

引言 INTRODUCTION

Trust is a rare virtue for modern people. Not too long ago we believed in even strangers at their words. But nowadays we ask people for a badge to verify their identity. We sign a contract to protect our rights. Sometimes, we need to call a witness to reaffirm our promise. But every now and then, we read stories about people showing faith to random people. A person was involved in an accident when his car hit a scooter. No one was hurt. The man noticed that the other guy was on his way to deliver pizzas. Unfortunately, his bike was messed up after the crash. He then offered: “Why don’t you drive my car to finish your delivery? We’ll take care of the rest afterward.” That takes a lot of faith! In Jesus, we receive the greatest gift of eternal life. However, sometimes our faith may be unsettled by life circumstances. It can be an unforeseeable event like losing a job or even a loved one. Other times it can be an unanswered prayer or a recurring sin. We wonder: does God still care about me? Am I still His child? In our message today, we will discuss three proofs of our salvation. We need to examine ourselves if we have those signs to show that we are truly saved. And if so, in what areas we should improve so that we can continue to grow in our spiritual life.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 熟練神的話語 Experience in God’s Word (5:11-14)

The first proof of salvation is one’s experience in God’s Word. Put it in another way, it is our proficiency in applying God’s truth to daily life. Let us read [5:11-14](#). The author uses physical growth as an analogy to describe spiritual growth. He says he has much to say about this. He refers to the things about Melchizedek. It is some truths that are more difficult to understand. Verse 11 points out that they are “**dull of hearing**.” The problem is not only because those lessons are more complicated. But it is because of an active resistance in hearing. Since they were reluctant to listen, someone had to teach them basic lessons from God’s word all over again. They were like infants who could only drink milk. They should have been teachers by now. But they were stuck in elementary school! A baby looks cute when he is holding a milk bottle. But a teenager has not weaned may need to see a doctor. In addition, infants’ mind should become more mature as they grow. All the training they receive from home and school prepare them to make wise decisions in life. The same principle is true for spiritual growth. The author says in verse 14 that those who are mature in their faith should be able to “**distinguish good from evil**.” It is more than knowing the difference between the two. One should desire to do what God sees as good and rejects what God considers as evil. Satan is very crafty. Very few Christians may go into a temple and bow down to a statue. But there are many self-help gurus who teach people to eat this or practice that. They say it is good for our health or our pocket. Gradually, they lure our mind and our time away from the Lord. Anything we see, read and learn must be scrutinized with

God's Word. If you do not know what God says is true and right, then what standard do you use to make judgment? If you are not maturing in God's Word, then you can easily fall into Satan's traps. Nowadays, many Christians only read the Bible when they come to a Sunday service. Worse still, a lot of them do not even attend church every week! May I have some honest words with you? Your love for God's Word reflects your love for God. We can give ourselves many reasons and excuses for not attending church. Some people come here on Friday to serve others and eat, then they go home. I know that we can be busy at times with work schedule and kids' activities. You may be like a dead meat after a long week. The fact is, we all get tired too. But those who attend fellowship can tell you that learning with other believers is quite relaxing and enriching. If you have safety concerns about driving at night, I would love to arrange a ride for you. I also know that getting up early on Sunday may be a challenge to you. But I encourage everyone to set aside your Sunday morning for both service and Sunday school. Ultimately, life is a matter of choice based on your priorities. You do the things you see as important. Here is another reminder for you: do not study the Bible like a history book or a text about moral and ethnics. Do not be content with gaining some knowledge. We must let God's truths affect our lives. For example, are there some sins you need to avoid? Are there some virtues you should pursue? In what ways can you strengthen your relationship with God and with others? Whether you have been a Christians for five or twenty years, there is always room for you to mature in God's Word.

2. 努力神的事務 Diligence in God's Work (6:9-12)

