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**Translation Project:
The Excerpt of the Preface of Mere Christianity**

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Translation Project

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The Excerpt of the Preface of Mere Christianity

Everyone has heard people quarrelling. They say things like this: "How'd you like it if anyone did the same to you?"—"That's my seat, I was there first"—"Leave him alone, he isn't doing you any harm"— "Why should you shove in first?"—"Give me a bit of your orange, I gave you a bit of mine"—"Come on, you promised." People say things like that every day, educated people as well as uneducated, and children as well as grown-ups. Now what interests me about all these remarks is that the man who makes diem is not merely saying that the other man's behavior does not happen to please him. It looks, in fact, very much as if both parties had in mind some kind of Law or Rule of fair play or decent behavior or morality or whatever you like to call it, about which they really agreed. And they have. Quarrelling means trying to show that the other man is in the wrong. And there would be no sense in trying to do that unless you and he had some sort of agreement as to what Right and Wrong are; just as there would be no sense in saying that a footballer had committed a foul unless there was some agreement about the rules of football. Now this Law or Rule about Right and Wrong used to be called the Law of Nature. Nowadays, when we talk of the "laws of nature" we usually mean things like gravitation, or heredity, or the laws of chemistry. But when the older thinkers called the Law of Right and Wrong "the Law of Nature," they really meant the Law of Human Nature. The idea was that, just as all bodies are governed by the law of gravitation and organisms by biological laws, so the creature called man also had his law—with this great difference, that a body could not choose whether it obeyed the law of gravitation or not, but a man could choose either to obey the Law of Human Nature or to disobey it. We may put this in another way. Each man is at every moment subjected to several different sets of law but there is only one of these which he is free to disobey. As a body, he is subjected to gravitation and cannot disobey it; if you leave him unsupported in mid-air, he has no more choice about falling than a stone has. As an organism, he is subjected to various biological laws which he cannot disobey any more than an animal can. That is, he cannot disobey those laws which he shares with other things; but the law which is peculiar to his human nature, the law he does not share with animals or vegetables or inorganic things, is the one he can disobey if he chooses. This law was called the Law of Nature because people thought that everyone knew it by nature and did not need to be taught it. And I believe they were right. If they were not, then all the things we said about the war were nonsense. What was the sense in saying the enemy were in the wrong unless Right is a real thing which the Nazis at bottom knew as well as we did and ought to have practiced? If they had no notion of what we mean by right, then, though we might still have had to fight them, we could no more have blamed them for that than for the color of their hair. I know that some people say the idea of a Law of Nature or

decent behavior known to all men is unsound, because different civilizations and different ages have had quite different moralities. But this is not true. There have been differences between their moralities, but these have never amounted to anything like a total difference. If anyone will take the trouble to compare the moral teaching of, say, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks and Romans, what will really strike him will be how very like they are to each other and to our own. Some of the evidence for this I have put together in the appendix of another book called *The Abolition of Man*; but for our present purpose I need only ask the reader to think what a totally different morality would mean. || Think of a country where people were admired for running away in battle, or where a man felt proud of double-crossing all the people who had been kindest to him. You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two made five. Men have differed as regards what people you ought to be unselfish to—whether it was only your own family, or your fellow countrymen, or everyone. But they have always agreed that you ought not to put yourself first. Selfishness has never been admired. Men have differed as to whether you should have one wife or four. But they have always agreed that you must not simply have any woman you liked.

But the most remarkable thing is this. Whenever you find a man who says he does not believe in a real Right and Wrong, you will find the same man going back on this a moment later. He may break his promise to you, but if you try breaking one to him he will be complaining "It's not fair" before you can say Jack Robinson. A nation may say treaties do not matter, but then, next minute, they spoil their case by saying that the particular treaty they want to break was an unfair one. But if treaties do not matter, and if there is no such thing as Right and Wrong—in other words, if there is no Law of Nature—what is the difference between a fair treaty and an unfair one? Have they not let the cat out of the bag and shown that, whatever they say, they really know the Law of Nature just like anyone else? It seems, then, we are forced to believe in a real Right and Wrong. People may be sometimes mistaken about them, just as people sometimes get their sums wrong; but they are not a matter of mere taste and opinion any more than the multiplication table. Now if we are agreed about that, I go on to my next point, which is this. None of us are really keeping the Law of Nature. If there are any exceptions among you, I apologize to them. They had much better read some other work, for nothing I am going to say concerns them. And now, turning to the ordinary human beings who are left: I hope you will not misunderstand what I am going to say. I am not preaching, and Heaven knows I do not pretend to be better than anyone else.

