

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

Romans 5:1-2

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week, we will read Romans 5:1–11. Today, we will read verses 5: 1-2.

The key to reading the book of Romans is to understand the overall outline of the book and, when reading each passage, to grasp Paul's logic and recognize how that passage fits within the whole book of Romans. In the structure of Romans, Paul first presents the judicial redemption accomplished by Jesus as the basis for sinners to receive grace. This judicial redemption includes both the condemnation of man and justification by God. The conclusion of the discourse on condemnation is that "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Romans 3:10) If it were not for God's free justification, no one would be able to come before God by their own merit.

The first step of God's justification is the establishment of Jesus Christ as the propitiation, so that through faith in Jesus' blood, people may be freely justified by God. This is the foundational discourse on justification by faith.

Next, Paul presents Abraham, the father of faith for both the Jews and New Testament believers, as the example and model of justification by faith. The passage for this week, Romans 5:1–11, is the final section in the discourse on justification by faith. It speaks of the results of being justified by faith. This passage concludes the topic of judicial redemption and introduces the next topic, which is the organic salvation.

Paul, being a scholar with rigorous logic, uses this passage as a transitional section—from judicial redemption to organic salvation; from the objective position given by God to the subjective life experience in which man must participate; from receiving spiritual life to living out spiritual life. Moreover, this transitional passage also serves as an overview of the upcoming discourse on organic salvation. Paul discusses organic salvation from Romans 5:12 to 8:39. This covers the entire

Christian life—from being justified by God to the time of the Lord’s return when our bodies are redeemed and glorified.

Let us first look at God’s promise. In Romans 8:30, “Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.” Paul assures us that every person who is justified will also be glorified. The miniature journey from justification to glorification is found in Romans 5:1–11. Verses 1–2 describe the position we have received and the hope of the glory to come; verses 3–5 describe the path to that glorious hope; and verses 5–11 describe the necessary experiences along that path.

Verse 1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Having been justified by faith—this is the starting point for every believer. Justification by faith is not something we deserve, nor is it a reward for anything we have done. It is completely and entirely the free grace given to us by Christ through His sacrifice on the cross. Through Jesus’ blood and our faith, we are justified by God the Father. As we have discussed before, even the source of our faith is not from ourselves; it is Jesus’ faith, accompanied by the word of the gospel, that enables us to believe. Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This “peace with God” in this verse is entirely positional and is something God has unilaterally accomplished. The KJV translates it as “have peace with God,” which is different from “be reconciled to God” in verse 10. There, “be reconciled to God” is a matter of life and is mutual.

Paul deliberately uses two different Greek words to show that there is a process from verse 1 to verse 10—a process that moves from positional to experiential, from what God has unilaterally accomplished to what man must also participate in. Therefore, I personally feel that the Chinese translation “與神相和” in verse 1 is not very accurate, as it gives the impression of mutual reconciliation. In fact, it is God

who, through the redemption of Jesus Christ, unilaterally gives man peace, granting man a position to come before God.

We know from Genesis 3 that after Adam and Eve sinned and fell, there was no longer peace between God and man. God drove them out of the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 3:24, “So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.” From that time on, man could no longer come before God. The way was guarded by the flaming sword because God does not allow sinful and unclean people to defile His holiness, righteousness, and glory.

There was no peace between God and man. Man had no position to come before God. But in His love and mercy, God slowly revealed a way to approach Him in the Old Testament through the Israelites. By the time of Moses, God established the Day of Atonement, during which the high priest had to first burn incense and then bring the blood of the sacrifice into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle it on the mercy seat.

In Leviticus 16:11–14, “And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which is for himself. Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil. And he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die. He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.”

After the high priest completed these rituals, he could enter the Holy of Holies once a year to meet with God before the mercy seat. However, what the high priest did in the Old Testament was all a type.

When Jesus was crucified and gave up His spirit, the veil in the temple that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place was torn from top to bottom. Jesus, by His own blood, opened a new and living way, just as it says in Hebrews

10:19–20, “Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.”

Because Jesus Christ opened the way into the Holy of Holies with His blood, Hebrews 4:16 says, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Today, every saved and redeemed person can boldly come to the throne of grace to meet with God. What Adam and Eve lost in the Garden of Eden has now, through the legal redemption of Jesus Christ, been recovered for every saved believer. By faith, we may enter into the realm of grace—to meet with God at the mercy seat. This is a precious privilege.

What Adam lost, we can regain in Christ. That’s why Paul says in Romans 3:25, “Whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness...” The word “propitiation” here is more accurately translated as “mercy seat.” It emphasizes the realm of grace.

At creation, the whole Garden of Eden was the place where God met with man, but after the fall, man lost the right to meet with God. Now, through the redemption of Jesus Christ, a small area has been separated—the mercy seat—so that every saved saint may come into the realm of grace to meet with God, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In this realm of grace, peace has been restored between God and man. This realm of grace will expand—from the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place, to God’s house during the church age, and ultimately to the Millennial Kingdom at Christ’s return.

