Reigning in Life: The Two Keys to Living Victorious

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> *“For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive* ***abundance of grace*** *and of the* ***gift of righteousness*** *will* ***reign in life*** *through the One, Jesus Christ.”* — **Romans 5:17 (NKJV)**

> **Highlight key:** = grace / *apart-from-works* truth · = the precious gift · **bold** = key terms

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Quick Recap: Can God Allow Sickness Like Job?

In our Bible study we asked a big question: *Can God allow sickness in our lives the way He allowed it for Job?* The answer is **no** — and here are the **four reasons** why Job’s situation isn’t ours.

> Note: Job was **blameless and upright** — but *not yet righteous* the way we now are in Christ. **Hebrews 10** shows the difference between his life and ours.

#	What Job lacked	What we have in Christ
1	**Temporary righteousness** — he sacrificed animals every year (Hebrews 10: the blood of bulls and goats only *covers* sin)	**Everlasting righteousness** — fully *cleansed*, once and for all
2	He believed *“God gives and God takes away”*	God only **gives** — *“the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy, but I have come to give life”* (John 10:10). God is **not** a thief
3	**No mediator** — Job longed for one	We have **Jesus** as our Mediator

#	What Job lacked	What we have in Christ
4	The devil could still **enter heaven** and request to harm him	Jesus **cleansed heaven** with His blood (Hebrews 9) — the devil lost his access, and Jesus gave **the authority to us**

The key verse behind each reason

1 Everlasting righteousness: Job's yearly sacrifices could never finish the job —

> *"For it is **not possible** that the blood of bulls and of goats should **take away sins**."* — **Hebrews 10:4 (KJV)**

2 God only gives: the *stealing* belongs to the thief, not to God —

> *"The **thief** cometh not, but for to **steal, and to kill, and to destroy**: I am come that they might have **life**, and that they might have it **more abundantly**."* — **John 10:10 (KJV)**

3 We have a Mediator: what Job longed for, we already have —

> *"For there is one God, and **one mediator** between God and men, the man **Christ Jesus**."* — **1 Timothy 2:5 (KJV)**

4 Heaven is purified: Christ entered heaven itself for us —

> *"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands… but into **heaven itself**, now to appear in the **presence of God** for us."* — **Hebrews 9:24 (KJV)**

> *Why would heaven need cleansing if it's holy?* Adam once had access to heaven, but he handed the **key** to the devil — who could then enter heaven and request permission to afflict Job. Once Jesus cleansed heaven with His own blood, the devil **lost that access for good.** And Jesus didn't keep the authority to Himself: *"I have given you the authority."* It's now **yours.**

> The blessings of the world can be temporary — but the blessing of the Lord is **everlasting**, and He adds no sorrow with it.

> *Side note:* The **Bereans** searched the word in depth and were called **noble** for it. The deeper we go, the more fruit comes out.

What Does “Reign in Life” Even Mean?

Romans 5:17 says we will **reign in life.** But are we *currently* reigning? Let’s check:

- If a problem overtakes you → the **problem** is reigning over you.
- If sickness moves in → **sickness** is reigning over you.
- If you have no peace → **peacelessness** is reigning over you.

Too often, the world reigns over us when it should be the other way around.

> **Adam and Eve reigned in life** — authority over everything, a life free of sickness, pain, and sorrow. Only *after* sin did death and everything else rush in.

That original life is **God’s ultimate goal for you.**

> **The hero-and-villain story:** We only feel satisfied when the hero defeats the villain and restores everything — *and then some.* That’s the Bible. God is the **King of kings** and the **hero of heroes**. If even a simple hero longs to set everything right, *how much more* your heavenly Father?

And the Bible gives **only two keys** to reign. But first, the recap that everything stands on.

“Faith *Without* Works Is Life”

Across Romans 1–4, the same truth stacks up over and over: you are blessed **not** by what you do, but by **faith** in what Christ did. Watch the pattern.