The second proof of salvation is diligence in God's work. Our reading is in **6:9-12**. Just a quick recap of the context for verse 9. Last week we studied verses 4 to 8 about the serious sin of departing from one's faith. The result will be like an unproductive farmland that produces thorns and thistles. The author continues to say in verse 9 that: "But you are much better than that situation, because your diligence in God's work shows that you have been saved." They served fellow believers out of their love for God. That should be the ultimate motive for any ministry. If we keep that in mind, then we will do our best in whatever the Lord assigns us. Surely the author is not proposing that good work can lead to salvation. But good work should be a natural result of one's salvation. Helping each other was a key ministry in the early church. For example, they supported traveling evangelists. At that time, many missionaries like Paul had little resources. Paul financed himself because he was a tent-maker by trade. But believers also provided him food, lodging and fund. The author encourages them in verse 10 that "**God is not unjust so as to overlook (their) work.**" God is impartial. He will remember our good work. God will bless us in this life and He will give us rewards in heaven. Since God is watching, they should keep up with their good work. The author reminds them in verse 11 to "**show the same earnestness... until the end.**" Here the "end" may mean the conclusion of their earthly life or the return of Jesus. The implication is the same: they must remain diligent until they see the Lord. If they do so, they would be "**imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**" A well-known example of faith and patience is Abraham, which the author will elaborate in the next section of the chapter. Just like Abraham did, they should fix their eyes on eternity. They should look forward to a future prize. They were qualified for it like heirs expect to receive

an inheritance. But meanwhile they had to wait patiently for it. They should not give up even though what they got now was hardship, rather than God's blessings. God's promise motivated them to serve Him by serving people. How different our attitudes will be if we serve people as if we were serving God? In Matthew 25, Jesus describes a judgment scene in eternity. God is portrayed as a king praising people for their good work. He says they fed Him when He had no food, gave Him water when He was thirsty, provided Him lodging and clothes when He was in need and visited Him when He was sick and in jail. Those people do not know what God is talking about. Remember his reply? Matthew 25:40 reads: "... 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'" Little things we do out of love for God on a person will be like doing it to God. And it does not have to be something monumental. You do not need to go to another country to lead people to Christ or build a hospital or school for them. God does not look at the size of the results, He examines the size of our hearts. God uses two criteria to evaluate our work: faithfulness and diligence. Faithfulness means you do it consistently, even when no one is watching or giving you approval. Diligence means you do it without delay when an opportunity comes up. The fact is, when you think someone else will take care of a matter, it ends up no one is doing it. When you see a need, do not think twice. Just do it! You will have joy if you consider service a privilege rather than a burden. You can serve God in many ways. It can be as simple as picking trash up from the floor, collecting used cups from the table, keeping chairs tidy or turning lights off when a room is empty. Currently, we have fewer people eating dinner on Friday. You can volunteer to wash dishes. In a small church like ours, you do not need a formal title to serve. Just serve others by treating them as family members.

3. 確信神的應許 Confidence in God's Promises (6:13-20)

The third proof of salvation we see in this passage is confidence in God's promises. Let us read **6:13-20**. The author carries over certain key words he uses in verses 11 and 12: hope, patience, inherit and promise. The readers must hold onto their hope with patience until they inherited God's promise. The author recalls the incident in Genesis 22. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac on an altar. Abraham passed the greatest test to his faith. At the end, God provided a ram to replace Isaac. Then God used an oath to confirm His promises to Abraham. At that time, it was a legal means to settle a dispute. People would swear by someone greater than them. Perhaps it was a person in authority who could execute punishment if anyone violated his vow. God swore by Himself because there is no one greater than Him. God did not have to make an oath because He is always trustworthy. God was using a human way to communicate with Abraham. It is like a dad stooping down and hooks his pinky with his son, promising that they will go to the park on Saturday. The gesture confirms dad's words. The child knows that daddy will keep his promise. God hooks His pinky with us. Will you not believe Him? Since we are children of the faithful God, we should be faithful in all that we do. Are you a person of your words? Sometimes, we assure people casually to end a conversation. Then sometime later we excuse that we are too busy or we forget the agreement. Jesus said let our "yes" be "yes" and our "no" be "no." If you cannot promise anything, just say that you need some time to think about it. Abraham trusted God wholeheartedly. Someone suggested that God swore an oath to Abraham implies that He

would not do what He said right away. That was exactly why Abraham must wait patiently with faith. And did he wait! It took 25 years before Abraham had his first son Isaac. Isaac finally became a father when he was 60 years old. Then Abraham passed away 15 years later. That needs a lot of patience! We are on the edge when the internet or traffic light is slightly too slow. We buy instant food and use microwave oven to heat it up. Thank God that He does not follow our schedule. We must trust that God will do what He said in His time. Did Abraham get everything God promised? All he got was one son, but not a nation. He did not have many descendants like stars in the sky or sand by the sea when God took him home. He did not even own the land his family resided. Abraham could not imagine how all peoples on earth would be blessed through him. But he believed in God without a doubt. All those promises gradually come true. Israel became a country with its territory. All Christians throughout ages are the spiritual descendants of Abraham since they believe in the same God. The author urges his readers to be patient like Abraham was. In verse 18, he says there are two unchangeable things that verifies God will never lie: His promises and His oath. We can believe in God's character no matter what happens. There are three images in verses 19 and 20 that illustrate such security. First, it is an anchor of a boat. Jesus is the firm foundation of our faith like an anchor fixing the position of a boat. It will not be drifted away by wind and waves. The second picture is a runner. Jesus was our pioneer who finished the race. He entered into "the inner place behind the curtain," namely the Most Holy Place. He thus opened the doorway for us to come into God's presence. Thirdly, through His sacrifice, Jesus became the Superior High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Jesus is superior because His term as a High Priest lasts forever. The Old Testament high priests could only enter the Most Holy Place once a year. But Jesus is now sitting on the right side of the Father. We can approach God at any time through Jesus.

