

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Sharing the gospel is a lot like promoting a product. When a company makes an item, its marketing team tries to get people's attention. They design attractive packaging, run TV commercials and online ads, and highlight why their product is better than the competitors. A catchy slogan or memorable image helps people remember it. In the end, success is measured by the sales number. In a similar way, Christians are representatives of the gospel. God puts us in different situations each day to point people to Jesus. We may connect with others through conversations, phone calls, texts, or social media. No matter the method, the core message never changes: we are sinners, and only Jesus can save us. As Paul reminds us, our focus is always on Christ and His cross. When people surrender their lives to Jesus, souls are saved. Unlike products in a store, where people can choose between many brands, there is only one way to salvation — through Christ alone. People's response to Jesus in this life will determine their eternal destiny. Paul understood this deeply. That is why he dedicated his life to saving as many people as possible. His passion was simple: to know Christ and to make Him known. He spoke to people from various backgrounds and he was sensitive to their unique needs. While he never changed the gospel, he was willing to adjust his methods without altering the message. That is a lesson we can learn from him today.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 尋找共通點 Look for Mutual Ground

In Paul's approach to evangelism, he always looked for mutual ground with the people he met. He was ready to serve them and put their needs above his own, as he says in verse 19: **...I have made myself a servant to all...** Paul was willing to give up his rights in order to bless someone else. Jesus Christ was his only Master. Beyond that, Paul made himself flexible and available so that he could reach people of various backgrounds. He adapted his methods without compromising his faith. Paul mentions three groups of people in this passage. First were his fellow Jews. He says in verse 20: **To the Jews I became as a Jew...** Paul respected their traditions, avoided certain foods, and observed their festivals when he was with them. We see an example in Acts 16. Paul met a young man named Timothy, who later became his faithful ministry partner. Timothy's mother was Jewish, but his father was Greek, and the local Jews knew it. To avoid unnecessary conflict and keep the door open for the gospel, Paul circumcised Timothy. The second group Paul mentions is "those outside the law," meaning Gentiles who did not follow the Old Testament Law. Paul was willing to identify with them as well. He even ate with them in

temple food courts. The apostle Peter learned this lesson too, though at one point he feared people more than God. In the book of Galatians, Paul rebukes Peter for hypocrisy. Peter was eating with Gentile believers, but when some Jewish Christians arrived, he suddenly withdrew out of fear of criticism. Other Jewish believers on the scene followed his example. They were trying to protect their face, but in doing so they stumbled the Gentile Christians. Paul confronted them because the unity of the gospel was at stake. The third group Paul talks about is “the weak.” Most likely, these were the Gentile believers from chapter 8 who were weak in their conscience. Many of them grew up eating meat sacrificed to idols. They worried that continuing to eat such food might affect their faith. Paul understood their concerns and he gladly gave up his freedom for their sake. We can imagine him happily eating with them at home or go to Souper Salad — if it helped strengthen their faith. Paul summarizes his intent in verse 22: **... I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.** His top priorities were the salvation and spiritual growth of others. He adjusted his preferences, showed respect, and met people where they were. The same principle applies today. We can either build bridges or walls with non-believers. The following two stories illustrate this rule-of-thumb. A team of missionaries traveled to a rural area in another country. The local people warmly welcomed them and prepared what they considered a special feast. But when the missionaries saw the food, they were shocked. The meat was raw, and something was crawling on the top, and flies swarmed around the table. The villagers seldom eat meat, so this meal was offered with great honor and generosity. The missionaries had two choices: reject the food and likely close the door for the gospel, or receive it with gratitude. By God’s grace and with much courage, they chose the second option. Another story comes from Japan. Some American businessmen traveled there to explore a partnership opportunity. The Japanese hosts took them to a noodle shop for lunch. Food was served. The Japanese ate the noodle the only way they knew how – they slurped it. The American folks looked at each other. Without missing a beat, they began to slurp noodle too! The people in both stories practiced the saying: “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.” As Christians, we should look for mutual ground when we meet people. The world loves to divide people into categories — skin colors, income level, politics, education, and other labels. A Chinese pastor once joked that there were two camps in his congregation: people who drove Toyota Camrys and people who drove Honda Accords. Today, the distinction might be minivans versus SUVs! Whatever people strongly identify with can easily become a reason to reject those who are not their “type.” But why should our prejudice become a barrier to the gospel? From God’s perspective, there are ultimately only two kinds of people: saved and unsaved. Every person is born a sinner, and every person needs the Savior. We never know who may walk through our church doors, but we can decide how we will treat them. We can welcome people warmly without approving sinful behavior. We can look for mutual ground as they share about themselves — their major in school, career, hometown, hobbies, etc. Then we can introduce them to church members with similar backgrounds so that friendships can be built naturally. Perhaps they are new in town. We can tell them where to find the DMV, Chinese grocery stores, or restaurants. Small acts of kindness help seekers realize that

