

Series: *“How to Survive in the Kingdom of God”*



Message: *“Law of Righteousness, Law of Works, and Law of Faith”*

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*Dr. Mary Craig,*

*Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.*

We are discussing spiritual laws from the scriptures that govern life in the Kingdom of God. Jesus told us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. We spoke of how to enter the Kingdom of God. Now we are talking about life in that Kingdom.

Yes, God has laws or operating principles within the Kingdom of God. To the extent that we know them and utilize them, our lives go better for us. We come to know better who God is and His ways.

We discussed the law of Truth. Malachi 2:6 told us that the law of Truth is in the mouth. Jesus Christ is the Truth. Jesus is the embodiment of Truth and as our great high priest, the law of Truth is in His mouth. The Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit, that two edged sword coming out of His mouth as He spoke truly.

We saw how Jesus spoke as He heard the Father and He did as He saw the Father doing. This is the pattern for us as well. We emphasize the spiritual reality of the Word of God, the truth coming out of the mouth of God, the God-breathed Word. And we discussed the rule - as in heaven so on earth. Of course we pray for this. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, but this should be a principle that is our heart's desire -- as in heaven so let it be on earth.

In heaven, God rules supremely and He is to be acknowledged that He rules supremely and has the preeminence on earth as well. We are to give up false idols and idol worship and worship the One, True, and Living God. We are indeed to hallow the Father's name. Jesus spoke and did as He heard and saw His Father in heaven. In heaven God's perfect will is done. His perfect will is obeyed -- as in heaven so let it be on earth.

Now we're going to consider the Law of Righteousness, the Law of Works, and the Law of Faith. We'll begin by reading from Romans 9:30 – Romans 10:4.

*“What shall we say then that Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith, but Israel pursuing a law of righteousness did not arrive at that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it is by works. They stumbled over the stumbling-stone just as it is written: ‘Behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation for I bear them witness that they have a Zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge, for not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”*

Leviticus 18:4, 5: “You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes to live in accord with them. I am the Lord your God, so you shall keep My statutes and My judgments by which a man may live if he does them. I am the Lord.” It is basically ‘do this and you will live.’

So how then is the law of righteousness kept? Sinful humanity whose flesh inclines to evil cannot do it. The answer is in understanding the Law of Faith. **The Law of Faith states that one can be justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.**

Romans 10:1-13. Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, “The man who does those things shall live by them.” But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*) or, “‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” Romans 10:1-13 NKJV

This brings the repentance unto life. The Law of Truth is in our mouths, and our hearts appropriate that truth, relying upon it, trusting it, obeying it.

Romans 3:27, 28: “Where then is boasting? It is excluded by what kind of law? of work? No, but by the law of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith, apart from works of the law.”

Here we see that the Law of righteousness refers to obedience to God. The Law of Works in Romans 3:27 is contrasted with the Law of Faith. Works of righteousness fall short to bring about the righteousness of God. Works done by sinful humans cannot fulfill the Law of Righteousness so as to bring us life. We fail to merit life. This law however, is superseded by the Law of Faith. Faith justifies us before God such that we attain to the righteous demands of God through belief in Jesus Christ, our substitute.

It's kind of funny, but a few years back my husband had been working on a sermon coming out of the book of Job, an Easter message, you know, “I know that my redeemer lives” and things like that and he was talking about Job and all the things that came upon Job and how Job's friends would come to him and they were trying to find some secret sin. And we were talking in the kitchen and I laughed and I said, “oh but Job did have a secret sin! I said, “Job had that first Adam Humanity Sin; he had that sin that just comes down from the imputation of Adam’s sin.” Kind of like all of us have this secret sin that we're living with.

You see we're all in that totally corrupt club, together. This is the whole point: we cannot have a righteousness by works. We cannot attain to the righteous demands of God through our own

efforts, through works, because we always have this in the background. We are just unable to please God and sin has been imputed to us through Adam, from Adam's sin, his cosmic treason.

Jesus Christ takes that away. He is our substitute, offering Himself voluntarily as a substitutionary atonement in our place and for our benefit as Surety of the Covenant in His Blood. We attain to the righteous demands of God only through belief in Jesus Christ. The Law of Faith states that if we believe God, that is believe His Word and His promise, it is accounted to us for righteousness. Romans 3:31 says, **“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.”**

Let's just pause here a little bit and come up with a few what I call little ditties here. One that I have come up with is:

“Believe and you will see. First with the spiritual eye, then to the physical eye.” (Mary Craig) And another that might help us is:

“The eye of faith sees with the mind of Christ.” (Mary Craig)

We believe what we choose to believe and our actions will reveal our true beliefs. We believe the promise of God in His promised Messiah and we are saved, declared righteous. We believe Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and we receive the Holy Spirit. The scripture tells us that “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”

Hebrews 11 tells us that faith governs all. By the Word of God the worlds were framed. We are to believe that God is and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him. We have heard testimonies and you can ask anyone who is a born-again believer to testify that ‘God is and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him.’ We believe what God says and we are assured that it will come to pass. God is faithful and He also shall bring His Word to pass. We are convinced that whatever the One, True, and Living God says is so.

We read the Word and hear it in our ears, we attend to it in our hearts. In other words, we pay attention, we listen up!, Our minds grasp and hold on to that Word. Deep inside where we live, the Word also lives. We believe; we operate on that belief system. We do not doubt. The true believer believes in Jesus, believes Jesus, and believes what Jesus believes.

James 1:5-8: **“but if any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of God who gives to all men generously and without reproach and it will be given to him. But, let him ask in faith, without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”**

Boiling it down, God is holy and His ways, holy. His Law is holy, spiritual, just, and good. The demand of God's righteousness is obedience—perfect, personal, perpetual obedience. But Adam sinned; he believed another word, another wisdom, and plunged humanity into the estate of sin and misery. Therefore, the Scriptures say there is none righteous, no not one; and all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We're in trouble, folks.

The Law cannot give life. It stands there as the standard of God's righteousness. It says, Do this and you will live. But we cannot attain or merit eternal life. Titus 3:4-7. When someone believes in Jesus Christ truly, he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ because of what Christ has done. Christ died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. We believe it and put our faith, our trust, in Jesus Christ alone to make us acceptable to God, who “is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His Being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. (Q 4, Westminster Shorter Catechism 1674) We get back to the Father only through and by

Jesus, the Beloved, the Anointed One, the Messiah. In Him is life. The Holy Spirit is the Life-Maker, the Life-Producer. Eternal life is a gift, a free gift to all who believe in Jesus, believe Him, and believe what He believes.

There's so much more, and we'll be talking about it. Let us remember the Lord our God.

For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. **4**But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, **5**not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, **6**whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7**that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:3-7 NKJV

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Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.

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## Mary Craig, D. Min.



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