> *“But to him who **does not work**, but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his **faith** is accounted for **righteousness**.”*
> **— Romans 4:5 (NKJV)** → faith without works is **righteousness**

> *“For by grace you have been **saved** through **faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not by works**, lest anyone should boast.”*

— **Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)** → faith without works is **salvation** (*sōzō* — life, health, abundance, prosperity)

> *“Therefore we conclude that a man is **justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law**.”*
> — **Romans 3:28 (NKJV)** → faith without works is **justification**

> *“For the promise that he would be the **heir of the world** was **not** to Abraham or to his seed **through the law**, but through the righteousness of **faith**.”*
> — **Romans 4:13 (NKJV)** → faith without works makes us **heir of the world**

> *“…knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the law** but by **faith in Jesus Christ**… for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”*
> — **Galatians 2:16 (NKJV)**

> *“**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…”*
> — **Titus 3:5 (NKJV)**

> *“But now the **righteousness of God apart from the law** is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets…”*
> — **Romans 3:21 (NKJV)**

So Romans is crystal clear: **faith without works is righteousness, salvation, justification, and the inheritance of the world.**

“Faith *Without* Works Is Dead”

> *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith without works is dead** also.”*
> — **James 2:26 (NKJV)**

So which is it — *life* or *dead?* Both are true. Everything is about **context** — and we’ll solve it at the end. First, the two keys.

> *“For if by the one man’s offense death reigned… much more those who receive* ***abundance of grace*** *and of the* ***gift of righteousness*** *will* ***reign in life*** *through the One, Jesus Christ.”*
> **— Romans 5:17 (NKJV)**

Key #1: Abundance of Grace

> *“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”* **— Genesis 6:8**

Even a *small* bit of grace protects you from *big* trouble — a pandemic, a collapse, a storm. Grace carries you through **victorious**.

How Do You Increase Grace?

> *“**Grace** and peace can be **multiplied** by the **knowledge of Jesus Christ**.”*
> **— 2 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)**

The key word is **knowledge — of Jesus.**

> Sometimes we learn *too much Bible* but forget the **Author**. We memorize *too many verses* but miss the **heart of the Father.**

The more you understand the *nature of Jesus*, the more grace multiplies. So if your peace feels low or you need healing, do **one** thing: sit at His feet and **hear the word about Jesus.**

> *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”* The **wise** person sees trouble coming and escapes; the foolish walks right in. The more you know **Jesus**, the more you can escape any situation — so whenever you sit under preaching, make sure it’s **about Jesus**, not just rules.

Two Trees, Two Kinds of Hearing

When you open the Bible, you’re “eating” — and *eating is nothing but hearing the word.* There are two trees to feed from:

Tree	What it feeds you

Knowledge of **good and evil** (the law)	Causes the fall — *the law came so that sin might abound*
Tree of **life = Jesus**	*“I am the way, the truth, and the life”*

So ask: *when I open the Bible, am I growing in good-and-evil… or in Jesus?*

Grace and Works Don’t Mix

> *“And if by grace, then it is **no longer of works**; otherwise **grace** is no longer grace.”*
> **— Romans 11:6 (NKJV)**

> *“But if it is of works, it is **no longer grace**; otherwise **work** is no longer work.”*
> **— Romans 11:6 (NKJV)**

> **Highlight:** If you have **grace**, there are no works. If you have **works**, there’s no grace. You can’t mix the two.

Why? Because *“there is none righteous”* (Romans 3:10), the list of sins runs past **600**, and our best obedience is a **filthy rag.** The law came through Moses — but **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** *Know the truth, and the truth will set you free* — that truth **is Jesus.**

Key #2: The Gift of Righteousness

Start with one question: **what is a gift?**

> A gift is **free** — you don’t pay for it. If God blesses you *because you were good*, that’s not a gift, it’s a **reward.** A gift depends on **nothing** in you.

And here’s the proof:

> *“While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* — **Romans 5:8**

He didn’t wait for you to confess everything or clean up first. So your works are **inversely proportional** to your blessings.

Why You Can't Earn It

Think of an exam where you only write the answers you **know** — could you pass? Now apply it to sin. Could you confess *every* one?

