

INTRODUCTION 引言

Translation from one language to another one is an art of science. Errors will happen if you miss out some details. Two sisters of my wife both married Caucasian guys. One man spoke limited Mandarin. Once we gathered for a home-cooked dinner. One dish is stuffed-pepper. It was made by putting ground pork into some non-spicy peppers. My sister-in-law loved it very much. She commented: "This is delicious. The meat juice fills the bottom of the pepper." She then asked if her husband knew what she was saying. He understood the Chinese words for "bottom" and "pepper." "I sure do." He replied, "You said the pepper is so hot that it burns your bottom!" The original meaning of the message was lost in translation. Jesus came into the world to preach the gospel message. Many people reject Jesus because they misunderstand His message. We see such people in John chapter 6. A crowd chased after Jesus when they saw His healing miracles. At the beginning of the story, Jesus also performed the miracle of five-loaves-and-two-fish to feed them. In the subsequent conversations, Jesus wanted the crowd to follow Him for the right reason. In Jesus' mind, true believers must also be followers. That is a reminder to the two persons who will receive baptism today and to us all. We need to clarify one important truth at every baptism. The water cannot save anyone. Only Jesus can save us. We have become Christians the moment we accepted Jesus as our Savior and Lord. Baptism is an action to testify our faith.

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Perceiving External Problems 察覺外在的問題

On that day, the crowd went to Jesus because they perceived some of their external problems. John tells us their reaction after their stomachs are filled. Look at verses 14-15: **14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" 15 Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.** Those people thought that Jesus was the Prophet foretold in Deuteronomy 18:18. Back then, God told the Israelites that a certain prophet would come. That messenger would speak with authority and people must listen to him. Jesus taught people with God's authority. Also, the food miracle reminded them that God gave manna as food to their ancestors in the wilderness. Jesus also created food out of nowhere. Since Moses rescued their ancestors from Egypt, Jesus should be able to liberate them from the Romans. Jesus came to be a King, but not the kind of military leader the Jews had in mind. Therefore, He quietly retreated to the hillside alone. The crowd kept looking until they found Jesus the next morning. Jesus revealed the motive behind their pursuit in verses 26-27: **26 Jesus**

answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” Those people were only interested in temporary food. Jesus encouraged them to seek after the permanent food that only He could provide. Jesus called the miracles He performed as “signs.” Road signs tell us speed limit, street name, direction, etc. Likewise, Jesus’ miracles convey some messages. First, the power proves that Jesus is God. Second, it confirms that God’s Kingdom had arrived. Jesus rescues people from sin and transfers them into the Kingdom of Light. However, the crowd only cared about their physical needs instead of their spiritual need. They wished to plan a revolution, but they needed reconciliation with God. What about you? Why do you think that you need Jesus? Some people look to Him for emotional support. Others may find Jesus’ moral teachings quite inspiring. Another common answer is: it is good for people to have their own religion. Some gospel seekers look for their version of God. They say: “I will be satisfied if God gives me this.” It can be more money, a successful career or a beautiful spouse. Other people conclude that God is not real because there are problems like natural disasters, wars and poverty. They reason that a perfect God should make everyone happy, healthy and wealthy. We should not put God inside a box! He is much wiser than we think. By meeting our needs of this life, Jesus wants us to realize we have a deeper need that only He can meet.

2. Receiving Eternal Promise 接受永恆的應許

The crowd chased after Jesus for the wrong reasons. They only perceived some external problems they had. Jesus then corrected their misconception. He encouraged them to receive His eternal promise. Jesus tells them in verse 27 to seek after an eternal food instead of a temporary food. Jesus refers to eternal life. He continues to use food as a metaphor in verses 51-52: 51 “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” 52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Jesus uses “bread from heaven” or “bread of life” ten times in this chapter to represent Himself. The manna in the wilderness and the miracle bread all point to Jesus. He is the true bread that gives us eternal life. The audience was shocked by Jesus’ invitation to eat Him up. A few verses later, He even asks them to drink His blood. The listeners could not understand it because they were thinking in physical terms. But Jesus was talking about His death on the cross. He sacrificed His life and shed His blood to pay for the sin of mankind. Those who receive Him into their hearts, as if consuming His body, will be saved. The message did not make sense to the crowd. As a result, many of them left. Jesus then asked His disciples. Look at verses 67-69: 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” Jesus wanted the twelve men to examine their intent for following Him. Just like in many occasions, the

impatient Peter acted as a spokesman for the group. He had a correct understanding of Jesus' identity and His messages. Jesus is the Holy One of God. He is more than a prophet. He is not just a miracle-performer. Also, Jesus spoke the words of eternal life. His teachings carried the authority of God. They are life-changing lessons from God. At this point in time, the disciples only had a fuzzy idea about their Master. It was not until Jesus' resurrection before they finally realized that Jesus is God. By asking if they wanted to leave, Jesus gave them a choice. Even today, Jesus allows us to reject Him or to receive Him. We should accept Him if we are convinced that He is the one true God. However, becoming a Christian is not only about going to heaven after we leave the world. People have a confusion that eternal life begins after they go to heaven. But the Bible tells us that we get a new life the moment Jesus enters into our hearts. That new life makes us love God, His Word and His people. We feel God's presence because He lives inside us. He shapes us daily to make us more like Jesus. We become more submissive to obey God's truths. Those and many other signs show that we have an eternal relationship with God.

