

Growing in the Grace of God #02 - the New Covenant Part 2

by Bob Hoekstra

The New Covenant is a promise of forgiveness of sins, personal relationship with God, and internal working of God enabling and changing lives, and it is already inaugurated for the church.

Duration: 52:57

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ephesians 2:4-10, Hebrews 10:13-39

Topics: "New Covenant", "Gods Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a new heart that is solid, mature, and strong. He explains that many Christians, after being saved by grace through faith, begin to think that their efforts and striving are the key to their spiritual growth. However, the preacher emphasizes that it is God's grace that freely provides for us through the person and work of Jesus Christ. He describes grace as unmerited favor, but also emphasizes that it is much more than that, comparing it to the vastness of the Pacific Ocean. The sermon also highlights the significance of the new covenant, which was promised to Israel and established through the blood of Christ.

Transcript

The New Covenant, by way of introduction on this section, synonyms for the New Covenant. Other biblical terms that really are talking about the same thing from different direction, we just often don't make the connection. New Covenant, growing in the grace of God.

We're really talking about Christian discipleship, as seen in verses like Luke 9.23, if any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me. Christian discipleship, another synonym for New Covenant living or growing in the grace of God. Spirit-filled living.

Verses like Ephesians 5.18, be filled with the Spirit. We talk about the abundant life. John 10.10. These aren't all separate things, they're just different perspectives on the same reality of knowing and walking with and in God.

Praise God that He says it umpteen different ways. After all, it is a glorious diamond. In fact, we're going to come to a phrase later about the manifold grace of God, the many faceted aspects of the grace of God.

It's like an infinite heavenly diamond. Every place you stand, you get a new perspective. It's not a different thing you're looking at, you're just standing at a different point.

The Scriptures put us at a different place and show us life in Christ. But again, one of the wonderful things of having God speak in so many different directions about the same reality, every perspective gives new understanding of what that reality is. And personally, I will say that nothing in my own life, in teaching the Word for 29 years now, walking with the Lord 30 and a half years, 30 years and 9 months... Did you get saved when you were an infant? Yes! A little grace back for the teacher.

A little grace back for the teacher. I got saved when I was 25. Not months either.

I wasn't a prodigy convert. But in my years of walking with the Lord, though all of these perspectives and some maybe yet to understand more have been helpful and will be, nothing has had a more radical revolutionary influence in my own walk with the Lord and ministry than standing and looking at life in Christ under the terms of growing in the grace of God which is all about living under the new covenant of grace. Let's get some biblical perspective on the new covenant a bit now.

A little quick survey. Have any among us had an extended opportunity ever to have a topical biblical, not a rambling, you know, related thoughts or study, but a biblical topical study where each issue is anchored in the scriptures on the subject of the new covenant? Did you see how few hands? That's the one for your tapes. Okay.

Do you know, everywhere I've asked for a show of hands on that. It's been always, say, less than 5% and as often as not, zero hands. It's amazing.

Though the term new covenant appears throughout the New Testament and some, you know, teachers, good biblical teachers like Pastor Chuck and others have done some fantastic topical studies like on the Holy Spirit and other things. And really, Chuck's studies on the Holy Spirit are very much another perspective on the same thing we're looking at here. And he's written a book, a topical book, a biblical book on why grace changes everything.

And in it, we'll even read some quotes about the new covenant. It's not that it's missing from the teaching of the New Testament church in America but it is amazing how little attention is given to it when you see how much attention is given to it in the scriptures, you know. And I don't see it missing in Pastor Chuck's teaching or in the Calvary chapels in general but as an issue of study, it's amazing how unattended it is and how often overlooked.

And in many Christians' lives, even the reality of it under any terms is too sadly missing. So let's get a little perspective on the new covenant. Jeremiah 31 Jeremiah 31 The new covenant promised to Israel eventually That's our biblical heading of study and we'll see it in these verses.

The new covenant is promised to Israel eventually. We'll see very soon how it relates to us much more personally than a long-term promise to Israel. Jeremiah 31, 31-34 Behold the days are coming, says the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt my covenant which they broke though I was a husband to them, says the Lord but this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people no more shall

every man teach his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord for they all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more The new covenant is promised to Israel eventually Here it is right here Days are coming I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel This promise of a new covenant will be fulfilled for Israel when Christ returns to the earth at the end of the tribulation It's when all remaining Israelites will turn to Him Zechariah, they'll see Him whom they have pierced be mourning and weeping Romans 11, 26 Then all Israel shall be saved At that time all left on the earth will respond to the Messiah's return and they will enter in as a nation But what does it involve?

