

Topical Message
The Law Of Faith, Part 1
Pastor Mac

KAPONO: Would you join me as we bow our heads in prayer? Lord, we come to You, Lord, with thanksgiving in our hearts, Lord. We're so thankful that you are with us, Lord. Would You bless this day, Lord, for all who are here and those who are watching online?

Lord, You have something for us that we need not miss. So calm our spirits, Lord. Would You keep our thoughts focused and our ears open, Lord? Soften our hearts that we would receive what it is that You have for us, something that would bless us, Lord.

So thank You, Lord, for this day and allowing us to gather, Lord, Lord, we praise Your name. And we're so thankful for Pastor Mac as well. Lord, continue to give him that strength that is needed to serve out Your will in his life. Give him the words, Lord, this morning, Lord. And we thank you again for this time in Your word. We pray Jesus name, Amen.

PASTOR MAC: Amen. All right. Thank you. And praise the Lord. And please be seated. All right. Well, good morning, church. Beautiful saints. Are the lights brighter? Man! Must be something I ate.

[Laughter]

Well, we welcome you here on behalf of Pastor JD Farag to Calvary Kaneohe. For those of you joining us online, we welcome you to our online service. And for any visitors that are here, we especially welcome you and pray that you've been blessed by the abundance of love you should receive here by the saints here at Calvary Kaneohe.

So as we get started, I do want to remind everyone about our next prayer meeting. It will be held on March the 3rd at 7:00 p.m. here in the sanctuary. And if you're able to come out and join us for corporate prayer, we invite you to do so. If you're not able to come out because of your schedule, let me know who your boss is; I'll talk to them. We'll figure all of that out so we can get you here so we can pray together as a body of believers.

But no, if you're unable to make it pray for us as we assemble and pray together as a family, because prayer is something that we need to be doing continuously. And it can never be overrated. So let's pray as often as the Lord leads and as often as we have an opportunity.

I also want to mention that Pastor JD will be returning to the pulpit this coming Thursday, February the 12th. And before resuming our verse-by-verse study through Zechariah, he will

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talk openly about his wife's death in a topical teaching out of Ezekiel, Chapter 24, verses 15 through 27. Also, he will resume the Prophecy Updates and sermons beginning next Sunday, February the 15th, all of which will be livestreamed for our online church as well.

And like I mentioned, I'm looking forward to his return. I wish the circumstances were different. But continue to pray for our pastor and his family. Continue to pray. This will be a process, and we need to be there to lift them up.

On Sundays, as you know, we have two services. The First Service is normally dedicated to the Prophecy Update, and the Second Service, the sermon. Like I said, next Sunday, that should return to normal operations. But for today, I would ask for you to join me in the *Book of Romans*, in *Chapter 3*. We'll pick it up at *verse 27* and read down to *verse 31*. And I would also ask all who are able to stand to do so for the reading of the word of God this morning, followed by a word of prayer.

Again, the *Book of Romans, Chapter 3*, beginning in *verse 27*, the word of God reads, **“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles?**

Yes, of the Gentiles also [Verse 30] since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.”

So why don't we pray and ask for the Lord's blessing on our time together this morning? Loving heavenly Father, we first give You thanks for allowing us to be able to come together to hear Your word this morning. And Lord, what You have laid out for us to hear, some very difficult topics that we're going to be getting into, and without You meeting us here, it's all useless.

So I pray, Lord, selfishly, perhaps, in this season that you have your servant in, would You, by the power of Your might, strengthen me this one more time to deliver Your word of truth? And may our hearts be open to receive it.

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So go before us in the power and strength of Your might, and may Your Holy Spirit do all the work necessary for us to understand that knowledge from above. In the mighty name of Yeshua, Jesus, the Christ, we do pray. Amen. Thank you. And please be seated.

So our teaching for our First Service this morning, and Second, is titled, 'The Law of Faith.' Again, this will be Part 1. So right out of the gate you can see that we will not be getting into *Chapter 4*. You know, I tried to. I say that every week, don't I? Yeah, I'm learning.

