LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 15 (Part 2) :21-28

The Faith of the Canaanite Woman

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

We are picking up our study here in Matthew at verse 21 so if you would follow along while I read. It says, leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him crying out, Lord son of David have mercy on me. My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession. And Jesus did not answer a word.

So his disciples came to him and urged him, send her away for she keeps crying out after us. And he answered, I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. The woman came and knelt before him. Lord help me, she said. He replied, it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.

Yes Lord, she said, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table. And then Jesus answered, woman, you have great faith. Your request is granted. And her daughter was healed from that very hour. Would you pray with me please?

Father God, open our hearts to the ministry of your word and speak to us what you would have us to know and understand from these scriptures. Give us insight, give us understanding, give us wisdom we pray and direct us Lord according to your word in Jesus name. Amen. Once again for those of you who are taking notes I'm going to put some headings up because I think this is good to connect you to what the passage is saying. And so there's three headings that I want to put up.

I'll put up on the screen. You can write them down if you're taking notes. The first one is when God is silent. The second heading that we're going to be looking at is pressing through the silence. And then the third one is faith and determination.

So let's begin with the first one when God is silent. We'll just kind of highlight that one and put that one by itself. Verse 21 begins with the words leaving that place and that refers to the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. It says Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Matthew doesn't tell us why.

Mark does. He says that Jesus got away because he needed some time away. He wanted to be. He's been trying to get away with his disciples now for quite some time and every time they try to people hear about where they are and they go and they you know basically kind of mob him wherever he is. And that's going to happen here as well even though Jesus probably figured in Tyre and Sidon he'd get some relief but it didn't happen there.

The usual crowds gathered once they found out where he was. Let me put up a quick map so you can kind of see a little bit where Tyre and Sidon are in relationship to Galilee and then of course you've got to go much farther south than that down into what is we traditionally think of as Israel today but I put a couple of circles around the cities of Tyre and Sidon. They are considered to be Phoenician cities. We have some very famous people who came from there not people who are necessarily folks that we want to follow their example but you know Hiram king of Tyre was the one who provided all of the wood from the trees of Lebanon for David's palace and also for the temple when Solomon was king and then you'll remember Jezebel was actually the daughter of a king from that same region so they were pagans it was considered to be a Canaanite city. People don't often realize that the cities of Tyre and Sidon were actually included in the allotment of Israel when Joshua allotted the land this was in the tribal allotment of Asher the tribe of Asher but they never took it and so they remained Canaanite cities they never conquered the area but it was in the allotment of that area then we're told in verse 22 if you look with me in your Bible that a Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him obviously Jesus crying out Lord son of David have mercy on me my daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession this is this is the cry of distress every mother among us who has you know has ever struggled with the suffering of her child knows exactly what this cry of distress is all about but there's something significant to this woman's understanding of who Jesus is did you notice that she cries out to him and doesn't say rabbi doesn't say teacher doesn't say master she calls him son of David now that's a messianic title she is in a sense saying to him Messiah have mercy on me the significance of that is that she's a Canaanite woman a lot of the Jews will struggle during the life and ministry of Jesus to come to some kind of a connection connecting point between Jesus and his messianic ministry this woman's already got it dialed in and right from the beginning you know it doesn't even say she's heard him speak a lick because he's gone to this area to get away and yet she finds where he is and she says you know son of David have mercy on me I want you to notice here how Jesus responded or didn't respond as the case may be it says in verse 23 that Jesus did not answer a word now immediately I could kind of feel the tension in the room grow I don't know if you when you're reading this passage if the tension in your own heart grows at least initially when you when you first read this here's a woman who is obviously experiencing horrible grief and sorrow and and maybe even a little panic over the the spiritual condition of her daughter she comes to Jesus she obviously seeks

