

**Topical  
Serving in Suffering  
Pastor Mac**

KAPONO: Would you pray with me and bow your heads? Lord, may we find encouragement, Lord, through the testimonies this evening, through the real-life stories of our brothers and sisters, Lord, that we know. Lord, may Your word shine bright in the message that You have for us this evening. Fill us with strength, Lord.

And we thank You for Your mercy and Your everlasting grace, Lord. Be with Pastor Mac as he delivers this message for us, this topical study. Give him the strength, Lord. Give him the words. Would You temper him, Lord, in the way that You would have? And we ask this in Your name only, Jesus. We say amen.

PASTOR MAC: Praise the Lord. Thank you. And please be seated. Well good evening, church.

[ Congregation says, "Good evening!" ]

What's happening?

[ Laughter ]

Praise the Lord. Right? And on behalf of Pastor JD Farag, we want to welcome you to Calvary Kaneohe. And for any visitors that are joining us tonight, we pray that you have been loved on by your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. For those joining us online, we welcome you to our Thursday night live stream service.

Normally, Pastor JD would be going through, conducting his line-by-line teaching in the Book of Nahum. But for tonight we will be conducting a special topical teaching that the Lord has for all of us. But before we get there, I do want to remind everyone about our next prayer meeting that will be held here in the sanctuary on the 1st of April at 7 p.m.

Now, I know what some of you are thinking like, oh, that's April Fool's Day. Well, you'll be a fool if you don't come.

[ Laughter ]

I'm just playing. But you know what I'm saying? If you're able to come out and pray with us as a corporate body, please do so. And if you're not able to come, wherever you are, stop, drop, and pray, as we like to say.

And before we begin, why don't we do just that? Why don't we stop and pray and ask for the Lord's blessing on what He has for us this evening? Father in Heaven, I want to thank You, Lord, for being exactly who You are. And Lord, I can't do this without You. There's no need without the presence and power of Your Holy Spirit.

You have brought us to this moment and to this place this evening to hear and heed what You have for all of us. So meet us here, my Lord. Go before us in the strength and power of Your might. And may we take heed to all that You have for us, take it to heart and live by Your word, and die to ourselves because of it. In the mighty name of Yeshua, Jesus the Christ, we do pray. Amen.

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Well, tonight, and as briefly mentioned, we will be doing this topical teaching titled 'Serving in Sufferings.' And this teaching will be a lot different from the ones that we have done together in the past. Because for this teaching, I will be using the lives from members of this church as primary examples of this type of serving.

And before we get into this, please know that I do recognize that we all suffer from time to time. I get that. But within the lives of these children of God, I believe that we will see that what they have and or are going through is a degree of suffering that most of us will never experience. And over the years, with getting to know them, I have been, and I continue to be amazed regarding what God has done in their lives and the impact that they have in the lives of so many people. And I'm confident that their impact will continue tonight and bless each and every one of us, as well as provide some much-needed conviction for those of us who claim to be servants of the Lord.

And let's be real. Much of our service to the Lord is strictly done out of convenience, without many of us having any type of physical abnormalities. When we think about it, we have it so good, and in many cases too good. And instead of serving the Lord, we end up serving ourselves. And one of the biggest indicators of serving ourselves is how unwilling we are to serve when the situations change, and then we love to use the name of the Holy Spirit in vain.

We say things like, the Holy Spirit is now leading me to do such and such. Oh, how convenient! All of a sudden now, things change and the Holy Spirit's telling you to do something different. Okay. That's the scope of our service in many cases but not for these children of God that we will look at tonight.

Now, I would like to begin by thanking the various servants that made this teaching possible: My sister in Christ, Josanne Pedro, as well as the Pedro family; Tonya Nikolic, for working with Linda Heffernan regarding her testimony; Marcus and Jenette Rosehill, for giving us access to their lives; and Brielle, the wonderful ballerina, for her servant's heart as well. And with that, let's go to the scriptures in order to set the tone.