I know as I got into this teaching, I realized that we had a unique opportunity to deal with an elephant in the room. And Lord willing, we will do just that, as we will see. But even with that elephant, we will close out *Chapter 3* this morning within these teachings.

But please remember that there is so much more that can be extracted out of this chapter that we did not, nor will we be able to, get a chance to get into. And that's pretty much the case as we go through all of these teachings, which is the reason why that we all have to go back and do our own independent study and review regarding everything that we learned.

Because most likely we will have more questions which will require us to do more studying, which will provide for us more answers that will also lead back to more questions. Right?

But in and through it all, we become more familiar with the word of God, while our understanding increases as well as having our relationship deepen for the things of as well as the love of God.

And I truly believe that this is by Divine design. Because think about the positive impacts that it has for our spiritual walk. It's all for our benefit, not to mention that it should keep us in constant communion with the true and living God. And that's where we need to be at.

Now, as we mentioned last week, we are in the amazing Section 3 as it pertains to the *Book of Romans*. And the reason why this section is so amazing is because it speaks to the provision of God's righteousness that's been offered to all of mankind.

And as we have talked about continuously, in order to be saved, one must be justified. And in order to be justified, one must have righteousness. And in order to have the righteousness that justifies, it must be the righteousness of God. And He is the only one that can administer that righteousness because He is the only one that has it.

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So again, this section is very important for us to understand. And like we talked about, we need to spend more time in this section than the last section. This is where we need to bathe because we stink. You know what I mean?

[Laughter]

It provides the solution for the sin problem. And that stinks, right? And growing in this section and having a great understanding of it allows us to be better witnesses when it comes to explaining why mankind needs the righteousness of God.

And like we also discussed, many of us need this kind of detailed explanation, and this is why we have it captured in the word of God for us. He covers all bases. And in our teachings last week, titled, 'The Saving Righteousness of God,' we would do our best to detail out how the solution to the sin problem has always been available to mankind since the fall of man.

And the reason why this is possible is because of redemption. Then we would look into the word "redemption" as it pertains to the Scriptures. And what we would see is that redemption means a deliverance by payment of ransom. And this payment was often tied to or utilized for the freeing of slaves. And this is how it's being utilized within the word of God as it pertains to mankind being slaves to sin.

This is our problem. We are in debt to sin. And we know that the wages of sin is death. And in order to have our debt paid, we must be redeemed by someone who is not in debt to sin as well as being related to us in dealing with morality. We are talking about mankind. So the Redeemer must be like us. And we know based on the Scriptures, this is our Kinsman Redeemer, Jesus the Christ, and He has been the focal point in regards to freeing all of mankind from the bondage of sin since the very beginning. The Redeemer to come and the Redeemer to come again.

And in order to see this reality, we will look at *Genesis, Chapter 3, in verses 20 and 21*, and see that Adam would name his wife Eve only after he had sinned against God. And the significance of this is that it showed that even after mankind was cursed by God because of sin, they believed in the promise of the Redeemer that would come through them by their descendants.

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And we can see that it was accounted to them as righteousness based on what we see in verse 21, which is God himself will conduct the first sacrifice of an animal and clothe both Adam and Eve. And so this symbolized them being covered by the righteous act of God, because only by blood can sin be atoned for while they would have to wait for their full redemption when the Redeemer would fulfill that promise and eventually crush the head of the deceiving serpent and completely eradicate sin. And we can't wait.

And this act also had to be completed by the shedding of blood unto death. And the shedding of blood is the propitiation that was completed and is made complete by Jesus Christ. He is the Mercy Seat of the world. Because of Him and through Him mercy reigns forever.

And we talked about how it is that the Mercy Seat covered the law of testimony which concealed God's people from the condemning judgment of the law, while the offering of blood sacrifices covered their condemnation in regards to the violations of the law. And just like the Mercy Seat takes care of providing that protective covering for the people as well as producing that much-needed forbearance in regards to the just judgment of God, we know that the atoning blood of Jesus Christ does the same thing, but in the greatest way known to man. Because again, His blood atones for all sins. And God's righteous judgment was fully displayed on the cross as He poured out His wrath against sin on the Son of Man. And in doing so, the law has been fulfilled. So the law can no longer condemn those in Christ Jesus.

