

- (6) The verb **πείθω** (*peíthō*) in the passive means, to come to believe, to obey, to be persuaded, or convinced. The perfect passive means to have confidence, to be absolutely convinced, to be certain.

The active voice, as in Galatians 1:10, means to convince, to persuade, to appeal, to win over. The perfect tense with a present meaning indicates dependency on someone, to trust in someone, to have confidence.

- (7) The verb **πιστόω** (*pistóō*) means to show oneself faithful, to be convinced, to have confidence, 2 Timothy 3:14.

3. Biblical Use of “Faith” or *Pístis*:

1. *Pístis* is used for doctrine in:

Hebrews 11:1 In fact, doctrine is the reality from which we keep receiving confidence, the proof of matters not being seen.

v. 2 For by means of doctrine, men of old gained approval.” (EXT)

2. A description of faith is found in:

2 Corinthians 4:18 “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen [the essence of God]; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (NASB)

Faith is the means by which we perceive reality in the invisible essence of God.

3. Sometimes both the faith-rest technique and doctrine are described in the meaning of *pístis*, as in:

2 Corinthians 5:7 We walk by faith and not by sight— (NASB)

Your eyes are in your soul, and your soul must have Bible doctrine. We see the unseen through doctrine. Doctrine gives us a relationship with the integrity of God which sustains us in time of disaster. We see the justice and integrity of God through doctrine.



Hebrews 11:6 Without doctrine [*pístis*] resident in the soul, it is impossible to please God for when one is occupied with God, he must be convinced that He is and that He becomes a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (EXT)

Romans 10:17 Doctrine [*pístis*] comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. (NASB)

Galatians 5:22 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness [*pístis* to the working object, the Word of God], (NASB)

4. In each of these three verses, *pístis* relates faith to the perception of the Word of God. The noun refers to the required combination of (1) the Law of Freedom—volition—combined with (2) the transitive noun, *pístis*, and (3) the working object of that faith, the Word of God.
5. All perception of doctrine is accomplished through the function of faith perception.
6. Paul uses *pístis* for the doctrines of demons in:

1 Timothy 4:1 But the Holy Spirit explicitly reports, that in latter times [between the First and Second Advents of Christ] some [those who deviate from divine guidance] will become apostate from the faith [*pístis*: doctrinal inventory of ideas], concentrating on deceitful spirits [the faculty of the Satanic Academy of Cosmic Didactics] and doctrines of demons [the academy's curricula of human viewpoint, human good, & evil]. (EXT)

4. Faith Is the Means of Salvation Adjustment to the Justice of God.

1. To believe is a non-meritorious system of perception. The merit is always found in the object of faith, Jesus Christ, and not in the subject, the one having the faith, the new believer.
2. The doctrine that salvation is by faith and faith alone in Jesus Christ alone is documented in many passages:



John 3:16 God loved the world so much that He gave His uniquely-born Son [**Jesus Christ**] with the purpose that whoever believes [*pisteúō*] in Him shall not perish in the lake of fire, but shall keep on having eternal life. (EXT)

Other references that reveal the faith-alone doctrine include John 3:18–19, 36, 6:47, 20:31; Acts 16:31; Romans 3:22, 28, 4:5, 9:30; Galatians 2:16, 3:26; 1 John 3:23, 5:4–5.

Salvation adjustment to the justice of God is believing in Christ.

3. The justice of God is our point of contact with the integrity of God because justice judged our sins in Christ on the cross. The mechanics of receiving all blessings from the justice of God is grace. Grace is the non-meritorious policy of the integrity of God and compatible with nonmeritorious faith:

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been permanently saved through faith [*pístis*]; this salvation is definitely not out from the source of yourselves, this free gift is from the source of God;
v. 9 not from the source of works, so that no one should boast. (EXT)

5. Faith is a System of Doctrine or What Is Believed.

1. The working object of faith is the immutable Word of God. This includes both doctrine in perception and in application.
2. Bible doctrine is invisible. Faith is confidence in the unseen. The comprehended Word of God must be transferred by faith from *γνώσις* (*gnōsis*) in the *νοῦς* (*noús*) to *ἐπίγνωσις* (*epígnōsis*) in the *καρδία* (*kardía*).

