

INTRODUCTION 引言

Art is a subjective matter. Some people are willing to pay big money to buy an artwork. However, the price-tag may not always reflect the true value. Wolfgang Beltracchi is a little-known contemporary artist. His paintings are displayed in many museums and are collected by some wealthy people. But there is one problem. All his works are fake. He copies the paintings of famous artists. Beltracchi's skill is so flawless that it fools lab analysis and the eyes of experts. He makes millions and millions of dollars by cheating people. No one noticed until he was caught in 2008. He was careless because he skipped some critical steps. But Beltracchi was back in the same trick after spending a few years in jail. He is a con artist through and through. Many people are deceived because they cannot tell the difference between a masterpiece and a copycat. There are fake goods in the world because there are real deals. Counterfeits are made after name-branded products. The same is true in the spiritual realm. False gods prove the existence of a true God. Idols share some characteristics of the real God. Many people are satisfied to have an object of worship. They think that faith is like food in a buffet restaurant. You can choose whatever you like. The key issue is, why do you choose to believe in a certain deity or religion? If all the gods are the same, then it does not matter which one you pick. If to believe or not to believe a certain god makes no difference, then why bother? Those are some questions we will address today. This message may not answer all the questions you have about faith. But I hope that it will help clarify some key concepts.

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Why We Need to Be Saved? 為何我們需要得救?

A. One Problem 一個問題

First, we need to ask why we need to be saved. We can look at the question from a few angles. The Bible never tells us to join a religion. It asks us to receive a Savior. We need a Savior because we have the same common problem. We are sinners in God's eyes. Romans 3:23 says: **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.** By saying "all," it means every person – men and women, young and old and people living in the ancient past or the distant future. We are sinners by birth. Parents will notice that babies are self-centered. The first two words they learn to say may not be "papa" and "mama," but "mine" and "more." Which parent will teach their babies to be selfish? You do not need to because it comes with the package. The sin problem is expressed in different ways as we grow up. Examples are like pride, lying, impatience, gossip, etc. You can do a simple exercise if you are honest and humble enough. Hold out a palm as if you were looking at a mirror. Then say to it: "You are a sinner!" Many seeker friends are mad when Christians call them sinners. We are not judging you. We just convey God's truth. We must accept the bad news before we will appreciate the good news. Suppose I have a big hole on the back of my clothes. You see it when you pass by. I expect you to tell me the true thing, not the nice thing. By saying: "Brother Choi, I like the color of your shirt" does not solve the problem. Similarly, realizing and admitting my sin problem is a positive step toward getting a solution.

B. Two Destinies 兩個結局

Sin is the one common problem we all have. God will exercise judgement over sins because He is holy and righteous. There will only be two destinies in His judgment. Jesus describes them as two gates in Matthew 7:13-14 – **13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”** We call the two destinies heaven and hell. Most people want to go to heaven. We do not want to think about hell. It is a horrible place not only because of the torment. It is also because people in there will be separated from God forever. There will be no second chance. Some religions teach reincarnation. They claim that you can become a human again in your next life if you are good enough in this life. Two sincere questions I need to ask. First, how good is good enough? Will my bad actions cancel out the good ones like playing boardgames? You have to back up three slots if you step on a penalty. The second question is who defines what is good? Is it still a good thing if I rob the bank and give the money away to poor people? Ultimately, there has to be a highest standard everyone must submit to. The Bible tells us that God sets the ultimate rules. We cannot go to heaven by our own effort. God sends us the invitation. We must respond to His offer in this life.

2. Why Only Jesus Can Save? 為何耶穌才能拯救?

A. The Only Savior 唯一的救主

We said that sin is the universal problem we all have. God sent Jesus to save us out of His great love. But why only Jesus can save us? It is because He is the only Savior God designated. Acts 4:11-12 explain: **“11 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. 12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”** The Bible says all believers will end up in heaven. The God of heaven decides who can go there. It is like only you can give permission to a stranger to enter your house. We like to have choices when we buy things. You pick a certain brand because of its reputation, quality or price. However, we cannot choose our own path to go to heaven. Jesus is the only way. We stated earlier that no good work will work. Other people try religious practices or philosophical ideas. Those efforts can make you a better person. But they cannot take away your sins. Jesus died on the cross for the penalty of our sins. His death is effective because He has no sin. I cannot pay for the sins of my family members because I am a sinner too! Jesus is the only solution. There are several meanings when we accept Jesus as our Savior. First, I admit that I am a sinner. Second, I admit that I cannot remove my sins. Third, I admit that Jesus died for me 2,000 years ago. But He rose three days later to prove that He is God. Based on God’s promise, I am saved the moment I received Jesus into my heart.