him out begging for mercy Lord son of David you know please have mercy on me have mercy on my daughter she's suffering terribly then nothing worse than seeing your children suffer any parent who has seen their child suffer instantly wants to take that suffering on themselves Lord please let me suffer in their place but just to watch your child go through some kind of a suffering that you can't do anything about and and she she is she she finally realizes there's something I can do this Jesus whom I've heard something of and she goes to him makes that effort and you know she had a lot of things going against her related to this whole request first of all she was a Canaanite and then and there was not a good relationship between the people of that region and the Jews secondly she was a woman from the standpoint that during that time and in that culture many of the rabbis just ignored women they would not respond to them just simply because they were women and that was also kind of going against her and there were a lot of other things but she pressed through anyway and yet she is met by the Lord with silence and that is significant and the reason it's significant is because you have to remember something when we see Jesus acting some way responding some way in the Gospels we have to remember that's how God responds and this isn't necessarily one that we would want to think about I mean we like to think about him healing and showing compassion and and blessing that little children and we love hearing about those things because we think well yeah you know that's the heart of God we see it in the person of Jesus the Son of God we know that when Jesus acts that's how God acts and we can just know that but here's another interesting one again they might want to put on your refrigerator but this is an understanding nonetheless of of God and that is that sometimes he doesn't respond when we initially go to him in prayer have you found that out to be true yeah me too so this is this is this is something that is kind of corroborated for us here in the word and what's more we see it happening elsewhere how many times in the Psalms have you read the the heart of the psalmist as he cries out to the Lord and says where are you you know there there's a there's a very poignant passionate cry from the Prophet Habakkuk then I'll put up on the screen for you he cries out and says how long Oh Lord he says must I call for help but you do not listen he's making an assumption there that God isn't hearing him but he says or cry out to you violence but you do not save see sometimes this is the reality this is the situation that we we come to the Lord we cry out to the Lord and we are met with silence why does God remain silent well were it not for some scriptural hints you and I would have to say No.

I mean, you know, I don't possess any more insight than you do as to why God remains silent. We can see some things in scripture that help us gain a little bit of understanding, but by and large, the whole thing is caught up in the mystery of the knowledge of God. I mean, there are some things that are given to us. In the Word, you'll remember that when Daniel received some visions and dreams from the Lord that he found quite troubling, he cried out to God and he asked the Lord, what is this? What's this mean?

Do you remember this passage? It's in Matthew, or excuse me, Daniel chapter 10. And finally, he received a visitation. And this angelic being spoke to him and said, do not be afraid, Daniel, since the first day you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But then he explained why there was a delay.

He said, the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me 21 days, three weeks. And then Michael, he says, one of the chief princes, speaking of an angel, came to help me because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision contains a time yet to come. But essentially, what the angel told Daniel during that visitation was there was spiritual opposition to the answer getting to you, okay? So did you ever, when you pray, have you ever stopped to think that that might be the case?

When you don't receive a ready answer, have you ever stopped to think, maybe there's some spiritual warfare going on that I'm not even aware of? Now, had this angel not told Daniel what was going on, he wouldn't have known. All he would have known is that I'm crying to God and I'm not getting an answer, that's all he knew. And that's all you and I ever really know. I'm talking to God and I'm not getting a response.

But sometimes, at least the Bible suggests to us in this passage, that sometimes there are situations where spiritual opposition can come into play. How often that happens, I have absolutely no idea. All I'm saying is that the Bible cites this example. And then there is another example in the New Testament. You'll remember that when Paul was writing his second letter to the Corinthians, he made them aware of the fact that there was a physical infirmity that he was struggling with, did not want, and had asked the Lord to remove.

We don't know precisely what it was. We have some pretty good ideas in our guests as to what Paul was struggling with because he makes reference to the Galatians of a disease he had with his eyes. He told the Galatian churches, he says, the reason I even came to you is because I was ill. And then he goes on to say, and I can testify that had you been able to, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. Which tells us that more than likely, Paul was struggling from some kind of an infectious disease of the eyes.

And if that is what he's talking about, in second Corinthians, then it does give a little more weight to our understanding, but it really doesn't matter ultimately because what we know from second Corinthians is he was burdened by something that he didn't want. And he was asking the Lord to remove it. And he

came to the Lord and said, I want you to remove, Lord, please remove this. No answer. He came to the Lord a second time.

Lord, I want you to remove this. Please remove this from my life. No answer. And then Paul, you know, went to the Lord a third time. And it was then that the Lord told him why he had that physical infirmity.

He writes about it in second Corinthians 12. This is what he says. To keep me from becoming conceited or puffed up or vain. Because of all of the amazing, surpassingly great revelations that had been given to me, he said, there was then given to me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me. And he tells us here, he says, three times I went to the Lord.