1 Corinthians 2:9 Just as it is written [**Isaiah 64:4**], “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” (NASB)

3. The perception concept is related to spiritual growth by which the soul’s inventory of principles acquired in unbelief is replaced by the inculcation of a divine inventory of ideas.
4. The application concept is related to the faith-rest drill and succeeding problem-solving devices.



5. Consistent spiritual growth converts one's faith in the working object of biblical truth into power for application toward a believer's personal circumstances.
6. Continued advance in the spiritual life results in the believer's adjustment to the justice of God which is the point of contact with the integrity of God.
7. The inculcation and application of the Word of God results in maximum blessings to the soul. Blessings do not originate with the performance of divine good, but their origin which is doctrine in the soul.

6. The Working Object of Faith.

1. The working object of faith is what receives the merit. There is no merit in the subject, which is faith, a non-meritorious system of perception.
2. Both the noun, *pístis* and the verb, *pisteúō* are transitive and demand an object which is the impeccable Christ for salvation and the immutable Word of God for spiritual growth.
3. Faith, without one of these working objects, secures nothing but condemnation from the integrity of God.
4. We enter into the plan of God by faith in Christ and afterward we grow in grace by first learning biblical vocabulary by which doctrines are built and retained.
5. It is the object of faith that counts, not the worthiness of the one with faith. There is no merit in believing; the merit lies in the object of faith.
6. There are two adjustments to the justice of God an individual must make to function in the plan of God, **(1)** the application of personal faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ for salvation and eternal life and **(2)** the application of personal faith toward the teachings of the Bible for advancement to spiritual maturity.
7. Faith is not an isolated act. It is the channel by which we appropriate what God has done for us, either for salvation or for spiritual growth.



8. The function of faith in the spiritual life is associated with the execution of problem-solving devices. For rebound adjustment to the justice of God, the object of faith is two-fold, depending on the believer's spiritual growth.

The scripture is the working object of faith for the immature believer:

John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

See also 1 Corinthians 11:31; Psalm 32:5, 38:18; Proverbs 28:13.

For the mature believer, doctrine is the working object of faith, and the integrity of God is the basis for understanding the forgiveness of our sins through rebound.

9. Through these adjustments to the justice of God and blessings from the integrity of God, Jesus Christ becomes the author and finisher of our faith, Hebrews 12:2.

7. The Application of Faith in the Function of the Faith-Rest Drill.

1. Faith must be exercised as it develops. Learning doctrine develops faith. As this occurs, faith has the increasing ability of perception, the ability to learn more and greater details in the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

v. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the Word they heard [**the working object**] did not profit them, because it was not united by faith [**negative volition to the Word**] in those who heard. (NASB)

2. God has blessings which will only be yours if you relate totally to the integrity of God by learning the Word of God,

1 Peter 1:7 that the genuineness of your doctrinal inventory, being much more precious than gold, which is perishable, even though tested by fire for the purpose of approval, may be discovered to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;



1 Peter 1:8 and though you have never seen Him, you continue loving Him, with reference to Whom at the present time you continue not seeing Him, yet you keep on believing [*pisteúō*: **faith application**] with sublime unalloyed happiness that is inexpressible and full of resplendent glory. (EXT)

3. A doctrinal inventory is the believer's currency which is the gold standard for executing the Christian way of life. It is through *pístis* that doctrine is converted into spiritual capital.
4. Learning doctrine gives you the capital to understand the integrity of God which is the love of God.
5. Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac was the proof or testing of his mature faith in Genesis 22:1-18 referenced by James in James 2:21-24.

8. The Victory of Faith

1. The love of God is the integrity of God. The believer's relationship with the integrity of God is greater than any pressure, disaster, or situation he faces in life.
2. Regardless of the circumstance—failure or success, burden or prosperity—orientation to the integrity of God results in the copacetic spiritual life.

