加國華人教會

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加拿大華人教會的代溝問題——Generation Gap in Canadian Chinese Churches

- AL: We all agree that there are issues to be dealt with in the short history of North American Chinese church, e.g. generation gap. On the other hand, we always try our best in dealing with these issues, e.g. by accommodating or inventing new ways of resolving the problems. But as you look at this generation, it seems to me there is a gap that runs deeper than simply style of music, choice of instrument, or ministry strategy. There seems to be something more fundamental in terms of how the next generation approaches faith. First of all would you agree with that assessment?
- KW:I would have to agree with you. This present generation was born in a very different time than the times before. They were born into a situation which Internet and YouTube etc. are popular. The way they communicate is different than previous generations. That perhaps is the fundamental difference. We lack the knowledge and the know-how to understand them because we did not experience the things they have today.
- 林:青少年跟他們的父母非常不同,這兩代之間的不同稱之為代溝。這現象十分 明顯,亦不能避免。若果他們是土生土長的華裔青年,而他們的父母都是從 外地移民來的華僑,他們便會在雙重文化的氣氛下成長、生活、工作。一方 面他們從父母學到一些中國文化的價值觀念、道德標準、處事方法等,但另 一方面他們在西方主流文化社會成長、讀書、受教育、工作、在互聯網吸收 資訊。在這些衝擊下,便會形成一種身份危機。

聖經權威的理解——The Notion of Biblical Authority

- 李:當我在教會裡與一班年輕的、或在神學院接受訓練的青年人溝通,發現了一 個比較深層的問題,可能對華人教會有頗大的影響。我想,這是跟後現代主 義及這時代思潮的趨勢有很密切的關係。這超過文化、身份的危機,超過以 前兩代的代溝問題。當進入廿一世紀,後現代主義影響到人類生活的方式、 思想的角度,以至教會神學的觀點。如果影響到神學觀點,一定會影響到下 一代的傳道人,以至將影響帶到教會。那麼教會未來的數十年將會受到影響。
- NY: I think as I am supposed to be part of this younger generation, there are a couple of things that are worth highlighting. One of them relates to the notion of authority -What does it mean for someone to be authoritative? It seems to me that in my generation and younger, there is less automatic acceptance of authority. You do not necessarily trust somebody because they are in the position of power. Rather you trust someone because they have earned your trust. The second aspect of this younger generation is the notion of community. There is a very deep longing in my generation and after to really feel a sense of belonging. We see this phenomenon in the online world – internet, social networking sites such as Facebook or Friendster, etc. These are so critical to the lifestyle of this generation that people will spend hours on these technologies.
- 林:我相信這是反映後現代的那種意識了。我們那些從中國大陸、香港、台灣、 東南亞來的華僑,在家庭當中權威的問題,本身就是一個被接受的事實,因 此我們接受這一個觀點,但下一代卻完全拒絕。我相信這是後現代一個明顯 的象徵。簡單來說,後現代是真理迷失,道德相對、價值真空,完全是以個 人主義、個人抬頭的態度去面對人生。
- NY: When it comes to respecting authority, I do not think it is a wanting disrespect of authority, i.e., it is unlike people rebelling against authority for its sake. There is perhaps a sense of, if not cynicism, quarded skepticism about people in the position of authority. When it comes to issues of morality and truth, my work experience with students in university fellowships has been that they are some of the deeply passionate people that I know of, and they have a deep craving for truth and for doing what is right.
- KW: I tend to agree with Mr. Norman Young. In terms of post-modernity, it is different in Chinese culture than in western culture. It may be due to that Chinese culture has deeper connection in families and values, etc. It is more of a rejection to how authority is defined and used, and how truth is presented and defined, and how morality is played out. So it is the rejection of previous generation's definition, use and application of authority and truth. I think the younge generation, as I agreed with Mr. Norman Young, wants to seek the truth.

聖經真理的定義——The Definition of Biblical Truth

- 李:It may be just a matter of definition, e.g., how to define the truth. May be we, and even the post-modern people pursue the truth, but what is and where is the truth? As to my understanding, young people pursue truth, but they decide what is truth based on their desire. "If I feel good, and I think it is right, that is right", they said. So they reject the objective truth, but only accept subjective truth. It is a Me generation which started from the western world, and now everyone in the world is affected. "I am the final say, I am the final arbiter", they said. However, in our faith and belief, God's word is the final arbiter.
- 林:這就是後現代一個明顯的特色。李經寰牧師所說的十分對。後現代的特色是 極端個人主義抬頭。他們否定一個客觀、絕對的真理存在,沒有共認的道德 和真理標準,一切傳統的道德、價值、真理、原則完全不需要持守,而且全 是所謂的『講人自講』,即自己講的一套便是對的,這就是後現代主義。這 與《舊約聖經》中的士師時代相似,當時的以色列人中沒有上帝與他們同 在,故此各人任意而行,完全照自己的意思辦事,亦不接受任何權威。因此 關於兩代之間的代溝問題,從後現代的角度來看,讓我們看到情況越來越複 雜,更出現一種解構的情況,很難重建。即使以教會生活幫助下一代青年人 重建他們對真理的認識、道德的觀點、價值的觀念、權威的看法,亦需要花》 很多功夫。