Not when will Israel get it now so much This is not a class in eschatology or prophetic things really But what is involved here essentially in this covenant Three major terms here Number one, forgiveness of sin Verse 34 End of the verse I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more One of the terms of the new covenant is forgiveness of sin Second, relationship personally with God Verse 34 They all shall know me all who are under this covenant all of God's people the Israelites, chosen nation from the least of them to the greatest of them says the Lord So forgiveness of sins a personal relationship with the Lord and third this is an area we'll spend a lot of time on in this course an internal working of God enabling and changing their lives Verse 33 I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people Not God's holy righteous will carved in stones for them to look at externally That's the old covenant This new covenant God writing it inside in our thinking and in our heart in our desires, motivations, goals in the very character of who we are and it will cause this to come to pass I will be their God and they shall be my people Our emphasis in this course will be on this third area God's internal working by his grace to grant us new life growing life, abundant life a life of service and fruit and abundant labors Now all of this is a promise is a promise to Israel someday What does that have to do with us?

Here's the amazing thing What is promised to Israel someday the basic characteristics of the new covenant has already been inaugurated for the church now Hebrews 8 One place that shows us that New covenant promised to Israel eventually inaugurated for the church now Already in place for the church now Hebrews 8 verse 8 Let's start with verse 6 But now he, Christ, has obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as he is also mediator of a better covenant shifting off from looking at the high priest under the old covenant to Christ under the new which was established on better promises we'll come back to this verse near the end of the course and see why the new covenant is a covenant of better promises no comparison exceedingly great and precious promises for if that first covenant had been

faultless that is without lack then no place would have been sought for a second because finding fault with them he says because God saw in them something lacking not surprisingly to God but knowingly there would be something missing from the old covenant of law because finding fault with them behold the days are coming says the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt because they did not continue in my covenant and I disregarded them says the Lord for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days says the Lord I will put my laws in their mind write them on their hearts

I will be their God and they shall be my people none of them shall teach his neighbor and none his brother saying know the Lord for all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more in that he says a new covenant he has made the first the old obsolete now what is becoming obsolete and growing

old is ready to vanish away you recognize these verses quoted here exactly the same verses we read in the promises to Israel now he is quoting them to the church and someone might say yeah but these are Hebrew Christians you know all that means is they would have more quickly an understanding and more earnestly a need to hear this there is no Jew or Gentile in Christ there is no

male female east or west Hebrews is not just for Hebrew Christians it was written to Hebrew Christians who desperately needed to hear it but everything everything promised to them is for everyone that is in Christ and now the new covenant is being read to the church quoting the same exact passage explaining to them the better covenant verse 6 verse 6 but now he has obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as he is a mediator of the better covenant which was established on better promises already starting to use past tense terms about this new covenant established on better promises and it goes a little further verse 13 says the new covenant makes the other obsolete what other? the law covenant of the law Hebrews 10 look at this this gets right down to it Hebrews 10 16 this is the

covenant that I will make with them after those days says the Lord I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds I will write them then he adds their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more does that sound familiar? same exact verses out of Jeremiah 31 new covenant verses promised to Israel quoted to the new testament church now same context continues now where there is remission of sins there is no longer an offering for sin God takes care of these sins this way there is not going to be animal sacrifices to cover sins therefore in light of this new covenant in light of this new covenant promised Israel but now read and applied to the church therefore brethren having boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way that's the new covenant

which he Christ consecrated for us through the veil that is his flesh when Christ died on the cross shed his blood for us he consecrated for us this new and living way which he consecrated what is the which referred to the new and living way the new covenant that's been quoted here time and again from Jeremiah he Jesus consecrated this new covenant for us he consecrated it could be translated dedicated it inaugurated it initiated it opened it up established it he put it into force for us new testament believers by his death on the cross what Israel is awaiting someday we are to be walking in now forgiveness of sins personal relationship with God and an inner working of God in our hearts and minds our inner being bringing us life in Christ from the inside out this new covenant is already

