

1 Peter 3:18-22
A Word To the Weary
J.D. Farag

On Sunday mornings, we're going through 1 Peter, verse-by-verse, and Lord willing, today we will complete Chapter 3. Our text will be verses 18-22, and I'll ask, if you're able, those of you that are here, to stand, if not, where you're seated, is fine. You can follow along as I read.

The Apostle Paul... Paul.

[Laughter]

I spent some time in the epistles. Let's try that again, just a second here.

[Laughter]

The Apostle Peter... (Chuckling) Rough week.

Verse 18, "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous, for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it, only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes [An anti-type] baptism that now saves you also – not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand – with angels, authorities, and powers in submission to Him."

That's self-explanatory, right?

So we could just...

[Laughter]

Let's pray. Wow! Lord, Your Word is just, is alive, powerful, active, like a two-edged sword. And Lord, we need that surgical sword in our lives. So Lord, thank You for Your Word in this portion that we have before us today here in Your Word. Lord, we need for the Holy Spirit now to quiet our minds, settle our hearts, focus our attention, because this is here for a reason. And we don't want to miss anything that You have for us today in this Your Word.

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So Lord, we're looking to You to speak as only You can and are always so faithful to in that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit. So Lord speak, your servants are listening. We pray in Jesus' name, amen and amen.

Thank you. You can be seated.

So I want to talk with you today about being weary, specifically, why and how coming to Jesus in and with our weariness is the only answer for our weariness. Now, it's important to understand, and I think I probably mention this every week. I hope you don't tire of me doing so.

But Peter is writing this letter by the Holy Spirit to believers who are really suffering, severe suffering, and they are so battle weary, they're attacked from every side, persecuted in horrific and unthinkable ways. And so God inspires Peter to write this letter, to encourage them. And in so doing, he rightfully gets the weary Christian to Jesus as soon as possible. That's a good thing. Get to Jesus.

Why?

Because Jesus is the only one who can satiate our weariness. Last Thursday, in our verse-by-verse study through Jeremiah - man, I'm loving Jeremiah. God has the Prophet Jeremiah give God's people this hope and this encouragement. They've got the Babylonians right out there in their backyard. They know they're going to be taken into captivity. It could be argued that this is the darkest hour, the 11th hour.

And God just has Jeremiah write down this prophecy. And it's a prophecy to encourage them, to give them hope. In *Chapter 29:11*, it's that life verse for many. We're all familiar with that. We love it and we quote it, and we memorize it about how God knows the thoughts He has towards us and they're thoughts to prosper us, not to harm us, but to give us a future and a hope. And he wanted to give them this hope yet future. And so he's going to use this tribulation, this captivity, to bring about the restoration and even salvation.

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But it's when we got to *verse 25 of Jeremiah 31*, where God has Jeremiah write this to encourage them. He says, **"For I have satiated the weary soul, [And it gets better] and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."**

Oh, I need to hear that. I'm going to hang on to that because I'm hanging on for dear life right now. And I need to know this, that God, in my weariness, is going to satiate my weary soul. He's going to replenish my sorrowful soul. If this sounds like the words of Jesus, that's because it is. I'm not trying to be snarky here. But you know this well, right?

Recorded in the *Gospel of Matthew Chapter 11*, beginning in *verse 28*, Jesus is speaking, and He says, **"Come to Me all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. [And then He says it again] For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."**

You know, we miss this in our culture, in our day. They would yoke the animals together for the work to plow. And if you had an unequal yoke, you would place this burden on the weaker of the two, and you would kill them. And what Jesus is saying here is: My yoke is easy. I'll do all the work. You can just rest in Me.

Are you heavy laden? Come to Me. Are you weary? Come to Me. I'll satiate your weary soul. I'll give you rest. My burden is light. My yoke is easy.

I always know it's the Lord when there's not a heavy trip being laid on me because His yoke is easy. I always know it's the Lord because John tells us that **"The commands of the Lord are not burdensome."** If it's burdensome and it's this heavy trip and someone lays something on me, and it's just crushing me, that's not the Lord.

How do I know?

Because His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. One more thing before we go any further. Three words, and one would think that this would be a firm grasp of the obvious. Sadly, it's not. Come to Me. The emphasis, I believe, on "Me."