結論 CONCLUSION

Salvation is a gift from God. He gives eternal life to all who put their trust in Jesus. Our spiritual life is just like our physical life that needs growth. There are vital signs that indicate a person is alive. For example, body temperature heartbeats and breathing. Similarly, we need to ask ourselves if we have those three spiritual vital signs to show that we have eternal life. Are you actively growing in your experience on God's Word, in your diligence with God's work and in your confidence about God's promises? Salvation is all about an eternal relationship with God. Just like our relationship with family and friends, we need to cultivate our relationship with God. A stagnant relationship will only go backward. We are not in a competition with others to become a better Christian. But we are in a constant battle with ourselves to defeat our pride so that we will surrender to God. We can never be perfect in this life. But we should always pursue toward maturity.

引言 INTRODUCTION

信任是現代人鮮有的美德。不久前，我們甚至相信陌生人的話。但是現在我們要看別人們的證件來確認他們的身份。我們簽合同以保障自己的利益。有時，我們需要證人來肯定自己的承諾。但是偶爾我們會看到一些人對陌生人表現出信心。有一個人開車時與一輛摩托車相撞，還好沒有人受傷。那個司機注意到對方正在送披薩的路上。很可惜，他的摩托車已經不能開了。於是他提議：

「這樣吧，你開我的車先送披薩，回來後我們再處理車子的事情。」這需要很大的信心！在耶穌裡，我們得到了永生這份最大的禮物。然而，有時我們的信心可能會因為環境而動搖。或許我們遭遇到不幸的事故，例如失業甚至失去親人。其他時候，我們的禱告沒有得到神的回應，或是我們一再犯同樣的罪。我們懷疑神是否還關心我嗎？我還是天父的孩子嗎？在今天的信息中，我們將討論得救的三個證據。我們檢查一下自己有沒有這些表現，確定我們真的得救了。另外，我們應該在哪些方面改進，使我們的靈命更加成熟。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 熟練神的話語 Experience in God's Word (5:11-14)

得救的第一個證據是熟練神的話語。換句話說，就是我們在日常生活中應用神的真理的能力。讓我們讀 **5:11-14**。作者用身體的成長來比喻靈命成長。他說他還有話要說。他指的是關於麥基洗德的事情。那些是比較難理解的道理。第 11 節指出他們「聽不進去」。問題不只是因為那些事情更複雜，而是因為他們不願意聽。既然他們不接受，就必須有人把神話語的基本道理再教導他們。他們就像只能喝奶的嬰兒。他們現在應該是老師了，但他們似乎小學仍未畢業！拿著奶瓶的嬰兒看起來很可愛。但尚未斷奶的青少年可能需要看醫生。此外，嬰兒的思想應該隨著他們的年齡而變得更加成熟。他們從家庭和學校接受的教育是幫助他們做有智慧的決定。同樣的原則也適用於屬靈的成長。作者在第 14 節說，信心成熟的人應該能夠「**分辨好歹**」。重點不只是知道兩者之間的分別。一個人應該選擇做神認為是美好的事情，並拒絕做神認為是邪惡的事情。撒旦非常狡猾。很少基督徒會走進寺廟，向神像鞠躬。但是有許多自學的專家教導人們吃這個或練習那個。他們說這對我們的健康或我們的錢包有好處。漸漸地，他們使我們的思想和時間遠離主。我們所看、所讀和所學的東西都必須用神的話語來衡量。如果你根本不清楚什麼是神看為真實和正確的事，那你用什

