

10. The source of true happiness is the sophisticated spiritual life. However, what is absolutely not allowed is for you to take up the task of slandering another believer.
11. Therefore, the way that one believer can get himself into major trouble with the Lord is to slander another believer.
12. When a believer attains the sophisticated spiritual life, his sins of the tongue are controlled. He, too, can have a bad day, but a mature believer can rectify his mistake through rebound and then keep moving.
13. It is consistent study, retention, facilitation, and application of doctrine to life and circumstances that enables the advancing believer to consistently apply the doctrine in his inventory of ideas to glorify God in his daily life.
14. Every believer has the right to privacy in order to live his life as unto the Lord. This principle is violated when one believer challenges another believer's spiritual life.
15. There is a logical reason for this. It may be stated that within any given congregation, each and every member is at a different level of spiritual growth.
16. Each member is more advanced in his spiritual growth than some, but less so with others. Each believer advances at his own pace. Thus, he should not be criticized or slandered by those more advanced in doctrine, conversely, he should not slander those less advanced than himself.
17. This situation is starkly evident in the military—everything from buck private up to a four-star general. Yet, in this example, there are human authorities along the way who must evaluate those below them and make sure they are moving forward consistently toward the stated objective.
18. In the spiritual life, the authority is the Word of God. There is one human authority assigned the duty to communicate divine policy to each individual believer: the pastor-teacher. Each member functions under the privacy of his royal priesthood.
19. The Holy Spirit is the Teacher. The individual student is under the authority of the Spirit's divine supervision. Sins by each individual parishioner are managed by God through divine discipline.
20. There are a few exceptions that do occur when an individual privately or publicly invades the privacy of another believer, violates church policy, or criticizes the doctrine communicated by the pastor.

(End JAS4-26. See JAS4-27 for continuation of study at p. 261.)

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21. In these cases, the pastor, or certain deacons, must address this situation privately with the intent to rectify the situation. Likewise, when a parishioner knowingly violates church policy. Finally, public criticism of the pastor's message must be addressed privately to determine the motivation for the criticism and if not resolved then the appropriate form of church discipline must be imposed.
22. These are illustrations. But they revolve around the principle that the body of Christ must be in concert so that each member can grow in grace.
23. **PRINCIPLE:** The problem-solving device for each of these illustrations is the application of the Royal Law.
24. Presently, client-nation America is under assault from numerous attacks by political adversaries and common citizens who have both legally and illegally acquired political power upon the citizenry.

25. Without legal authority to do so, they impose regulations and demand submission to mandates which circumvent the Constitution, some of which border on Drācōnian.

**Drācō (7th century BC), Athenian lawgiver whose harsh legal code punished both trivial and serious crimes in Athens with death—hence the continued use of the word *dracōnian* to describe repressive legal measures.**

**Draco's code, which is generally dated 621, was not the first reduction of Athenian law to writing, but it may have been the first comprehensive code or a revision prompted by some particular crisis. Draco's code was later regarded as intolerably harsh, punishing trivial crimes with death; it was probably unsatisfactory to contemporaries, since Solon, who was the archon in 594 BC, later repealed Draco's code and published new laws.<sup>1</sup>**

**Draconian \Drā-kō-nē-an\ [Draco (Athenian lawgiver)] relating to, or characteristic of Draco or the severe code of laws held to have been framed by him. Cruel, severe.<sup>2</sup>**

26. The people James is criticizing are proponents of lawlessness. In violating biblical principles, they have become lawless. The Royal Law has been long since removed from their consciousnesses. As a result, their tongues have been set free to slander fellow believers with vile accusations while they freely violate divine standards from Scripture.
27. Yet, these divine standards are what underwrite the positive believer's advance to the sophisticated spiritual life. This is certainly not the case with those being discussed by James in verse 11, which, so far, reads this way:

**James 4:11a** Stop slandering [ καταλαλέω (*katalaléō*) ] fellow members [ ἀδελφός (*adelphós*): i.e., "neighbors" ] of the royal family of God. The one who slanders another believer, or judges another believer ...

1. If the first two charges are true: they slander fellow believers and judge fellow believers, then it follows that they also slander the law and judge the law.

<sup>1</sup> "Draco," in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 2010), 4:207.

<sup>2</sup> *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. "Draconian."