B. The Only Lord 唯一的主宰

Accepting Jesus as our Savior is only part of the picture. True believers must also embrace Jesus as their only Lord. Jesus says in Matthew 7:21 – **“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”** True believers must also be Jesus’ followers. A clear evidence is to submit to the Father’s will. In other words, we obey the teachings in the whole Bible. It does not mean that we can do so

perfectly. But we choose to listen because we love God. He takes the initiative and builds an eternal relationship with us. A healthy relationship must continue to grow. Suppose I am an orphan begging on the street. One day a wealthy man shows sympathy and adopts me as his son. I instantly become an heir to the family. I must get rid of the old way of living and learn how to behave like his son. I change the manner I speak, sit, wear and eat because I have a different status now. My new father hopes that those changes are my responses to his love. Today, many Christians think that the Bible is a tedious rulebook. They see God as a strict school principal. He is happy when students get good grades. But there will be penalties when they break rules. Do you consider God as a merciful Father or a stern judge? Do you obey Him out of fear or out of love? Good works are not the basis, but the results, of salvation. God empowers us to live a godly life when we rely on Him. We love the rules because we love the Rule-Maker.

CONCLUSION 結論: Where Do You Stand? 你目前的光景如何?

We need to be saved because we are sinners. Only Jesus can save us because He is the Son of God. True believers are those who claim Jesus to be their Savior and Lord. So the question is: where do you stand? I hope that you have a clear understanding of your spiritual status before you walk out today. My intention is not to attack anyone. All that we have discussed can be boiled down to two important questions. First: do you think you are saved? Second: are you truly saved? There should be a definite “yes” or “no” answers to both questions. The results are four combinations. You can ponder which group you belong to as I elaborate. I call the first category **the converted**. They think they are saved and they are truly saved from God’s perspective. Congratulations if you are one of them! Let me encourage you with Paul’s words in Colossians 2:6-7 – **6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.** Cherish God’s relationship with you and continue to grow in it. The second group are **the confused**. They are not sure that they are saved, but in fact they are. Perhaps they consider themselves not good enough or they are overcome by certain sins. Salvation is based on fact, not feelings. A prodigal child is still a child of the parents. Jesus assures us in John 10:28 – **“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”** Salvation is a gift from God. Once God has given it to a person, no force can take it away. If you have walked away from God, ask Him for forgiveness. If you need assurance in your heart, pray to Him for peace. The third category are **the conceited**. They think they are saved but in fact they are not. They believe that saying the sinners’ prayer or receiving baptism will seal the deal. The fact is that a ceremony cannot save anyone. Only Jesus can. Those who have Jesus living in them will have signs of a new life. Jesus illustrates in John 15:5 – **“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”** Those who have a relationship with Jesus is like a branch attached to a grapevine. They will bear fruits. They will express qualities like joy, peace, kindness, patience and the rest. They change from me-centered to God-centered. If those criteria do not describe you, then you are closer to the last category. They are **the convicted**. They know they are not saved, and they are truly not. All Christians have been in that state before. But that should not be the end of story. The gospel is for them too! The most well-known Bible verse in John 3:16 reads: **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”** There are three things you need to do. Admit that you are a sinner, Believe that Jesus died for your sins and Commit your life to Jesus and follow Him. Then you will be saved.

INTRODUCTION 引言

藝術是一個很主觀的課題。有些人願意花大錢去買一件藝術品。然而，價格不一定能反映真實的價值。沃夫岡·貝爾特拉奇 (Wolfgang Beltracchi) 是一位鮮為人知的當代藝術家。他的畫作在許多博物館中展出，也被一些有錢人收藏。但其中有一個問題。他的所有作品都是假的。他仿造著名藝術家的畫作。貝爾特拉奇的技術是如此完美，他騙過了實驗室的分析 and 專家的眼睛。他透過蒙騙人賺了千百萬美元。直到 2008 年他被捕時才被人發現。他粗心大意，省略了一些關鍵步驟。但貝爾特拉奇在坐牢幾年後又重施故技。他是一個徹頭徹尾的騙子。許多人因為分不清傑作和山寨貨而上當。世界上有假貨，因為有真貨。冒牌貨是仿照名牌貨製造的。在屬靈的事情上也是如此。假神證明了真神的存在。偶像具有真神的一些特質。許多人滿足於擁有崇拜的對象。他們認為信仰就像自助餐廳裡的食物，你可以選擇任何你喜歡的東西。關鍵問題是，你為什麼選擇信奉某個神靈或宗教？如果所有的神都是一樣的，那麼你選擇哪一個並不重要。如果相信或不相信某個神明並沒有什麼分別，那又何必費神呢？這些是我們今天要探討的問題。這篇信息可能無法解答你有關信仰的所有問題。但我希望它能幫助澄清一些基本的概念。

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Why We Need to Be Saved? 為何我們需要得救?

