

# *It's Hard to Believe in Christmas* 很難相信聖誕節

Isaiah 以賽亞書 53:1-6 & Luke 路加福音 2:1-7, 29-35

USED: 24th(11pm)&25th(9am)December 2022 年 12 月 24 日 (晚上 11 點) 25 日 (上午 9 點)

A cocktail of excitement, stress, tiredness, and alcohol can create unexpected hazards in the home at Christmas.

興奮、壓力、疲倦和酒精的混合會在聖誕節給家裡帶來意想不到的危險。

More than 80,000 people a year need hospital treatment for injuries such as falls, cuts, and burns during the festive period.

每年有超過 80,000 人在節日期間因跌倒、割傷和燒傷等受傷需要到醫院接受治療。

- \* Hospitals reported four broken arms last year after cracker-pulling accidents.
- \* 醫院報告去年有四個人在拉聖誕紙炮時發生事故弄斷了手臂。
- \* 3 people die each year, testing if a 9v battery works on their tongue.
- \* 每年有三個人死於用他們的舌頭來測試 9 伏電池是否仍能運作。
- \* Around eight people crack their skulls after falling asleep while throwing up into the toilet.
- \* 大約有八個人酒醉後在廁所嘔吐時睡著了，把他們的頭撞得頭破血流。
- \* 18 people receive severe burns trying on a new jumper with a lit cigarette in their mouth.
- \* 18 人在試穿新套頭衫時，嘴裡叼著一根點燃的香煙，而被嚴重燒傷。
- \* More than 30 people have died since 1996 by watering their Christmas trees while the fairy lights were plugged in.
- \* 自 1996 年以來，已有超過 30 人因在聖誕樹的燈飾還通著電時澆水而死亡。
- \* Around 58 people are injured each year by using sharp knives instead of screwdrivers.
- \* 每年約有 58 人因使用鋒利的刀而不是螺絲刀而受傷。
- \* Approximately ten people a year must have broken parts of plastic toys pulled out of the soles of their feet.
- \* 每年大約有 10 個人必須從腳底拉出塑料玩具的破損部件。
- \* 142 were injured on one Christmas day alone by not removing all pins from new shirts.
- \* 僅在一個聖誕節，就有 142 人因未從新襯衫上取下所有別針而受傷。

Instead of joy and happiness at Christmas, there is pain and disaster. Christmas can be hard. Even the message of Christmas is hard to believe.

聖誕節沒有歡樂和幸福，而是痛苦和災難。聖誕節可以是很難。甚至聖誕節的信息也令人難以置信。

Over this Christmas season at St Paul's, we have been asking the question - IS CHRISTMAS UNBELIEVABLE?

我們在聖保羅堂的這個聖誕節期間，一直在問一個問題...聖誕節令人難以置信嗎？

We have seen that Christmas ISN'T just a good story in our heads. It's a TRUE story that happened in history.

我們已經看到聖誕節不僅僅是我們腦海中的一個好故事。這是在歷史上發生的一個真實故事。

We've seen the evidence for Jesus being a real person, that the New Testament accounts of his life weren't made up, and that the miracles they describe haven't been disproved by science.

我們已經看到了耶穌是真實存在的證據，新約中關於他生平的記載並非虛構，其中所描述的神蹟也沒有被科學推翻。

It is reasonable to believe in Christmas. But still, it is so hard to believe in Christmas in such a way that it shapes our lives every day of the year. The message of Christmas is hard to swallow.  
相信聖誕節是合理的。但是，仍然很難相信聖誕節是用來塑造我們一年中的每一天的生活的一種方式。聖誕節的信息是難以接受的。

We see it in Luke 2. When Jesus' parents brought him to the Temple on the eighth day, an older man was present.

我們在《路加福音》第2章看到了這一點。當耶穌的父母在他滿了八天把他帶到聖殿時，有一位年長的男子在那裡。

Simeon had been waiting for the long-promised Jewish Saviour and Ruler. When he saw Jesus, he took him in his arms and spoke what are now famous words called the *Nunc dimittis*.

西面一直在等待久已應許的猶太救世主和統治者。當他看到耶穌時，他把他抱在懷裡，說了現在著名的話，叫做西面頌。

These words have been used in Christian church services all over the world for centuries.