I am only trying to call attention to a fact; the fact that this year, or this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practice ourselves the kind of behavior

we expect from other people. There may be all sorts of excuses for us. That time you were so unfair to the children was when you were very tired. That slightly shady business about the money—the one you have almost forgotten—came when you were very hard up. And what you promised to do for old So-and-so and have never done—well, you never would have promised if you had known how frightfully busy you were going to be. And as for your behavior to your wife (or husband) or sister (or brother) if I knew how irritating they could be, I would not wonder at it—and who the dickens am I, anyway? I am just the same. That is to say, I do not succeed in keeping the Law of Nature very well, and the moment anyone tells me I am not keeping it, there starts up in my mind a string of excuses as long as your arm. The question at the moment is not whether they are good excuses. The point is that they are one more proof of how deeply, whether we like it or not, we believe in the Law of Nature. If we do not believe in decent behaviour, why should we be so anxious to make excuses for not having behaved decently? The truth is, we believe in decency so much—we feel the Rule or Law pressing on us so—that we cannot bear to face the fact that we are breaking it, and consequently we try to shift the responsibility. For you notice that it is only for our bad behaviour that we find all these explanations. It is only our bad temper that we put down to being tired or worried or hungry; we put our good temper down to ourselves. These, then, are the two points I wanted to make. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in.



The Chinese Translation

每個人都聽過他人爭吵的經驗。吵架時，人們會說：「如果有人對你做同樣的事，你會喜歡嗎？」「那是我的座位，我先到的。」「別管他，他不會傷害你的。」「擠什麼擠。」「我分了你一些我的橘子，你也該分我一些吧。」「拜託，你答應過我的。」人們每天都說這樣的話，不論他們是否受過教育，是孩子還是大人。現在，我對這些評論之所以感興趣，在於這些話不僅是因為他人行為不討喜。做事的人不僅僅是在說另一個人的行為碰巧不討好他。事實上，這看起來更像是雙方心裡都存有某種法律，公平競爭規則，或體面的行為，或道德，或任何你喜歡稱之為的東西，能使他們達成共識。他們確實是如此。爭吵意味著試圖表明對方是錯的。除非雙方就何謂是非對錯達成共識，否則爭吵是沒有意義的。就像如果足球比賽沒有一套能規範是非對錯、讓參賽者都能遵循的遊戲規則，還能說某球員犯規了？這種判決便毫無意義。現在，這條關於是非的律或者規則在過去被稱為自然定律。

如今，談論「自然定律」時，我們通常指的是萬有引力、遺傳規則或化學定律。但是，以前的思想家所稱的「自然定律」，指的則是人性的法則。也就是說，正如所有物體都受萬有引力定律支配，生物體受生物法則支配一樣，被稱為人的生物也有他的定律，不同之處在於，物體無法選擇它是否遵守萬有引力定律，但人卻可以選擇是否遵守人性的法則。換種方式說，人們每時每刻都受制於幾套不同的定律，但只有其中一套是他可以自由違背的。人體受制於重力，不能違抗它；如果讓一個人在停在半空毫無支持是不可能的，他無法選擇，只能像石頭一般墜落。作為一個有機體，人受制於各種生物法則，他不能違抗這些法則，就像動物一樣。也就是說，人不能違背他與其他事物共享的那些定律；而人性的法則，是人不能與動物、植物或無機物共享的法則，卻是人可以選擇違抗的。這條法則被稱為自然定律，因為人們認為不需要教導，我們生來就知道它。我相信他們是對的。如果他們不對，那麼我們所談論的和戰爭有關的一切都會變成胡說八道。若非確標準是真實存在在納粹們的心裡的，並且他們想的和我們所想的一樣，並且我們也該將此正確標準付諸行動，不然說敵人是錯的又有什麼意義呢？如果他們一概不知我們所說的是非對錯是什麼，那麼，仗依然要打，但我們卻不能咎責。因為指責他的不是就如同指責他們天生的髮色為何如此一般。