inaugurated for us in fact that's one of the major points of the book of Hebrews that time and time again we don't live under law with a high priestly system and one priest passes it on to the next priest and one man goes in once a year to the very presence of God it's like that was all just shadows and we'll look at that issue also we have a better covenant better promise better high priest and the better covenant is the new covenant and it's been inaugurated for us now the essence of it you can find in the promises through the prophets there are the things the land they're going to get you might say well the land is not promised to the church and to Gentiles no but interesting thing in the kingdom we'll enjoy the land just as much as Israel does in fact in the millennium we'll be part

of the administration over the whole earth you know so even that aspect of it we will benefit from but the essence of the new covenant the relationship with God not just him fulfilling his word to faithfully give that land to those he promised it to and he will keep that promise he will but the very essence and character of the new covenant forgiveness of sins personal relationship with God and an internal working of God that essential characteristic of the new covenant it's already inaugurated for us now that's why we read earlier 2nd Corinthians 3 we are servants of the new covenant new covenant we are right now already servants

under the new covenant so this new covenant promised to Israel eventually inaugurated for the church now sure only if I have an answer I'm basically talking

about the new covenant the reason why it's better in a sense that we are in the new covenant is it because of the Holy Spirit that in other words because Jesus has descended we'll probably it'll probably take 12 weeks to answer that question so I think we'll wait on that the reason it's the reason it's better is because of all the things we're going to look at for these 12 weeks it's not just that though you mentioned a critical aspect of it ok definitely what you said yes that's why it's better but that's not the only reason it's better that's just one see it's so much better it's not like it's this much better or this much better it's not like it's this much better it's this room you couldn't it's out of sight the pacific ocean that's right I think you'll even get a flavor of that in

the closing verses in just a little while sure welcome it's a covenant that is promised to Israel eventually inaugurated, established, instituted for you and me now and it's provided next heading provided by the blood of Christ let's go back to Luke 22 20 which we read quickly at the start Luke 22 20 likewise he also took the cup after supper saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you this cup the communion cup every time we take communion it's an opportunity to reflect on the new covenant how many times have you heard it someone reads the scripture this cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you we've heard it, we've done it we've participated that cup is speaking about basically in symbolic simple form everything we're talking about in this

course and I tell you when God began to open my eyes and fill my heart with the significance more and more of the grace of God the communion table just exploded in greater significance and richness remember we looked at being servants of the new covenant 2 Corinthians 3 5 not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as coming from ourselves but our sufficiency is from God who made us sufficient as servants of the new covenant think of the implications of that covenant see not only forgiveness of sins not only relationship with God but what a relationship one in which we do not have to consider anything in the kingdom life will come from us how much are you trying to produce in your Christian life I want to be good I want to be better I want to be godly I want to be like

Christ how are you doing how hard are you trying sucking wind how much of it is coming from you if there is real Christ likeness there how much of it is coming from God to you not that we are sufficient of ourselves to consider anything coming from ourselves but our sufficiency is from God is that a covenant or what what kind of covenant is that sounds like grace to me it's so liberating it's so encouraging we don't have to look to self to manufacture any of the Christian life but we know where to look to find it and that's what we'll be doing in this class all along the way yes we'll spend a lot of time in John 15 5 right on target exactly right on target exactly amen this cup is the new covenant it speaks of that kind of relationship with God forgiveness of sin relationship with God and

inner working of God's resources applied to us from the inside out the very life of Christ shared within us it's in human terms unbelievable because God is the one telling us these things they become believable in fact it says we believe we walk in them that just shall live by faith this cup is the new covenant reminder of the new covenant drinking it is a confession of this new arrangement for living with God the new covenant in my blood which was shed for you for all of us for every follower of Jesus Christ and those who are being invited and awaiting this wonderful blessing what was the price paid for the new covenant the shed blood of Jesus Christ think of the amazing and effective price paid to establish this covenant no wonder it offers such amazing and effective provisions when you

think of the price paid no wonder it provides what it provides the price is measureless what it provides is unsearchable what a covenant and our last heading all of this is related to the grace of God all of this is related to the grace of God let's track a little bit of that together let's go back to Jeremiah 31 and then flip back and forth between the Jeremiah passage and New Testament elaborations on it Jeremiah 31 Jeremiah 31 let's go to verse 34 speaking of the initial work of the grace of God the forgiveness of sins for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more the forgiveness of sin the basic fundamental initial work of the grace of God in the new covenant the initial work of the new covenant if God is going to build a relationship with people their

