

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

Luke 22: 24-38

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 are going to read Luke Chapter 22 and today we will read verses 24 to 38.

Verse 24: "Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest."

It is very striking that immediately after the Lord established the Lord's Supper, He also clearly revealed that He was about to suffer. Yet right after these things, a dispute arose among the disciples. What were they arguing about? They were arguing over which one of them should be considered the greatest.

As we read this today, it may seem somewhat laughable. But if you think about the church life you yourself have experienced, every person in the church has been saved by grace and redeemed personally by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. Yet is it not true that churches are often filled with disputes as well? And the reason for many of these disputes is usually that people want to be great. They want things done according to their own ideas; they want others to listen to them. This is also something that is commonly found among Christian communities.

Verse 25: "And He said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors'."

Jesus immediately made a strong contrast between what exists in the world and what exists in the kingdom of God. In the world, kings rule and exercise authority. Of course, sometimes people are fortunate enough to have a good king, while at

other times they encounter a cruel one. These rulers lord it over the people, and even expect others to call them benefactors.

Authority in the world comes from position. If you are a king, then you have the right to rule. It is much the same in today's democratic politics: once you are elected and obtain the position, you have the authority to govern. Therefore, in order to gain that position, people may use every possible means. And after securing the position, they often use their power to dominate others and seek their own advantage.

Verse 26: "But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves."

In the kingdom of God—and even in the church today—all authority should not come from position. It is not because someone holds the office of elder that he therefore has the right to rule over the saints in the church. On the contrary, Jesus said that the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who leads should be like the one who serves. In the kingdom of God, and in the church, the proper relationship of authority is based entirely on life, not on rank or title. An elder is meant to be the servant of all.

Verse 27: "For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves."

According to our natural way of thinking, the one sitting at the table enjoying himself seems greater, while the one serving at the side seems lesser. But Jesus used Himself as the example. He is the Son of God, yet when He came to earth, He became One who served others. Many times He served to such an extent that He had no time to eat or sleep, but spent His days busily meeting the needs of others.

Jesus set Himself forth as the example to show us this: if you want to be great in the church today, then you must become one who serves others. Through your

service, you supply your life to others so that those who are in need may be satisfied. Therefore, authority is entirely a matter of life. The richer a person's life is, the more willing he is to serve others; the richer a person's life is, the more willing he is to become the servant of all.

Verse 28: "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials."

Throughout the course of Jesus' earthly ministry, because He continually served others, He also continually endured all kinds of trials and testing. His disciples were always with Him and witnessed the way He lived. Therefore, Jesus wanted them to reflect on all the things they had experienced during the time they had followed Him. The ultimate expression of Jesus' service was that He completely laid down His own life.

Verse 29-30: "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

In this present age, when we are willing to serve others and willing to accept various kinds of testing, our lives become enriched and mature through those experiences of trial and service. Then one day, when Jesus returns and brings in the millennial kingdom, the Father will give the kingdom to Christ, and Christ will also give the kingdom to those who have followed Him—those who were willing to endure testing in this age, willing to suffer, and willing to serve others.

One day, in the kingdom of Christ, we will eat and drink with Him at His table, enjoying fellowship with Him, and we will also sit on thrones. At that time, the throne will be a throne of life, and the authority exercised will be authority that comes from life. The apostles will also have authority to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Because the apostles themselves were Israelites, when Christ returns to

receive His kingdom, the remnant of Israel will repent and turn to the Lord. The twelve apostles will then judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

As for the overcoming saints of the New Testament, Book of Revelation 20:4 says, "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them." When Jesus returns to receive His kingdom, the overcoming believers of the New Testament will sit on thrones with Christ and will be given authority to judge the nations. This authority is given to the overcomers because their lives have become mature, rich, and seasoned, enabling them to reign in life. After Jesus had spoken about the difference between the kingdom of God and the world, He continued on to speak further.

Verse 31: "And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.'"

Jesus then went on to tell His disciples that they needed to know Satan and also to know themselves. Satan is the accuser and the adversary; he is always looking for opportunities to gain possession of the disciples. How does he do this? By sifting them like wheat.

Jesus especially singled out Peter by name because among the twelve disciples, he was often the leading one. The one who takes the lead is also the one most fiercely attacked by Satan. Therefore, Jesus wanted Simon to realize that Satan was about to sift him like wheat.