Captured in the *Book of Psalms*, 119:49-50, the word of God reads, "**Remember the word to Your servant, upon which You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life.**"

Sometimes in the lives of those who serve and trust in the Lord, those afflictions take place and all that they literally have is the word of God for comfort. No amount of medication can do it. No number of natural supplements can resolve it, and in fact, no amount of prayer removes this thorn in the flesh that God has allowed for reasons known only to Him, that will ultimately serve His purpose.

This is a reality for so many and a reality that is extremely hard to address when we're talking to those who are going through these devastating afflictions. And as we will see, these afflictions happens to those who are already believers in the Lord, as well as those who would come to the Lord.

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But what's so amazing about these testimonies is that we get to see how alive and active the word of God is. Because like what is written in His Word, that is what captured and keeps them in the service of the Lord. In other words, it's not because of their sufferings that they serve. It's because of the word of God despite their sufferings. And this is very important for us to understand.

Now, this is not to suggest that suffering is not used to bring someone to the Lord. Because it has been, and for some it will be used in the future. But it's the word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit that keeps all of us in the will of God, serving as children of God, no matter what the condition we find ourselves in. It's His word, such as my sister in Christ, Josanne Pedro, would come to prove.

Josanne, pictured here, was raised in a Christian home with seven other siblings, and as such, she would come to the Lord early in her childhood and that would pay off big time in the future. And as she began in her 20s, she would begin to work for a small printing company that serviced hotels through the state of Hawaii.

And over the next few years, this once small company would begin to grow and she would begin to move up within the company, landing a role as a primary administrative assistant and then becoming a tracking manager. And she would tell me it was at this point that her focus on the Lord began to come out of focus because she was driven by positional status and the overall busyness of the job. She also told me that she would work over 60 hours a week and not for the money but because of the job itself.

Now, I know many of us have had these moments where we burn the midnight oil, so to speak, for a time period. But that's not sustainable. It has to end at some point. Now, on top of this, Josanne would end up taking on additional positions as other employees became burnt out. They would leave. And then she had the demands of the company increasing in size and the demands on the company, along with her relentless drive to be successful.

So as the years went by, she would continue working hard, and in 2007 be blessed by having a beautiful baby girl. And now her mind starts to shift. Her focus wants to be on her family, but the job did not care. They wanted that same drive and tenacity before the child. Now I could only imagine the pressure that she felt, not to mention the amount of stress that it placed on her body physically. In fact, she would also tell me that she did not care what she had to put inside of her body, just as long as she could stay up and get the job done, and this continued as she returned to work.

But shortly after she returned, she would become sick. After several tests and other visits to the doctor, in 2008, she was diagnosed with Crohn's disease, which is a chronic inflammatory bowel disease. And according to medical statistics, it's considered a rare disease in the U.S., with about 40,000 new cases each year. And along with having no cure, currently the cause of the disease is unknown, with the severity of it being mild for most people, allowing them to live as long or nearly as long as people without it. But again, that's

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for mild cases, something that Josanne would come to know nothing about. Her case of Crohn's disease was severe. In fact, in the top 1% of severe cases.

And after she was diagnosed, it would take at least one year before she would receive any assistance from the state because it was so rare. And all of this was happening while her daughter Angelee was not even three years old yet. Now the Pedro family, of course, would rally around Josanne, but God would do a work in and through Josanne that only He could do while she suffers through this disease.

And make no mistake about it, this disease ravaged her body year after year. The associated pain she went through was unspeakable. Again, this disease took away her ability to work, her ability to drive, eventually, her ability to walk and even care for herself. And I praise God for her upbringing, for being raised in the ways of the Lord because all of it would come back in a magnificent way.