1 John 5:4 Whatever category of individual which has been born from God overcomes the cosmic system; and this is the victory that overcomes the cosmic system—our faith [*πίστις* (*pístis*)].

v. 5 Who is the one who overcomes the cosmic system? No one else but the one who has come to believe [*πιστεύω* (*pisteúō*)] that Jesus is the Son of God. (EXT)

We return now to our passage in James:

James 2:18 But someone will say, “You [**Imperative mood #21**] keep on having faith without the working object of the Word, and I will keep on having faith in the working object of my works; demonstrate to me faith without the works, and I will demonstrate to you my faith out from the source of my works.” (EXT)



1. Even though we have expanded this verse to demonstrate that faith is a transitive concept which demands a working object, there is more than one working object.
2. John 3:16 contains the verb **πιστεύω** (*pisteúō*): “to believe” which has God’s “only begotten Son,” Jesus Christ, as the working object of that faith.
3. For example, when an unbeliever places his personal faith in Jesus Christ, he is said to have been justified before the Supreme Court of Heaven. Jesus Christ was the working object of his faith.

Romans 5:1 Having been justified
 [**δικαίωω** (*dikaiōō*)] by means of faith, let us
 have prosperity with God through our Lord Jesus
 Christ. (EXT)

4. Jesus in His true humanity was sinless. Because of the virgin birth, He did not possess a genetically formed sin nature. Therefore, Adam’s original sin “did not have a working object” to which it could be imputed. During Jesus’ life, He never committed one personal sin. He was thus qualified in His true humanity to be our substitutionary sacrifice on the cross.
5. Paul indicates in Romans 5:1 that when a believer’s personal faith is directed toward Jesus Christ as its working Object, it results in being justified before the Supreme Court of Heaven.
6. This believer is justified when God imputes to him His Own righteousness creating a grace pipeline through which divine blessings follow.
7. The verb *justified* in Romans 5:1 is in the passive voice. The person who had believed in Christ in the past, received justification at that moment.
8. On the other hand, since we are justified through faith in Jesus Christ for our salvation, God is justified in providing our logistics to His imputed righteousness resident in us.
9. Paul uses the term, “justified by means of faith” in Jesus Christ. James uses Abraham as an example for “justification by works” with regard to his conscientious preparation to sacrifice Isaac (James 2:21).
10. In verse 23, James cites Genesis 15:6 which refers to Abraham’s justification by faith in Messiah for salvation:

Genesis 15:6 The he [**Abram**] believed
 [**אָמַן** (*’aman*)] in the Lord; and He reckoned
 [**חָשַׁב** (*chashav*)] it to him as righteousness
 [**שֶׁתַּחַת** (*sethaqah*)]. (NASB)



11. Notice that the verb *believed* (*'aman*) is transitive whose working object is “the Lord.” Because of Abram’s faith alone in “the Lord” alone, God “reckoned” it (*chashav*), an accounting term, to Abram as “righteousness” (*sethaqah*). The result was Abram’s justification by God the Father.

The Hebrew verb *chashav* exhibits two basic semantic elements. The first is the element of calculation, with its modifications “account, compute, charge, settle (accounts),” thus “count, value, calculate.” The second is the element of planning: “think out, conceive, invent.” (p. 230)

“Calculate can be understood as the center or a semantic field that comprises primarily the verbs of counting. But *chashav* goes beyond the meaning of reckoning with numbers and quantities, referring rather to values and factors in general: weighing, evaluating, calculating, rational assignment of place and rank, the technical accounting of a merchant. (p. 231)

A fixed idiom meaning “reckon something to someone’s account” (Genesis 15:6). (p. 234)

The act of accepting faith is finally reckoned as a deciding factor in the relationship with Yahweh. The expression calls the outcome of the events depicted a settlement of accounts in a theological sense, deliberately echoing commercial language. The interpretation of the promise to Abraham found in Genesis 15:1–6 uses such expressions and ideas throughout. The reckoning of belief as *sethaqah* documents the conclusion of the transaction.¹ (p. 243)

12. It is also important to note that the verb, *'aman*, is the Hiph‘il stem indicating causative action. Abram was caused to believe in *Yahweh* by hearing the gospel presented. It is an active voice. Abram produced the action of believing the gospel. It is a perfect tense specifying the action is completed.
13. This verse makes it abundantly clear that at this point Abram was saved by expressing his personal faith in the working object of *Yahweh*, aka Messiah, or Christ, resulting in the imputation of divine righteousness.
14. James’s example in James 2:21–24 refers to a sequence of events that occurred in Genesis following Abram’s salvation noted in Genesis 15:6.

