

# Growing in the Grace of God #23 - Various Aspects of New Covenant Grace Part 1

by Bob Hoekstra

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living by faith in God's sufficiency, trusting in His promises and provision, and experiencing His strength and renewal.*

**Duration:** 51:25

**Scripture:** Micah 7:7

**Topics:** "Grace Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of living by faith and relying on the grace of God. He references Deuteronomy 20:1-4, which encourages believers not to be afraid in the face of overwhelming enemies because God is with them and will fight for them. The preacher also highlights 2 Corinthians 4:15, which speaks about how God's grace brings thanksgiving and glory to Him. He further explores Isaiah 40:29, which emphasizes that God gives strength to the weak and increases their power. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the preciousness of God's loving kindness and the need for believers to trust in Him rather than themselves.

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## Transcript

Your children be with you and be in Christ and know you. And we come seeking you Lord. We ask you to speak to us now.

We come humbling ourselves under your mighty hand and realizing you give grace to the humble and we yearn for your grace. We hunger for your grace. We need your grace so we come humbly confessing our need.

We come in faith anticipating expecting what you can and will do and ask you to shape us mold us and pour out life within us we pray Lord by your grace in Jesus name. Amen. Study number 12.

Various aspects of new covenant grace. Just a title that lets us highlight some things on the issues of grace. A title that lets us catch up on some things tie some things together biblical issues related to the new covenant and the grace of God.

By way of introduction let's let the context be set by one of our theme verses for the whole course. 2nd Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves but our

sufficiency is from God. A verse worthy of frequent meditation and prayer and every word every phrase just key and critical in this verse as is so often the case and this is all about new covenant living.

Next verse God who also made us sufficient as ministers servants of the new covenant. The new covenant acknowledging our insufficiency relying on God's sufficiency. We're talking about humility and faith remember we've looked at that before.

Humility and faith. Humility facing our own need acknowledging our insufficiency not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves. The things that are needed in the kingdom of heaven do not source in man even redeemed man.

The we here born-again new covenant servants and we cannot consider that we are sufficient to think of anything anything eternal anything heavenly anything godly anything that matters anything that saves souls and changes lives that any of that is from ourselves. It does come to us but it's not from us critical because that indicates finally where we'll put our hope. Not in self because it doesn't come from self.

Doesn't mean we can't find what we need a sufficiency for life it just has to be the sufficiency of God but our sufficiency is from God. There's the faith part humility it doesn't come from us. Faith it does come from God and humility and faith are critical in living daily by the grace of God.

We've looked at that extensively in previous studies. This is all about God's grace at work that's what the new covenant is God's grace at work second Corinthians 12 early on in the book. For our rejoicing is this the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God.

How did Paul conduct himself in life and ministry? By the grace of God. Another verse that makes it obvious that God's grace is not just his willingness to forgive us. This verse is talking about how Paul lived the daily Christian life and how he ministered and it wasn't by fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God that's how he lived and ministered.

That's what a new covenant servant's life is all about living by the resources of the grace of God. Chapter 4 verse 15. For all things are for your sakes that grace having spread through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

What a great ministry in Christian life verse that is. Second Corinthians 4 verse 15. 4:15.

For all things all things that we get involved in in ministry end up for the sakes of those we are ministering to that grace having spread through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. We want our ministries our lives to be for the sake of others that their lives might be touched by what? By grace. And that grace will just spread through the many to us through us out touching others and out through them to touch others.

And what does that eventuate in? Causes thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Oh thank you Lord for your glorious grace. Grace for this and grace for that and grace that met me here and grace that touched the life there.

That's what ministry is all about being filled with the grace of God pouring it out and letting thanksgiving abound to the glory of God as grace spreads through the many. Now that's just sort of introductory to let the Lord put our minds in the same direction on the grace of God and life and ministry in the new covenant

as we look at various aspects of new covenant grace. Now let's think together in the scriptures for a while about new covenant truth in the old testament.

Too many folks think the old testament is all about law and only the new testament is about grace. Not true. Common misconception.

There's law and grace in the old testament the new testament. And some get the old covenant and the new covenant mixed up with the old testament new testament. Same word so it's easy to do.

But the old testament you know the collection of the inspired writings of the prophets before messiah came and then Matthew and following the inspired message of God through the apostles about the coming of messiah and after he came. That's what really separates the old and new testament. One kind of looking forward to his coming the other he's here.

And then the expounding of the significance of who he is what he did and all the shadows in the old testament brought out in vivid image in the person of Christ in the new testament. But in that looking forward record the old testament as well as the here he is and here's what he did when he came. New testament there's law and grace in both.

There's old covenant and new covenant truth in both. Of course the the old testament has a lot of old covenant and some beautiful indicators and foretaste of the new covenant. And then the new testament has some of the law therefore the standards of the old covenant but it is concentrating on expounding the new.

But let's look at the old testament see new covenant truth there like genesis 15 6. Genesis 15 6 new covenant truth you know man's insufficiency God's sufficiency living by faith accessing God's grace Genesis 15 6 and he Abraham believed in the Lord and he God accounted it to him for righteousness. God counted Abraham righteous not because of some standard he achieved but because of his trust in the Lord's promises. Trusting in the Lord and interestingly enough this is even before the law was given like 430 years from genesis 12 the first promise to Abraham till the law is given.