In and through this most painful experience, her focus became and remained Christ centered. Her primary duty was to God. And as a mother, in the name of the Lord, she would pour out all that she had into her daughter. And as a sister in Christ, know this, she was fearless when it came to her faith because she knew the word of God. And out of all the things that I can go into about Josanne, this is the one area I want to quickly focus on, and that is her fearlessness, as seen in this way.

Captured in the *Book of Proverbs* 27:5-6, the word of God reads, **“Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”**

On her bed of sickness, with everything against her, she would serve as one of the most loving and faithful friends because she was not afraid to rebuke, in love, in order to keep those that she loved from being duped and deceived. And it was seeing that several people thought that they could just tell Josanne anything spiritual, and because of her illness, she would just agree with them, tell them something feel good, and keep it moving. But no. Josanne would pray about it, ponder on it, seek wise counsel, pray again, and then respond. And her responses were always backed with Scripture and seasoned with grace.

And shame on those Christians that responded to her in anger because she lovingly spoke the truth. Some of them would send her hateful text messages and stop visiting her because they did not like the way she felt because she was not going to be moved or go against the counsel of God. And I would have you to know that she instantly forgave each and one of those in question. And she never let a root of bitterness get inside her soul. Oh, she was hurt, yes, but she was never bitter.

And as a brother in Christ and one of her pastors, I know who you are. But I will also have you know that she would even rebuke me for being so angry at you for the way you treated her. I was all in my flesh. But she stayed walking in the Spirit. Now that's a loving friend. And I thanked her for it. And her body may have been weak and broken, but her spiritual

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spine was a rod of steel. And shame on us who never feel compelled to rebuke, in love, as healthy as we are.

But for some reason we will spend countless hours listening to gossip and/or listening to someone talk garbage about our brother and sister in Christ without ever asking them if they followed what's captured in the Scriptures. The Bible tells us exactly what to do when we have a disagreement. But instead of doing what the Bible says, we decide to do nothing or what makes us feel vindicated. And then unlearned or unloving Christians join in and fuel the flames of ignorance, deceiving themselves, thinking that they're right.

And please know this. Saying nothing is more than often agreeing with them. But God knows the hearts of all of us, and we better believe we will be held accountable. You can play with man, but you can't play with God. Josanne would end up going home to be with the Lord one year ago tomorrow.

And her dying ministry was so powerful. She never once focused on her pain or her soon departure. Instead, she focused on praying for her daughter to be kept by Jesus, praying for her family to be united as one, and praying for each and every one of us who are in Christ. And she asked me to read a passage of Scripture when I gave her testimony in the hopes that we would take it to heart. And I will do that now.

Captured in the *Book of 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*, the word of God reads, **“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”**

She would stress for us to do right by our bodies and not live to achieve temporary success but live to please the Eternal Father. Again to the Pedro family, know that you are loved, and that Josanne is sorely missed.

For our next servant, allow me first to read from *Psalms*, again, *Chapter 27:10*, so we can set the tone. As the word of God reads. **“When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me.”**

How many children of God have relied on this passage of Scripture? I mean, for various reasons, people have been left without parents, and some of those are just more than heartbreaking. But God does and will take care of them, just like He has done and continues to do with Linda Heffernan.

Linda was born in Tehran, Iran in 1952. She was one of three triplets. But unfortunately, her mother died while giving birth. And with the death of her mother, her biological father could not handle the loss of his wife, so he placed all the children in an orphanage. And apparently, he would visit them from time to time and would be made aware if there was a family willing to adopt them. And after two years, an American family stationed in Iran via the army were interested in adopting Linda because the mother fell in love with Linda's unique green eyes. And in order to settle the adoption, Linda's father would accept a case of

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liquor to sign her over to the adopting parents. This is what she would come to know as she grew up. And even though her adoptive parents were not believers, she said that they were good parents.

Now, Linda could have used this being adopted for a case of liquor all her life and played the victim. But she didn't. And she did not become a believer until she was 26 years old. So one of the lessons that I don't want us to miss is that we so often choose to be a victim. Believe it or not, traumatic events happens to most of us. And I'm not dismissing the toll that it can take on people. And for those people, I pray that they are receiving that professional help needed. Don't get it twisted.