sins must be forgiven the sins must be washed away they must precede that developing of relationship which is followed by accompanied by the internal work of God but that first promise of the new covenant forgiveness of sins first in sort of theological sequence in spiritual reasoning you know what starts in forgiveness of sins a relationship with God internal work of God the preceding issue has to be the forgiveness of sins well hold your hand there look at Ephesians 1.7 which talks about the forgiveness of sins in the New Testament terms forgiveness of sins is the subject from Jeremiah 31 terms of the new covenant Ephesians 1.7 talks about forgiveness of sins this way in him we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace forgiveness of

sins what's that all about where does it come from how is it measured what is it like and according to it's according to the riches of his grace the riches of his grace there are such great treasures here in the grace of God to explore together in this course our initial introduction to them is the forgiveness of sins it's according to the riches of his grace but the riches of God's grace are not exhausted when he forgives us many Christians myself included generally make a major mistake at this point in thinking that the forgiveness of sins and the grace of God are identical to each other I started out that way people talk about the grace of God oh yes my sins are forgiven people talk about the forgiveness of sins oh yes the grace of God is so great wonderful to make a connection between

the two major mistake to make them identical to each other grace of God forgiveness of sins one they're both glorious but one is far greater than the other which is the greater grace forgiveness is just according to the riches of his grace it doesn't exhaust the riches of his grace it's just the first dip into that rich grace it's where we all taste deeply unto life everlasting it's starting out with God forgiveness of sins it's according to the riches of his grace the riches of his grace oh there are treasures there to explore in fact the whole Christian life ought to be seeing the riches of his grace unfolded in daily growth relationship fruit service abounding good works Ephesians 2 8 and 9 remember for by grace you have been saved through faith that not of yourselves it is a gift of

God not of works lest anyone should boast by grace we're saved through faith not of us it's God's gift that also talking about starting out with God initial salvation forgiveness new birth it's promised in the Old Testament in the New Covenant promises when the New Testament explains forgiveness of sins it links it in to the grace of God our heading is that all of the New Covenant is related to the grace of God the easiest to see is this the initial work of God's grace forgiveness justification new birth all kind of all anchored right there at the start of the Christian life how are you justified by grace how are you born again by the grace of God how are your sins forgiven grace of God all those initial workings of God at the start it's His grace every believer knows that you know why we

know every believer knows that because if they don't know that they're not a believer it's so simple if anyone thinks you can get new birth everlasting life sins forgiven anyway by the grace of God that person

is not a follower of Jesus Christ they're not a believer they're maybe a religiously interested person religiously motivated and active striving to earn heaven all kinds of things but they're not a believer in New Testament terms so every believer knows of this but you know what we're going to spend very little time in this course on that because every believer knows that we're going to spend most of our time where far too many of us don't know that the grace of God is to apply and that is the ongoing grace of God in our daily living as Christians let's go back to Jeremiah hold your

hand here in the New Testament go back to Jeremiah 31 verse 33 but this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after these days says the Lord for those days I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people God working internally to make the reality of a people of God coming forth I will put my law my holy standards my righteous realities in their minds inside their thinking and write it on their hearts you know how important it is to have God write the character of himself on our hearts if he didn't do that there could never be any true Christ likeness there would just be cheap mimicking by religious people Jesus said guard your heart for out of it flow all the issues of life there could be no godliness if

God did not write it on our hearts it has to start inside it has to start inside work of God on the heart but that's what's promised in the new covenant well that new covenant is already inaugurated for us it's available that internal working of God we have access to it everyday now that's the old testament promise of it now when the new testament talks about it it links it to grace like Hebrews 13 9 Hebrews 13 9 Hebrews 13 9 do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines well what a good warning that is for this day and age this was given in the first century if the apostle was writing this again he'd probably want to say give me that pen I want to write it in very large letters do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines there's such a variety of strange