¹ K. Seybold, “אָמַן,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans., David E. Green (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 5:230–31, 234, 243.



15. Years later, Abram committed adultery with Hagar resulting in the birth of an illegitimate son, Ishmael. Later, his son Isaac was born to him and Sarah at his age of 100 (Genesis 21:1–5).
16. Scripture does not indicate exactly how old Isaac was when the Lord ordered Abraham to take the lad and offer him as a sacrifice. In Genesis 22:5, Abraham refers to him as a “lad,” the Hebrew masculine noun נָעַר (*na‘ar*): “a young person; one old enough to serve in battle.”² To be conscripted by the Israeli army one had to be at least twenty years of age (Numbers 1:45).
17. The typology of the event is abundantly clear. Isaac is the bloodline of the promised Messiah. Isaac must marry and have his own children in order for that bloodline to continue, specifically through his son, Jacob. Abraham knew these things and thus decided that God had good reason to order the execution and would provide a divine solution.
18. Abraham resolved that he was given direct orders to go to Mount Moriah and sacrifice his son, his only son, on an altar. He made every effort to carry this out down to the moment before he intended to slice Isaac’s carotid artery.
19. In the book of Hebrews, the writer presents a list of faith-rest heroes in which Abraham is introduced in Hebrews 11:17–19. We will exegete verses 17 and 18 since their content contributes to our better understanding of James’s reference to God’s commandment to Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac.

Hebrews 11:17 By means of faith
 [πίστις (*pístis*)] Abraham, when he was tested,
 offered up Isaac, and he who had received the
promises [Genesis 12:1–3] was offering up his
 only begotten son; (NASB)

1. The phrase, “By means of faith,” refers to the working object of faith which is mentioned later in the verse by the word, “promises.” These promises are associated with the unconditional covenant to Abraham:

Genesis 12:1 Now *Yahweh* said to Abram,
 “Get out from of your country, Ur of Chaldea, and
 from your relatives, and from your father Terah’s
 house, unto a land that I will show you.

² Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, “נָעַר,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003), 742.



Genesis 12:2 I will make out from you a great nation, and I will bless you personally, and make your reputation great. You shall be a blessing.

v. 3 “And I will bless them that bless you, and curse the one that curses you. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” (EXT)

2. **The Abrahamic Covenant** is part of the doctrine of Unconditional covenants granted by God to Abraham, Isaac, Judah, David, and the Jews in general. In Genesis 12:1–3, the promise is genetic. It guarantees Abraham’s bloodline will last for all time and even into eternity.
3. **The Palestinian Covenant** refers to the promise of real estate to the Jewish people as their homeland. In the millennial kingdom, it will include southeastern Turkey, most of Syria, all of Lebanon, Jordan, and present-day Israel, most of Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and all of Kuwait. (Genesis 15:18)

Genesis 15:18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. (NASB)

4. **The Davidic Covenant** is the promise to David that his dynasty will rule Israel forever. The Tribe of Judah is the kingly tribe culminating with the House of David containing the Judaic chart pedigree down to Christ Who will ultimately reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. (2 Samuel 7:8–17)
5. **The New Covenant** to Israel guarantees its restoration following the Second Advent of Christ. It will restore Israel to its covenant boundaries as the millennial kingdom’s client nation. Jeremiah describes the millennial restoration in Jeremiah 31:31–34.
6. In Hebrews 11:17, the writer indicates that Abraham was “tested” with regard to the covenant given to Him. The word “tried,” is the present passive participle of **πειράζω (peirázō)**. The verb, “to try,” is designed to “*see what you think: test, examine, appraise, evaluate, assess.*”³

(End JAS2-78. See JAS2-79 for continuation of study at p. 781.)

³ Oxford’s American Writer’s Thesaurus, 3d ed., comp. Christine A. Lindberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “Try, verb 2.”