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I mean, you're weary? Come to Me. No, you're going to them. You're going to that bottle, alcohol, or pills to try to numb it. No, come to Me. Come to Me. Now, that might provide temporary relief. In fact, it says so on the bottle.

By the way, have you noticed this? That temporary relief. Really?

I want permanent relief. This is only temporary, and then it wears off. And then actually, here's the thing, and this is the fine print. It's actually worse when it wears off.

And is that not what we do? We run to and fro, going everywhere and to everyone but the One who can satiate that need that we have. We're empty. We try to fill it up, and we find out that when it wears off, we're actually emptier than we were prior to when we went to whatever it was to be filled. We can be amused, entertained.

But when it's all said and done, we're just left. And here's Jesus: Open arms, at the ready. Would you just come to Me? I have everything you need right here. **“And you have not because you ask not.”** Just Come to Me. Come to Me.

Well, I wanted to start out this way for a reason. And the reason is, is that – and I want you to think this through with me because, you know, oftentimes we kind of miss this when it comes to a guy like Peter.

You got to know that Peter, who for the better part of three-plus years was close to Jesus, walked with Jesus. I wonder how many times Peter, in his weariness, went to Jesus. I would suggest it was on many occasions. So he knew firsthand.

And I think it's for this reason that Peter, again, inspired by the Holy Spirit, would pen these words because he knew firsthand, Hey, you're weary, you're discouraged, you're downcast, you're depressed, and that depression is giving way to despair. I need to get you to Jesus as fast as I can. That's what I did.

Man, we had some days – it was pretty rough out there on the front lines of ministry. I mean, yeah, there were the miracles. But whew; we worked hard! I mean, there were some scary times, too. I'll never forget that time, Peter would say, when we had like 20,000 people that were hungry and we didn't have any food. And what are we going to do?

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And Jesus said, Hey, there's a boy over here with a sack lunch that his mom made for him. Why don't you ask him if he would, you know, be willing to share it?

You're like, Really?

And then we did. And then, Wow! And look what God did.

So please know that it's almost like the Apostle Peter has earned the right to say what he's going to say in the text that's before us today. And he's going to provide us with these reasons as to why it is and even how it is that coming to Jesus with our weariness is the only way we'll ever be satiated in our weariness.

And the first reason is found in *Verse 18*, and it's that Jesus works it for good. Now, I know you know this. And we'll talk about this. But I find it very interesting that Peter would write about the crucifixion of Jesus, the suffering of Jesus, and he would say that in Christ's suffering on the cross, look at the good that was brought as a result, namely eternal life.

What's your point, Peter? Where are you going with this, Peter?

Well, here's where I'm going with this. By the way, if it sounds like I'm trying to speak for Peter, maybe it is. (Chuckling) Peter would say, as horrific as the crucifixion and burial of Jesus was. And by the way, he was there. He saw it firsthand.

In fact, he was also there at the empty tomb, except John beat him there. And we know that because John told us that he beat Peter. Anyway, there must have been something between those two guys, very interesting personalities.

So Peter would say, as horrific as that was and the suffering, the suffering Savior, the suffering that Jesus went through, look what it did. It accomplished the paying in full for all of our sins in what's arguably the ultimate in suffering. And I think every single one of us would be hard pressed to find one that would be equal to the suffering of the Savior.

You know, it's believed in fact, historians attest to this, that by the time Jesus was crucified, He was unrecognizable. He was beaten and bludgeoned so badly. The suffering.

So Peter's saying, hey, I know you're suffering. I know you're weary. I know you're struggling. I know you're discouraged. But if the ultimate in suffering on the part of the Savior wrought for us eternal life, is there anything the Lord can't do?

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By the way, spoiler alert this Thursday, *Jeremiah Chapter 32*: Is there anything too hard for the Lord?

That's a rhetorical question, by the way, because we already know the answer. It's so interesting. Just indulge me for a moment. I can't wait for Thursday. I love Jeremiah; I'm telling you, I love Jeremiah, man. I'm getting so ministered to. You guys don't even have to come. I'm getting so ministered to in Jeremiah.

Is that bad? That was kind of mean, wasn't it? You can come. That's fine.