麼標準來做判斷呢？如果你不熟練神的話語，那麼就很容易落入撒旦的圈套。如今，許多基督徒只在參加主日崇拜時才讀聖經。更糟糕的是，有許多基督徒並非每週都去聚會！我可以和你說幾句坦誠的話嗎？你對神話語的愛反映出你對神的愛。我們可以給自己很多不去聚會的理由或藉口。有些人星期五來這裡服事和吃飯，然後他們就回家。我知道每個人有時會忙於工作和孩子的活動。經過漫長的一周，你可能會覺得累。事實是，每個人都會感到疲倦。但是參加團契的人可以告訴你，和其他信徒一起學習其實是很放鬆和充實的。如果你晚上不方便開車，我很樂意為你安排接送。我也知道星期天早起對你來說可能是一個挑戰。但我鼓勵每個人把主日早上的時間分出來參加崇拜和主日學。歸根結底，生活是在乎於你的優先次序，你會做你認為重要的事情。另外一點的提醒：不要把聖經當作歷史書或道德倫理的教材那樣學習，也不要只滿足於獲得一些知識。我們必須讓神的真理影響我們的生活。例如，有哪些罪你需要避免？你應該追求什麼美德？你如何加強與神和別人的關係？無論你已經信主五年還是二十年，仍然有許多空間讓你在神的話語中成長。

2. 努力神的事務 Diligence in God's Work (6:9-12)

得救的第二個證據是努力做神的事務。我們來看 6:9-12。簡單重溫一下第 9 節的背景。上週我們學習了第 4 到第 8 節關於離棄信仰的罪。其結果將會像一片荒廢的農田，長出荊棘和蒺藜。作者在第 9 節繼續說：「但你們比那個情況好得多，因為你們努力於神的事務，表明你們已經得救了。」他們因為愛神而服事信徒。這應該是任何事奉的最終動機。如果我們記住這一點，那麼我們便會盡力做好主分配給我們的事情。當然，作者並不是說人可以靠好行為得救。但是好行為應該是一個人得救後的自然結果。互相幫助是早期教會的一項重要事工。例如，他們支持旅行傳道人。那時，許多像保羅這樣的傳教士缺乏資源。保羅自己賺錢，因為他的職業是做帳篷。但信徒們也為他提供了食物、住宿和旅費。作者在第 10 節鼓勵他們說：「**因為神並非不公義，竟忘記你們所做的工**」。神不會偏私，祂會記住我們善行。神會在今生祝福我們，並在永恆裡賜我們獎賞。既然神在看，他們便應該繼續做好自己的本份。作者在第 11 節提醒他們要「**顯出這樣的殷勤...，一直到底**」。這裡的「一直到底」可能是指他們離開世界時或是耶穌再來時。含義是一樣的：他們必須保持勤奮，直到他們見主的面。如果他們這樣做，他們便是「**效法那些憑信心和忍耐承受應許的人**」。一個有名的信心和忍耐的例子是亞伯拉罕。作者將在本章的下一段詳細說明。就像亞伯拉罕所做的那樣，他們應該注目在永恆。他們應該期待將來的獎賞。他們有資格拿到獎賞，就像繼承人期望得到遺產一樣。但與此同時，他們必須耐心等待。他們不應該放棄，即使他們現在面對的是困難，而不是神的祝福。神的應許激勵他們通過服事人來服事神。如果我們服事人像服事神一

樣，我們的態度肯定會不同。在馬太福音 25 章中，耶穌描述永恆審判的場景。神被描述為一位王，祂讚賞人們的善工。祂說他們供應食物給祂，給祂水喝，為祂準備住宿和衣服，在祂生病和坐牢時探望祂。那些人不知道神在說什麼。還記得祂的回答嗎？馬太福音 25:40 說：「…『我實在告訴你們，這些事你們既做在我這弟兄中一個最小的身上，就是做在我身上了。』」就算是很微小的事情，如果我們的動機是出於對神的愛，我們就像在服事神一樣。我們不需要做什麼驚天動地的事。你不用去到另一個國家帶領人信主或是為他們建醫院和學校。神不看結果的大小，祂看我們的心。神用兩個標準來評估我們的事奉：忠心和勤奮。忠心是指努力做好一件事，不管有沒有人在看或是讚賞你。勤奮是指機會來臨時你會毫不猶豫地去做。事實是，如果你以為其他人會去做，最終可能沒有人去做。當你看到需要時，便應該馬上行動！如果你明白服事是一種特權而不是一個重擔，你就會很喜樂。你可以通過不同方式事奉神。最簡單就是撿起地上的垃圾、收集桌子的杯子、把椅子排好或關掉教室的燈。目前，我們週五吃晚飯的人比較少，你可以自願去洗碗。像我們這樣的小教會，你不需要頭銜來參與服事。你只需要把別人看為家人去服事便行了。