I pleaded with him to take it away. But ultimately, after obviously the third or I don't know how many, probably after the third time, the Lord then said to him, no, I'm not gonna remove that from your life. My grace is sufficient for you to deal with this situation for my power is made perfect in your weakness. But he tells us at the very beginning of this passage, what the whole purpose was. He says it was to keep him, to keep his feet on the ground.

Have you ever noticed physical suffering has a way of doing that? I hate to admit it. I hate to admit it. I do not want to admit it before the Lord. Lord, when I suffer, it just seems like you just kind of keep me a little bit more connected to my roots of humanity.

Don't want to say that. Don't want to have to say that. I would like to be able to say, Lord, I am connected to the roots of my humanity, even without suffering. Thank you very much. But it's just frankly not the case most of the time.

And Paul was no different than you and I. And so here he goes before the Lord repeatedly and does not get an answer. But I want you to notice something. He kept asking. He pressed on.

And so that gives us a little insight into what we should do when we pray and we don't get an answer. What are you going to do? You're going to get discouraged. Some of us do. You're going to get depressed.

Some of us do. Are you going to get mad at God? Some of us do. But let's take a look at what we see happening in this passage. It's the next point on our outline.

And it is pressing through the silence. Verse 23 in your Bible. So his disciples came to him and urged him, send her away for she keeps crying out after us. You know, I always thought that what the disciples

were saying about the woman was just, would you get rid of her? But do you know that the Greek suggests in the send her away, it suggests sending her away, but satisfied.

The full idea of this Greek phrase means send her away and give her what she wants and get rid of her because she's bugging us. They got bugged. Jesus wasn't bugged. He wasn't saying anything to her, but he wasn't bugged, but they're bugged. Send her away.

She continued to cry after the Lord and Jesus is not responding. Now, I want you to kind of think of this in your mind's eye. This woman is crying repeatedly, Lord, son of David, have mercy on my child. Lord, son of David, over, we don't know how long, but over and over to the point of embarrassment to the disciples. And eventually they say to Jesus, would you just do this for her?

Send her away, give her what she wants and send her on her way. She's, you know, she's irritating us and so forth. Well, I don't know what the woman thought of at this particular point. Maybe she was thinking, wow, maybe finally these guys are speaking on my behalf. Now I've gotten noticed at least.

At least I've bugged them long enough that the disciples took notice and so forth. Surely, you know, Jesus, if he won't respond to them, maybe he'll respond to them. If he won't respond to me rather, maybe he'll respond to them and give me what I want. And what does Jesus say? Jesus actually still doesn't turn to the woman and even say anything.

He turns to his disciples and he says, listen, guys, I was only sent to the lost sheep of Israel. Wow, yet another roadblock to answered prayer. Now we don't just have silence, we have a roadblock. Do you know the difference? It's one thing to be met with silence.

It's another thing to be met with just boom, you just get stopped. And it's from the very one from whom she's seeking help. And she hears him say to his disciples, I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. Some of you might be wondering what that's all about. Well, you know, it was basically just God's plan.

God's plan was that when Jesus came, he would come and bring the good news to the house of Israel. That was the plan. The plan was for them to either receive or reject their Messiah who had been prophesied to them. And then upon his rejection by the Jews, you know that it was the apostles who received the commission then to go to all of the world and to take the gospel to the Gentiles and so forth. But that wasn't in God's timing yet for what was supposed to be happening.

So to this woman though, she's not thinking, you know, her thought isn't the redemptive program of God, you know, the timing of the Lord in terms of, you know, when the Gentiles get to hear versus when

the Jews get to hear, have the Gentiles not yet received an open door because the Jews haven't yet rejected fully their Messiah and so forth. She's not, she doesn't care. She's got a little girl who's suffering. That's all she cares about. And she has come against another roadblock.

Boom. What does she do? You know, it's funny, my little grandson, Liam, who's two and a half years old, when he gets disappointed, his shoulders just drop, and he just goes. And then he'll walk around just like that. You know, he says, Grandpa, can I have an ice cream bar?