So Jeremiah's praying, and he in his prayer says, Lord, there's nothing too hard for You. And then God answers Jeremiah's prayer, and He switches it around in response to Jeremiah's prayer. And He says to Jeremiah, "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" Oh, I see what You're doing. That was good.

Answer: No.

That's an easy - I mean, I never did good with tests. But if that question is on the test, I got that one right. No. I don't even need multiple choice. You know, you always want a multiple choice because at least you had a chance. No, this is no multiple choice. You need to write it out. I'm going to just go: No! No, No, No, No! Exclamation mark, exclamation mark, exclamation mark, ad infinitum. That's my answer. And it's the right answer.

Okay, Pastor, why are you taking it this far?

Because of *Romans 8*. Can I start in *verse 17*? **"Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed [Listen] we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory."**

And then he says this, *Verse 18*. **"I consider [Some of your translations render it "I reckon" - that's the Texas version]**

[Laughter]

[I've reconciled it, I've considered it, I've concluded the matter]

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

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Wow! Well, that settles me down a little bit, maybe a lot. Yeah, I am suffering, but (pshh) it's not even (pshh). Don't put it on the same level. It doesn't even come close.

So you live 70, 80 years, whatever. And most of your life is marked by suffering, pain and suffering, trials and difficulties. And you want to compare a life of suffering and misery with eternal life of glory where there's no more sorrow, no more pain, no more night, I'll take that one, no more death?

We're going to talk about that in a moment. No more cockroaches; that alone right there... I'm going to keep saying that because I'm convinced, I reckon that there are not cockroaches in heaven. Can I go to *verse 28 of Romans 8*?

Come on, you know this verse. We're good at quoting this verse. We do it with gusto, comes from our toes all the way...

“For we know [Right?] that in all things [All things] God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”

And then we stop right there. I think we do error greatly when we stop at *verse 28*. Let's keep going. **“For those [Verse 29] God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.”**

By the way, that's the purpose. That's why you're suffering. Because God's purpose is to make you more like Jesus. To conform you to the likeness of His Son. And if I'm not mistaken, and if you're anything like me, you probably did the same thing. You actually prayed: God make me more like Jesus.

To which the angels in heaven, given charge concerning us, were like: Are you sure you want to pray that? You know not what you ask. Wait, did you just – did you just say you want to be more like Jesus? Oh, man. Okay, game on. Game on.

Verse 30. “And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified. What then, [Verse 31] shall we say in response to this?

[That which we just read] [That's why we need to keep going]

If God is for us, who can be against us?”

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Oh, we love that. We quote that one too, right? I think we've got it in our bathroom at home.

[Laughter]

No, we do, actually; we actually do because we're very spiritual people, you know. But I want to draw your attention to *verse 32*, because this is the whole point. I want you to listen very carefully. **“He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all – how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?”**

Did you catch that? Did you hear what? You know what this means?

Okay, stay with me. In other words, yeah, you're really going through a difficult time right now. And you know the promises. You've heard them all, and you've already had your dear, precious brothers and sisters in Christ who know you're struggling, you're going through a trial, you're suffering, and they're coming up to you and quoting *Romans 8:28*. Like you don't know the verse.

I know the verse. Easy for you to say. Everything is going smashingly well for you. And you come to me and quote *Romans 8:28*?

Anyway, that's enough – boy, that was – I better go to the Lord with that one. But *verse 32*. Yeah, I'm going through it. I'm suffering, I'm discouraged, I'm weary. I'm cast down. I'm downcast. But wait a minute. If God did not withhold His only begotten Son, but willingly gave Him to die for you, [Think about it] is there anything that He wouldn't do?

What was your problem again?

I mean, wait a minute; let me see if I got this straight. Forgive me if I'm sounding snarky here. It's a sanctified snarky. But in what world does this make any sense at all?

I mean, God gave us His only begotten Son because He so loved us that Jesus would die for us. He would not withhold His only begotten Son. And if God is willing to do that and subject His only begotten Son to unmatched suffering unknown to any man, what will He not do for you?

I mean, we're trusting God for our eternal life, but we can't trust God for this month's rent. Does that make sense?

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Look, if you've got a better one, let me know. Again, I always open up that open invitation. But that's what Paul's saying here. Because of the suffering of Christ, the fellowship of His sufferings.