And that's the key. Because His blood is eternal, and it has been shed. And this is why we as believers in Christ are not appointed to wrath. And all of this was done in order to demonstrate at the present time God's righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

So this is where we are. And with the Lord's blessing, we are going to expound only on *verse 27 in Romans, Chapter 3*. Yes, I know. But in doing so, we are going to come face-to-face regarding the topic of faith and works. And that's that elephant in the room. And now you see why we're going to have to take two services to deal with that elephant. You know how hard it is to eat an elephant?

[Laughter]

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I don't know. You can imagine, right? But we're going to deal with this systematically as best as we are able because this topic is really, really important, and it needs to be vetted and rightly divided. And that takes more than a five-minute conversation to do so.

In fact, like I said, it's going to take the better part of both services as we get into this. I was talking to a brother last week, and it dawned on me this is not a sidebar conversation. He asked a valid question. And I'm like, "How do I answer this question in 5 minutes?" It's not happening, not with any, you know, meat to it. So I really — like I was talking to a couple of saints, my idea this week was to have an overview and kind of like, glide and slide on out.

[Laughter]

The Lord was not having that. So here we are, and it happens to align where we are in Romans anyway, so we need to take advantage of it. And once we finally get through all of this, we're going to see why faith alone justifies and then conclude on how the righteous law of God is indeed established by faith that never contradicts good works in the Spirit that are executed in faith.

All right. Okay. We're going to get into some terms and some things that we really need to think about. So put your spiritual thinking caps on and please be praying throughout this teaching this morning, both of them, in fact. Because we're going to have to take the scenic route in order to get to our spiritual destination safely. Are you with me, church? I could close my eyes so you can walk out if you want.

All right. With that, *verse 27* of our text, as the word of God reads, **“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.”**

So here, we see that the Apostle Paul is going back to using that tactic that the Spirit knows works so well in asking these rhetorical questions. And we can see that this verse has three of those rhetorical questions, each one of them being followed up with an answer. Not an answer. THE answer.

And we know that these questions are in regards to everything that was previously discussed. So perhaps the main point is that no man born in the likeness of Adam could ever do anything to be righteous in the sight of God, no matter how much of the law, whether

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that be the natural law or the law of Moses, that they were able to keep. Because being born into sin is a breach of the law within itself. For it is written: **“In iniquity, I was born, and in sin my mother conceived me.”**

And that's for all of us. All of us. But let's also remember that the Apostle Paul was directly speaking to his Jewish brethren here. So we need to keep this Jewish perspective in the forefront of our minds of what's being talked about here. Because when we do, this speaks to him addressing the Jews for having some sort of justifiable pride in their lives because they were the ones chosen by God. And because of that, they had thought that they had some role to play in regards to salvation itself. Do you hear me?

Wait a minute. We have a role to play in salvation, don't we? No, absolutely not. So this was sort of the final loophole that the Apostle Paul is closing, slamming the door on it. He was letting them know that they could not boast in such an idea because this was not the case. Their role in God's plan regarding redemption was for God's glory and His glory alone.

And in one way or another, if we think about it, we're all a part of that plan. But none of us have anything to do with being a part of salvation itself. None of us. And with this being the fact, as well as knowing that the righteousness of God can only come from Him and by Him, no man could ever boast in achieving anything, especially towards the righteousness in the sight of God.

And understanding this is the beginning of understanding God's grace. Because like others would note, God's grace leaves no place for any kind of self-satisfaction in anyone's own achievement for salvation. All of it is by the hands of the Lord alone. This is why the Apostle Paul, by the Spirit, would answer this in regards to boasting this way. He says, **“It is excluded.”** Not just for the Jews, but for all of mankind. All of us excluded.