我知道有些人會認為有人人都知道的自然定律或正直的行為存在的想法是不合理的，因為不同的文明和不同的時代有著截然不同的道德觀。但是這是錯誤的。他們的道德觀之間存在差異，但這些差異從來沒有達到完全不同的程度。如果不嫌麻煩地比較古埃及人、巴比倫人、印度人、中國人、希臘人和羅馬人的道德教義，會驚訝地發現各文明下的道德教義和道德觀和我們的是多麼相似。我已將這方面的一些研究放在另一本書的附錄中，書名是《廢除人類》；但為了達到我們目前的目的，我只需要讓讀者思考人類擁有截然不同的道德觀意謂著什麼。

試想，如果某國內，戰爭中的逃兵會受人欽佩，出賣所有對他最友善的人為自己感到自豪。倒不如去試想在一個國家，二加二會等於五，還比較不荒謬呢。對於應該對哪些人無私——無論是你自己的家人，還是你的同胞，或者是每個人，人們抱持不同的看法。但人們都贊同，不應該把自己放在第一位。自私從來不被人欣賞。對於應該擁有一個妻子還是四個妻子，男人們意見不一。但他們都認同，凡是你喜歡的女人你就能擁有她，這是不可能的。但值得注意的是這一點。如果有人不相信事情對錯有準則，他往往隨後又會改變主意。他可能會違背對你的諾言，但如果你試圖違背他的諾言，轉眼間他就會抱怨「這不公平」。一個國家可能會說條約無關緊要，但下一分鐘，他們就會毀約，說他們想要打破特定條約，因為它不公平。但如果條約無關緊要，如果事情沒有對錯之分——換句話說，如果沒有自然定律——公平的條約和不公平的條約有什麼區別？這不是無意透露出，無論他們說什麼，他們和其他人一樣真的了解自然定律嗎？那麼，我們似乎被推動相信一套真正的對與錯的標準。人們有時可能會誤解它們，就像人們會算錯加法一樣；但它們不僅是一個比九九乘法表更複雜，或只是和品味和意見有關的問題。

如果同意目前我所說的一切，那麼讓我接著談下個論點。也就是我們都沒有真正遵守自然定律。如果你們中間有誰是例外，我向他們道歉。他們選擇閱讀一些其他的作品會更合適些，因為我所說的事與他們沒有關聯。現在，我對著剩下的一般人說：我希望你們不要誤解我要說的話。我不是在說教，上帝知道我不是自詡我優於他人。我只是想提醒人們注意一個事實；今年，或者這個月，或者更有可能是今天，我們經常以自己認為「別人應該怎麼做」為標準來要求對方，結果自己也沒做到。我們可能有各種各樣的藉口為自己辯護。比如說，當你沒有好好對待小孩，你說是因為太累了。那筆你做過的不當交易，反正是在你非常拮据的時候發生的，所以快忘了也罷。還有你答應為誰誰誰做，但從未做到的事情——好吧，要是知道自己將忙得不可開交，當初你就不會答應它。至於你對待你的配偶或手足的方式，如果知道了他們有多煩人，就情有可原了——難道我不也是這樣討人厭嗎？我也一樣。也就是說，我沒有很好地遵守自然法則，一旦有人告訴我我沒有遵守它，我的腦子裡就會冒出一串長長的藉口。現在，問題不在於藉口的好壞，關鍵是它們再次證明，無論我們喜歡與否，我們相信著一套自然定律。

如果我們不相信有某種行為是正直的，我們為什麼要急於為不正直的行為找藉口呢？事實是，我們如此相信正直，以至於感到規則或律被強加身上，我們無顏去面對我們正在違反它的事實，因此我們試圖推卸責任。因此，你會注意到一切我們使用的藉口，都只是為了要掩蓋我們的不良行為。我們把壞脾氣歸咎於為疲倦、擔心或飢餓，我們把好脾氣歸功於自己。那麼，這就是我想表達的兩點。首先，全世界的人類都有這種奇怪的想法，認為自己應該以某種方式行事，而且無法真正擺脫它。其次，他們實際上並沒有那樣做。他們雖知