No, you can't have an ice cream bar, or something like that, you know, and then he walks around like that. He wants me to know how poor he is. You know, it's kind of that, it's emotional manipulation, we know what it is, and so forth, but he'll learn, you know, he's two and a half, he hasn't had his full amount of whoopings yet, I guess. Anyway, cute kid though, and I think he knows it. But this woman, this woman, continues.

She continues. She continues to press in. Look with me in verse 25. The woman, now, she comes, it says, she knelt before him, Lord, help me. This is desperation, you guys.

Lord, help me. Now we know, we've already, we've been through so much of the book of Matthew, we know how Jesus responds to the human condition. Over and over and over again, we have seen him, and we're going to see it here at the end of this chapter again, that the compassion of the Lord is just going to overflow. We know he's compassionate. Did you guys hear what I just said?

We know he's compassionate. Do you know he's compassionate? But we doubt it sometimes, don't we? When? When we don't get an answer.

Rather than continuing to believe what we know, we allow the silence to change what we know, to alter what we know. We allow the silence to speak into what we know and change it. Well, I thought the Lord, I thought the Lord was full of compassion, but, well, what are you going to believe? You going to believe the word of God or you going to believe your circumstances? See that's what it comes down to.

Do your circumstances trump the revelation of God's word? You know what? We're all going to be completely, painfully honest, we're going to say, sometimes. Sometimes they do. God catches me in it, he'll rebuke me gently, lovingly, but yeah, sometimes my circumstances trump what I know and they tell me what's true rather than the word of God.

And I'm disappointed and I'm discouraged because I'm not getting the answer that I wanted in prayer and then I open my Bible and I read about how God is so gracious and compassionate and I go, I don't see

it. I mean, we may not verbalize that, maybe we do, but in most cases we don't, we'd be afraid to in front of somebody else, but you know what it causes us to do? We just do this. That's what we do. We may not have one single word come out of our mouth, we just close the Bible.

Well, let's just get busy with life. There's things that need to be done, family that needs to be raised, work that needs to be accomplished. Let's just get busy, do it, do what's in front of us, you know? That's what we do. And we don't talk about it, we don't mention it to anybody.

Somebody says, hey, you going to go to church? Yeah, I was going to, but I just got some things I got to get done and if I don't get them done today, I'm probably not going to get them done. So I think I better stick back and just, you know, or I don't know, I'm just kind of tired. You know, Sunday is my only day, you know? It's the only day I really have to myself.

So I think, let's just kind of play hooky this week and then this week turns into next week and into next week. And what's going on, and we kind of think that we're just kind of like a little disinterested, you know? But what's really going on underneath the surface is we've been disappointed by the silence. And we allowed that silence and that disappointment to be injected into our understanding of the character of God. And it changed it.

We didn't even mean for it to happen, but it did. And now we see God differently than what his word says, rather than taking the word and saying, no, this is the truth. And what I'm believing is a lie. We don't like to do that usually. We don't like to call ourselves a liar, but isn't that what the word says, that our hearts are deceitful?

Do you know that's the definition of deceit? To deceive. Your heart will deceive you related to your understanding of God and so forth. But this woman continues to press in, which by the way, I'll just interject a little personal opinion, but I'll tell you right here and right now that I think it is personal opinion. But I think this is what Jesus wanted her to do.

In fact, I think he was baiting her, not in a cruel sort of a way, but in a way that her faith might be developed and fortified and that it might learn to press through. And so he speaks to her and so forth in this and really wants her to press through on this. And there's another reason why I believe that Jesus wants her to press through because it's consistent with his other teaching on prayer. Do you know there are two passages in the book of Luke where he talks about this very thing? We'll just read them quickly on the screen.

First of all, from Luke chapter 11, it says, then he said to them, suppose one of you has a friend and he goes to him at midnight and he says, Hey friend, I like how he leads it into it. Lend me three loaves of bread because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me and I have nothing to set before him. Then the one inside answers, don't bother me just because you didn't plan for your guests. That's the implication. The door is already locked and my children are with me in bed.