> Worry is a sin. Sadness is a sin. Fear is a sin — *because anything without faith is sin.* Have you ever confessed the **sin of fear?**

Where?	Passing mark
School / college	35–40%
Heaven	**100%**

> *"Whoever… stumbles in one point is guilty of all."* — **James 2:10**

In heaven, **99% = zero.** That's why we need the **gift** of righteousness, not the **reward** of it:

> *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by* ***one Man's obedience*** *many will be* ***made righteous****."*
> — **Romans 5:19 (NKJV)**

> It was *Adam and Eve* who fell, yet the verse says **"one man"** — because the man, as head of the home, carried the responsibility. One man broke it; **one Man** (Christ) restored it.

> And **righteousness** is the *biggest* blessing there is — Scripture says the righteous one is blessed, their inheritance is blessed, and *everything the righteous touch is blessed.* This one gift unlocks all the rest.

A Quick Greek Lesson: Sin Is a *Noun*

Here's the beautiful detail. In Greek, "sin" and "sinner" are **nouns** — a noun is a *person, place, or thing*; a verb is an *action*.

- **Hamartía** (ἁμαρτία) — *noun:* sin / sin nature
- **Hamartōloi** (ἁμαρτωλοί) — *noun:* sinners

- **Hamartanō** (ἁμαρτάνω) — *verb:* to sin / miss the mark

So heaven looks at your **location**, not just your actions:

> We were "sinners" because we were locked in a **place** of sin. No amount of good *deeds* could move someone out — **Jesus had to die** to relocate us from the place of *sinner* to the place of *righteous.*

> **Highlight:** *"A righteous man falls seven times, but rises again."* Even when you **fall**, you fall *as the righteous* — your **location** doesn't change. We're **lambs** who want out of the mud, not **pigs** who live in it.

To make you *unrighteous*, Jesus Himself would have to become *disobedient* — impossible. That's why our righteousness is **everlasting.**

> *"Seek first the kingdom of God and **His** righteousness"* — not *your* righteousness — *"and all these things will be added to you."* — **Matthew 6:33**

Solving the Puzzle: Faith Without Works vs Faith *With* Works

Now back to the contradiction:

> *"…so **faith without works is dead** also."* — **James 2:26 (NKJV)**

Romans says *faith without works is life*; James says it's *dead.* Both are true — they're talking about **two different audiences.**

Righteousness *Before God* vs Righteousness *Before Man*

> *"Was not Abraham our father **justified by works** when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that **faith was working together with his works**, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was **accounted to him for righteousness**.' And he was called the friend of God."*
> — **James 2:21–23 (NKJV)** *(this faith was accounted to him at age 75–85)*

> *"For if Abraham was **justified by works**, he has something to boast about, but **not before God**."*

> — **Romans 4:2 (NKJV)**

> *“But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me **your** faith without your works, and I will show you **my** faith by my works.”*
> — **James 2:18 (NKJV)**

Righteousness before…	How it works	Where it’s taught
God	By **faith**, *without* works	Romans
Man	Shown *through* works	James

Abraham’s 30-Year Gap

Watch the timeline. Abraham was declared righteous **before God** by faith at around age **75–85** — *without* any works. But his famous work (offering Isaac) only appeared **after age 110** — nearly **30 years later.**

> *“…faith was working together with his works…”* — **James 2:21–23 (NKJV)** *(the works showed at age 110+)*

> So before you judge a new believer — *“Why isn’t he changing?”* — remember: Abraham was already righteous in heaven’s eyes for **decades** before man could see the fruit.

Righteousness *before God, apart from works* is the **starting position** for reigning in life. The more you believe it, the more good works naturally follow:

> *“The goodness of God leads you to repentance.”* — **Romans 2:4**

The Takeaway

To **reign in life**, you need just two keys :

1. **Abundance of grace** — grow it by *hearing more and more about Jesus* (the tree of life), not by piling on the law.

2. **The gift of righteousness** — received freely through Christ's obedience, locking you into a *permanent place* of righteousness that even your failures can't undo.

You weren't created to be reigned *over* — by sickness, fear, or trouble. In Christ you're an **heir of the world**, made to **reign.**

> **Reign in life.**

Based on a Sunday message from Romans 5:17 (NKJV). If it strengthened you, pass it on to someone who needs to start reigning today.