And there was a man by the name of Isaac Watts who was considered to be a non-conformist hymn writer. But he would at least conform to this understanding of what God's grace does, or what it should do to pride. And he would write this hymn back in the early 1700s, titled, ♪ When I Survey The Wondrous Cross ♪

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And you can see portions of the lyrics on the screen And they read: ♪ When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride ♪

So it's safe to say that he got it for sure. And I pray that we get it as well. And he would actually be singing this song in regards to the *Book of Galatians, Chapter 6, in verse 14*. But again, it clearly holds weight here in what we're discussing because both of them deal directly with boasting.

And when we think about boasting and religion, we often notice this: That within the works associated with any kind of religion, there's always so much room for pride. Wouldn't you agree? This is one of the dangers of religious works and why Jesus was so opposed of the religious leaders. Because their focus was leading the people in their religion but not leading the people to God.

And that's what happens. And all of this leads to the same conclusion if left unchecked, and that's people begin to have more faith in their works than having faith in the Lord, even in the righteous works of the law. Because again, righteous works without faith at all = never having faith. They never had life to begin with. Do you hear me? So they can't even be considered dead works in the future, right? Because the faith was never established.

In other words, righteous works alone will not provide salvation. However, faith alone in Christ alone will.

[Congregant shouts, "Amen!"]

No works need to be included because the law of faith is to believe in the Redeemer. That is captured in the Gospel of God that is completed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And anything added to the law of faith unto salvation is not according to the Scriptures.

But sadly, many, and I would even say perhaps most denominations, tie in works as a part of salvation in one way or another, either through the front door or the back door, or the side door, or the window. It comes into play. And it's a problem when you're attaching works to salvation.

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Now, we talked about this false doctrine last week known as the "Saving Faith Doctrine." And what this speaks to is that having a saving faith, meaning a faith that basically proves that you believe in Christ and that you're saved, in order for that to happen, it will be seen by works that proves that you believe.

And not only that, it's also going to be seen by you obeying what God has commanded and that you come to fully recognize that your faith is a gift from God in order for you to do this. Now, don't forget that there's many facets to this doctrine. And then even some of them speak to it, as we would call it. They would say, "Hey, saving faith means that you believe in Christ, Christ alone."

Now, if it's left there, we agree. Absolutely. That is a saving faith. But that's what — it'll be a week later when you'll hear the "but" coming. And that's a problem. And this is a part of our teaching where we're going to begin to lay the groundwork so that we can tackle faith and works head on.

And we will eventually get to the Book of James at the end. And then, next service, pretty much at the beginning, we're going to look at this contradiction of sorts, that's talking about faith and works and how it's interpreted. And unless we get down to the nuts and bolts, any simple explanation will not satisfy how this is being discussed. It just doesn't work. Because what's being discussed, we have to explain it. And that's what we intend to do.

So first, let's build this assuming contradiction. For that, we're going to go to the *Book of Ephesians* in order to start our argument. And I know that the word "argument" seems kind of bold or harsh, but it has become an argument within our Christian ranks, and we need to tear that argument down.

And much of this confusion comes because of isolating certain passages. And now you can isolate a passage, but if it's done, it cannot change the context of the message into some new doctrine. In fact, we're about to demonstrate that and give an example of how to look at a verse in the contextual sense, isolating it, that does not contradict the passage or the overall message to us as believers. And we've seen these series of verses over and over again, so they should come to no surprise. But I hope that all of it enhances what we're about to get into.

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So *Book of Ephesians, Chapter 2, verses 8 and 9*, well-known passage of Scripture. As the word of God reads, **“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”**

How many times have we heard this? And we can clearly see that the Apostle Paul is consistent in his stance in regards to faith in Christ being the only requirement in order to be saved. No works at all have to be done or could ever be done on our part in order to secure our salvation. It is the grace of God. Salvation is the gift of God. For those who believe are saved through faith.

And remember how we have talked about the word “saved.” Do you guys recall that? We explained it in the salvation tenses. And when we did, we would be focusing on saved, the third one that's listed here, from the power of sin. This is the one we focused on because being saved from the power of sin is a critical aspect in regards to our sanctification process, which is that continuous application of the word of God in order to glorify God. Are we tracking, church?