Today, we are still in the church age, just as Jesus said in the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32. Every saved believer has been like that prodigal son who ran away from home and squandered his wealth. It was only when he had nowhere to turn, and even longed for the pods that the pigs ate, that he remembered how many hired servants his father had, and that they had food in abundance. So he came to his senses and decided that it was better to return home and be a hired

servant than to perish outside. He knew he had wronged his father and no longer dared to claim the status of a son. Therefore, on his way back, he was rehearsing what he would say to his father: “I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.”

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him. Since the son left home, the father had been longing daily for his return and often stood at the door watching. When the father saw him, he ran to him, embraced the dirty, stinky prodigal son, and kissed him repeatedly. Then he ordered his servants to bring out the best robe for him, so that he could have status and sit at the table and eat. From this figure, we understand that Jesus Christ Himself is to become our garment of righteousness.

The Heavenly Father had already prepared the robe of righteousness at home, so that every returning prodigal son does not need to wash or clean himself; he only needs to put on the robe of righteousness to be reconciled with God the Father. God has unilaterally prepared this robe and accomplished peace, so that every repentant person may come home, wear the best robe, put on a ring—which is the seal of the Holy Spirit—and wear shoes of peace, able to sit at the table with the saints. Although the returning prodigal son has not changed much in essence, he already has a status of reconciliation with God.

Verse 2: “Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Justification by faith gives us peace with God. Through the redemption completed by Jesus Christ, and by faith, we gain access into the grace in which we now stand. Jesus opened the way to the Holy of Holies by His blood; this way is prepared, but we must enter by faith to come to the mercy seat. This is a realm and domain of grace; faith is the means of entry, the gateway into this realm, and the time is now. Not only do we enter now, but we must continue to stand in this realm of grace. It is Christ’s death that prepared this domain for us; our faith enables us to find the

entrance and enter into this realm of grace, but we must continually hold this position.

Dear brothers and sisters, how often do we face storms and panic because we stand in the wrong place? Christ is our refuge and our stronghold. If we can stand firmly in the realm of grace, the devil cannot attack us. Since this is grace, there is nothing we need to do except simply receive what Jesus Christ has accomplished for us. However, it is very difficult for people to remain in the realm of grace; we always want to do something, as if only by exerting effort can we feel at peace with ourselves.

Therefore, people often end up hindering themselves. In fallen thinking, people believe they must accumulate merit to hold their heads high and speak and act with confidence. But little do they know that coming to the mercy seat is entirely by Jesus Christ's grace, because we simply cannot afford the price ourselves. This realm of grace is life because Jesus paid the price of life to redeem us. Since it belongs to life, we know that growth in life is slow and organic, following the laws of life. Matters of life are mysterious; we can experience them but cannot always explain or reason them out. Even when we face environmental failures, we can resurrect from the dead—seemingly weak but full of resilience.

Dear brothers and sisters, I hope we all learn to cherish this precious status. Whenever we pause to rest, we must examine whether we are standing in the realm of grace. Every person who is saved has already been transferred from Satan's kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's beloved Son, but we often slip back into the world to enjoy sinful pleasures. Therefore, we must often examine ourselves whether we stand in the realm of grace.

If we want to move forward, we must walk on the path of peace; peace must arbitrate in our hearts. When we are newly saved, our spiritual senses are dull, and we do not know what peace feels like—but the feeling of unrest is much stronger. If the path we walk or the deeds we do violate God's moral law, our conscience will feel unrest. At that time, we must stop immediately. We must learn to respect the feeling of peace in our conscience and cultivate its sensitivity. Later, on matters

unrelated to morality, we will be able to develop spiritual intuition to know whether the path we are on aligns with God's will, and to rejoice in hope of God's glory.

In the original text, "rejoice" is a verb; the KJV translates it as "rejoice in hope". But what are we hoping for? We hope for the glory of God. Here, we must ask: How does our hope relate to God's glory? I believe many saints, when they first learn theology, are taught that everything we do should be for God's glory—that is, to attribute the final outcome to God's glory. Because of this teaching, we often see that when Christians accomplish a great task—perhaps an athlete breaks a world record, or a scientist makes a great invention, or a politician wins an election—they give glory to God. This is certainly not wrong, but such understanding somewhat diminishes the concept of God's glory.

We must understand that the entire universe was created by God. How can our discoveries increase God's glory? Moreover, if we look at ourselves, failure often outweighs victory. Does God lose glory when we fail? Actually, true glory is God's manifestation; and our hope is that God's glory may be manifested through us.

Today, although we are still imperfect, we all have a glorious hope—that our spiritual life may grow daily, and the virtues of Christ may be gradually formed in us. When Christ returns, at the judgment seat of Christ, all things in us that do not belong to God will be burned away. What remains will be the composition of Christ in us, and then we will truly manifest the glory of God. This is our common hope.

Let us pray together: Dear Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for paying the great price on the cross and creating a realm of grace for us. By faith, we can stand in this realm of grace and rejoice in hope that Your glory may be manifested in us. Bless my church and church life. May every saint cherish this status of grace and be willing in daily life to nourish spiritual growth through healthy spiritual feeding, bringing forth life growth and a living testimony. May church life be filled with God's glory. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus Christ.