3. 確信神的應許 Confidence in God's Promises (6:13-20)

我們在這段經文中看到的第三個救恩的證據是確信神的應許。讓我們讀 6:13-20。作者重覆了他在第 11 節和第 12 節中使用的幾個關鍵詞：盼望、忍耐、承受和應許。讀者必須耐心等待他們所盼望的事情，直到他們承受神的應許。作者引述了創世記 22 章中的事件。神要求亞伯拉罕將他唯一的兒子以撒獻在祭壇上。亞伯拉罕通過了最大的信心考驗。最終，神提供了一隻公羊來代替以撒。然後神起誓來確認祂對亞伯拉罕的應許。在當時，起誓是解決紛爭的法律程序。人們會向比他們更偉大的人發誓。或許他是一位掌權者，他可以懲罰毀約的人。神指著自己起誓，因為沒有比祂更偉大的人。神其實不必起誓，因為祂總是守信用的。神用人的方式與亞伯拉罕交流。這就像一個爸爸彎下腰，和孩子勾手指，承諾他們週六會去公園。這個姿勢證實了爸爸的話。孩子知道爸爸會守諾言。神彷彿和我們勾手指。難道你還不相信祂嗎？既然我們是信實的神的兒女，我們也應該做一個守信用的人。你是一個言出必行的人嗎？有時候，我們會隨便向人們保證來結束對話。之後我們會編藉口說自己太忙或是忘記了協議。耶穌說：我們是就說是，不是就說不是。如果你不能保證什麼，就說你需要一些時間考慮。亞伯拉罕全心全意地信靠神。有人說神向亞伯拉罕起誓表示祂不會馬上實行祂所答應的事。因此亞伯拉罕必須懷著信心耐心等待神。他的確等了很久！亞伯拉罕等了 25 年才有他的第一個兒子以撒。以撒到了 60 歲才當爸爸。然後亞伯拉罕在 15 年之後便去世了。這需要很大的耐心！當網路或交通燈稍為慢一點之時，我們便很不耐煩。我們買現成的食物，然後用微波爐

加熱。感謝神，祂沒有按照我們的時間表來做事。我們必須相信神會在祂的時間裡成就祂的應許。亞伯拉罕得到神所答應的一切東西嗎？他只得到一個兒子，而不是一個國家。神呼召亞伯拉罕回天家時，他的後代也沒有天上的星星，海邊的沙那樣眾多。他甚至沒有擁有他家人居住的土地。亞伯拉罕無法想像地上的萬國會如何通過他得到祝福。但他毫無疑問地相信神。所有那些應許逐漸實現。以色列成為一個擁有領土的國家。歷代基督徒都是亞伯拉罕的屬靈後裔，因為他們都相信同一位神。作者鼓勵他的讀者要像亞伯拉罕一樣保持耐心。在第 18 節中，他說有兩件不更改的事情保證神不會說謊：祂的應許和祂的誓言。無論情況如何，我們都能相信神的品格。第 19 節和 20 節中有三個形容說明了這份確據。首先是船的錨。耶穌是我們信心穩固的基礎，就像錨固定了船位置，船便不會被風浪吹走。第二幅圖畫是跑步選手。耶穌是我們完成比賽的先鋒。祂進入幔子後面，就是至聖所。耶穌為我們打開了進到神面前的大門。第三，通過耶穌的犧牲，祂按照麥基洗德的等次成為大祭司。耶穌是超越的大祭司，因為祂的任期是永遠的。舊約的大祭司每年只能進入至聖所一次。但耶穌現在坐在天父的右邊。我們可以通過耶穌隨時接近神。

結論 CONCLUSION

救恩是神的禮物。神賜永生給凡信靠耶穌的人。我們的屬靈生命就像我們肉身的生命一樣不斷成長。一個還活著的人自然會有生命的徵兆，例如，體溫、心跳和呼吸。同樣，我們需要問問自己，我們是否有上面提到的三個屬靈生命徵兆，證明我們有永生。你對於神的話語的熟練程度、對神事務的努力和對神應許的確信是否都在積極成長？救恩是關乎於與神建立永恆的關係。就像我們與家人和朋友的關係一樣，我們需要培養我們與神的關係。停滯不前的關係只會倒退。我們不是與別人比賽，想要成為更好的基督徒。我們乃是一直與自己爭戰，以打敗我們的驕傲，使我們順服神。我們這一生都不可能達到完美，但我們必須不斷追求更加成熟。