幾個世紀以來，這些詞已被用於世界各地的基督教教會的崇拜中。

They go something like this: *Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation.*

他們是這樣說的：主啊，如今可以照你的話，容你的僕人安然去世；30 因為我的眼睛已經看見你的救恩

That is not all that Simeon said. He also said something quite troubling:

西面所說的還不止這些。他還說了一些另人驚訝的話：

*This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.*

這孩子被立，是要叫以色列中許多人跌倒，許多人興起；又要成為毀謗的對象，35 叫許多人心裏的意念顯露出來；你自己的心也要被劍刺透。

Those words are relatively unknown. They have not been put to music; they are not read out in Christmas services around the world.

這些詞相對不為人知。它們沒有被寫為歌曲；它們不會在世界各地的聖誕節聚會中被宣讀。

It's probably because they seem rather depressing, even disturbing, even though they get to the heart of the meaning of Christmas.

這可能是因為它們看起來相當令人沮喪，甚至令人不安，儘管它們觸及了聖誕節意義的核心。

The Christmas story, and the words of Simeon, tell us that Jesus Christ came to be rejected.

聖誕節的故事和西面的話告訴我們，耶穌基督來是為了被棄絕。

Even in the familiar part of the Christmas story at the beginning of Luke 2, the bit where it says, *She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them* - Luke is telling us that Jesus is rejected right from the start.

即使在《路加福音》2章開頭的聖誕節故事中熟悉的部分，也就是說，馬利亞的產期到了，就生了頭胎的兒子，用布包起來，放在馬槽裏，因為客店裏沒有地方。…路加告訴我們耶穌從一開始就被拒絕了。

From the beginning, Jesus Christ is being shut out. Jesus came to get people mad at him. He came to reveal people's hearts and have them speak against him.

從一開始，耶穌基督就被拒之門外。耶穌來是要讓人生他的氣。他來是要暴露人們的內心，讓他們反對他。

Why? It wasn't because he loved to be rejected. Some people get their sense of worth by being rejected by others. Being rejected makes them feel important.

為什麼？不是因為他喜歡被拒絕。有些人通過被別人拒絕而獲得價值感。被拒絕讓他們覺得自己很重要。

Jesus came, not seeking rejection, but knowing he would face it. He embraced the rejection because it is the very centre of why he came.

耶穌來了，不會主動尋求拒絕，而是知道他會面對它。他接受了拒絕，因為這是他來這裡的核心原因。

If we don't understand the rejection he faced, why he faced it, and the implications for us, then we don't understand Christmas. Christmas can't be good news for us.

如果我們不理解他所面臨的拒絕，他為什麼要面對拒絕，以及對我們的影響，那麼我們就無法理解聖誕節。聖誕節對我們來說不是好消息。

There are three main reasons Jesus faced rejection. The first reason is that he is too ordinary.

耶穌遭到拒絕的主要原因有三個。第一個原因，就是他太普通了。

### **JESUS IS ORDINARY 耶穌是平凡的**

He was rejected because he didn't meet humanity's expectations of a saviour. He wasn't the right kind of person. He didn't look or act like a saviour or ruler.

他被拒絕是因為他不符合人類對救世主的期望。他不是那種合適的人。他的外表和舉止都不像救世主或統治者。

When Jesus is presented at the Temple, we are told in v24 that Mary & Joseph brought along a couple of doves or pigeons for the sacrifice. That is what poor people brought. Jesus was born into poverty. He came from the wrong side of town.

當耶穌被帶到聖殿時，我們在第 24 節中被告知，馬利亞和約瑟帶了一對斑鳩，或兩隻雛鴿作獻祭。那是為窮人而定的標準。耶穌出生在貧窮之中。他來自城市不理想的那邊。

He didn't have the credentials for leadership. In Mark 6, we are told that his hometown and closest circle of friends rejected him. They were offended by him...scandalised by him. Why?

他沒有領導的資格。在《馬可》6 章中，我們被告知他的本鄉、本族和自己的親友拒絕了他。他們厭棄他……被他醜化了。為什麼？

In his commentary on Mark 6, William Lane states the issue well: *Their discernment could not penetrate the veil of ordinariness that surrounded him.*

威廉萊恩在他對《馬可福音》6 章的註釋中很好地闡述了這個問題：*他們的洞察力無法穿透包圍他的平凡的面紗。*

He was a carpenter. Father died young and was raised by his mother. He had no connections on the margins of society. He wasn't leadership material.