And if God could bring out eternal good from that suffering, and God would not withhold His Son from that suffering but would willingly give you Jesus to suffer for you. Man, I got it made in the shade. There's nothing the Lord won't do for me. What, He's going to withhold something from me when He would not withhold His only begotten Son?

And not only that, but if God could work that out for good, my little itchy-bitsy problem that I'm, you know, suffering and struggling and, you know, it's kind of like, I mean, I raised My son from the dead after the crucifixion. I can take care of that. That's easy. I could do it blindfolded if you want, with My hands tied. I can just speak the word, and it'll happen. I can do it because is there anything too hard for the Lord?

Well, here's the second one and this I have to preface, because if there's anything that will crush us and make us weary, it has got to be the bondage to sin. And this is why Peter, in *verse 19* and the first part of *verse 20*, says what he says. And it's very interesting because he's drawing upon the account of when Jesus descended to Hades. Now we have a question here, and the question is: What did He do in Hades?

And the answer is that He first preached and proclaimed victory over demons and death. And secondly, He set the captives in paradise free.

Now this is kind of gnarly. The Apostle Paul helps us out. I told you Paul was going to be involved in today's sermon. He's writing to the Ephesians, and he sheds light on this.

Chapter 4 beginning in *verse 7*. **“But to each one of us, grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” (Now this, [Verse 9, parenthetically] “He ascended” — what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.”)**

Okay, here's another question: Where is this place? Who was in this place? Why did Jesus go to this place and descend to this place?

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Well, God's word answers this for us of course. In the *Gospel of Luke*, the *16th Chapter*, beginning in *verses 19-31*, we're told about a certain rich man and a certain beggar named Lazarus, both of whom were in this place that Jesus descended to. A place called Hades in the Greek, Sheol in the Hebrew.

However, there was a division, a chasm with one side being paradise, which, by the way, is why Jesus, to the criminal on the cross who says, **“Remember me when You enter Your kingdom.”** Jesus responds with, **“Truly, truly, I say unto you that today you'll be with Me in paradise.”**

That's this part of Hades. He's referring to that. The other side of Hades - you've got the paradise side, big chasm, and then you've got the torment side in Hades.

So in this account, the rich man who's in the torment side, cries out to Abraham, who's in the paradise side, and he's begging him to send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue from the tormenting flame.

Abraham responds to him, saying that there was this great gulf fixed between the two sides so that those who want to pass to the other side cannot. Then he begs Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers to testify that this place of torment was real, so that they would repent.

But Abraham curiously tells him no and then explains why. He says, **“If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.”** Wow!

So this is the place that Jesus descended to, Hades. And while there, He preached to these spirits, these demons: You're done. It's finished. I have defeated you. I have defeated death. And then He says to the paradise side, Let's go. And He takes them with Him, and they're set free out of the paradise side of Hades.

And in *Revelation Chapter 1:17-18*, the Apostle John fills in a couple of blanks. I love this, and I want to include this because we're told that when he sees Jesus, what is his response? This is John we're talking about. You know, the same guy that beat Peter to the empty tomb. This is the same John that always was careful to record in the gospel that he was inspired to write that he was the disciple that Jesus loved. Just ask him.

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He loved all the disciples. But in all fairness, the Apostle John is known as the apostle of love, loving man. Well, what's his response when he sees Jesus? He falls at His feet as dead. And what's Jesus's response?

He lays His right hand on him and says, **“Do not be afraid.”** Oh, that's the gentle Savior. He says, **“I am the First and the Last (the Alpha and Omega) I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.”**

Oh, You got keys?

Yeah.

You know, something happens when somebody has keys, you know, cause you come up to a door and it's locked, and move aside, pull out your keys. Whoa, dude, you got keys?

Yeah, I've got the keys.

Oh, how do I get me some of them?

No, you got to be important like me to have the keys. You have to have authority.

Well, Jesus has the authority. He has the keys to Hades and to death. So the bondage to sin that's crushing you. You're set free. But now we have to deal with the guilt of sin. I would venture to say that in some ways the guilt of sin can be more crushing than the bondage of sin. And here's how I get there, by the way. *Romans 6*, I want to say, when Paul says, **“That therefore, now sin will no longer have dominion over me.”** What's he saying?

