

# A Conversation of the Heart (continued)

## 心靈的對話 (續)



Spoken by Rev. Canon Charles Gibbs at Avatamsaka Vihara, Maryland, on June 17, 2014  
Chinese Translation by Lianlian Wu and Jessica Hu

Charles Gibbs 牧師 2014年6月17日講於馬里蘭州華嚴精舍  
吳蓮蓮、胡庭綺 中譯



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**Question:** Is it hard to retire?

**Rev. Gibbs:** I spent 17 years giving as much as I had to give as URI's founding executive director. Whenever I travelled I would keep a daily journal on my computer. At the end of the day, I would often work until midnight or after to capture the events and insights of that day. Then I would send my reflections out to the members of the URI community around the world so they could travel with me. When I recently reread the journals from a few of my trips, I was filled with gratitude for

問：您要退休，容易嗎？

**Gibbs 牧師：**擔任URI創始執行長17年的時間，可以說是盡我所能地付出。每次旅行在外，我都會在電腦上記錄每天的行程，一天結束後，總是工作到半夜或者更晚，回顧當天重要的事件及見解，然後將我自己的感受與想法寄給全球的URI成員，這樣他們就等於跟著我一起旅行。最近重讀幾篇以前寫的日記，對於能有如此不可思議的經歷，我內心充滿感激；而單單閱讀裡面所描述的那段緊湊與忙碌的生活，就已經覺得精疲力竭。

當卸下帶領URI的權責之時，我非常地清楚，我已經盡上最大的努力，付出我所有的了。現在最需要的，就是花一些時間來恢

the incredible experiences I was privileged to have and I was exhausted just reading about the incredibly full and demanding days.

I was very clear, when I laid down the privilege and the responsibility of leading URI, that I had done the best I could. I had given everything I had to give. What I needed more than anything was time to rest, to restore myself. I've said my assignment in this new chapter of my life is to go as deeply as I can into what it means to be a human being. I believe, at least for me, the first step in that adventure is to be still and to listen deeply. I give myself to that wholeheartedly. While I pray for the United Religions Initiative and my dear friends every day, I don't miss the responsibilities of the job I had.

**DM Sure:** I want to say, as someone who read these journals, they were such a blessing. Charles had speech recognition software on his laptop, so he could speak his journal at night. No matter how late at night it was or how many taxi rides and bus rides he'd had that day, when he got back to the hotel room, he would download his experiences through a speech recognition – voice-to-type – software and then send it out so we benefitted. I remember Cairo, Egypt and then from places I never imagined going, Charles was there telling us what it was like.

**Question:** How do we open up to our extraordinary? / How do you see the extraordinary?

**Rev. Gibbs:** I'll start by saying that I grew up with a brother, Eric, who had Down Syndrome. Eric looked different from the rest of the family and most of the other people where we lived. He looked as if he were from somewhere in Asia. He spoke in a way people thought he was from somewhere in Asia. At that time, doctors believed that Eric and others like him, people they labeled *Mongoloid Idiots*, could not really accomplish anything positive and most likely would be a

復自己。我說過，在這個人生嶄新的一頁，我要做的就是深度探索人生的意義。而這趟探索之旅的第一步，至少對我而言，就是保持靜定，傾聽自己內在的聲音，而我也全心投入於此。當我每天為URI以及摯友們祈禱時，也就是履行我所肩負的責任。

**恆實法師：**我想說，對於曾經讀過Charles日記的人而言，都會將之視為一份恩典。Charles的手提電腦安裝了語音辨識軟體，所以每天晚上他用唸的方式記錄自己的日記。無論多晚，無論那天搭了多少趟的計程車或公車，一旦回到旅館房間，他都會將一天的見聞藉助辨識軟體—語音輸入、文字輸出—的方式記錄下來，然後寄給我們，收到的人都感到受益匪淺。我記得無論是埃及開羅，或是許多我從來沒有想到會去的地方，Charles就在那裡告訴我們當地的風貌。