So the question could be: How do we bring glory to the true and living God? And the answer? These three words: By good works. Do you hear me? That's how we bring glory. Works that are attached to what process? Our sanctification process. Not salvation. We are not talking about salvation; being saved, past tense. We are talking about sanctification; being saved in the present tense.

So here is the first question on our test. You ready? See if you've been paying attention. When it comes to being saved, present tense, What are good works a part of? What process? Sanctification! Praise the Lord. And that's the answer.

And those works are to bring glory to God. Captured in the *Book of Matthew, in Chapter 5, and verse 16*, the word of God reads, **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your [What?] good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”**

So the question could be here: What good works is Jesus talking about? Oh, the answer comes from what Jesus was talking about and discussing on the Sermon on the Mount, all of what's known as the Beatitudes, are aspects of good works in one way or another. Are you seeing where we're going?

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Not only that, as well as what Jesus says following the Beatitudes and what He would go on to say after this verse, are glorifying works towards God. So do we see that good works are indeed good? They are.

And as we continue, we see that God is glorified by the works of bearing fruit as captured here in the *Book of John, Chapter 15, in verses 7 and 8*. The word God reads, **“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples.”**

Good works glorify God. They also show that we are His disciples. And being a disciple is being a learner. And when it comes to being a disciple of Christ, His disciples not only learned from Him who was the living word, they also follow Him and His teachings, out of His word. All of that produces good works that glorifies God.

And as we continue, we can see that God is glorified by the good works of praise as captured here. Actually, it's the *Book of Psalms, I believe, Chapter 86, verse 11 through 13*. The word of God reads, **“Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore. For great is Your mercy toward me, and You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.”**

Praising and worshiping the Lord are good works. And we know from the Scriptures that the highest form of worship that can be displayed towards God is being obedient to His word. And that obedience comes by having an understanding of His word. And that takes place over time as we mature in our faith. Are we tracking?

And think about this. As it pertains to being justified, our faith was already established. That's when we first believed. And that places us within this lifelong process of being saved as it pertains to being sanctified. And this point cannot get overlooked. This is our walk. And this is how we build this case as it ties into faith and works.

And we continue to see that God is glorified by good works in regards to suffering for His namesake, as captured in the *Book of 1 Peter, in Chapter 4, verses 14 through 16*. The word of God reads, **“If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part, He**

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is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. [See that? Contrast.] [Verse 16] Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter."

In what matter? The matter of suffering for the glory of God, being a reproach for the name of Christ, and whatever else comes along with it as we are Christians walking in the will of God. Those are all good works in the sight of God, and **"blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory [In the end] and of God rests upon you."**

Who doesn't want this? Are we getting the picture when it comes to good works and how all of this is a part of our lifelong sanctification process? This is it. This is how we are being saved throughout our lives as it pertains to being sanctified. This is what it is all about: Glorifying God throughout good works throughout our lives. And the last one that we'll look at will tie in to where we're going in regards to the Book of James, and that is we continue to see that God is glorified by the good works that are produced by faith.

For this, we'll start off in the *Book of James, Chapter 1, verses 2 through 4*. The word of God reads, **"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, [Do you see that? Trials.] Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."**

Now, we have to ask ourselves the question: Who is being addressed regarding all of this in these passages when it comes to glorifying God through works? Believers. And we have already noted that good works done in and by the Spirit of God demonstrates that we are being sanctified, set apart from the world for the service of the Lord.

And I wanted to make sure that we started here at the beginning of the Book of James in order for us to have a point of reference in regards to how faith is being used by James. Do we see it? Look at *verse 3* and now it reads. **"...the testing of your faith..."**

Do we see that? Now, is this talking about the testing of your faith to believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ? No, it can't be. Because they're already saved. And the only way that one can conclude that this is talking about the testing of their salvation is if you believe that once someone is saved, that they can lose their salvation.