But in many cases, we hold on to trauma, and we weaponize it because it serves as an excuse for our actions and removes personal accountability or responsibility, not to mention that everything today is considered traumatic. Oh, I got a load of work; I'm traumatized. I have to do my homework; I'm traumatized. We have taken that word and use it for everything. Oh, I'm black. I'm traumatized. And people use it because it works.

Again, thank God that Linda would not claim to be a victim. And once she completed college in Maine, Linda would join the U.S. Army, following in her father's footsteps, who adopted her, and she would end up being stationed here in Hawaii, at Schofield. And it was while she was at Schofield in the Army that she would become a believer in Jesus Christ, back in 1978.

So she completed her tour in the army, moved to California, and taught at a Christian school. So the Lord was already massaging her and getting her rooted in the faith, has only He can. When she received word that her mother was sick, she went back to Maine in order to help take care of her. And for the next ten years, that's what she did until her mother passed away. And after that, she would receive a job offer that would bring her back to Hawaii once again, working at Schofield, but as a civilian this time. And it's here and when her life would take a major turn.

In 2014, she would have a minor stroke but would mostly recover from it, with the exception of having a small limp. Then in 2017, she would have a major stroke. This would leave her hospitalized for over two months, having to be fed via IV, would have her speech significantly reduced, and would end up using a walker full time after she was released from rehab. And shortly after this, when she was released from rehab, she would begin to lose her vision because of cataracts, and would have to go in for surgery, which would significantly reduce her eyesight.

And through all of this, she continued to proclaim the name of Jesus in and out of every hospital, even though her speech was now slow. Then in 2019, as she was walking with her walker to her apartment, a car backed into her, causing her to break her hip, requiring her to have surgery and now placing her in a wheelchair. And it was during this vulnerable stage in her life, that the enemy would then dispatch a couple of senior Jehovah's Witnesses to her home.

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They would come by day after day, she said, relentlessly challenging her faith. But as down as she was, she would not fold or bend. She stood strong, remained faithful, and drove them out with the word of God. And it took her several months, oh, but she passed that test, and God honored it. And as all these hospitalizations would continue, it began to take its toll on her. As you can imagine, her rehabs were very slow and painful.

Then in 2021, she would end up having pneumonia twice, becoming overly weak. And to add injury to insult, if you will, while she was trying to regain her strength, being so fragile, she ended up breaking her foot. And at this point, the VA began enforcing their health care directive policy.

Are you guys familiar with that? And Linda, having no family on the island, she would come to me with a request asking me to be her health care directive representative, since I had access to federal health care and facilities because I was in the military. So it was for emergency purposes only. I thought nothing of it. Again, she has no family here. So I just signed the papers. Not a problem. Then in 2022, she would catch COVID, be admitted to the ICU ward. They placed her on a ventilator, gave her “the medication.” No one could visit her, and no one knew her condition but those doctors.

So here it is. Friday afternoon I get a phone call. The doctor says, “Hey, we have you on this health care directive as emergency point of contact for Linda. Her organs are shutting down. She's on life support. It's only a matter of time, but we need your permission to take her off life support.” That's exactly how he said it. And I'm on this phone thinking, “What?”

And then, as only God can, would place this on my heart. Captured in the *Book of 1 Samuel, Chapter 17:37*, the word of God reads, **“Moreover David said, ‘The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.’”**

And all I thought about was everything that Linda had been through, and how the Lord delivered her. And I told the doctor, keep her on life support and call me back on Monday. And he just was like, “I will probably be calling you before then.”

Well, he didn't. On that Monday, they called me back. He said that Linda was fighting the machine, so they took her off life support, and then her organs began to respond, and that she opened her eyes. And I was just blown away, of course, giving God the glory for what He had done. Linda would completely shock all the doctors. And guess what? She would proclaim the name of Jesus through it all.