He's going to be sinless now because sin no longer has dominion over him?

No.

Is he saying that he's no longer tempted and that temptations a sin?

No, that can't be because Jesus was tempted, but He was sinless. So it can't be that temptation is sin. It can't be bondage to sin. What is he saying about sin that doesn't have dominion over him?

The guilt of sin, that infrastructure of guilt that the enemy builds in our lives to keep us condemned. And I'll tell you, the best of us aren't going to stand up very well under that. So that's – and Peter knows this, and Peter should. If anybody knew about the guilt of sin, it

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would be Peter when he denied the Lord. Can you imagine the remorse and the guilt and the condemnation? It must have crushed him until Jesus restored him.

Well, again, we've got kind of a gnarly couple of verses here, the second part of *verse 20* and *verse 21* because it's like Peter goes from, you know, the crucifixion, the suffering of Christ, and then he goes to the descension of Christ into Hades to preach the victory over demons and death and set the captives free on the paradise side. And now we're back at the flood with Noah. I've got whiplash. I don't know about you. Whoa, whoa!

Okay, Peter, what's up with this?

Well, this is good. I mean it at first read, it's, like, difficult to understand, but then upon closer examination, you realize it's as simple as it is encouraging. Just as Noah and his family were removed by the water in the flood, a type of baptism, so too, is this true for us. That's why, and please don't miss this, *verse 21*.

Notice what Peter says. He says, Jesus removes our guilty conscience towards God. He's not making us sinless. He's not making us exempt from temptation. No. He's removing the guilt that's crushing us. No wonder you're weary and heavy laden. You're weary and heavy laden under the guilt that Jesus has removed.

Why are you still carrying it? He took care of it. Why are you letting it have dominion over you? Why are you letting it master you? Why are you letting it crush you? Why am I yelling at you? I don't know.

[Laughter]

It's a gift. It's a gift.

I hope you are getting this, because this can be a life changer, man. There is therefore now this is, again, *Romans 8*. And by the way, maybe now's as good of a time as any to mention once again, if you're struggling, you need to spend some time in *Romans Chapter 8*. I mean, if you want to go back to 6, that's fine. But, you know, **“Wretched men that you are, who's going to deliver you from this body of death?”**

And then, thank God for *Chapter 7*. By that time, you're able to kind of catch your breath. But then when you get to *Chapter 8*, you're good. You're not good. But it's good because

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God is good. First verse *Romans 8*, **“There is therefore now no condemnation [No guilt] for those that are in Christ Jesus.”**

Why?

Because He removed it.

How did He remove it?

Just like with Noah and his family were removed in the flood, He has removed the guilt of your sin as far as the East is from the West. And get this, He remembers them no more. I wish I didn't remember them anymore.

In fact, every time I pray and ask God to forgive me for something I had already asked Him to forgive me for, God's like, I forgot all about that. And now you reminded Me of that. And now I've got to forgive you again. Stop bringing it up.

[Laughter]

I removed it. We saw this again on Thursday night in Jeremiah. Did I tell you I love Jeremiah?

Anyway, he's talking about the removing of sin and guilt, and it's - see in the Old Covenant – this is the New Covenant. He wants to give the people hope in Judah who are about to go into captivity in Babylon. And they'll spend 70 years there. Many of them will not come back. They'll die in Babylon. Their kids might.

But he wants to encourage them ahead of time and say, I have a future planned for you. I'm not through with you. I will not make an end of you. My plan for you is a plan that is good, not evil. I have a future plan for you. And I have a New Covenant. New Covenant.

Oh, what about the Old Covenant?

Oh, fulfilled. You don't do away with the Old Covenant. The New Covenant fulfills the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant points to the fulfillment in the New Covenant. See the Old Covenant, all it could do was Kaphar in the Hebrew, cover.

At best, they could only have their sins covered, not removed. The New Covenant in His blood, **“Though your sins be as scarlet...”** I think every single one of us would have to

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probably raise our hands. Don't look at your neighbor, but every single sin. **"I'll make them white as snow."**

There is power in the blood. That's the blood of the New Covenant. Every time we partake together of the communion table, it's the blood of the New Covenant. It doesn't just cover it. I'll cover this. That's temporary, temporary relief. It should say that on the bottle.

