

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Romans 3: 5-8

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue reading Romans chapter 3, verses 5 to 8.

The most significant advantage of the Jews is that God entrusted His holy word to them, so we should thank the Jews for the Old Testament we hold. Because they faithfully carried out God's commission, we have the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi. Through it, we can understand God's creation, humanity's identity, status, function, and mission within that creation, as well as humanity's fourfold fall, and God's calling of Abraham from among the created race to be the ancestor of the called race.

As the ancestor of the called race, Abraham has two kinds of descendants: physical descendants, the Israelites, and descendants of faith, the New Testament saints. The Israelites' unbelief and rebellion are faithfully recorded in the Old Testament, accompanied by God's kindness, forbearance, and longsuffering. More importantly, the prophets' prophecies foretold the coming of the Messiah; when the Messiah came, He fulfilled God's promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his seed.

As Abraham's descendants by faith, we, the New Testament saints, should thank the Jews for fulfilling God's commission to preserve His holy word. However, the Jews themselves, due to unbelief, did not receive the benefits of the holy word. Paul, on one hand, laments their loss, but on the other hand, strongly declares that their unbelief cannot nullify God's faithfulness, nor can their falsehood affect God's truth. On the contrary, God will, in His righteousness, rebuke humanity, and His rebuke will prevail over all human arguments.

Paul, a lawyer trained in rigorous logic, leaves no room for opponents in his discourse. He first adopts the opponents' perspective, presenting two possible

arguments they might raise: the first in verses 5 and 6, the second in verses 7 and 8, and he directly offers powerful counterarguments.

Verse 5: “But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)”

This is the first argument opponents might raise. If human unrighteousness demonstrates God’s righteousness, how can God inflict wrath on human unrighteousness? Doesn’t human unrighteousness further highlight God’s righteousness? If human unrighteousness magnifies God’s righteousness, does God’s wrath then show His unrighteousness? This is human sophistry, which at first glance seems somewhat reasonable. Paul prefaces this by saying he speaks as a man, meaning that in a human-centered society, human-centered logic emerges. If human unrighteousness magnifies God’s righteousness, then God should not be angry at human unrighteousness. Paul suggests here that after humanity’s fall, human reason became distorted, leading to arguments within a relative value system that favor oneself, producing specious, deceptive claims.

Dear brothers and sisters, if you closely observe your society, especially in courtrooms, don’t you often see such logic in lawsuits and defenses? This is precisely the result of humanity’s fallen reason losing its proper function, as it lacks an absolute value system as its basis, rendering it incapable of producing correct outcomes. We must recognize that God’s value system is absolute, and human value systems, if not rooted in God’s absolute system, only produce chaotic societies. Why is society’s moral climate deteriorating? Why is the human moral system on the brink of collapse? This is the fundamental reason. God’s absolute value system is built on His righteousness and the proper order established upon it.

Thus, God’s wrath is righteous, issued for the sake of righteousness. Human anger, in contrast, is unrighteous, driven by self-interest—perhaps loss of profit, damage to reputation, or suppression of power. Human anger is self-centered and directed at the offender. Accustomed to their own unrighteous anger, people assume God’s

anger is the same, which is entirely wrong. God's wrath is not an emotional reaction or personal vengeance. It arises when people violate God's righteousness and the order established under it, a firm, sustained, and gradually increasing righteous anger. So, is God's wrath unrighteous? Paul asks and answers himself.

Verse 6: "Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?"

Certainly not! This is Paul's resolute response. If that were so, how could God judge the world? God's righteous wrath stems from human violation of His righteousness; as the world grows more corrupt, His righteous wrath increases until it surpasses the limit of His forbearance, bringing His judgment. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne, and His judgment is absolutely righteous and just.

In Genesis 18, after Abraham learned God must judge Sodom, he interceded for his nephew Lot, basing his plea on God's righteousness. Genesis 18:25 says: "Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" God's judgment is absolutely righteous, just, and fair.