[ Applause ]

Now, how many of us can say that? No family, no husband, no full-time support. But God will sustain her, and He did, and He did so while keeping her having a servant's heart. And I know this firsthand. Don't forget, a month ago I was in the hospital not doing too well, by the way. And guess who called me? Linda, asking me if I needed anything. Now she still has a long road ahead of her, so we need to keep her in prayer.

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Currently, Linda is at the Oahu Care Facility located at 1808 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96826. And I wanted to provide all of this for all of you, just in case you're in the area, you have a moment and might want to stop by or would like to send her a card or whatever the Lord leads you to do.

She is so strong in the Lord and being used mightily by Him. And even though she does not know why, neither do we know why all of this has happened to her, she wanted me to let everyone know that it's the word of God that keeps me grounded. Those are her words.

And one of her favorite passages of Scripture is captured here in the *Book of Proverbs*, 3:5-6, well-known. As the word of God reads. **“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”** It's not about knowing all; it's about growing tall. So Linda, from Pastor, JD, Pastor Leitu, myself, and all of the saints, we love you and we'll continue to be praying for you.

Oh boy. Now for this next one, our amazing servant. I would like to read the first part. It was captured in the *Book of Matthew* 23:12. Again, the first part. The word of God reads. **“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled...”**

And you see that I highlight the word **“will.”** Because this is the fact of the matter. It's only a matter of time before we are humbled. And when the Lord does it, best believe it's for our good and for His glory. And I say that because God will allow the world to humble us, no question. But again, when God does it and we yield to it, knowing that it's Him becomes unmistakable. And that's a good thing. And that is what our next servant will come to testify to.

His name is Marcus Rosehill, a native Hawaiian, born at Kapiolani Children's Hospital in 1955. Now, Marcus was one of those guys that the guys would look at and just be full of envy. And we know. We understand that. I mean, first of all, he had the looks. Perfect build. I mean, that's what we call swagger.

[ Laughter ]

You just know. And then he would be able to back everything up that he said with his actions. And add to that the fact that he was very —still is — intelligent, graduating with honors from Kamehameha Schools and going on to college at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, earning a degree in tropical agriculture. That alone will shatter my brain. And this would fit nicely within his lifestyle of boating, fishing, surfing, all kinds of water sports. And while he was earning his degree, he would also be working as a firefighter for the Honolulu Fire Department, where he worked for ten years while obtaining another degree in fire science.

Do we see this? It's like whatever Marcus decided to do, it was a done deal. He could not and would not fail, would not stop because he can do it. And he knew it. Well, he's not satisfied with this. No. Marcus would go on to be a commissioned Air Force officer in 1980, and then decided to attend the flight screening program to see if he would qualify to fly.

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And he did. He would go straight from surfing and fishing to flying. So after a series of schools and training, he would graduate pilot training in 1982 and would begin flying the F-4 Phantom for the Air National Guard, with his call sign being — very fitting — Rosie. Only the manliest of men were able to get a chick's name.

[ Laughter ]

I'm serious. We had a guy with blue eyes. We'd call him "pretty." It didn't work well.

[ Laughter ]

Because he looked too pretty. But a manly man.

And he flew those jets from 1983 to 1987. But in 1985, he would be offered a job at Aloha Airlines — they're no longer available. But you remember them, some of you — where he would serve as a first officer. Now, as he remained in the Air National Guard, in 1987 he would begin flying the F-15 Eagle. That's that Top Gun type of plane. And he would prove his pilot skills by winning the pilot of the year award in 1988.

And in that same year, he would be promoted to captain by Aloha Airlines. I mean, you cannot write a book this well at all. Who wouldn't envy this? And once he completed his time in the National Guard in 1994, the brains would go into overdrive as he started planning his retirement. His goal was to build a boat and become a fisherman as well as utilize his boat for various services as a private business owner.