A. One Problem 一個問題

首先，我們必須問為何我們需要得救。我們可以從幾個角度來看這個問題。聖經從來沒有告訴我們要加入某個宗教。它要求我們接受一位救主。我們需要一位救主，因為我們有同樣的問題。我們在神的眼中都是罪人。羅馬書 3:23 說：因為世人都犯了罪，虧缺了神的榮耀。「世人」是指每個人 – 男人和女人，年輕人和老年人，以及生活在以前或未來的人。我們生來就是罪人。父母會注意到嬰兒總是自我中心的。他們最先學會說的詞語可能不是「爸爸」和「媽媽」，而是「我的」和「還要」。哪個父母會教自己的孩子自私呢？你不需要，因為他們生下來就是那副德性。隨著我們的成長，罪的問題會以不同的方式表達。例如驕傲、撒謊、沒耐性、講閒話等。如果你夠誠實和謙虛，你可以做一個簡單的練習。伸出手掌，就像在看鏡子一樣。然後對它說：「你是個罪人！」福音朋友每當聽到基督徒稱他們為罪人時，可能會生氣。我們不是在審判你，我們只是傳遞神的真理。我們必須先接受壞消息，然後才能欣賞好消息。假設我的衣服背面有一個大洞。當你經過時看到了。我希望你向我講真話，而不是講好話。如果你說：「蔡弟兄，我喜歡你襯衫的顏色」並沒有解決問題。同樣，明白並承認我的罪是邁向解決方案的積極一步。

B. Two Destinies 兩個結局

罪是我們所有人都有共同問題。神會對罪執行審判，因為祂是聖潔公義的。神的審判只會有兩個結局。耶穌在馬太福音 7:13-14 將它們形容為兩扇門：**13 「你們要進窄門。因為引到滅亡，那門是寬的，路是大的，進去的人也多；14 引到永生，那門是窄的，路是小的，找着的人也少。」**我們稱這兩個結局為天堂和地獄。大多數人都想去天堂。我們不願意去想像地獄。那是一個可怕的地方，不只是因為刑罰，也是因為那裡的人將永遠與神隔絕。不會再有第二次的機會。有些宗教提倡輪迴。他們聲稱，如果你在今生做得夠好，你可以在下輩子再次成為人。我需要問兩個真誠的問題。首先，多好才算夠好？我的壞行為會不會像玩遊戲一樣抵消好行為？如果踩到刑罰，我必須倒退三個空格。第二個問題是，誰定義什麼是好事？如果我打劫銀行，然後將錢送給窮人，這還是一件好事嗎？最終，必須有一個每個人都必須遵守的最高標準。聖經告訴我們，神制定最終的規則。我們無法靠自己的努力上天堂。神向我們發出了邀請。我們必須在今生回應祂的呼召。

2. Why Only Jesus Can Save? 為何耶穌才能拯救?

A. The Only Savior 唯一的救主

我們說過罪是我們所有人都面對的普遍問題。神出於祂的大愛差遣耶穌來拯救我們。但為什麼只有耶穌才能拯救我們呢？這是因為祂是神所指定的唯一救主。使徒行傳 4:11-12 解釋說：**11 「他是你們匠人所棄的石頭，已成了房角的頭塊石頭。12 除他以外，別無拯救；因為在天下人間，沒有賜下別的名，我們可以靠着得救。」**聖經說所有信徒最終都會進入天堂。天上的神決定誰可以去那裡。這就像只有你才能允許陌生人進入你的房子。我們買東西時喜歡有選擇。你挑選某個牌子是因為它的聲譽、品質或價格。然而，我們無法選擇自己通往天堂的道路。耶穌是唯一的途徑。我們之前說過，任何好行為都行不通。有其他人嘗試宗教操練或哲學思想。這些努力可以讓你成為一個更好的人，但它們無法消除你的罪。耶穌為了償還我們的罪而死在十字架上。祂的死是有效的，因為祂沒有罪。我無法償還我家人的罪，因為我也是個罪人！耶穌是唯一的解決辦法。當我們接受耶穌為我們的救主時，有幾重意義。首先，我承認我是一個罪人。第二，我承認我無法解決我的罪。第三，我承認耶穌在兩千多年前為我而死。但是祂三天後復活了，證明祂是神。根據神的應許，當我接受耶穌進入我心中的那一刻，我就得救了。