Verse 32: "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

Here Jesus prophesied to Peter about the things that were about to happen. Although Satan was going to attack him and sift him like wheat, Jesus told him not to be afraid, because He had already prayed for him. Prayed for what? That his faith would not fail. Jesus was essentially saying: "You will fall, but after your fall, I have

prayed for you so that you will not lose your faith. And when you rise again and turn back, you must strengthen your brothers.” The failures and weaknesses Peter would experience would eventually become the very basis of his ministry.

Failures in the world often completely crush a person. But spiritual failures are different, because Christ has already interceded for us. These experiences of failure can be turned into part of our salvation experience. When our faith does not fail and we rise again, those very experiences of failure become the foundation for serving others and strengthening our brothers and sisters. Although Jesus spoke so clearly to Peter, Peter still did not truly know himself, nor did he understand Satan’s work against him.

Verse 33: “But he said to Him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.’”

Peter was completely sincere when he said these words. However, he did not realize that within what he thought was sincerity and faith, there was still an element of the flesh. As long as the flesh is in control, Satan has a way to work within us and gain ground in us. Therefore, Jesus spoke to him even more clearly and directly.

Verse 34: “Then He said, ‘I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.’”

Jesus told Peter very plainly and clearly, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” By speaking these words to Peter beforehand, Jesus was laying a foundation in advance. When Peter truly failed and became weak, he would be able to remember what Jesus had spoken to him.

So after the Lord’s Supper, Christ first taught His disciples to understand the relationships within the kingdom of God: the one who serves others is the truly great one. He also taught them to know Satan and to know themselves. Then He

went on to tell them that the mission they were about to face would be very different from before.

Verse 35: “And He said to them, ‘When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?’ So they said, ‘Nothing.’”

Previously, Jesus had sent them out two by two, instructing them not to take a money bag or a pouch, and to go directly to the lost sheep of Israel. If a household received them, peace would rest upon that house; if they did not receive them, they were to shake off the dust from their feet. Therefore, in their earlier experience, when they went out, they did not need to carry a money bag or a pouch, and they lacked nothing. So when Jesus asked them these things, they answered, “Nothing.”

Verse 36: “Then He said to them, ‘But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.’”

Because in the past they were sent out as those under commission—to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, God’s chosen people. But after Jesus was raised from the dead, their calling would expand, and they would be sent to the Gentiles. Therefore, they were to carry a money bag and a pouch, and the one who had no sword was to sell his garment and buy one. They would need to learn to provide for themselves and to protect themselves.

Because when it comes to the Gentiles, the principle of preaching the gospel is: receive nothing from the Gentiles. When we go to different churches to minister, according to the principle of living by the gospel, we may receive hospitality from the church, because they are family in the Lord. But when we are sent to the Gentiles, we should take nothing from them; we should prepare everything ourselves, bring our own money bag, bring our own pouch, and be able to take care of and protect ourselves.

Verse 37: “For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.’ For the things concerning Me have an end.”

Jesus had spoken so much, yet they likely did not fully understand.

Verse 38: “So they said, ‘Lord, look, here are two swords.’ And He said to them, ‘It is enough.’”

Jesus was speaking about spiritual matters—about how their mission would soon change. But what they heard was something very physical and literal. In fact, they even had two swords among them. When Jesus said, “It is enough,” He was not saying that two swords were sufficient, but rather that their response was enough—He was ending the discussion.

After the Lord’s Supper, Jesus made full use of the remaining time to continue teaching His disciples and to tell them in advance what would happen. The Gospel of Luke records only part of what He said; it was the apostle John, nearly thirty years later, who filled in much more in his writing of the Gospel of John. In John chapters 14, 15, 16, and 17, we can see many of these teachings and earnest instructions. Jesus clearly knew the situation His disciples would face after He departed, so He used every opportunity to speak many words to them. These words are still our greatest help today.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. Help us understand that in Your house and in Your kingdom, authority comes entirely from life. May we be willing to have our lives enriched through serving others. In the process of serving, help us to know ourselves and also to recognize the work of Satan in opposing us. Help us also to understand our calling and the preparation we need. Teach us to experience Your sustaining grace in all things, the supply of Your word, and Your intercession for us. Even our failures, You can turn into part of our salvation. Bless our life today. In Jesus Christ’s name we pray. Amen!