- KW:When I mentioned the definition of truth in our previous dialogue, the word "rejection" did not refer to the rejection of truth, but rather to the rejection of the definition of truth, and how to search for truth. I emphasize that there is absolute truth. The matter is how we define the truth to be. Sometimes we have not given enough thoughts, and we are vulnerable to our vounger generation and others who challenge us. When I deal with university students, the most common question is that "Can I date a non-Christian?" I still remember I pulled out the passage, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers." But then when I looked back there was nothing called dating 2000 years ago. We quoted the passage and said, "This is it and final. That is God's truth." The next generation tends to get confused, and they may reject the entire concept of truth, or even say "there is no truth".
- NY: I think the difficulty the post modern generation has with the definition of absolute truth and objective truth is that they seem to have a strong sense of certainty. When the post-modern ears listen to that strong sense of certainty, they have a sense of skepticism and ask, "Is that the only way of looking at it?" For this generation, what we are looking for is not relativism or relative truth, but a certain amount of humility and modesty when it comes to some particular interpretations of scripture. We may tell them, "How about this interpretation? What do you think of this? I am not going to say it is absolutely right, but I think it is a good one. Let us have a conversation or dialogue about it."
- 林:NORMAN YOUNG所說的是另一個同後現代有十分密切關係的觀點,即各人有不 同的看法和詮解的方式,正如我先前所說的『講人自講』一樣,關鍵是如何 尋找到真理的確切性,從而知道孰是孰非。若然大家各持不同的觀點,並相 信所有都是相對的而彼此尊重,那樣真理便迷糊了。NORMAN YOUNG提及一點 關於青年人未必接受到一種客觀、絕對的真理,那麼我們如何,建立一客觀 真理的標準,抑或是不可能建立的呢?這是一個很重要的問題。如果這一代 的青年人完全浸淫於後現代的意識當中,那麼我們如何突破這困局,幫助他 們回到神在《聖經》內對我們的啟示,作為在信仰和道德上最終及至高的標 準,值得我們一生去持守的呢?我相信這是問題核心的所在。

解釋聖經真理的權威——The Authority of Interpreting the Bible

- AL: In the church situation, is it true that this generation of post-modern Christians do not object the idea of truth, but rather question who is qualified to define that this interpretation of scripture is the objective and ultimate truth? How does this affect the way we teach and preach the Bible every Sunday?
- KW:Jesus said, "I am the truth". Therefore, we need to study Jesus, read Him, see what He is all about, and try to make connections with Him. I do find that reading the whole Bible as a narrative rather than just picking a verse and studying it helps people understand the whole story of God and Jesus. The good thing about this post-modern culture is that it forces us as Bible teachers or preachers to get them read more on Bible.
- NY: I read a paper by N.T. Wright, and it was called "How can the Bible be authoritative?" He has an interesting way of looking at it. He broke up the Bible, which you can think of it as a grand play or story, into six acts. These six acts basically give you the six sections of this story. Act 1 is creation. Act 2 is fall. Act 3 is Israel. Act 4 is Jesus, and the New Testament began. Act 5 is the Holy Spirit and us. Act 6 is Jesus' second coming, and the eschatological aspects of things. N.T. Wright suggested that in Act 5 we do not necessarily have a script anymore, i.e. we do not have a script that we can read and perform accordingly. Instead, he said that we need to improvise like a Jazz musician does. But do we improvise in a completely arbitrary way? No, because the director of the play is the Holy Spirit. In terms of what prevents us from doing whatever we want, we have to look at what came before in Acts 1-4, and what follows in Act 6. In that sense the story is authoritative in our lives. It has the authority to modify our behaviour, i.e., the things we do and do not do. For me, this analogy of this grand Biblical story being a six-act play was tremendously useful to me.
- 林:當社會人士否定真理的存在,我們當如何在教會中及講壇上傳揚真理呢?我 相信大家的责任一定不是隨波逐流,乃是要作中流砥柱。世人不接受權威, 否定真理的客觀性,否定道德的標準,推翻任何的價值,我們的責任就是要 肯定《聖經》是權威的經典,是上帝的說話。因此,福音派的教會需要傳講 的乃是神的主權、基督為中心的信仰、及《聖經》的權威。而前兩點都是從 《聖經》中得來的。因此若將《聖經》挪去,我們便沒有信息可以傳揚,只 任憑各人各自表述,卻不接受《聖經》的立場。故此我們要思想如何向後現 代人,重新宣告《聖經》是神話語的權威。
- 李:在現今世代,有人強調《聖經》是記敘文,可以讓信徒看錄像帶,然後由他 們自己思想,對此我卻不同意。因為就算是耶穌基督的時代,當耶穌講道完 畢後,門徒依然不明白祂的話。然後,耶穌在屋內跟門徒及來到祂面前的 人,解釋祂的教訓、比喻。所以,《聖經》不單將其故事表現出來,還有一 部份是我們需要解釋的。至於解釋《聖經》方面,下一代提醒了我們作為傳 道人的需要謙卑,正如《聖經·詩篇》第119篇第18節所說:『求你開我的 眼睛,使我看出你律法中的奇妙。』如果沒有聖靈給我的屬靈洞見,我可能 只看到《聖經》字面上的解釋,看不到《聖經》中神的心意。我亦嘗試明白 後現代人的感覺,當我們傳講真理的時候,如何向後現代人客觀地解釋神的 真理?我們每一次傳講的真理都是神的話語,都是帶著權威的,但是否可以 以不變的真理為內涵,而在其表達的形式上變化,使後現代人較易吸收?