CONCLUSION 結論

True believers of Jesus must also be His followers. On that day, the crowd rushed to Jesus. From those people, Jesus called for His real followers. He took the initiative to build a relationship with those who put their faith in Him. That reminds me of an amazing story between a man and his animal friend. The fascinating thing is that the animal is a fourteen-foot long tiger shark. Jim is a wildlife conservationist. Once he was diving in the Bahamas. He met a tiger shark that had a fishing hook on her jaw. Jim spent some time to gain the trust from the shark. Eventually, he helped her remove the hook. Since then, the shark would swim to Jim every time he dived in the area. He gave her a name Emma. The relationship has lasted 20 years now. Over that duration, their bond gets stronger every time Jim took out a hook from Emma. She loves Jim to rub her head like people do to their dogs and cats. Before that, Jim had no idea that sharks were affectionate creatures. But he cautions people not to try the same when they see sharks in the ocean. After all, they are wild animals. Emma knows that Jim cares about her. She delights to draw near to him even when she does not have any need. Similarly, following Jesus should not be about getting something from Him. He took away our sin. He loves us with an everlasting love. Our love for Him must come from a simple heart. We say to the Lord like Peter did: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." To our two baptism candidates: your spiritual journey has just begun. I pray that your knowledge about Jesus and your dedication for Him will continue to grow.

INTRODUCTION 引言

從一種語言翻譯成另一種語言是一門藝術。如果你錯過了一些細節，就會發生錯誤。我太太有兩個姐姐嫁給白人。其中一個人能說有限的普通話。有一次我們聚在家裡吃晚餐。一道菜是釀辣椒，它是將碎豬肉放入一些不辣的辣椒中製成的。我太太的其中一個姐姐非常喜歡吃。她說：「這很好吃。肉汁充滿了辣椒的底部。」然後她問她丈夫是否知道她在說什麼。他聽懂了「辣椒」和「底部」兩個字。他回答說：「我當然知道。妳說辣椒太辣了，會火燒屁股！」原來的意思在翻譯過程中失誤了。耶穌來到世上傳福音信息。許多人拒絕耶穌，因為他們誤解了祂的信息。我們在約翰福音第 6 章中看到了這樣的人。群眾看到耶穌所行的醫治神蹟時，就追著祂。故事一開始，耶穌還行了五餅二魚的神蹟來餵飽他們。在隨後的對話中，耶穌希望群眾以正確的理由跟隨祂。在耶穌看來，真正的信徒也必須是跟隨者。這是對今天將接受浸禮的兩個人和我們所有人的提醒。我們需要在每次浸禮時澄清一個重要的真理。水不能救任何人，唯有耶穌才能救我們。當我們接受耶穌為我們的救主和生命的主之時，我們就已經成為基督徒。浸禮是見證我們信心的一個行動。

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Perceiving External Problems 察覺外在的問題

那一天，群眾因為察覺到一些外在的問題而去找耶穌。約翰告訴我們他們吃飽後的反應。請看 14-15 節：**14 眾人看見耶穌所行的神蹟，就說：「這真是那要到世間來的先知！」****15 耶穌既知道眾人要來強逼他作王，就獨自又退到山上去了。**那些人認為耶穌是申命記 18:18 所預言的那位先知。當時神告訴以色列人，有一位先知以後會來。那位使者會帶著權柄說話，人們必須聽從他。耶穌以神的權柄教導人。此外，食物的神蹟提醒他們，神在曠野賜嗎哪給他們的祖先作食物。耶穌也憑空創造了食物。既然摩西從埃及拯救了他們的祖先，耶穌也應該能夠將他們從羅馬人手中解放出來。耶穌是要成為君王，但不是猶太人心目中的軍事領袖。於是，祂一個人悄悄地退到山上。群眾繼續尋找耶穌，直到第二天早上終於找到了祂。耶穌在 26 至 27 節揭示了他們找祂的動機：**26 耶穌回答說：「我實實在在地告訴你們，你們找我，並不是因見了神蹟，乃是因吃餅得飽。27 不要為那必壞的食物勞力，要為那存到永生的食物勞力，就是人子要賜給你們的，因為人子是父神所印證的。」**那些人只對短暫的食物感興趣。耶穌鼓勵

他們要尋求唯有祂才能供應的永恆食物。這裡「神蹟」這個字的原來意思是標誌。路標告訴我們速度限制、街道名稱、方向等信息。同樣，耶穌的神蹟也傳遞了一些訊息。首先，超自然能力證明耶穌是神。其次，它證實神的國已經來臨。耶穌將人們從罪中拯救出來，並將他們遷移到光明的國度。然而，群眾只關心他們的物質需要，而不關心他們的屬靈需要。他們希望策劃一場革命，但其實他們需要與神和好。你呢？為什麼你認為你需要耶穌？有些人只是尋找一個心靈寄託。其他人可能覺得耶穌的道德教導非常有激勵性。另一個常見的答案是：人們有自己的信仰是件好事。有些福音朋友想要找到他們心目中的神。他們說：「如果神給我這個東西，我就滿足了。」可能是更多的錢、成功的事業或好看的配偶。其他人則認為神並不存在，因為有自然災害、戰爭和貧窮等問題。他們認為完美的神應該讓每個人幸福、健康、富有。我們不應該把神放在一個盒子裡！祂比我們想像的更有智慧。透過滿足我們今生的需要，耶穌希望我們意識到我們有更深層和唯有祂能滿足的需要。