**問：**怎樣才能開明地看待自己跟人家不一樣的地方呢？你如何發掘非凡之處？

**Gibbs 牧師：**我有一個弟弟Eric，他是一名唐氏症患者。Eric看上去和家族裡的其他成員都不一樣，乃至我們住家附近大部分的人也都不一樣。他看起來像是亞洲人，講話的方式也好像亞洲人。當時，Eric還有和他有相同症狀的人都會被貼上「蒙古癡呆症」的標籤，醫生都不認為他們能有什麼成就，估計只會帶來負面影響，甚至拆散一個家庭。因此當Eric被確診為唐氏症之後，人們都勸母親將Eric留在收養機構，就當作沒這個兒子。

然而幸運的是，母親比醫生更有智慧。就像她的其他三個孩子一樣，母親也順利地將Eric撫養長大。只可惜Eric在世間的時間不長，就在34歲生日之前辭世了。他的過世非常突然，令人出乎意料。雖然如此，他還是擁有了一個不平凡的人生。他改變了很多人的生命，因為透過Eric，他們體會到不要看一個人的外表，而是去認



negative influence that might destroy a family. So, when Eric was diagnosed with Down Syndrome, our mother was counseled to place him in an institution and forget that she had ever had him.

Blessedly, she was wiser than the doctor and she raised Eric as she raised her other three children. Sadly, Eric lived a relatively short life. He died suddenly and unexpectedly not long before he turned 34. But he also lived an extraordinary life that changed the lives of so many people by helping them experience the blessing that comes when you move beyond the surface of another human being and connect with that person's heart. At his memorial service, the church was filled to overflowing with people who came to pay tribute to the extraordinary person Eric was and to celebrate his life.

Having Eric as a brother helped me to understand that, each in our unique ways, every single one of us is precious, is extraordinary. I believe we all need to cultivate that understanding, that consciousness, and to do the best we can to carry it mindfully through our days, seeking the preciousness in every person we encounter. By the way, the first precious person we encounter when we wake up in the morning and the last precious person we encounter before we go to sleep is our self. I believe if we listen carefully, and that means taking time to be still – to listen inwardly and let that inward listening inform our journey through the day – it helps us see the preciousness within and around us, and let it inspire how we lead our lives.

As they were growing up, I often told both my children that my greatest wish for them was that they discover what they loved and give their lives as fully as possible to what they loved. For some people this is very easy. For others, it's the challenging journey of a lifetime. But I believe it may be the most important journey of our lives. It's important to be patient and to persevere in this journey, because when we understand what we love we glimpse our unique purpose in this world and can give ourselves wholeheartedly to fulfilling that purpose. We aren't put here to become someone else, to fulfill someone else's purpose or expectations for us. We're put here to become the best me we can possibly become.

I believe that living in this mindset opens us to our extraordinary uniqueness and to each other person's extraordinary uniqueness; and, if we're seeking the preciousness in others, we will find it easier and easier to see our own preciousness. I believe the two clearest signs we're being successful in this venture are joy and gratitude. To finish, I'd like to share a story about joy and gratitude.

I have a dear friend named Masato Kawahatsu. Mas is a priest in



識對方的心，這樣就能領受上帝的恩典。Eric告別式那天，教堂擠滿了前來送他最後一程的人，一同來歌頌他不平凡的人生。

因為有了Eric這個弟弟，讓我明白每個人都以獨特的方式來顯示自己的珍貴和不平凡。我相信我們都需要培養這樣的觀念與認知，並且努力地落實於生活當中，在有緣相遇的每個人身上發掘他們的珍貴之處。而我們每天醒來遇到的第一位，以及每晚入睡之前遇到的最後一位值得珍惜的人，就是我們自己。如果我們能夠認真聆聽，我是指安靜下來聆聽內在的聲音，讓它告訴我們生命旅程的方向，那麼這份聆聽就會幫助我們看到自己以及週遭的可貴之處，也會啟發我們生活之道。