Dear brothers and sisters, God's judgment is not only righteous but also complete. Therefore, we must not harbor illusions that hidden sins go unseen by God, nor blindly abuse grace while neglecting our responsibility. Jesus Christ has completed the work of redemption, and His shed blood can forgive all our sins, great or small. But we have a responsibility to confess our sins and apply Christ's blood. 1 John 1:9 says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The grace of forgiveness is already prepared, but our responsibility is to apply it through confession and repentance.

Thus, we should cultivate a habit of daily confession and prayer, carefully examining ourselves: Have we offended family members, coworkers, or brothers and sisters in the church? The grace of forgiveness is complete, but repentance and applying grace are our responsibility. During the age of grace, God is full of forbearance and longsuffering, giving people opportunities to repent. At the final

judgment, God will manifest His righteousness, restoring the universe's proper order. While enjoying the Lord's grace, may we also fulfill our responsibilities.

Verse 7: "For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?"

This is the second argument opponents might raise: I admit I am false and God is true. If my falsehood highlights God's truth, doesn't my greater falsehood magnify God's truth, bringing Him more glory? Why, then, am I judged as a sinner for my falsehood?

We know that after humanity's fall, when people sin and God seeks them, their first reaction is to deflect responsibility, saying it's not their fault. This began in the Garden of Eden. When God asked Adam if he ate the forbidden fruit, Genesis 3:12 records: "Then the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.'" Adam immediately blamed the woman, adding that she was given by God, implying the responsibility was God's, not his. Adam did this, and Eve was no better. When God asked Eve, she said the serpent deceived her, and she ate. Adam blamed the woman God made, and Eve blamed the serpent God made. People think shifting blame to others lessens their fault; this human-centered, relative thinking began in Eden.

But God's standard is absolute; breaking one command is breaking all. Sin is defined as missing the mark, deviating from God's will and purpose for humanity. Moreover, God's truth is neither increased nor decreased by human falsehood, for His faithfulness is unchanging, incapable of increase or decrease. Similarly, God's glory, radiant and splendid, is unaffected by human actions. Human sophistry to escape judgment is feeble, and Paul seems somewhat exasperated by such arguments.

Verse 8: “And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come’? — as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.”

Why not say, “Let us do evil that good may come”? Doing evil is human, and producing good is God’s—they are fundamentally distinct. Yet, in human-centered relative perspectives, people claim that human evil highlights God’s goodness, suggesting evil has value. In God’s absolute value system, this is utterly invalid. However, some saints hold this erroneous view, thinking that sinning more and confessing magnifies grace. Such sophistry—doing evil to produce good—is completely untenable before God.

Dear brothers and sisters, doing evil to produce good is an obvious fallacy, having no place in God’s righteous framework, yet fallen human minds often use distorted reason to propose such errors.

I believe saints have heard such sophistry, like claiming Judas’ betrayal enabled Christ’s crucifixion, so Christ needed someone to betray Him, making Judas’ act not entirely his fault; or that Jewish unbelief turned salvation to the Gentiles, giving their unbelief value; or that unrighteous methods can achieve God’s will, so any means are justified for a good end. This last fallacy of doing evil for good is prevalent in today’s church ministries.

How many churches, to pass a policy or bill, align with worldly politics, even using improper means—a classic case of doing evil for good. 1 Timothy 3:15 says: “the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” We must recognize the church as God’s house, the pillar and ground of truth. Every church ministry must be initiated by God, conducted entirely according to His righteous principles, with glory ultimately returning to God. The church must never use any means to achieve ends.

Doing evil to produce good is what those who slandered Paul claimed he taught. They committed various evils, slandered and attacked Paul, even claiming their actions fulfilled God’s good purpose. They did not know grace, did not believe in Jesus, yet were jealous of Paul’s fruitful work. Rejecting grace and trusting only the

law, they did evil to Paul to achieve what they considered good—keeping the law. Yet they could not keep it, so Paul says their condemnation is just. Dear brothers and sisters, doing evil for good must never occur in the church; may God have mercy on us.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for showing us through Paul's condemnation of the Jews that they often did evil to produce good. Lord, shine on us, teaching us in our personal lives to avoid accumulating evil deeds. Help us reflect often, confess our sins, and maintain open communion with You. Guard the church I am in, ensuring every ministry, from start to duration to outcome, testifies to Your glory. I pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.