道自然定律，卻打破了它。這兩個事實是對我們生為人和正所處的宇宙進行清晰的思考所需要的基礎。



Reflection

The translation of the preface is often overlooked by translators. This neglect often leads readers to lack important background information, and misguiding their understanding of the entire ideas of this book. The preface is the facade of a book, which usually contains the author's discourse on the creative motivation, theme, and ideas of the writing. It can help readers better understand the content and the author's viewpoint and position. In the preface, C.S. Lewis introduces his beliefs and understanding of Christianity as well as the purpose and motivation for writing Mere Christianity. He also discusses some philosophical and ethical issues related to the Christian faith, which run through the entire content of the book. Through the preface, readers can better understand the theme of this book, the author's viewpoint, and position, and therefore better understand the core values of the Christian faith.

When translating the preface of the book, I found that translation is not just about translating words and sentences but also about learning how to translate ideas and emotions into Chinese while maintaining the style and characteristics of the original work. During the translation process, I need to be aware of the structural differences between the two languages. Therefore, when translating into Chinese, I made adjustments based on the characteristics of Chinese as an ideographic language.

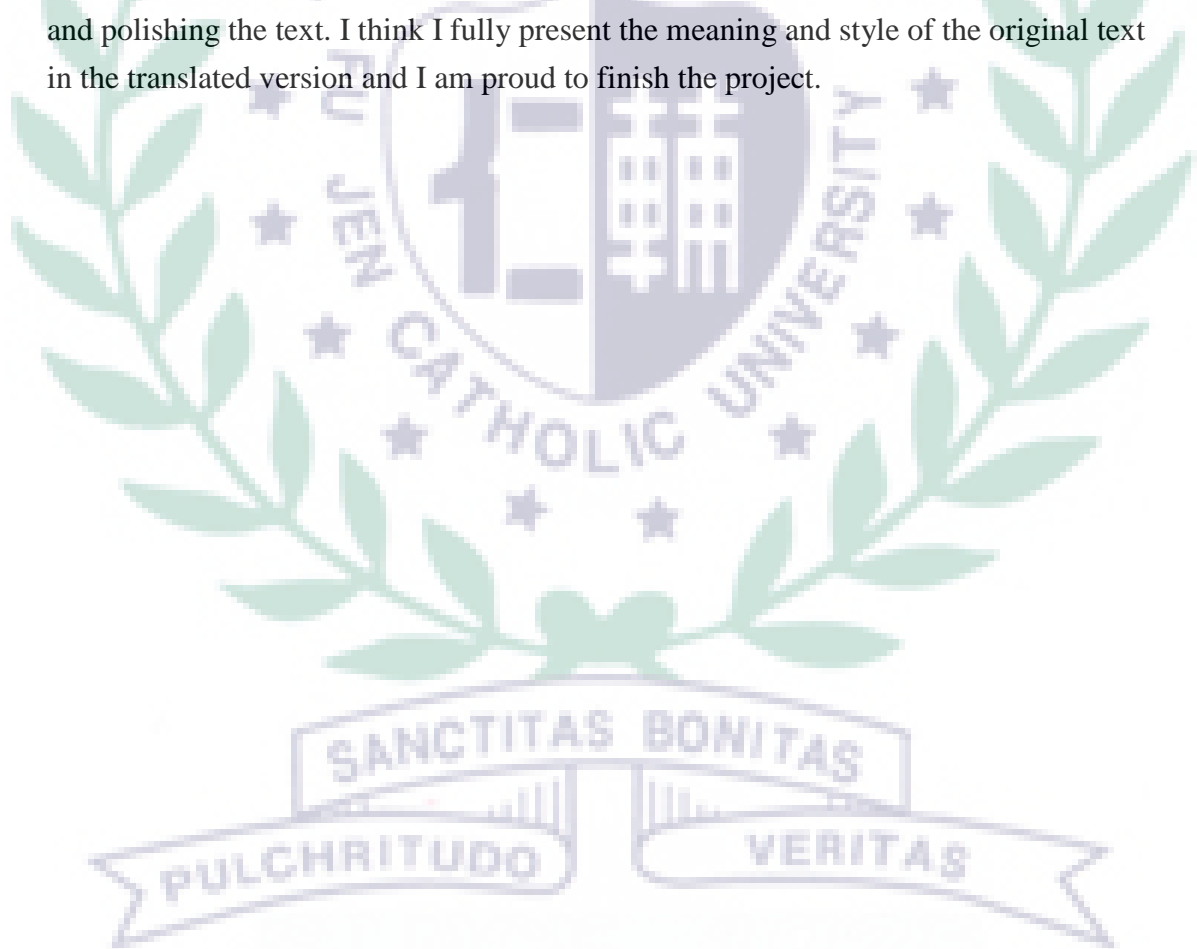
The original text	The translated version	The revised version	explanation
Have they not let the cat out of the bag and shown that, whatever they say, they really know the Law of Nature just like anyone else?	這不是暗暗表明著，無論他們說什麼，他們和其他人一樣真的了解自然定律嗎？	這不是無意透露出，無論他們說什麼，他們和其他人一樣真的了解自然定律嗎？	Let the cat out of the bag，這個片語指的是無意間被透露了出來。所以第一次的翻譯有誤譯。此錯誤在修訂版本中做了更正。
It is only our bad temper that we put down to being tired or worried or hungry; we put our good	我們把壞脾氣歸結為疲倦、擔心或飢餓，我們把好脾氣歸咎於自己。	我們把壞脾氣歸咎於為疲倦、擔心或飢餓，我們把好脾氣歸功於自己。	在中文當中「歸咎」和「歸結」有詞意的褒貶之分。在第一次翻譯中，這兩個詞