I can't get up and give you anything. Jesus says, I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he's his friend. Yet because of the man's boldness, he will get up and give him as much as he needs. Look at that because of his boldness, he'll do it. And so I say to you, ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find knock and the door will be open to you. For everyone who asks, receives he who seeks finds it in him who knocks, the door will be opened. So you see, this is why I think that Jesus wanted the woman to respond just this way because this is consistent with his teaching about how he wants people to come to God in prayer. He wants us to come boldly and that idea of boldly is almost kind of like brashly or that's not right. With a confidence that says, hey, you're good and this is what I need and I'm coming to you because there's no one else to come to, you know.

And then again in the book of Luke from chapter 18, it says that then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. And he said in a certain town there was this judge who neither feared God nor cared about men and then there was also this widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea grant me justice against my adversary and for some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, you know what, even though I don't fear God or care a lick about men yet, you know, because this woman is just constantly coming and bothering me, I'm going to see that she gets justice so that she won't eventually wear me out with all her coming. And the Lord said, listen to what the unjust judge says and will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

I tell you, he will see that they get justice and quickly. However, when the son of man comes and by the way, he is coming, he asked this question, will he find faith on the earth? Isn't that an interesting and rather sobering question to hear at the end of a parable about continuing to press on in prayer? He gives this parable and by the way, it's the second one in the gospel of Luke and then he ends it with this, he says, so when I return, here I'm telling you a story about how you need to keep going, keep going, keep going, keep pressing, keep praying, don't give up. So when I come back, will I find faith on the earth?

People, what does it take to press through? It takes faith. Faith in what? Faith in the goodness and compassion of God. Listen, listen, if I have a need.

And I believe that Mr. X over here can meet my need, but I don't believe Mr. X cares a hoot about me. I'm gonna be hindered in coming to him. And if I go and I ask him, would you help me with this?

And he says to me, get out of my face. Absolutely not. Knowing what I know about him, I'm probably not gonna be like the woman in this parable. Because I'm gonna figure he doesn't care. And so I'm gonna just say, well, that's a dead end.

But what if I go to someone who genuinely cares and I am convinced beyond a shadow of doubt, that person genuinely cares. I mean, has aching compassion for me, who delights to show mercy. What then? What then? If I don't receive a ready answer the first time, will I go back?

Well, if I still believe, if I haven't allowed these circumstances and this silence to affect what I believe, and I still believe, you know what? He loves me. He wants me. He wants the best for me. He is overflowing with compassion for me.

He loves to show mercy. Am I gonna go back? Oh, you darn tootin' I will. Because this person cares. Do you see the difference?

Do you see? This is what we have faith in. Faith in the revealed word of God that says, this is how I am. Yeah, sometimes I will meet your prayer with silence. But it's not because I don't care.

You might think that. Others may try to convince you of that. That's not what's going on here. I don't say I care about you and then say I don't care about you in the same breath. That's not my personality.

That's not my character, God says. What I am, I am. And what I have always been, I will always be. I love you with an everlasting love. I will never leave you nor forsake you.

I will not abandon you, you know. And that's not gonna change. Even if you and I don't get an answer, that's not gonna change. So we come to the last point on our notes and it is faith and determination. Now Jesus responds to the woman this time.

He doesn't respond just to his disciples. He responds to the woman and he says to her, verse 26, it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs. Boom. Another wall. Another wall.

Another barrier. Would you have given up by now? Would you have done like Liam? Shoulders forward, down, arms hanging limply at your side and just walk away, lip outstretched, bottom lip, you know. Don't you love how kids do that to let you know you've just hurt me bad.

Would you respond that way to God? By the way, Jesus isn't being cruel here. When he says to her, you know, it's not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs, he's simply stating a fact. And every parent understands this. You know, you don't let your children starve and instead give the money, or the money rather, the food to their pets.

I mean, what parent would do that? Would take the food and show the kids and then go, here kids, look it. Watch while Fido eats. No parent in their right mind would do that because you love your children. And so Jesus is simply making a simple statement of reality.

You don't do that. The job, again, that Jesus had received was to reach the lost children of Israel. But after all this, this amazing woman is not disappointed. She is not deterred and she comes to him in verse 27 and she says, yes, Lord, you're right. You're right what you say.

I wouldn't give my food to my dogs and not give it to my children. That's true. But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table. And you know, she is absolutely right. You know, once again, referring to my youngest grandson, Liam, they have a dog at their house.

