fail to receive the grace of the Lord Jesus.

沒有一個**偉大**的人不需要他的恩典……沒有一個**腐敗**的人不能接受主耶穌的恩典。

All the **gifts** we give at Christmas are symbols of the greatest gift of all, God's grace to us in Jesus.

我們在聖誕節送出的所有禮物都像徵著最偉大的禮物，即上帝在耶穌裡對我們的恩典。

Some gifts seem to have no point to them but some gifts, by their very nature, make you swallow your pride.

有些禮物似乎是毫無意義，但有些禮物，就其本質而言，會讓你吞下你的驕傲。

Imagine opening a gift from a friend - it's a book titled, "**10 easy steps to lose weight**".

想像一下打開朋友送來的禮物——是一本名為「減肥的 10 個簡單步驟」的書。

Offended, you put it down and unwrap the next gift, it's another book from another friend.

被冒犯了，你放下它打開下一份禮物，這是另一個朋友送的另一本書。

This one is called "**Overcoming Selfishness**".

書名是「克服自私」。

If you say thank you for the gifts you are in a sense admitting that you are overweight and obnoxious.

如果你說謝謝你的禮物，你在某種意義上承認你超重和使人討厭。

To receive some gifts is to admit **flaws** and **weaknesses**, and you **need help**.

接受一些禮物就是承認缺點和弱點，你需要幫助。

The message of Christmas - the **message of Christianity** - is that there has never been a gift offered that makes you **swallow your pride** to the depths that the gift of Jesus Christ *requires* us to do.

聖誕節的信息——基督教的信息——是從來沒有提供的禮物讓你把你的驕傲吞嚥到耶穌基督的禮物要求我們做的深處。

Christmas means that we are **so lost**, **so unable** to save ourselves, that nothing less than the death of the Son of God himself could save us.

聖誕節意味著我們如此迷失，如此無法自救，以至於只有上帝之子的死才能拯救我們。

To accept the **true Christmas gift**, we have to admit we are sinners. **Unworthy** of the gift, and in need of *saving* by his grace.

要接受真正的聖誕禮物，我們必須承認我們是罪人。不配得到禮物，需要靠他的恩典拯救。

That is a **descent** that is much lower than any of us wants to go.

這是一個比我們任何人想要去的都要低得多的「下降」。

You see, Christmas totally humbles us because it proclaims that nothing less than the death of the Son of God can rescue us.

你看，聖誕節完全讓我們謙卑，因為它宣告只有上帝兒子的死才能拯救我們。

It also affirms us because he was willing to do it for us.
這也肯定了我們，因為他願意為我們做這件事。

The **greatness of Jesus** is seen in how far down he came to love us and lift us up.
耶穌的偉大體現在他有多願意和有多大情度降下來去愛我們並扶助我們。

Christmas turns all our values on their head. God isn't attracted to us by impressive resumes and performance.

聖誕節顛覆了我們所有的價值觀。上帝不會被令人印象深刻的簡歷和表現所吸引。

The only way to get God's approval is by acknowledging our brokenness, sin, frailty, flaws, and our desperate need for his mercy.

獲得上帝認可的唯一方法是承認我們的破碎、罪惡、軟弱、缺陷，以及我們對他的憐憫的迫切需要。

THIRDLY, IF WE ACCEPT IT, JESUS' GRACE GIVES US ULTIMATE REST.

第三，如果我們接受，耶穌的恩典會給我們最終的安息。

At the end of this list of names there is an **obscure** verse, v17:

在這個名字列表的末尾有一段含糊難解的經文，第 17 節：

there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

這樣，從亞伯拉罕到大衛共有十四代，從大衛到遷至巴比倫的時候也有十四代，從遷至巴比倫的時候到基督又有十四代。

That doesn't mean a lot to us, but it was pretty big for the first recipients of this news.

這對我們來說意義不大，但對於這條新聞的第一批接收者來說卻意義重大。

In the Bible the number seven is very significant. Right at the beginning of the Bible, God did the work of creating for six days, and then he RESTED on the seventh day.

在聖經中，「七」是非常重要的數字。就在聖經的開頭，神做了六天的創造工作，然後在第七天休息。

God wasn't tired; rest means him enjoying his creation. All is at peace and harmony.

Everything was perfect.

上帝並不疲倦；休息意味著他享受他的創造。一切都處於和平與和諧之中。一切都很完美。

The **seventh day** didn't have an end to it. It was the high point and goal of God's creative work. BUT THEN SIN ENTERED THE PICTURE.

第七天並沒有結束的時限。這是上帝創造工作的最高點和目標。但後來罪進入了畫面。

The first people decided to reject God's loving rule over their life, and chose for themselves how they thought life should work.

始祖決定拒絕上帝對他們生活的慈愛統治，並為自己選擇了他們認為生活應該如何運作。

REST was destroyed. There wasn't any harmony or peace anymore.

「安息」被破壞了。不再有任何和諧或和平。

BUT GOD STILL GRACIOUSLY PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE.