<p>temper down to ourselves.</p>			<p>語我使用地並不正確，於是做了更正，是詞意的褒貶符合原句的意思。</p>
<p>Now if we are agreed about that, I go on to my next point, which is this. None of us are really keeping the Law of Nature.</p>	<p>現在，如果我們就此達成共識，我將延續我的下一點，也就是我們都沒有真正遵守自然定律。</p>	<p>如果同意目前我所說的一切，那麼讓我接著談下一個論點。也就是我們都沒有真正遵守自然定律。</p>	<p>英文原書中，作者以一種對話的形式敘述他的觀點。第一個版本的翻譯，我是直接照著英文的句子直譯，但冗言贅字使翻譯的結果不符合中文簡潔的特色。修正過後的版本句子更加通順，並保有原文對話風格的特色。</p>
<p>I am not preaching, and Heaven knows I do not pretend to be better than anyone else.</p>	<p>我不是說教，上帝知道我並沒有裝地像是比別人更好。</p>	<p>我不是在說教，上帝知道我不是自詡我優於他人。</p>	<p>Pretend 這個詞常見的意思是假裝。然後一字多義，在原文中，not pretend to do sth 的意思是不想妄稱，因此我將這個字的翻譯修訂成了自詡。</p>

All these changes makes the Chinese translation more smooth and precise.

Mere Christianity is a classic Christian work written by C.S. Lewis. I chose to do its Chinese translation as my graduation learning outcome project because this book is one of the classics in English literature. The depth and breadth of this book can challenge my skills and knowledge in English learning and translating. Translating Mere Christianity helps to show my language proficiency because translation requires

a high level of language skills, including proficiency in grammar, vocabulary, idioms, and so forth. I also need to be aware of the cultural differences between English and Chinese and successfully communicate the meanings through translation. My outcome helps to testify my academic achievement after four years of learning English at university. Secondly, I can show my reading comprehension level. To understand the author's intentions and thoughts and accurately translate them into Chinese, I should understand the original text fully. The translation of complex work shows my good reading comprehension skills. Thirdly, my LOD project—the product of my translation—shows my literary competence: Mere Christianity is a famous Christian philosophy and literature. The whole process of my translation demonstrates that I can have a profound understanding and appreciation of literature and philosophy to avoid losing the essence of the original text. Lastly, I have trained myself to do more and to be better, because completing the project requires careful proofreading and polishing the text. I think I fully present the meaning and style of the original text in the translated version and I am proud to finish the project.



Thank you for reading. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send an email to me. My email address is: josephine20211030@gmail.com