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And if this is what you believe, then at some point, no matter how small you think that it is, you are adding to the finished work of the cross. That's what you're doing. You are crucifying Christ over and over again by placing any kind of works in conjunction with salvation.

Now just think about it. If the works of simply being circumcised was railed against — are you following me — by the Apostle Paul, why are you getting circumcised? If that was railed against not to do as a part of your salvation, why would any other work be included? Are you following me?

When you believe that you have to work for your salvation in any degree, what you are saying is that Jesus died for me, but now I have to pay Him back through works. I have to do something.

So if we really believed that we could maintain our salvation or earn it by any works — let's just say maintaining it by any works, then why can't we do that from the beginning? No need. Don't go to the trouble. Keep sacrificing the animals. Right? They'll do the trick for us, and we'll continue working. Are you following me, church? Oh, because — oh, we didn't have the Holy Spirit, that's why. Really?

And if that's the case, how were the Ninevites saved? Right? No works at all. But they were saved. Not to mention that was before the finished work on the cross. Works are only as good as the Spirit behind them, but they still do not save.

And that's something else that we need to consider and ask ourselves. And that is: When is our faith that causes us to grow and mature in faith set into motion? What is that? When does that happen? You know, when do we start to grow our faith? We come to Christ, and we believe. It's after the belief. Don't you agree? It's not: You start all these processes and then come to faith. Once we believe.

Once we believe. And that is counted to us as righteousness that justifies us in the sight of God. That's when the active portion of our faith should begin. That's when it happens. And that's also in concert with our sanctification process. Justified, sanctified through our lives *[Should be]*, glorified, when we're in our new, resurrected state.

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So do we see what's being expressed by James here? And this is the beginning of the letter. He is addressing believers about their faith in regards to the testing of their faith towards becoming or remaining mature Christians in the faith. This is what it is.

And none of this has anything to do with being saved by faith unto salvation. But that does not mean that just being in the faith will automatically save us from the impacts of life without practicing the faith that we claim to believe. Do you hear me, church? This is the issue. And we will see this come full bloom during our Second Service.

But I want to make sure that we see this distinction now, because it's within these details that we can rightly divide the word of truth. And back in the '60s, there was this doctrine established by certain denominations in order to help us Christians understand an aspect of this part as it pertains to growing in our faith.

And many of you may be familiar with this doctrine that's known as the "Faith-Rest Drill" doctrine. And what it is at its core is a mental technique used by believers to overcome anxiousness, fear, or adversity by actively believing in the promises of God based on having a working knowledge of the word of God. That's the key.

And the thought behind this drill or technique is that when properly used, this should lead to us having faith over fear or faith over doubt within the life of a believer. And that should bring about mental stability as well as spiritual rest. And even without this technique having a name to it, many of us who are maturing in the faith have already used it. Most of you have. You rely on a promise of God that's associated with a situation that we're dealing with.

For example, we go inside, we're dealing with something, and we start to waver in our faith, right? Then we recall, based on the knowledge of the word of God, that we're not to have a wavering faith. Follow me? So we pray to the Lord. "I give You thanks. Forgive me for having a wavering faith in this moment, knowing that Your word says..." And we repeat what the word of God says.

And I know You're going to take — a devil fly's up here. Beelzebub. (Chuckling)

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And so we repeat what's in the word of God, holding on to the promises of God and praying that prayer for that situation. Because it's already written in the word of God, so it has to be the will of God. Do we see that? This brings us spiritual benefit, living in this physical reality. And we know the answer will come because God cannot lie.

And this is not some “name it/claim it” response regarding some temporal, material gain. Again, this is relying on the promises of God for that much-needed spiritual benefit. And it comes through by knowing the word of God. And that's the key. Doctrine.

And think about this. This doctrine itself, this faith-rest drill doctrine, was birthed out of Christians being persecuted. Are you following me? Test and trials drove this doctrine. And since we know that the trials are coming, we should all have pre-planned responses based on the Scriptures, so when those trials come, we have them at the ready.