但上帝仍然慷慨地供應他的百姓。

He instituted a seventh day rest as part of their normal weekly cycle. But he also instituted an ultimate rest. It was called the **Jubilee** year.

他將第七天休息作為他們正常每週週期的一部分。但他也制定了最終的休息。它被稱為禧年。

At the end of the last year of the seventh period of seven years - the forty-ninth year - saw the beginning of the **Jubilee** year.

在七次七年的最後一年結束時——第四十九年——就是禧年的開始。

The year began on the day of fresh beginnings, when the whole nation had just received forgiveness for their sin.

這一年以新的開始之日來開始，整個國家的罪孽都得到了寬恕。

The Jubilee year was characterised by freedom and return. Freedom from burdens, labour and debt were to go hand in hand with restoring broken family ties and repossession of lost property.

禧年的特點是自由和回歸。擺脫負擔、勞動和債務的自由與恢復破裂的家庭關係和收回失去的財產齊頭並進。

The Jubilee year kept many people looking forward in hope.

禧年讓許多人充滿希望。

Verse 17 tells us there were 3 lots of 14 generations. Or 6 lots of 7 generations, with Jesus as the beginning of the “seventh-seven”.

第 17 節告訴我們有三批的十四代。或六次七代，以耶穌為第七個七的開始。

Verse 17 is saying that what the hope of the **Jubilee** foreshadowed - the reestablishment of ULTIMATE REST - comes to us through Jesus.

第 17 節是說，禧年所預示的希望——最終安息的重建——是藉著耶穌來到我們。

No more counting of generations happened after Jesus. In him is where rest - harmony, peace, hope, security - can be found.

在耶穌之後不用再計算世代。在他身上可以找到安息——和諧、和平、希望、安全。

If we grasp that Christmas is not a once upon a time story, but that Jesus really broke into **time** and **space**, and that he has **accomplished our salvation** so that prostitute and king are equal in him, then we can have that rest now.

如果我們明白聖誕節不是從前的故事，而是耶穌真的闖入了時間和空間，並且他已經完成了我們的救恩，使妓女和國王在他身上平等，那麼我們現在就可以安息了。

Total, enduring, final rest is what we all need.
完全的、持久的、最後的休息是我們都需要的。

The rest that Jesus secures for us is a rest we get to enjoy **both** now, and forever with him.
 耶穌為我們確保的安息是我們現在和永遠與他一起享受的安息。

Jesus gives us rest for our souls now. Jesus says in Matthew 11:28:
 耶穌現在讓我們的靈魂得到安息。耶穌在《馬太福音》11:28 中說：

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

凡勞苦擔重擔的人都到我這裏來，我要使你們得安息。29 我心裏柔和謙卑，你們當負我的軛，向我學習；這樣，你們的心靈就必得安息。

Many speak today about a deep hunger in the human heart. People are hungry for love and security and significance and meaning. Jesus said
 今天，許多人談到人類內心深處的飢餓。人們渴望愛、安全、重要和意義。耶穌說，

I am the bread of life, feed on me and you will never hunger again.
我就是生命的糧。到我這裏來的，絕不飢餓；信我的，永不乾渴。

Many walk in darkness, disillusionment and despair. Jesus said
 許多人在黑暗、幻滅和絕望中行走。耶穌說，

I am the light of the world. If you follow me you will never walk in darkness, instead you'll have the light of life.
我就是世界的光。跟從我的，必不在黑暗裏走，卻要得著生命的光。

Others are fearful of death. Jesus said,
 其他人則害怕死亡。耶穌說，

I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will live even though he dies. And whoever lives and believes in me will never die.
復活在我，生命也在我。信我的人雖然死了，也必復活。

Christmas declares we can have that rest in our souls right now if we come to Jesus.
 聖誕節宣告，如果我們來到耶穌面前，我們現在就可以在我們的靈魂中得到安息。

The rest of unspoiled love between you and God. What a gift!
 你和上帝之間以未受破壞的愛作安息。多麼好的禮物啊！

Christmas is not a *Once upon a time* story that shows us how we should live better lives.
 聖誕節不是「從前的」向我們展示了我們應該如何過上更好的生活的故事。

Christmas is news. News calls us to acknowledge something that has already happened, and to respond to it.

聖誕是新聞。新聞呼籲我們承認已經發生的事情，並做出回應。

The Saviour of the world has broken into time and space to save us. This event is not so much a birth as it is a coming...the coming of God into his world.

這世界的救世主已經闖入時間和空間來拯救我們。這個事件與其說是出生，不如說是降臨……上帝來到他的世界。

1. **Christmas is good news not good advice** 聖誕節是好消息不是好建議
2. **Christmas turns our values on their head** 聖誕節顛覆了我們的價值觀
3. **Christmas is the promise of ultimate rest** 聖誕節是最終休息的承諾

He calls us to look to him, come to him, trust him, believe him, follow him, and find the rest we all so desperately long for.

他呼喚我們仰望他，來到他面前，信靠他，相信他，跟隨他，並找到我們都非常渴望的安息。