doctrines teachings in the church world today perhaps the strangest variety that's ever hit is this unholy laughter thing this Toronto cursing I mean how strange I'm not saying no one into it is possibly a believer maybe many are I'm not their God I don't know their heart I'm just measuring their practice by the scriptures and it's strange and the message of the teachers the way to be abundant in life and mighty in spirit is let's gather and see how many of us in fall on the floor and laugh uncontrollably for a couple of hours you know I say about that that's a strange doctrine and here's a stranger addition to it you can graduate from that and you can get into barking and howling and you can go home looking like you're drunk what a strange teaching what a strange teaching Jesus didn't

teach it the apostles didn't teach it no one in the Bible exemplified it oh but it's the latest greatest revival listen the flesh can get revived too the flesh can have a hoot and hallelujah holler and religious time I don't mind getting excited about God I do get excited about God but I want it to be by the work of his spirit not the work of my flesh why is it so important to not get carried about with various and strange doctrines the next sentence explains it for it is good that the heart be established by grace rolling on the floor laughing and growling doesn't establish the heart it exercises the flesh the heart is the inner man out of which all the issues of life flow it's the new creature in Christ it's the real you and me and it's out of that center of our being that God wants to

do a great work and let his reality come forth why is it many Christians their experience is hot and cold off and on up and down here and gone because their heart isn't established because what is in the heart will come out in the life and walk we all need stabilized inner life we need our hearts established grounded made steady anchored in the realities of the kingdom of God that's what produces a stable mature

growing developing Christian life well what is it that establishes the heart it is good that the heart be established by grace now see this verse has nothing to do with justification justification isn't the establishing of a heart justification is the giving of a heart new birth new life this verse is not about getting born again it's about growing up it's not about getting

declared innocent having a new heart within it's about having that new heart made solid mature and strong this is the arena this class concentrates on week after week after week and we could do it more weeks after weeks after weeks because it's all over the scriptures once you see it how many Christians this would recount their Christian experience either ignoring God or trying to strive for heaven religiously one way or another they saw by the work of the spirit of God it's by grace you're saved through faith that not of yourselves it's a gift of God lest any man should boast and by the grace of God they entered the kingdom of heaven now they're born again they're alive in Christ they have a new heart and pretty soon they begin to think hey the key to this thing is how hard you try and

they pick it up from each other hey they're doing better because they're trying harder you know I'm trying as hard as I can maybe there's a knack that you learn and we'll talk about a bunch of these along the way and just like that so many of us went from birth by grace to growth by law no wonder so many in the body of Christ are not growing in the Lord Jesus Christ we are to grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior this is a critical issue it's a difference between victory defeat fruit and barrenness joy and frustration witness and shame I mean it's a radical issue it's good for the heart to be established by grace see God's grace is not only His willingness and provision to forgive us it is also His heavenly dynamic to grow us and transform us there are all kinds of

pictures like this in the word of God where that which God used to save us is that which He uses to grow us like the word of God is the seed of life Peter said we're born again through the living and abiding seed of the word of God and you go to chapter 2 and you're born again and the seed becomes milk to grow on well what is it? seed or milk birth or growth yeah you got it it's both well what is grace now come on do you get saved with it or grow with it do you get justified or sanctified yes it's for both it's critical that we see it otherwise we're just bound we're chained to a Christian life of self effort measured by the law of God which leaves you in condemnation and a sense of alienation a sense of defeat and a sense of God must really be mad at me no he'll never again be mad at us

his children he took out all of that mad that holy righteous wrath on his son now his force will never be against us he's sad for us he's holding out his arms come to me weary and heavy laden ones and I'll give you rest Lord I'm too busy working for you saved by grace struggling to grow and serve by living through flesh resources under the law of God critical issue it is a plague around the world in the church yes it's by his grace he brings things into our lives that force us upon his grace but boy we'll we'll fight against him won't we I know this is 40,000 tons but I'll carry it I just need to learn how to brace better or just smash flat you know just as lifeless and dead no no no just give me four more steps on how to carry the earth I'll be a victorious Christian it is good that the

heart be established by grace strengthened made stable steady immovable maturing mighty by grace by grace not just in a willingness to forgive but a resource to transform what is the grace of God it's often called unmerited favor and it is but all of these sayings they're not really definitions they're more descriptions it's too big to define but you can describe it and it's good to describe it that's a good description unmerited favor God's favor that we don't deserve but for years I've been asking the Lord to give me more and more descriptions of his grace so that my understanding and appreciation and desire