No, this is permanent. I'm not just going to cover it. The New Covenant is I'm going to remove it. So why are you taking it back? Why are you taking it back? Why are you carrying it around? Why are you allowing the enemy to get away with that in your life?

Because you have to understand that the enemy will do everything and stop at nothing to create a distance between you and Jesus.

See, before you get saved, he'll do everything to keep you from Jesus. Then you get saved, he's got to regroup. And now that you are saved, he's got to figure out how to create a separation between you and Jesus. His most powerful tool is discouragement and the weight of the guilt of sin.

And here's what that looks like, by the way. You know exactly what I'm talking about when I say this. So you mess up. Unless you're sinless. Anybody here sinless? Don't anybody raise your hand, okay?

So you mess up, you sin. And the enemy is right there, isn't he? I mean, he's popped the popcorn. He's got the, you know, the live stream. He already rented it, paid for it. So he just sits you down in that chair and gives you the popcorn, and just let's watch what – man this is a horror movie is what this is, what you did. And you're watching this thing going, man, oh, this is bad.

Yeah, it's really bad. I don't know. If I were you right now, I would just lay low. I wouldn't go to the Lord. That's the last thing, and I sure wouldn't go to church because if the people sitting next to you knew what you did.

Again, don't look at the person sitting next to you.

If they knew what you did. Oh! Oh! Because they're local. Oh!

[Laughter]

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And he's met with a large measure of success, is he not?

He's just condemning us and guilty, guilty, guilty! Look what you did!

Answer: Look what Jesus has done. No, He paid for that.

No, you're going to pay for this!

No, it's already been paid for in full, stamped, paid in full, in the blood of Jesus Christ. Get out of my face. Go down the street; I'll give you the addresses.

(Chuckling)

That's bad; I'm not going to do that. I got in trouble one time for that.

Last one, *verse 22*. Oh, this is – Jesus has all authority. Well, okay, I know that, I mean, so what?

Well, I'll tell you what. He is all-powerful. He has all authority, and everything is in submission to Him. Well, what does that mean to me?

Here's what that means to me. God rules over all, and overrules all, period. You see, now He's at the right hand of the Father, He descended, and now He's ascended. Oh, and by the way, He's making intercession. I'll take it.

Do you understand that Jesus is praying for you? Man, when you say, Hey, I'm praying for you, thank you, that means a lot to me. But if Jesus is praying for me, Jesus is praying for me! The Holy Spirit is interceding for me! But everything is under His authority.

Let me take it a step further. Nothing can happen to you without Him first authorizing it. Let me expound on that, because there's another thing the enemy does not want you to know. The devil cannot do anything to you unless God allows him to.

And God will never allow the enemy to do anything to you unless He first authorizes it. And He'll never authorize it unless it's for our good and His glory.

Ask Job. Don't ask Job. We went through Job. We should get – I think I mentioned this First Service. We should get shirts that we survived James verse-by-verse. But for Job, we should get a shirt and a hat with that because we survived Job. That was a trial, man, that book.

For those of you that are here that went through that with us, whoa, oh, oh!

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Chapter 1, right out of the chute, man. You know, Satan's kind of hanging out. Still has access to heaven. That's why there's going to be a new heaven and a new earth. And God knows what he's been up to.

So He says, Hey, Satan, how are you doing?

Oh, good, been just kind of hanging out, going to and fro throughout the earth.

God says, hey, I don't know if you happened to notice my servant, Job.

Oh, I'm glad you asked, God. Here's the thing, God, of course, he's so faithful as a servant. Of course he serves You and worships You. Of course he loves You. Look how You bless him. You let me have at him and he'll curse You to Your face.

And God's like, okay, deal. Here's poor Job; he has no idea what's coming.

I think about Peter. Remember that account when Jesus says to Peter, Hey, Peter, come here, we need to talk.

What did I do now?

Oh, you really did it this time. Peter, so Satan has asked for permission for you to sift you as wheat.

So I'm Peter because apparently I'm speaking for Peter. I'm like, Lord, You told him no, right?

Actually, no, I did give him permission because in the end, it's going to be for your good and for My glory, because I have all the authority.

So God is not going to allow anything to happen to you. You think about you as an earthly parent or even grandparent, and if it's in your power in as much as you're able, are you going to let anything happen to your kids?