So he had a boat built in 1995. And he would name it Kainipo, which means 'in love with the sea.' He would also have two rental properties on Island, as well as ten acres of Hawaiian land that was being rented for growing and selling palm trees. So in 1998, he retired from Aloha Airlines, and with his boat fully operational, he set off on his new journey at the prime tender age of 43 years old. With his newfound love, Jenette, they were on their way.

Now here's a man in the prime of his life with no debt, no problems, no worries. But sadly, no God. And after five years of living the dream of dreams, Marcus would suffer a massive stroke in 2003. At the time, his girlfriend Jenette and Marcus were on one of their fishing ventures, and he woke up unable to move his right side. He was trying to get up. He was trying to speak, but all he could do was move around a bit and make enough noise to wake up Jenette.

Seeing what was happening, they began to realize the scope. Marcus was one of the most fit men out there, never having any medical problems at all. And was now faced with having to learn how to walk and talk again. He would be in a wheelchair for two months, constantly in rehab, and for the first time in his life, he had to depend on others. And Jenette would tell me that she thought Marcus was going to kill himself because he was not the man that he used to be. And Marcus thought Jenette would leave him. But she didn't. And in August 2004, they got married. Praise God for that. But again, God was not in the picture. And this is a major point that needs to be made here because of the hardness of the heart. It's real.

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Here it is. A massive stroke has occurred. But in his pride, by his own admission, Marcus did not seek the Lord at all. So what would it take?

Well, during this time, Marcus was unable to get a man who had planted palm trees on his land off his land. And this mess would end up in the courts. And instead of getting a lawyer, — pride — Marcus decided to represent himself. So for two years, he studied law, gathered his evidence, witnesses, and everything else that goes along with it, all the while, while still being impacted by this massive stroke.

And so here come the hearings. And hearing after hearing, Marcus continued to lose. It did not matter what evidence he had. Nothing worked in his favor. Nothing. And to make things worse, the deed to his land had been changed while he was recovering, and he knew nothing about it.

So he has this case against him, regarding land that he no longer owns, and the one who now owns the land sold the property, including the palm trees that belonged to the other man, worth \$2.5 million. So guess who got stuck with the bill? Marcus. And that man who lost those palm trees would come after Marcus with all he had, all of his assets. They took both his properties, cleaned out his accounts and then some.

And it was at this point that Marcus cried out to God. In fact, Jenette told me that when Marcus came home from the court that day, he fell to the ground, face flat, and just gave it all to the Lord. He was so broken. Exactly where we need to be. Everything. Everything that he worked for, all of it gone, except one item: His boat.

Fortunately, the boat had been placed in both Marcus' and Jenette's name. So the courts couldn't touch it. And it would be this boat that God would use to get Marcus to Him, as well as use Marcus to minister to people about the Lord. As the Lord would have it, the radio was on, or a podcast, or something like that. And Marcus heard that a pastor who planted a church in Molokai, where he went fishing at, was coming to plant a church here on Oahu. So it got his attention. And they would end up going to this church and become born-again believers, back in 2011.

Afterwards, Marcus began to study the word of God and walk with the Lord and seeking how the Lord was going to use him, which he thought that he could not be used because of his disability. But God had plans for Marcus and would use those seamanship skills that Marcus had. Because with that boat, Marcus has been able to minister to numerous people and has represented the love of the Lord from a vantage point that most of us could never do.

And although he no longer fishes himself, God has truly made him a fisher of men. And even now, with this testimony being heard, be encouraged because this will change the hearts of many who have suffered in a similar way. We all need to learn from this and cry out to the Lord and give it all to Him.