Christians are just normal people. We work jobs, raise families, and care about social events just like everyone else. When visitors form genuine connections with believers, they are more likely to return. In fact, if you visit many church websites, you will often notice one key word repeated again and again: “connect.” People are unlikely to connect with God unless they connect with people first. That is part of the mission of every church. We care about people’s physical, emotional, and relational needs so that we can point them to the only One who can meet their deepest spiritual need.

## 2. 定睛終點線 Look at The Final Goal

Paul looked for mutual ground when reaching out to people, but he never lost sight of the bigger picture. He faithfully handled his daily duties while looking at the final goal. To explain this, Paul used the imagery of sport competition. The believers in Corinth were very familiar with the Isthmian Games, which were held near their city. It was one of the four major sporting events in the Greek world. Another one was the Olympics. Athletes came from all over the Roman Empire to compete. Paul specifically mentions two sports: running and boxing. In every event, the goal is to win. Paul points out three things related to victory. First, there is the prize. In those days, winners received a wreath made of branches and flowers. That was the reward! Of course, the crowd would cheer for them, especially if they represented their hometown. Some might even receive a parade when they returned home. But eventually, all the excitement faded away like fireworks. Before long, athletes would begin preparing for the next competition. It is not so different from today’s World Cup, Super Bowl, or championship games. The excitement is huge — but temporary. Second, athletes must pay the price if they want to win. Anyone entering the Isthmian Games had to complete ten months of mandatory training. Those who refused were disqualified. Athletes carefully watched their diet, strengthened their bodies, sharpened their skills, and removed distractions from their lives. Coaches studied opponents, identified their weaknesses, and found ways to beat them. Every sacrifice and preparation pointed toward game day. Third, successful contestants compete with a clear plan. Runners stay focused, conserve energy, wear proper clothing, and keep their eyes on the finish line. They pay attention to their competitors but never lose sight of the course. Boxers aim their punches carefully and defend themselves wisely. Punching the air wastes energy and will not score points. Paul says the Christian life is similar. But there is one major difference: believers are not running for a perishable wreath, but for a permanent reward. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 4:7–8: **7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.** When Paul wrote those words, he sensed that he might lose his life for his faith soon. Yet he was not discouraged. Instead, he rejoiced because he knew a heavenly reward was waiting for him. At the same time, he encouraged other believers to persevere faithfully until the end. The moment God saves us He puts us into a race. It is not about how much Bible we read, how much money we give, or how many people we lead to Christ. The opponent is actually

ourselves! We race against our reluctance to run. Many believers are happy to secure a place in heaven. As a result, they become complacent. Some rarely read the Bible outside of church. Others think that serving in church and sharing the gospel are for “more spiritual people.” Some even stop attending church regularly. But following Jesus is like swimming against the current — if we stop moving forward, we drift backward. Salvation happens in a moment, but spiritual growth is a continuous process. God never tells us what rewards await us in heaven. But if salvation itself is already the greatest gift we could receive, and if walking with Christ brings such joy even now, then we can trust that God has prepared something far greater for eternity. Here is the encouragement: every Christian will receive a reward, but the rewards will differ according to each person’s faithfulness and diligence. Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us encourage one another to look at the final goal. Satan wants us to compete with others for things that are newer, bigger and pricier. But everything we can see and touch is temporary. God wants us to pursue something eternal. Therefore, we must remain spiritually active. Stay busy so that you will not get too cozy and even lazy. It is no coincidence that the words “discipline” and “disciple” sound so similar. On the negative side, we must minimize distractions and temptations. That may mean silencing our phones or turning on “Do Not Disturb” in church meetings. Be content with what you have, and avoid buying stuff on impulse. It also means saying no to activities that may compromising our faith. On the positive side, we should apply biblical principles to every area of life and find ways to serve in the church. God has given each believer gifts and talents to bless others. As we serve, both we and the people around us grow stronger spiritually. When talking about plans, let me say something to our leaders. Perhaps you wear multiple hats and carry heavy burdens. But do not become buried under endless tasks and lose sight of the final goal God has given the church. Otherwise, ministry can become an endless cycle of finishing one program after another. Take time to reflect regularly. Are the people you serve growing spiritually? Are you yourself maturing in the process? Do not become discouraged by criticism, disagreements, unmet expectations, or a lack of visible results. The race is not over yet. Look at the final goal, and run with joy alongside the Lord.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

In this passage, Paul teaches us an important principle about sharing the gospel: we can adjust the methods without altering the message. That was how our Lord did it. He reached out to the poor and to people rejected by the society, yet He also spent time with the rich and influential. Jesus met people where they were, but He never compromised the truth. In the same way, we are called to become “all things to all people” so that more people may hear the gospel. Our world is changing rapidly. The internet has only been around for about thirty years. Smartphones and social media are still relatively new. Now artificial intelligence becomes the next big thing. As believers, and as a church, we can wisely use new technology as a tool to share the gospel. The message itself never changes. We are still telling the same old story — that Jesus Christ is Lord. But we can present that everlasting truth in fresh and relevant ways to reach people today.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

分享福音就像推銷產品。當一家公司製造出了一件產品時，它的行銷團隊會努力吸引大眾的注意。他們會設計鮮明的包裝、賣電視廣告和透過網路作宣傳，強調自己的產品比競爭對手更好。令人難忘的標語或影像，能幫助人們記住這個產品。最終，成功與否是以銷售數字來衡量。同樣地，基督徒是福音的代表。神每天把我們放在不同的地方中，帶領人認識耶穌。我們可以透過交談、電話、簡訊或社交媒體與人聯繫。無論使用什麼方式，福音的核心信息維持不變：我們都是罪人，只有耶穌能拯救我們。正如保羅所提醒的，我們的焦點應該是基督和祂的十字架。當人們願意把生命交託給耶穌時，他們的靈魂便得救。人們可以在商店裡選擇不同牌子的商品，但救恩卻只有一條道路——唯有藉著基督。人們今生對耶穌的回應，將決定他們永恆的結局。保羅深深明白這一點。因此，他一生都致力於拯救更多的人。他的目標很簡單：認識基督，並介紹別人認識基督。他接觸不同背景的人，也注意他們的獨特需要。他不改變福音的信息，但卻調整方法去接觸不同的人。這也是我們今天可以向他學習的功課。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 尋找共通點 Look for Mutual Ground

在保羅的佈道方式中，他總是努力與所接觸的人尋找共通點。他願意服事別人，把他們的需要放在自己的之上。正如他在第 19 節所說：**...我甘心作了眾人的僕人...**。保羅願意放下自己的權利，為了能祝福別人。耶穌基督是他唯一的主。除此之外，保羅讓自己保持彈性、隨時候命，好讓他能接觸不同背景的人。他調整自己的方法，卻從不妥協信仰。保羅在這段經文中提到三類人。第一類是他的猶太同胞。他在第 20 節說：**向猶太人，我就作猶太人...**。當他與猶太人接觸時，他尊重他們的傳統、避免吃某些食物，也遵守他們的節期。我們在使徒行傳第 16 章看到一個例子。保羅遇見一位叫提摩太的年輕人，他們後來成為忠心的伙伴。提摩太的母親是猶太人，但父親是希臘人，當地的猶太人都知道這件事。為了避免不必要的衝突，也為了不造成傳福音的攔阻，保羅為提摩太行了割禮。第二類人是「沒有律法的人」，也就是不遵守舊約律法的外邦人。保羅願意與他們認同，甚至與他們一起在廟宇的食堂裡吃飯。使徒彼得後

來也效法保羅，只是有一次，他害怕人過於害怕神。在加拉太書中，保羅因彼得得虛偽責備他。彼得原本與一些外邦信徒吃飯，但當他知道有些猶太基督徒要來的時候，他因害怕被批評，就立刻離開了。在場其他猶太信徒也跟著效法他。他們只是想保住自己的面子，但這樣做卻絆倒了外邦信徒。保羅當面指出他們的錯誤，因為他破壞了福音的合一。第三類人是「軟弱的人」。他們很可能就是第 8 章提到那些良心軟弱的外邦信徒。他們從小吃祭過偶像的肉，因此擔心繼續吃這些食物會影響自己的信心。保羅理解他們的顧慮，也願意為了他們放棄自己的自由。甚至可以想像，如果能幫助他們的信心成長，保羅會很樂意與他們一起在家裡吃飯，或陪他們去素食的餐廳。保羅在第 22 節總結了他的心志：**...向什麼樣的人，我就作什麼樣的人。無論如何，總要救些人。**他最看重的是人的得救與屬靈生命的成長。因此，他願意調整自己的選擇，遷就別人，藉此體諒別人的處境。今天，這個原則同樣適用。我們可以和非信徒建立橋樑，也可以建立圍牆。以下兩個故事可以幫助我們明白這個原則。有一隊宣教士到另一個國家的鄉村傳福音。當地人熱情地歡迎他們，並準備了一頓他們認為最珍貴的盛宴。但當宣教士看到食物時卻大吃一驚：肉是生的，上面還有東西在爬，蒼蠅也在桌子周圍飛來飛去。那些村民很少吃肉，因此這頓飯表達了他們的友善與尊重。宣教士有兩個選擇：拒絕食物，並很可能關上福音的大門；或是以感謝的心接受。靠著神的恩典，並帶著極大的勇氣，他們選擇了後者。另一個故事發生在日本。一些美國商人到日本尋求合作機會。日本公司的代表帶他們去一家麵店吃午餐。食物端上來後，日本人用他們習慣的方式吃麵——發出很大的吸麵聲。美國人彼此看了一眼，接著毫不猶豫地也開始吸麵。這兩個故事中的人，都願意入境隨俗。作為基督徒，我們與人接觸時，也應該努力尋找共通點。這個世界喜歡把人分門別類——膚色、收入、政治立場、教育程度等等。一位華人牧師曾開玩笑地說，他的教會裡有兩大陣營：開豐田 Camry 的人，以及開本田 Accord 的人。今天也許變成了小型廂型車和 SUV 的區別！人們堅持的事物，很容易成為拒絕「不同類型的人」的理由。但我們為什麼要讓偏見成為福音的攔阻呢？從神的角度來看，世界上只有兩種人：得救的人與未得救的人。每個人生來都是罪人，因此每個人都需要救主。我們無法預計誰會走進教會的大門，但我們可以決定如何對待他們。我們可以熱情地歡迎他人，而不認同他們不敬虔的行為。我們可以在與人交談時尋找共通點，例如他們的職業、家鄉、嗜好等等。然後，我們可以把他們介紹給相同背景的弟兄姐妹認識，使他們建立友誼。也許他們剛搬來這個城市。我們可以告訴他們在哪裡換駕照、中國超市在哪裡，或有哪些不錯的餐廳。這些小小的善意，能幫助福音朋友明白：基督徒其實也是普通人。我們工作、照顧家庭，也關心社會事務，和其他人並沒有什麼不同。當新朋友能與信徒建立關係時，他們更有可能回來聚會。事實上，如果你看看許多教會的網站，你會發現一個重複出現

的關鍵字：「連結 (connect)」。人若不能先與人連結，也很難與神連結。這正是每間教會使命的一部分。我們關心人的身體、情感與人際關係需要，目的是把他們帶到那位唯一能滿足人最深屬靈需要的主面前。

## 2. 定睛終點線 Look at The Final Goal

保羅在向人傳福音時，總是努力尋找共通點，但他並沒有忽略整體大局。他忠心地完成每天的責任，同時定睛在終點線上。為了說明這一點，保羅使用了體育競賽作為比喻。哥林多的信徒非常熟悉大型運動會。當時四個主要的比賽的其中之一就在哥林多城附近舉行，另一個大家熟識的就是奧林匹克運動會。來自羅馬帝國各地的選手都會前來參賽。保羅特別提到兩個項目：賽跑和拳擊。在任何比賽中，目標都是得勝。保羅指出了與得勝有關的三件事。第一，是獎賞。當時的得勝者會得到一個由樹枝和花朵編成的冠冕。那就是他們的獎賞！當然，觀眾會為他們歡呼，特別是如果他們代表自己的家鄉時。有些人回到家鄉後，甚至還會受到遊行歡迎。但最終，所有的熱鬧都會像煙火一樣消散。過不了多久，運動員又要開始為下一場比賽做準備。這其實和今天的世界盃、超級盃或各種冠軍賽一樣。歡呼很盛大，但也是短暫的。第二，運動員若想得勝，就必須付代價。凡是參加當時運動會的人，都必須接受十個月強制性的訓練。不遵守規則的人會被取消資格。運動員會嚴格控制飲食、鍛鍊身體、磨練技巧，並減少生活中的干擾。教練會研究對手、分析他們的弱點，並找出取勝的方法。所有的犧牲與準備，都是為了比賽的那一天。第三，成功的選手必須有清楚的計畫。跑步的人會保持專注、保存體力、穿著適合的衣服，並且把目光定睛在終點線上。他們會注意對手的位置，但不會偏離跑道。拳擊手則會準確地出拳，也會小心防守。若只是對著空氣揮拳，只會浪費力氣，也得不到分數。保羅說，基督徒的人生也很像這樣。但有一個很大的不同：信徒努力，不是為了得著會朽壞的冠冕，而是為了永恆的獎賞。保羅在提摩太後書 4:7-8 說：  
**7 那美好的仗我已經打過了，當跑的路我已經跑盡了，所信的道我已經守住了。8 從此以後，有公義的冠冕為我存留，就是按著公義審判的主到了那日要賜給我的；不但賜給我，也賜給凡愛慕他顯現的人。**當保羅寫下這些話時，他感覺自己可能很快就會因信仰而失去生命。然而，他並沒有灰心，反而充滿喜樂，因為他知道天上的獎賞正在等候他。因此，他也鼓勵其他信徒忠心忍耐到底。當神拯救我們的那一刻，祂就把我們放在一場比賽中。這不是關乎我們讀了多少聖經、奉獻了多少金錢，或帶領多少人信主。其實，我們最大的對手往往是自己！我們是在與自己不願奔跑的懶惰在競爭。很多信徒只滿足於確定自己能上天堂，因此變得安逸鬆懈。有些人除了聚會以外，很少在家裡讀聖經；有些人認為參與服事、傳福音是「比較屬靈的人」才需要做的事；甚至有些人漸漸停止聚會。但跟隨耶穌就像逆水行舟——如果我們不繼續前進，就一定會

往後退。得救是在一瞬間發生的事，但屬靈生命的成長卻是一生之久的操練。神從來沒有具體告訴我們，我們在天堂會得到什麼獎賞。但如果救恩是今生能得到最大的禮物，而與基督同行是如此甘甜，那我們更可以相信，神在永恆裡為我們預備的，必定更加美好。這裡有一個很大的鼓勵：每一位基督徒都能得到獎賞，但獎賞會因各人的忠心與勤奮而有所不同。因此，弟兄姐妹們，讓我們彼此勉勵，一同定睛在終點線上。撒但往往讓我們與別人比賽，去追求更新、更大、更昂貴的東西。但一切看得見、摸得著的事物，都是短暫的。神要我們追求的乃是永恆的事。因此，我們必須保持積極。努力做有意義的事，免得過於安逸，甚至變得懶散。「discipline（操練）」和「disciple（門徒）」這兩個英文字如此接近，絕非巧合。從負面來說，我們需要減少分心與試探。在聚會中把手機調成靜音，甚至開啟「請勿打擾」模式。要學習知足，不要一時衝動購物；也要拒絕那些可能影響信仰的活動。從正面來看，我們應該把聖經原則應用在生活的每一個層面，並主動尋找機會在教會服事。神賜給每位信徒恩賜與才幹，用以祝福別人。當我們服事時，不但自己會成長，周圍的人也會因此得造就。說到計畫，讓我對教會的領袖們說幾句話。你可能身兼數職，肩負沉重的責任。但不要讓自己被壓在事奉的下面，而忘記神給教會的最終目標。否則，事奉很容易變成一個又一個不斷循環的活動。要常常花時間反思：你所服事的人有沒有在屬靈上成長？你自己在這個過程中有沒有變得更加成熟？不要因批評、意見不同、達不到的期望，或看不到的果效而灰心。這場比賽還沒有結束。要定睛在終點線上，帶著喜樂與主一同奔跑。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

在這段經文中，保羅教導我們一個關於傳福音的重要原則：我們可以調整方法，但不能改變信息。這也是我們主耶穌所做的。祂主動接觸貧窮人和被社會遺棄的人，同時祂也願意與富有和有影響力的人來往。耶穌願意走進人群，但祂從未妥協真理。同樣地，我們也蒙召要「向什麼樣的人，就作什麼樣的人」，好讓更多人能聽到福音。我們的世界正在快速改變。網路普及至今不過三十多年而已，智慧型手機和社交媒體也仍算是相當新的工具。如今，人工智能成為下一波重要的趨勢。作為信徒，也作為教會，我們可以有智慧地善用新科技，成為傳福音的工具。福音的信息永遠不會改變。我們仍然是在傳講同一個古老的故事——耶穌基督是主。但我們可以用更新、更貼近時代的方式，把這個永恆不變的真理傳給現代人。