for it might grow maybe you've heard this one it's an acrostic it takes grace and makes five words out of it G-R-A-C-E this is a good one too God's riches at Christ's expense that's

even better than unmerited favor that one really gets more into it what is grace God's riches at Christ's expense God's riches for us that Christ paid for we couldn't buy, couldn't earn, couldn't deserve couldn't muster them up on our own that's a good one let me give you a much more cumbersome one mine this is one of my latest attempts it's not for public consumption it's for my edification and understanding and asking the Lord to let me appreciate his grace but I'll share it you'll be gracious and not throw things at me the grace of God involves God freely providing for us God freely providing for us through the person and work of his Son as we humbly put our trust in his Son all that we would need all that we would yearn for all that we are commanded to walk in and become but could

never deserve it could never earn it and could never produce it on our own it's grace I was actually reading Ephesians 2 4-10 the day I kind of wrote that down Ephesians 2 4-10 let me read these verses and I will we're on the same page Ephesians 2 4-10 but God this is after dead and children of wrath and all that but God who is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us even when we were dead in trespasses made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved and raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus for by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of

works lest anyone should boast for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them the grace of God let me read my own feeble description God freely providing for us through the person and work of his son that is through who Jesus is and what Jesus has done as we humbly put our trust in his son all that we would need all that we would yearn for all that we are commanded to walk in and to become but could never deserve it could never earn it and could never produce it on our own the grace of God 2 Peter 3.18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to him be the glory both now and forever Amen we want to grow you know there is something about life it is designed to grow God made it that

way once we are birthed there develops this yearning to grow and we hear along the way yeah we should be like Christ we should mature we should not be like children blown here and there by every wind of doctrine we want to grow how often do we think it hinges on how much we do I am not growing like I should you know I am going to try I think I have caught on it is not that you go to five meetings a week it is eight that has got to be the key it has got to be eight it is not that you read a chapter a day I think you have got to read a book a day that is it, a book really hey that is good I thought it was two chapters it is a book a day Jonathan it is always five times more than what you are doing yeah really that is great it is always five times more than what you are doing number of days

when you start grasping when you start grasping it is like a response it is a grace thing you just can't get enough of it then the things we are trying to do to make us grow become the joy of our heart where we exercise the life God is giving us and we are not confusing cause and effect you know grow in the grace of God yes I didn't want to put a legalistic bumper sticker on my car in case I was speeding I wanted to think of something creative so I put by his grace dot dot dot excellent fill it in right hand corner I put a forgiveness sign yeah really really but there is so much by his grace amen the kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of grace the new covenant is a covenant of grace and that is what we are going to study over these next 11 now more weeks growing in the grace of God and an

amazing thing I found is as the Lord opens our eyes and hearts to this issue all of a sudden it is everywhere in the Bible you know I will tell you I was startled in the early 70's after I had been saved maybe 8 years pastoring maybe 5 years I was startled when God began to open my eyes to the purpose and place of the grace of God because I I mean I love the grace of God but I equated it totally to forgiveness and man I was going hard at it to show up God how much I appreciate his grace and man I was going to grow I was going to be an on fire Christian I was going to build a great church for him I mean I I made some great old covenant promises to God but I didn't have the sufficiency to carry them out I ended up condemned by my own promises let alone by his holy righteous perfect law oh

the grace of God in Christ is so rich see his grace forgives our short coming which is total you know in us there dwells no good thing but then it turns around and offers to us what we were striving to manufacture you know and we'll spend some good time talking about living daily by the grace of God because that always stirs in our heart you know the strange question it's even almost awkward to say it it's like how do you do grace? you know that's the way we think but we'll spend some good time looking at living daily by the grace of God let's pray together Lord we thank you for just whetting our appetite tonight for your grace we thank you for the way you address it so forthrightly in your scriptures and just open our eyes open our hearts let us see what is there and may our hearts

embrace it thank you for this amazing relationship this arrangement this new arrangement for living this new covenant of your grace Lord where all that is needed sources not in us but from you flowing to us and through us and Lord though we cannot produce that on our own and could never deserve it and certainly can't purchase it it is abundantly available and we just rejoice in that and pray that through these weeks we will be embracing and growing in the grace of God we pray in Jesus name Amen

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