他是個木匠。父親早逝，由母親撫養長大。他在社會邊緣沒有人脈。他不是領導材料。

We are even told in Isaiah 53 that he was not good-looking. ***He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.***

我們甚至在《以賽亞書》53章中被告知他長得不好看。他無佳形美容使我們注視他，也無美貌使我們仰慕他。3 他被藐視，被人厭棄；多受痛苦，常經憂患。他被藐視，好像被人掩面不看的一樣，我們也不尊重他。

Jesus was not a celebrity. A celebrity has always been someone who has it together on the outside, even if they are a wreck on the inside.

耶穌不是名人。名人從來是那些表面看來一切好好，即使他們在裡面是殘骸。

On the outside, they are beautiful. If not beautiful, then they are very talented.

在外表上，他們很漂亮。如果不是漂亮，就是他們很有才華。

It matters not if their relationships are a wreck and they struggle with addictions. In a celebrity culture like ours, it's the externals, the superficial, the outside that matters.

他們的關係是否破裂，並且他們是否與毒癮作鬥爭，並不重要。在像我們這樣的名人文化中，重要的是外在的、膚淺的、表面的東西。

Jesus destroys that. He says your status, your look, your beauty, your achievements, your position, your connections, is nothing. What matters is your heart and soul.

耶穌摧毀了它。他說你的地位、你的容貌、你的美貌、你的成就、你的職位、你的人脈，都算不了什麼。重要的是你的心和靈魂。

Christmas means Christians reject snobbery and care about character, humility, compassion, wisdom, and integrity. What we love reveals who we are.

聖誕節意味著基督徒拒絕勢利，關心品格、謙遜、同情、智慧和正直。我們所愛的揭示了我們是誰。

Jesus is rejected because he is too ordinary to be the saviour and ruler of the world.

耶穌被拒絕是因為他太平凡而無法成為世界的救世主和統治者。

## **JESUS REVEALS OUR ORDINARINESS 耶穌顯露我們的平凡**

**The second reason** he is rejected is because Jesus reveals the ordinariness of our inner lives. See what Simeon said in v35: ***the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed.***

耶穌被拒絕的**第二個原因**是因為耶穌顯露了我們內心生命的平凡。看看西面在第35節所說的話：**叫許多人心裏的意念顯露出來。**

Jesus Christ showed people who they really were, and they didn't like it. The book of Romans in the New Testament tells us that deep down in every human heart is a need for God. We all know we are sinners and therefore need a saviour. But the way all humanity deals with that is we all have an engine of self-justification deep in our hearts.

耶穌基督向人們展示了他們的真實面目，但他們並不喜歡。新約《羅馬書》告訴我們，每一個人內心深處都需要神。我們都知道自己是罪人，因此需要一位救主。但是全人類處理這個問題的方式是，我們內心深處都有一個自我辯護的引擎。

That engine wants so desperately to think we are ok that it suppresses the truth about God. It does not want to know about God or what he requires. Doesn't want to hear that we need God or that there is anything wrong with humanity.

那個引擎如此拼命地認為我們沒事，以至於它壓制了關於上帝的真相。它不想了解上帝或他的要求。不想聽到我們需要上帝或人類有任何問題。

Anything that makes it hard to suppress the truth gets us mad. So, when Jesus Christ came along, he was hated. Everywhere Jesus went, crowds gathered.

任何讓我們難以壓制真相的事情都會讓我們生氣。所以，當耶穌基督出現時，他被人憎恨。耶穌所到之處，人群聚集。

He mesmerised and alienated, attracted and infuriated. Jesus evokes rejection and hostility.

他著迷又疏遠，吸引又激怒。耶穌喚起了拒絕和敵意。

In the Christmas narrative, King Herod hears that Jesus is born the king. He is threatened and attempts to have him killed.

在聖誕節的故事中，希律王聽說耶穌降生為王。他受到威脅，並試圖殺死他。

When Jesus Christ comes to anybody and reveals himself as the true ruler of our lives, we all get mad at him. 當耶穌基督來到任何人面前並顯示自己是我們生命的真正統治者時，我們都會生他的氣。

And people will get upset at any Christian who lives and loves like Jesus because it reminds them of their own heart, priorities, and actions. You don't have to be perfect to get rejected.

人們會對任何像耶穌一樣生活和愛的基督徒感到不安，因為這提醒他們自己的內心、優先事項和行動。你不必完美才會被拒絕。

Living a life like Jesus exposes corruption, immorality, gossip, and greed. No one likes the depths of the immoral hearts being revealed or those who reveal them. Christmas means there is often no 'room in the inn' for those who follow Jesus.