Hey, I remember, as if it were yesterday, my daughter comes home and she's probably six, seven years old. She said, this boy was really mean to me. What is his name?

[Laughter]

I will find him. He will be in great danger!

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[Laughter]

And I'm a fallen parent, man. How much more our heavenly...

Was that too much? Maybe it was.

I'm a fallen father. He's our Heavenly Father. Not a hair on our head is going to fall to the ground unless He first authorizes it. He authorized way too many on my head to fall to the ground. They're all over the floor. You got to sweep them up.

[Laughter]

Maybe that was too much, okay. But doesn't that just encourage you?

Man, I've been really suffering. You mean to tell me that God authorized it?

Yeah.

That's not nice. Why would God authorize this suffering?

Oh, if you only knew. If you only knew. That you can ask Job about at the end. In all of this, Job did not curse God.

Oh, Peter: At the end, he brings his brothers. He's converted. His brothers are converted. He's closer to the Lord. He's stronger in the Lord. But he had to go through that sifting. Job had to go through that unbelievable suffering. And God knew where the breaking point was, by the way.

And we, I think, maybe - how do I say this?

With *1 Corinthians 10:13*, we've kind of made it too cliché. God will never give you more than you can handle. **“He will not allow you to be tried above that which you are able. But with the trial, He'll provide a way of escape so that you can bear up under it in and through the trial.”**

He's going to allow it; He's going to authorize it. But if you only knew what He's really signing off on and authorizing. I see it like this, and I hope this is an encouragement to you because it's been a tremendous encouragement to me.

And I'll close with this. Never imagine that God is not going to answer my prayers the same exact way that I would answer my own prayers if I knew what He knew.

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So He knows the end from the beginning. He's all-knowing, He has all power. He's omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. So He already knows the end.

In fact, sometimes I just think in my own mind, I know they have clinical terms for people who think like this, but I just think when I pray, it's kind of like almost God going, No, you know, you don't want Me to answer that prayer because it wouldn't be good, and it wouldn't bring Me glory. If I answer it - how many times have you looked over your prayer list and thanked God that He didn't answer the prayer the way you prayed it?

Had He answered that prayer the way you prayed it, it would have been catastrophic. Don't you think God knows that?

That's why He didn't authorize it. That's why God didn't allow it. He'll withhold no good thing. **“Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father above.”** If it's good, you got it. If it's good, He'll authorize it. He'll allow it.

So sometimes when you're going through a very difficult time, I don't want to make light of it. I know there are many who are just hanging on by a thread and my heart goes out to you. And by the way, I've been there. I know what it's like to be in the fetal position on the floor. You can't even. I mean, there's not even a noise. It's more like a groan and liquid prayers, which sometimes are more powerful than prayers with words. I mean, you're just crying out to God. I've been there more times than you might know. My heart goes out to you.

But I want to encourage you. God is in control. And He has all the authority and He's authorizing everything. And you just wait and see what God is going to do.

One last thing. This will be the final closing here. Let's talk about these Christians in the early church that were being wrapped up in the carcasses of animals and being thrown into the lion's den, eaten alive. Or how about when Caesar Nero would dip them in tar and light them on fire and ride around in his chariot, mocking them, 'Be the light of the world' and they burned alive like that.

I wonder if we could get one of them to be a guest speaker here on a Sunday. That would be really cool, wouldn't it? Announce a guest speaker; we've got a special guest today. They're coming back from 2000 years ago, and they're going to share their testimony about their suffering. I wonder, what would they say? What would they say?

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Do you think they would be encouraging to you? Do you think they would encourage you?
Do you think they would give you a whole new perspective on what you're going through?
Yes, they would.

Kapono, come on up. Why don't you stand? We'll close in prayer and song.

Loving Heavenly Father, (Sigh) once again, we're just in awe of You, in awe of You, God.
Truly, You are awesome! Lord, thank You. Thank You for this word in Your Word. Thank
You for the encouragement.

Lord, for any who is really struggling and hurting and weary and heavy laden, oh, I just, I pray
that they make their way to You as fast as they can. That You might satiate the weariness of
their soul, the anguish of their soul. Thank You, Jesus, so much. We love You so much,
Jesus. We love You so much. In Jesus' name, Amen.