向這時代的人傳福音——Evangelizing Among This Generation

KW;I have to say I received theological education in a traditional seminary and was taught on different assumptions and Joctrines, etc. But somehow, when I pastor and get in touch with people, I found it difficult to connect my knowledge to the world that I minister in. For example, once I talked to a group of university students about evangelism. I asked them to use the "Bridge" or the Four Spiritual Laws technique to evangelize to other people. Afterward, I asked them. "What happened?" They said that the whole notion of that message somehow just did not connect to people. I realized that there may be something that has been over-emphasized to the extent that we neglected some other issues of the Bible. For example, what is salvation? You go back to the Bible and you asked what salvation was to the Jews in Egypt. They might think that salvation was about getting out of being slaves. If you asked the same question to the Jews in exile, they might think it was about rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. Their understanding of salvation was different already. To us, salvation is about Jesus, who died on the cross so that we have a new relationship with God, and our souls are saved. So usually we were just taught one way, and we did not have room to reflect what salvation really is.

李:我有些不同的看法。像剛才REV KA WONG所講的,以色列人對救恩的認識當然 是與我們所理解耶穌基督釘十字架、復活的理解有所不同。這啟示的漸進過程大 家也是明白的。當耶穌基督降生、受難、復活,救恩完成之後,我們開始有一個 清晰的圖畫,明白救恩的定義。正如《哥林多前書》十五章保羅說,他所領受的 福音是,第一,耶穌基督為我們的罪死了及復活,因此對福音的定義非常清楚, 是無庸至疑的。至於《屬靈四定律》,它不是《聖經》,而是傳福音的工具。這 本福音小冊子對某一類人士可能非常有效。但對不同的人,在不同的環境,例如 對今天的大學生,是否仍要用《屬靈四定律》呢?我不會堅持必須用《屬靈四定 律》,因為它不是《聖經》,乃是傳福音的一個途徑。我們可以從他們在生活上 所遇到的事情入手,慢慢進入《屬靈四定律》所提到的幾件事:神有美好計劃, 人離開上帝,神如何預備救恩,我們如何才能開展新的人生。這基本的四件事, 我們可以將它重新包裝,讓他們在各自的處境中更明白福音。

上網洞穴人

加國廣東話青年喜愛上網絕對不是一件可以拿諾貝爾獎的大發 現,但若證明上網對品格塑造沒有多大幫助,又令他們認同才是難事。現在他們上網 的程度,非常廣泛。他們上網做功課,上網遊戲,上網收看電影電視,上網購物,上 網交友,上網發表意見,上網批評他人,上網分享及上網學烹飪等等。若不嫌誇張, 他們真是甚麼東西都可以上網作成。或者,中國人的美夢終於在他們身上達成了,就 是:『足不出門能知及能夠做天下事。』你說這是否太偉大了嗎!