過像耶穌一樣的生活會暴露腐敗、不道德、流言蜚語和貪婪。沒有人喜歡不道德的內心深處被揭露或那些揭露它們的人。聖誕節意味著客店裏通常沒有地方給那些跟隨耶穌的人。

### HIS REJECTION FOR OUR ACCEPTANCE 他被拒絕為了我們被接受

Jesus Christ came into this world knowing he would violate the world's standards and priorities and intimidate people with his life and message. Still, he came because of the substitutionary nature of his work. 耶穌基督來到這個世界上，知道 he 會違反世界的標準和優先事項，並且他的生命和信息將恐嚇人們。儘管如此，他還是因為他工作的替代性質而來。

Let's go back to Isaiah 53 again. Right after it says *Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem* we read this:

讓我們再次回到《以賽亞書》53章。就在它說，*好像被人掩面不看的一樣，我們也不尊重他。之後，我們讀到這個：*

***Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

4 他誠然擔當我們的憂患，背負我們的痛苦；我們卻以為他受責罰，是被上帝擊打苦待。5 他為我們的過犯受害，為我們的罪孽被壓傷。因他受的懲罰，我們得平安；因他受的鞭傷，我們得醫治。6 我們都如羊走迷，各人偏行己路；耶和華使我們眾人的罪孽都歸在他身上。

In a nutshell, Jesus' rejection is our acceptance. He didn't come to be rejected simply as an example; he came to be rejected as a saviour. He was rejected for our transgressions...our sins...our rejection of God.

簡而言之，耶穌的被拒絕就是我們的被接受。他不只是作為一個例子而被拒絕；他作為救世主而被拒絕。他因我們的過犯……我們的罪……我們拒絕神而被拒絕。

Simeon says in Luke 2:34 that Jesus *is to be a sign that will be spoken against*. Because Jesus is spoken against, we can be spoken for. Because there is no room for him, we can dwell in the presence of God forever. 西面在路加福音 2:34 中說，耶穌又要成為毀謗的對象。因為耶穌被毀謗，所以我們可以被稱讚。因為他沒有安睡的地方，我們可以永遠住在神面前。

Jesus knew that his acceptance would be our rejection, but his rejection would be our acceptance. He chose rejection for us.

耶穌知道他的被接受就是我們的被拒絕，但他的被拒絕就是我們的被接受。他為我們選擇了被拒絕。

Christmas is dangerous. Christmas is hard news. Some gifts, by their nature, are like that. Unwrapping a book on Christmas Day titled, *How not to be arrogant* will hurt your sensibilities, but it is most likely needed.

聖誕節很危險。聖誕節是個難的消息。有些禮物，就其本質而言，就是這樣的。在聖誕節若收到一本書，名為《如何不傲慢》，可能會傷害你的情感，但這很可能是必需的。

The message of Christmas is hard, but it is also healing and soothing. In the same way, a surgeon brings healing to our body by cutting us and spilling our blood. It's a wound that leads to health.

聖誕節的信息是難的，但它也是治愈和安慰的。同樣地，外科醫生通過割開我們並灑我們的血來治愈我們的身體。這是導致健康的傷口。

The reason Jesus makes us uncomfortable is because he challenges our worldview. He forces us to expand our theory of life and its purpose and goal.

耶穌讓我們不舒服的原因是因為他挑戰了我們的世界觀。他迫使我們擴展我們的人生理論及其目的和目標。

The magnificent, perfect, flawless God comes down into our ordinariness. He immerses himself in ordinary human life's pain, vulnerability, and suffering.

偉大、完美、完美無瑕的上帝降臨到我們的平凡中。他沉浸在普通人生命的痛苦、脆弱和苦難中。

It took God to take such drastic steps to save us. It is offensive to our sensibilities to think that we are that helpless in our sin.

上帝採取如此激烈的步驟來拯救我們。認為我們在罪中如此無助是對我們感情的冒犯。

And yet, we cannot know the blessing of forgiveness, hope, and life forever if we've never felt the offence of Jesus Christ. We should feel the offence, but we mustn't take offence.

然而，如果我們從未感受過耶穌基督的冒犯，我們就無法知道寬恕、希望和永生的祝福。我們應該感到被冒犯，但我們絕不能生氣。

It's hard to believe in Christmas, but there is healing and hope and joy when we do.

很難相信聖誕節，但當我們相信時，就會有治愈、希望和快樂。