在我孩子成長過程中，我常常跟他們說我對他們最大的期望，就是希望他們找到自己所愛、所感興趣的，並且盡可能將畢生投入其中。對有些人來說，這是很簡單的事情；對有些人來說，這卻是一生中極具挑戰的旅程，但我認為這應該是我們人生中最重要旅程。保持耐心，並且在旅途中堅持下去是很重要的。因為當我們明白自己所愛的是什麼以後，就可以看到自己在這個世界上存在的特殊意義，才能夠全心地付出，實現這個意義。我們存在的目的，不是為了成為某一個人，不是為了滿足別人的目標或者期待；我們存在的目的，是為了成就真正的自我。

這樣的生活態度，能幫助我們發現自己與其



the Konko church, which grew out of the Shinto faith in Japan. His daughter and my daughter were classmates for nine years. Mas and I became very good friends. One day as we were having lunch, Mas said, "Charles, when I was younger I became very ill. Something was wrong with me." Now Mas' illness manifested on the physical plane but sometimes what's manifesting on the physical plane has its cause in a deeper place.

Mas told me, "I went to see doctors and it didn't help. I went to see alternative healers and I was still sick. One day I was lying in bed looking out the window, feeling very sorry for myself because I was not getting well. I asked myself, 'Why am I not getting better?' The answer was there immediately. 'Because you're not grateful.'" "Charles", Mas said, "that day I made a commitment to say Thank you 100 times every day. And I got better."

Mas' story inspired me to try saying Thank you 100 times a day. I practiced and as I did I discovered it was changing my life, filling me more and more with gratitude and joy. To go through the day, saying, Thank you. I can't tell you how many difficult meetings I've sat in, working my meditation beads and with every bead silently saying, Thank you, trusting that there was some lesson, some gift I would receive from the difficulty.

When I told Mas I was saying a 100 Thank yous a day, he replied, in a very kind way, "That's great." The new message I have received is that the world is in such desperate shape we need to say Thank you 1,000 times a day. I invite you to embrace this simple practice of gratitude. Thank you. ❀

他人的亮點。在尋找別人珍貴之處的過程中，我們也會越加容易發現自己的珍貴之處。愉悅和感恩，就是這段旅程最明確的兩個成功指標。最後，我想以一個關於愉悅和感恩的故事做為今天的結束。

我有一位好朋友Masato Kawahatsu，是金光教的一位牧師，金光教起源於日本的神道。他的女兒和我的女兒做了九年的同班同學，所以我們成為很好的朋友。有一天我們共進午餐，Masato對我說：「Charles，我年輕的時候生病得很厲害，大概有什麼東西不對。」病灶已經在Masato的身上呈現出來；然而身體上的疾病，往往都有一個更深層的病因。

Masato告訴我，他去看了醫生，可是沒有什麼幫助；他也試過民俗療法，依然不見康復。有一天他躺在床上看著窗外，覺得很傷心，因為病情一直不見好轉，於是就問自己：為什麼我的病不見好轉呢？答案頓時浮現出來：因為你不夠感恩。「Charles，」Masato對我說，「從那天起我下定決心，承諾每天說一百次『謝謝』。於是，之後我的病就好了。」

Masato的故事，激勵我開始每天說一百次「謝謝」。每天這樣練習，我發現生活有了轉變，我越來越能感到愉悅和感激，每天都在感謝聲中度過。我無法描述究竟有多少次，當會談陷入膠著狀態，我都撥著手上的念珠，心中不斷默念：「謝謝」。因為我相信在每次的困難裡頭，我都能夠學到一些教訓，獲得一些禮物。

當我告訴Masato我每天也說一百次「謝謝」的時候，他很仁慈地回答我：「真好。現在這個世界這麼地危險、絕望，我們應該每天說一千次『謝謝』才對。」所以我也邀請各位，一起加入這個簡單的感恩練習。謝謝。 ❀



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