上網對當代青年人的影響實在太多,不能在這裏——論述,所以只選一樣,希望 能達至幫助牧養的作用。加國廣東話青年喜歡上網『談心』,他們在網上,真是無所 不談,上至父母關係,下至感情問題,他們都一一在網上盡訴心中情,那種坦誠的態 度,真是令人吃驚。加上,無論你是否認識他,只要你是在網上,都可以加入傾談, 成為老朋友一般。其實,網上的世界是一個沒有溝通藝術的世界。雖然有很多人說能 網上結交很多新朋友,但同時間,我們卻放棄在身邊繼續認識朋友的重要性。在網上 成為知已是容易的事,因為沒有親身接觸、日常生活調合,只有遙遙的談話。與身邊 朋友成為知交,需要不斷有藝術的溝通及相處,方能有長期果效。若放棄這溝通的藝 術及操練,我們便失卻了群體生活的樂趣、相交相磨的智慧及互相補足的甘甜。最可 憐的是,人與人之間再沒有溝通,而只有利害關係。不單如此,由於習慣網上的溝 通,現代的青年人越來越不曉得用言語表達自己。請留意身邊的年輕人,若叫他們分 享或表達自己,往往都是詞不達意,說了一大堆,都不能具體知道他們究竟想說些甚 麼。他們最常的反應,是叫別人到他們的『博客』 (Blog)去了解。

教會要花心思去提供一個環境或平台讓這群『洞穴人』走出洞穴,更重要的是, 讓他們有被接納的感覺。最根本的,是容讓他們『犯錯』(不是犯罪,而是事奉時出 錯),叫他們知道教會是可以讓他們『出錯』的地方,也鼓勵他們在錯中學習。

(作者為滿地可華人宣道會中文堂牧師)

我應否轉教會?

尊敬的麥牧師

我的教會最近辭退了主任牧師,據長執會的說法,是因為主任 牧師的愛心不足夠;但主任牧師臨別時毫無怨言,還為教會禱告 主任牧師很有講道的恩賜,但也常常在講台中指責人,他離開之後,我覺得在教會裏 便得不到足夠的屬靈餵養,我很想轉往主任牧師自行開設的新教會去。但我也覺得, 在現有教會,我的事奉可以服侍別人,如果不為自己著想,應該留下來。但如果留下 來,我自己便得不到屬靈供應,我應該轉教會嗎?

掙扎的弟兄平安:

你的問題十分微妙,我確實沒有答案。我不主張你離開本來的教會,我也不反對 你到牧師的新教會。這問題只有天父才能給你答案。然而,我卻可以提供我所知道 的,給你作參考。

- 一、要是你很快到牧師的新教會,可能是幫助他,也可能是傷害他,因你會肯定了牧 師分裂教會的傳言。你的動機是幫助他?或是自己得到屬靈的幫助?會不會傷害
- 二、要是你留在本來的教會,暫時或許沒有餵養。但以後教會聘到新牧師,我想餵養 就不是問題了。何況,在這轉折的危機中,你留下會有穩定局面的作用嗎?
- 三、根據你信中的暗示(沒有明說),牧師離開是因為他在講台常常指責人。這是惟一 的原因嗎?還有其他的原因嗎?人與人之間的相處是和諧或分裂,有時十分複 雜,求主給你有『平常心』來處理,然後決定去留,好嗎?

麥希真謹啟

(麥希真牧師為世界華人福音事工聯絡中心董事會永遠名譽主席。歡迎讀者將信仰掙扎問題電郵 至本刊編輯部 cccheditor@yahoo.com, 麥牧師便會在本專欄中回答。)

防患未然 鐘義理

會呢?難道是這牌子的汽車保養不好?他的答案竟然是.....

最近到美國探望一位老朋友、好弟兄,他當時駕駛了一部嶄新 的汽車到機場接我,原來這部汽車是兩星期前才購入的,怪不得還 有一般新車氣味。在前往他府上的途中,我忽然發覺在車頭玻璃上 有一個美國汽車會(AAA)的標誌,於是好奇地問這位朋友,為甚麼新車都需要加入汽車

他說是所患於未然。跟著他問我知道美國汽車會AAA是代表甚麼?未等我的答覆 他便繼續說了一篇做人的道理。說來頭頭是道,姑且記下來一起分享。

他說AAA代表Aware密意,Alert警覺,Action行動。他說如果不想當事情發生之很 才復悔,就必須事前密意四週,及早提防;如有任何風吹草動,我們需要提高我們的 警覺性,採取行動,方能避免指手不及。

這是何等的直確呀!為甚麼有那麼多的信徒,其或收者傳道人會在信仰生命中**跌** 倒; 皆因沒有留意撒但魔鬼的存在和詭計, 對它的出現和引誘沒有警覺, 也沒有積極 行動來處理罪的問題,並與上帝和好的關係。親愛的弟兄們呀(當然包括姊妹)!讓我 們一起加入AAAI緊急、警覺、行動協會,不喜給魔鬼緊地步,好好處理我們的老我,重 (作者為資深傳道人,在多倫多牧會)

作成主工的操練

· 容教 聚 2008年1月

2008年1月

掙扎的弟兄上