B. The Only Lord 唯一的主宰

接受耶穌成為我們的救主只是整幅圖畫的一部分。真正的信徒也必須接受耶穌成為他們唯一的主宰。耶穌在馬太福音 7:21 中說：**「凡稱呼我『主啊，主啊』的人不能都進天國；惟獨遵行我天父旨意的人才能進去。」**真正的信徒也必須是耶穌的跟隨者。一個明顯的證據就是順服天父的旨意。換句話說，我們遵守整本聖經的教導。這並不意

味著我們可以做得完美。但我們選擇聆聽，因為我們愛神。祂主動與我們建立了永恆的關係。健康的關係必須持續增長。假設我是一個在街上討飯的孤兒。有一天，一位富翁同情我，收我為兒子。我立刻就成為了家族的繼承人。我必須擺脫過去的生活方式，學習如何像他的兒子一樣做事。我改變了說話、坐、穿衣服和吃飯的方式，因為我現在的身份不同了。我的新父親希望這些改變是我對他的愛的回應。今天，許多基督徒認為聖經是一本無聊的規則手冊。他們將神視為一位嚴格的校長。當學生取得好成績時，他很高興。但當他們違反規則時，就會受到懲罰。你認為神是仁慈的父親還是嚴厲的法官？你服從祂是出於懼怕還是愛？好行為不是得救的基礎，而是得救的結果。當我們依靠神之時，祂就會賜給我們能力過敬虔的生活。我們熱愛規則，因為我們熱愛制定規則的主宰。

CONCLUSION 結論: Where Do You Stand? 你目前的光景如何?

我們需要得救，因為我們都是罪人。只有耶穌能拯救我們，因為祂是神的兒子。真正的信徒是那些承認耶穌是他們的救主和生命主宰的人。所以問題是：你目前的光景如何？我希望你在今天離開之前，對自己的靈性狀態有一個清楚的認知。我的目的不是要攻擊任何人。我們所討論的所有內容都可以歸納為兩個重要的問題。第一：你認為你得救了嗎？第二：你真的得救了嗎？這兩個問題都應該有明確的「是」或「否」答案。結果產生四種組合。你可以在我解釋的過程中思考你屬於哪一類型。我將第一類稱為已經「重生」的人。他們認為自己已經得救了，從神的角度來看，他們也確實得救了。如果你是其中之一，那麼恭喜你！讓我用保羅在歌羅西書 2:6-7 的話來鼓勵你們。**6 你們既然接受了主基督耶穌，就當遵他而行，7 在他裏面生根建造，信心堅固，正如你們所領的教訓，感謝的心也更增長了。**第二類是「困惑」的人。他們不確定自己是否得救，但事實上他們已經得救了。也許他們認為自己不夠好，或者他們被某些罪所勝過。救恩是基於事實，而不是感覺。一個浪子仍然是父母的孩子。耶穌在約翰福音 10:28 中向我們保證：**「我又賜給他們永生；他們永不滅亡，誰也不能從我手裏把他們奪去。」**救恩神所賜的禮物。神一旦把它賜給一個人，就沒有任何力量可以把它奪走。如果你目前遠離神，你需要請求祂的饒恕。如果你內心缺乏把握，你可以向神祈求平安。第三類是「自誇」的人。他們以為自己已經得救，但事實上卻沒有。他們認為，做了罪人的禱告或接受浸禮就能搞定了。事實上，儀式無法拯救任何人。唯有耶穌可以拯救我們。那些有耶穌住在裡面的人便會有新生命的跡象。耶穌在約翰福音 15:5 中用一個比喻來說明：**「我是葡萄樹，你們是枝子。常在我裏面的，我也常在他裏面，這人就多結果子；因為離了我，你們就不能做甚麼。」**那些與耶穌有關係的人就像是葡萄樹上的枝子。他們將會結出果實。他們會表現出喜樂、平安、恩慈、忍耐等美德。他們從以我為中心轉變成為以神為中心。如果這些形容不能描述你，那麼你更接近最後一類。他們是被「定罪」的人。他們知道自己仍未得救，而且他們確實沒有得救。所有基督徒以前都曾經處在這種狀態。但這不應該是故事的結局。福音也是給他們的！約翰福音 3:16 是最著名的聖經經文：**「神愛世人，甚至將他的獨生子賜給他們，叫一切信他的，不致滅亡，反得永生。」**你需要做三件事情。承認你是個罪人，相信耶穌為你的罪而死，將你的生命交託給耶穌並跟隨祂。然後你就會得救。