And having this understanding of what this faith-rest drill is and its primary purpose will come in handy when we get into tackling this faith-works issue directly. And after we do, I pray that it's no longer an issue.

Now, as with all doctrines, techniques, and everything else, they can always reach a point of overreach. And this doctrine is no different because some Christians abuse it. And the reason why is because they have a lack of understanding of biblical truth. So again, it's only as good as the biblical knowledge that's rightly applied to it. But because of this overreach, Christians often utilize this technique as a crutch to sit idly by and do nothing. Oh, I'm just giving it all to the Lord God. Yes, it's all in God's hands.

But wait a minute. All trials and tests and sufferings are not the same. Many of them require an active response on our part, some kind of engagement. And we need to be sensitive to this fact because it's an exercise of our faith on both sides of the spectrum, and that's the work's spectrum. It is. Meaning the patient work of being still as well as the patient work of being active during those trials and tests. This is a part of our sanctification that is attached to our faith.

So going back to James, the testing of their faith is a part of their overall sanctification process. And it's still the same today, like we just talked about. And we should know by now

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that responding positively during being tested, or our faith being tested, it doesn't always happen. We don't always respond in a positive way when our faith is being tested.

And he knows this. And that's why the believers are being addressed in such a pointed way. And we are too because this reality needs to be brought to the forefront of our minds. And James gives us a major encouraging reason why to persevere through trials. And we need to be sensitive to that as well. This is a part of our good works in the faith.

And we see this captured in *verse 12 of James, Chapter 1*, and we're going to look at *verses 14 and 15*. They'll be on the same slide, so we can have it to make an additional point. But we'll begin in *verse 12*. As the word of God reads, **“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”**

Do we see this? So notice how these works, as we can see or call them faithful, enduring works, are attached to rewards. The crown of life. And we know that faith unto salvation cannot be earned. So from the beginning of this letter, we see that James is stressing how believers should be living out their faith. This is the issue. And he will continue to stress this point.

And notice the word “approved” seen here in *verse 12*. Because this word in the Greek is the Greek word “dokimos,” and it means “tested.” So again, “when he has been tested, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” Faithful endurance while being tested earns believers the crown of life from the Lord himself. This is also a good work, but not a work onto salvation. Are we tracking, church?

And now let's shift gears a bit as we look at *verses 14 and 15*. The word of God reads, **“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”**

Okay. Let's remember, who is James talking to. Believers. So what death is this speaking about? It's not being dead to salvation because we know as believers, we are born-again. You don't become born again and die again. That doesn't happen unto salvation.

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But we also know that as believers we still sin. And if we remain in a state of willful sin as believers, we will have no works in the Spirit at all. No matter what we do, they will not be counted. All of it's for nothing and considered dead. And that's what we're going to see during Second Service. But sin, full grown, also has the propensity to bring about physical death. Do you hear me? Not only spiritually, carnally. Physical death. And we see this throughout the Scriptures.

And as believers, we are not immune to this at all. And this is the understanding that we need to carry into Second Service, like I said, where we will directly jump into *James, Chapter 2* regarding faith and works, as well as finish expounding on the rest of *Romans, Chapter 3*.

So I pray that you're with me, and I thank you for bearing with me. But I definitely want us to set the stage properly so we can put this thing to bed once and for all, as well as have an answer for those who might challenge this position or this position in the Scriptures. So it's for our learning and for our edification. Why don't we stand and pray? (Deep breath)

Father in heaven, once again, we thank You. And only You can make this right. Only You can make it understood. Only You can straighten it all out. And we rely on You to do so. That's why we're here, not only to hear Your word, though, Lord, we want to heed it. So would You just give us a new, fresh anointing as we walk away and prayerfully return to continue to receive Your word of truth?

We thank You for what You have revealed so far, knowing that You will continue to reveal and shed light on this topic so that we can be better witnesses and serve You to the best of our abilities that You've provided for us. We thank you in advance for that which only You can do. In the mighty name of Yeshua, Jesus, the Christ, we pray. Amen.