This is the word of God. The word of God speaks to this captured in the *Book of Psalms 120:1*. The word of God reads. **“In my distress I cried to the Lord, and He heard me.”**

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Marcus and Jenette, God bless you both. And know that the Lord is truly using you. And Marcus, these tents that we're in, not much longer, baby. Not much longer. Continue being that disciple that the Lord has made you. Because I'm of the belief that your 14-year boat ministry has impacted more people than 40 years of full-time ministry within countless so-called churches because you do it in the name of the Lord, and that's the difference.

Now, before we close out, I do have one more testimony that needed to be added, and it's really just beginning. But it's so powerful. And I'm talking about a young lady whose name is Brielle. And you can see on the screen that I added to it 'the ballerina' because she loved to dance and would end up being accepted to the School of American Ballet, located at the Lincoln Center Plaza in New York, a few blocks from Broadway.

Now, this is a big deal. To be accepted to this school is huge. Only about 10% of those who audition get accepted. Now think about that. And just because you were accepted this year does not mean you're going to be accepted next year. And Brielle was accepted at the age of 12. And each year that she would audition. There was no stopping her dance.

And she told me that dancing was her life. In fact, she put it to me like this. It was her god. But one thing that she had to deal with is that she was diagnosed with scoliosis right before she was accepted into the school, but it was decided to wait to correct it because it was not causing any problems. But that would change. At the age of 15, her position had gone from mild to severe, which required surgery.

Now, based on the statistics, this should have been more of a routine-level type of surgery, allowing her to make a full recovery and continue her career in ballet. But that's not what happened. Her body would end up rejecting the hardware that's installed and would end up giving her permanent nerve damage with constant pains radiating from her spine that travels throughout her body. And this only happens to 1% of patients that have this procedure. And that lot would fall to Brielle.

This completely removed her from dancing. And like I said, dancing was her life. And now she would have to make constant life adjustments just to help with managing the pain because the pain has the potential to always be there, so it can only be managed.

And I don't know about any of you, but if you have had nerve pain before, nerve pain is painful. And sometimes there is nothing that you can do but tear up and hope that it goes away just a little bit so you can think. It's paralyzing. And this is what her life would turn into before she would even turn 16. And all her loving parents could do is just watch hopelessly as the child suffers.

And Brielle told me that she became bitter. And even though she had gone to a Christian school in the past, she wanted nothing to do with the things of God. And as often as the pain spells would come, her bitterness would grow. But God would use her bitterness for His glory because she would become so bitter that she wanted to read the Bible just to see where it was wrong. She had no intentions on becoming a believer. It was mostly done out of spite just to see what is this thing about.

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So she began to read from Genesis to Revelation. And then she knew that the word of God was true. She told me that it was not some major experience or some epiphany. It was simply the word of God. And ever since then, she has been on fire for the Lord, baptized in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Spirit. And she is filled with the Spirit, not just indwelling; I mean filled. And it's amazing to see.

And please know that her circumstances have not changed, but her heart has been renewed. And she would put many of us to shame, being a three-year-old Christian or so. Already, she has read through three different versions of the Bible. And she has a deep desire for biblical studies, even challenging herself by taking courses that require 50 hours a week of dedicated learning. Now she doesn't have to do it, but she gets to do it, and she wants to do it. And God will honor her for it.

Now, I don't have a picture of her. but they are actually in town for a while, and prayerfully, those of you who are here will have a chance to meet her, Angela, her mother, and my brother in Christ and man of the house, a man of God, Howard. And I would say that her name, Brielle, is being shown by her nature, "for God is my strength." God bless you, Brielle. And God bless all of you. Why don't we stand so we can pray?

Father in Heaven, thank You so much for these amazing saints. Those who have and continue to go through difficulties, but yet, serve You. Lord, give us that type of servant's heart. May we serve You with all we have. Let us learn from this and be convicted in the right way so that we can live out our lives doing Your perfect will. Thank You for being who You are, once again, Father. And just go before us and keep us submitted to You. As we go our separate ways, let us leave nothing behind, but take it all with us. In the mighty name of Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen.