

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

**Romans 5: 17-19**

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. Let's continue to read Romans Chapter 5. We will read verses 17-19 today.

In yesterday's scripture, through Paul's use of different Greek words to describe gifts, we see that sanctification is a process of life's growth and the perfection of gifts. Grace is the source of gifts, so every saint who has received grace and salvation must frequently come before the throne of grace to receive God's grace. In grace, we receive the life imparting gift, *dorea*, and this gift of life enables life's growth. The growth of a saint's life is not aimless or without purpose but has a specific direction and goal.

Usually, we come before the throne of grace only when we encounter difficulties or when we are weak and fail, seeking God's forgiveness, grace, and mercy. At the throne of grace, we receive the gift of life, which helps us overcome our difficulties. According to common human experience, it is difficult to overcome challenges in a single instance; rather, we seek grace multiple times, receiving the life imparting gift repeatedly.

Just as sinful nature must pass through judgment to be condemned, similarly, the gift of life must accumulate to a certain degree to become a matured gift. This matured gift can overcome the sinful nature inherited from Adam, thus freeing us from that particular difficulty. From this transgression, we grow into an operating gift, gaining the ability to serve and help others overcome similar difficulties. The operating gift is connected to our service in the church.

In serving, the help we can offer others does not necessarily require us to have the same experiences, but it is inseparable from the life imparting gift and the matured gift. How we, through God's grace, achieve life's growth and overcome our difficulties is the best testimony; it can also encourage saints to bring their various

difficulties before the throne of grace, seeking God's grace and mercy as their timely help.

**Verse 17: "For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ."**

Because of one man Adam's offense, sin entered the world, and death followed; death reigned over the world. No human could escape the power of death; death became king over all through one man, Adam. The domain of death's reign is this world. This was God's original creation, later usurped by Satan to become the old creation, and human bodies belong to this old creation, thus falling under the power of death. Sin, through the lusts of the flesh, also rules over the human soul, causing the soul to fall under the power of death.

Jesus Christ is the last Adam. When humanity fell under the power of sin and death, unable to save itself, the last Adam accomplished redemption, opening a way of grace, and He became the head of the new creation. This enables people, through the way of grace, to become a new creation race. "Those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness" is translated awkwardly and inaccurately in the Chinese Union Version. The KJV renders it: "those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness." A direct translation would be those who receive overflowing grace and the gift of overflowing righteousness.

The word "gift" is significant, omitted in the Chinese Union Version, and its Greek term is *dorea*. Here, Paul seems to define the new creation: first, receiving Christ's overflowing grace. When we enter the realm of Christ's grace, we receive abundant, overflowing grace that not only fills us but overflows. Christ's grace inevitably brings the gift of life, *dorea*. The gift of life operates within the realm of grace, and the standard of its operation is righteousness; overflowing grace naturally brings the standard of overflowing righteousness. The gift of life supplies life, and this life produces a righteous disposition.

Dear brothers and sisters, grace and righteousness are inseparable. If we accept Christ's abundant grace, a righteous disposition must manifest in us. If we only enjoy grace but lack the constitution of righteousness in us, we must reexamine whether the grace we enjoy is Christ's grace.

The devil is very cunning, often offering counterfeit things. He may disguise himself as an angel of light, giving us worldly success and pleasures to indulge in, yet without the constitution of righteousness in us. If so, this grace is not from Christ. Christ's grace inevitably brings the gift of life, which leads to life's growth, and life's growth inevitably manifests a righteous disposition. The ultimate result is that we will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. The word "life" here in Greek is *zoe*, referring to spiritual life.

Paul confidently tells us that if, because of one man Adam's offense, death reigned through that one, how much more will we, through the gift of Jesus Christ, reign in life? As we mentioned earlier, death reigns in the old creation, but now we reign in the realm of life, which is the new creation. In the new creation, life swallows up death, and the gift of life overcomes transgression. In the old creation, death reigns; in the new creation, life reigns.

The intersection of the old and new creation is our soul. Sin seeks to rule our soul through the lusts of the flesh. On the other hand, the gift of life supplies overflowing righteousness to our soul, enabling our soul to manifest a righteous disposition. This is an unending battle, and the battlefield is our soul. To reign in life means that the gift of life supplies our soul, producing a matured gift in our soul. This matured gift can overcome our inherent sin nature, and thus we reign in life. The process of reigning in life is the process of our sanctification.

**Verse 18: "Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life."**

Because of one man Adam's offense, all were condemned. Because of Adam's single act of crossing the boundary in Eden, sin entered, and the sin nature was passed to Adam's descendants, so all had the sin nature; driven by the sin nature, they sinned, and thus all were condemned. Likewise, because of one righteous act of Jesus Christ—His shedding of blood on the cross to accomplish redemption—all were justified and received life.

If we follow the Chinese Union Version's translation, this understanding is not incorrect. Contrasting Adam's single offense with Christ's single righteous act, and contrasting all being condemned with all being justified, emphasizes that all who were condemned can be justified through Jesus Christ's one righteous act. This interpretation, focusing on a change in status, is theologically correct but misses Paul's emphasis in this passage on the organic salvation. That is, how we transition from a state of condemnation to a state of justification.

We must return to the Greek to discern Paul's thought and the truth he conveys. Because of one righteous act, the Greek word for righteous act is *dikaionoma*, which we have seen before, meaning justification, and ending in *ma*, emphasizing the result of justification. If translated directly according to the Greek, it would be: because of one result of Jesus Christ's justification. This translation helps us understand that this result of justification is not only what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross but encompasses His entire ministry, including His incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to sit at the right hand of the throne.

Because Jesus Christ completed this ministry, He was ultimately justified by God; Jesus Christ has accomplished it. Thus, *dikaionoma* emphasizes the result of justification. "All were justified and received life" in the KJV is: "unto justification of life," directly translated as "all attain to the justification of life." Thus, the original meaning is not "justified and received life" but "attain to the justification of life."

What is the justification of life? Let's look at the Greek word for justification here, *dikaiosis*, emphasizing the act of justification. Thus, Paul emphasizes here that in the process of sanctification, we are also justified in life.

Because Jesus Christ's ministry has been completed and He has been justified by God, the result of Christ's justification opened a realm of grace, the throne of grace. We all come to this realm of grace and receive the gift of life, which supplies life; here, life is zoe, spiritual life. This enables us to be justified by God in what we do; that is, we can grow into a matured gift, dorema. From dorea to dorema, this is the process of justification in life.

In 5:16, Paul says the gift results in justification from many offenses. The gift here is charisma, and justification is dikaion. That is, when we grow the operative gift charisma in us, we not only overcome the sin nature but can serve others with our experiences, thus manifesting the result of justification in us.

Here, we clearly see a progression: from the result of Jesus Christ's justification, a realm of grace is produced. In this realm of grace, we first have the act of justification, growing from dorea to dorema, and from dorema to charisma. When we have charisma, we also have the result of justification. Paul clearly reveals this process, which is our sanctification.

**Verse 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."**

By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. Let us look at the Greek words Paul uses. In 5:14, Adam committed a transgression, referring to his single act of sin, using parabasis, emphasizing that one act of crossing the boundary, which produced the offense, paraptoma, the result of crossing the boundary. Here in this verse, Paul uses "disobedience," and the Greek word is parakoe. Because of disobedience, Adam was constituted a sinner. Thus, parakoe, disobedience, emphasizes Adam's constitution. After Adam was constituted a sinner, the sin nature became the essence of this sinner, and sinners produce sinners, so Adam's descendants all became sinners.

Here we see Paul's logical precision and consistency. From a single act of sin, to the result of sin, to the constitution of sin; when a person becomes disobedient, they

are constituted a sinner. Similarly, in Romans 1:24-28, Paul speaks of God's threefold giving over, from evident sinful acts to, ultimately, a reprobate mind.

When a person has a reprobate mind, as mentioned here with disobedience, it becomes their constitution. When a person is constituted a sinner, this is far more serious than committing one or two sins. After all were constituted sinners, Paul says, likewise, by one Man's obedience—Jesus Christ's lifelong obedience to the Father—Christ's obedience contrasts with Adam's disobedience. Adam's disobedience constituted all as sinners; likewise, Jesus's obedience will constitute all as righteous.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must see that in the process of organic salvation, Paul emphasizes our constitution, not merely doing good deeds or having righteous actions, but our very constitution. Thus, in the entire process of sanctification, this is entirely a matter of life. We need to first receive grace, and in grace, receive the gift of life, dorea; from the gift of life, we grow a matured gift, dorema, which helps us overcome some inherent sin nature. With dorema, we can produce operative charisma. If we live our whole lives in the church, serving the church and others through operative gifts, ultimately, we can have a constitution in us, being constituted as righteous.

Paul speaks of the sanctification process as an organic salvation, entirely a matter of life. In grace, by continually receiving Jesus Christ's grace, our gifts can gradually be built up, from dorea to dorema to charisma, and ultimately, in God's grace, perhaps to doma. This is the lifelong hope of every saved saint.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! In Adam's inheritance, we were constituted sinners; yet through Jesus Christ's obedience, You created a realm of grace for us, enabling us to produce a righteous constitution through experiencing grace. Help us continue walking in the way of grace, letting life grow continually, so we may ultimately be constituted righteous. Help us see that justification is not only positional but also of life, and in the process of life, may we be subjectively justified by God. Help us not only see this truth but live it out in our daily lives. Bless my daily life. I pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.