2. Receiving Eternal Promise 接受永恆的應許

群眾以錯誤的理由追著耶穌。他們只察覺到自己一些外在問題。耶穌隨後糾正了他們的誤解。祂鼓勵他們接受祂永恆的應許。耶穌在第 27 節告訴他們要尋求永恆的食物，而不是暫時的食物。耶穌指的是永生。祂在 51-52 節繼續用食物作為比喻：**51 我是從天上降下來生命的糧；人若吃這糧，就必永遠活着。我所要賜的糧就是我的肉，為世人之生命所賜的。」**52 因此，**猶太人彼此爭論說：「這個人怎能把他的肉給我們吃呢？」**耶穌在這一章中十次使用「天上的糧」或「生命的糧」來形容祂自己。曠野中的嗎哪和神蹟中的餅都指向耶穌。祂是使我們得永生的靈糧。聽眾對耶穌邀請吃掉祂感到震驚。幾節經文之後，祂甚至要求他們喝祂的血。聽眾無法理解，因為他們是從物質來思考。但耶穌談論的是祂在十字架上的死。祂犧牲自己的生命，流了自己的血，來償還人類的罪。那些將祂接受到心裡，如同吃掉祂身體的人，就會得救。群眾無法明白耶穌的信息。結果，很多人都離開了。耶穌接著問祂的門徒。請看 67-69 節：**67 耶穌就對那十二個門徒說：「你們也要去嗎？」**68 **西門·彼得回答說：「主啊，你有永生之道，我們還歸從誰呢？」**69 **我們已經信了，又知道你是神的聖者。」**耶穌要他們十二個人檢視他們跟隨祂的目的。就像在很多場合一樣，沒有耐性的彼得充當了團體的發言人。他對耶穌的身份和祂的信息有正確的認識。耶穌是神的聖者。祂不僅僅是一位先知。祂也不只是一個行神蹟的人。此外，耶穌也傳講永生之道。祂的教導帶著神的權柄。它們是來自神改變生命的教訓。在這個時候，門徒們對他們老師的認識還很模糊。直等到耶穌復活之後，他們終於了解到耶穌是神。透過詢問他們是否想離開，耶穌給了他們一個選擇。就算在今天，耶穌也允許我們拒絕祂或接受祂。如果我們確信祂是獨一真神，我們就應該接

受祂。然而，成為基督徒不應該只是為了離開世界後去天堂。人們有一個誤解，以為永生是在上天堂之後才開始的。但聖經告訴我們，當耶穌進入我們心裡的那一刻，我們就獲得新生命。這個新生命使我們愛神、祂的話語和祂的子民。我們感受到神的存在，因為祂住在我們裡面。祂每天塑造我們，使我們更像耶穌。我們變得更順服，願意遵守神的真理。這些和許多其他跡象表明我們與神建立了永恆的關係。

CONCLUSION 結論

真正的信徒也必須是耶穌的跟隨者。那天，群眾湧向耶穌。耶穌從其中呼召一些真正的跟隨者。祂主動與那些相信祂的人建立關係。這讓我想起一個人和他的動物朋友之間的奇妙故事。令人驚訝的是，這隻動物是一條十四英尺長的虎鯊。吉姆是一名野生動物保護主義者。有一次他在巴哈馬群島潛水。他遇到了一條虎鯊，牠的下巴上有一個魚鉤。吉姆花了一些時間才贏得了鯊魚的信任。最終，他幫她取下了鉤子。從那時起，每當吉姆在該地區潛水時，鯊魚都會游向他。他給她取名叫艾瑪。兩者的關係至今已經持續了 20 年。在那段時間裡，每當吉姆從艾瑪的嘴巴又拿出一個鉤子時，他們的關係就變得更加緊密。艾瑪喜歡吉姆摸她的頭，就像人們撫摸狗和貓一樣。在此之前，吉姆並不知道鯊魚是一種有情感的動物。但他提醒人們，當他們在海洋中看到鯊魚時不要嘗試同樣的做法。畢竟，牠們是野生動物。艾瑪知道吉姆關心她。即使沒有任何需要，她也喜歡靠近他。同樣，跟隨耶穌不應該是為了從祂那裡得到什麼。主除去我們的罪。祂以永遠的愛來愛我們。我們對祂的愛必須來自一顆單純的心。我們應該像彼得一樣對主說：「主啊，你有永生之道，我們還歸從誰呢？」對於我們的兩位準備接受浸禮的人：你們的靈性之旅才剛開始。我為你們禱告，希望你們對耶穌的認識以及對祂的委身能持續增長。