They live over in Meridian, but they have a dog, 90 pound, husky malamute, kind of a cross, big, huge dog. Whenever it's mealtime and they sit at the table, the dog's name is Buddy. Buddy knows which end of the table to sit at. It's not Andy's side, it's not Nellie, it's Liam's side because the dog is smart enough to know that a two-year-old is very messy and there's going to be more than crumbs falling on the floor. There's going to be chunks, and I'm talking chunks.

I mean, sometimes when Liam doesn't like it, he does kind of one of those little, this was good, Mom, eat it, Buddy, you know, sort of a thing. You know how that goes. But even if he likes what he's eating, half of it's going to hit the floor, you know, and he'll wear some of it and then, and he'll eat some of it. And Liam gets a pretty good, or Buddy, rather, gets a pretty good meal from just sitting close to Liam at the dinner table. It's a common thing.

The dogs are going to eat the scraps that fall from the table. Basically, what the woman is saying to Jesus is, fine, don't give me what you're giving the children. That's fine, no problem. I'll just take the crumbs. Do you see the point of what she's saying?

Listen, a crumb is good enough. Do you see this woman's faith? A crumb will suffice. Where somebody else would say, you know, if you're not willing to put on a banquet for me, well then, just okay with you then. I'm cutting you out and that's it from here.

No, no, no, no, not this woman. The humility that you see here in this woman, the brokenness, the heart of just lowliness that says, fine, I'll take a crumb, one crumb, and it's done, and she is declaring his power. And it really is an amazing thing. And you can tell it's an amazing thing by how Jesus then responds to her. Verse 28, then Jesus said, woman, woman, you have great faith.

You know, isn't that crazy that it's two Gentiles who hear that from Jesus? Two Gentiles, wow, you are amazing. Most of the Jews would hear over and over again, oh, you have little faith. In fact, the guys who are with him constantly hear, oh, you have little faith, oh, you have little faith, and they keep seeing him doing all these amazing things. This woman only heard about things and she says, I'll just take a crumb, that's enough.

And Jesus says, woman, you have great faith. Your request is granted. And her daughter was healed from that very hour. And what we have for you and I is a testimony, a powerful testimony of faith that perseveres and hangs on, even when it comes up against roadblock after roadblock after roadblock, disappointment after potential disappointment, it keeps pressing, it keeps moving toward the goal of the answer and so forth. And I love this passage because it convicts me.

It convicts me in my prayer life. You know, Paul, what do you, how do you pray? Do you pray even half like this woman? Do you continue to press in? Do you continue to believe for good things even when everything around you seems to suggest otherwise and so forth?

Let me end here this morning by sharing a passage with you that I'm quite sure that most, if not all of you are familiar with. It's from James chapter one and James writes this. He says, consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds and here's why, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance in people. Perseverance is the ability to have longevity in your walk of faith, to continue on, to continue on, to continue on even when everything around you says give up. And James ends by saying that this work that God is doing in us, this work of developing perseverance must be completed, he says, because that is maturity.

That is what, he basically says that is completeness, not lacking anything when you just keep persevering, you just keep pressing in. So do you know what James is telling? us here? Are you ready for one more little final kind of slap in the face? I'm getting it too.

When you and I give up, that's a sign of immaturity. When we give up in prayer, when we put our shoulders forward and droop our arms and stick out our lower lip, that's immaturity. We see it in a two-year-old and we recognize it immediately as the kind of stuff a two-year-old does. When we see it in a full-grown Christian, we look at it and we say, it's immaturity. When I allow the circumstances of my life to change what I believe about God, that's immaturity.

Rather, rather I should see this, James says, as a test of faith. Faith that is developing in me a level of perseverance and the ability to stay on course, endurance that holds on till the end, doesn't give up, keeps going. That's hard. That's hard stuff. But James says, I want you to start to look at these things that come into your life that just make you crazy.

And I know there's a lot of them, but I want you to start looking at these things for what they are. It's a test, a test of your faith. It's developing a work of perseverance in you and that work has to be done. I know you hate it. It's painful, messes with your holidays and weekends and stuff like that, but it's something that needs to be done.

God is doing a good work. And the reason is, is he is a good God.