Trusting in the Lord became righteousness for Abraham and folks often say well how are these old testament saints saved? I mean it's clear how we are and it just seems so different there. Just take some time to read again Romans 4. Romans 4 makes it very clear by telling David's testimony and Abraham's that justification has always been by faith. Just believing God trusting in his promises his provision whether he promises something yet to come which he did to Abraham and to David or whether to us he promises the consequences of believing who came and what he brought.

It's faith in the Lord's promises and provisions wherein we find justification. God accounts that to us for righteousness. Numbers 14 6 through 9. You don't think of numbers when you think of the new covenant generally.

Think of Israel staggering under the law and building a bad testimony. Wandering and griping. Numbers 14 6 through 9 but look at this.

But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh who were among those who had spied out the land tore their clothes when they heard the doubt and the majority report. Hey we can't take this land. Walled cities the giants.

I mean let's be realistic let's be practical let's use some common sense. You know the majority report. But Joshua and Caleb verse 7 they tore their clothes and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel saying the land we pass through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

If the Lord delights in us then he will bring us into this land and give it to us a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord nor fear the people of the land for they are bread. Their protection is departed from them and the Lord is with us.

Do not fear them. They hinged it all on the Lord. If the Lord wants to give us this land if it's his delight toward us to bless us this way and he promises this land to us then he will bring us into the land.

Not self-sufficiency involved here but God's sufficiency. Sure they looked at you know they're just this band of stragglers wandering through the desert more or less and here are these great walled cities and these giants. It didn't look like it was possible humanly speaking.

Sure very practical realistic approach except one thing it overlooks all the promises of and the character of God which changes everything. Joshua and Caleb how did they view what lay before them? Through the eyes of God's sufficiency not their sufficiency. There was a foretaste there of the new covenant.

Hebrews 6 says we taste now we get foretaste of the powers of the age to come what it's going to be like in the millennium in the new heaven and new earth. There were many in the old testament who had foretaste of what we now have abundantly before us. Joshua and Caleb were certainly two of those.

They were living in anticipation of what God could do not what they could do. That's right at the heart of the new covenant. Yeah give it to us.

Give and gift and grace they just overlap all over each other you know like talking the same kind of language amen. Deuteronomy 20. Deuteronomy 20 again you think of the law the second giving of the law yeah plenty of that.

To show the standard and the need and the holy God and the unholiness of man. But oh look at these glimpses of new covenant living living by faith and the gracious provision of God. Deuteronomy 20 verses 1 through 4. When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you do not be afraid of them for the Lord your God is with you who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

So it shall be when you're on the verge of battle that the priest shall approach and speak to the people and he shall say to them hear oh Israel today you're on the verge of battle with your enemies do not let your heart faint do not be afraid and do not tremble or be terrified because of them. Why? Why not be terrified in light of being outnumbered for the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to save you. That's pretty straightforward.

We can count on God to bring us the victory. How this echoes verses we've seen in the New Testament 1 Corinthians 15:57. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Same kind of spirit same God same faith. Enemies greater than us don't be worried afraid the Lord is with us. God will fight for his people.

It's like new covenant truth that the Old Testament saints were putting their hope in. Psalm 18 1 through 3. Psalm 18. In many ways there's hardly a more new covenant book in all the Bible than the book of Psalms.

Have you noticed that? I love to spend time in the Psalms looking at the Psalms through the eyes of the fullness of the provision of the new covenant. You just see seeds of it foretaste of it glimpses ahead of it. The relationship with the Lord available even to these Old Testament saints.

Psalm 18. I will love you oh Lord my strength the Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer my God my strength in whom I will trust my shield and the horn of my salvation my stronghold. I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised so shall I be saved from my enemies.

These statements the Lord is that's getting right at the heart of new covenant truth. The new covenant truth is all about who the Lord is what the Lord is going to do what the Lord has done all based on his character and these words my the Lord is my strength my rock my fortress my deliverer that's a man depending on the reality of the person and provision of God himself. In whom I will trust the new covenant living by faith humbly letting God pour out his grace that's the kind of heart David had and then David said I will call upon the Lord.

What's the result of those who call upon the Lord? So shall I be saved from my enemies rescued just by calling upon his name not proving you're worthy not getting the upper hand yourself not making victory appear I just call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised so shall I be saved from my enemies.

Here's a man living by the sufficiency of God you know he showed what happened when he ran on his own sufficiency Bathsheba numbering Israel when he wasn't told to by God obviously there were carnal reasons there were not it's not expounded exactly why and there are probably many reasons it could be but you know if God has his reasons to do something fine but if we just take it upon ourselves do it for our reasons it's the flesh but basically David was a man after God's own heart even when he failed miserably he didn't try to earn himself back into God's good favor he fell on the mercy of God and when he was victorious he gave God the glory when he stumbled and fell he cried out for mercy I mean this is a man after God's own heart Psalm 36 Psalm 36 new covenant truth in the old testament

Psalm 36 oh these are great verses seven through nine how precious is your loving kindness oh God therefore the children of man put their trust under the shadow of your wings they are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of your house and you give them drink from the river of your pleasures for with you is the fountain of life in your light we see light oh that just screams out the character of the new covenant marked the relationship of David to the Lord the hope and confidence and fulfillment of God's people depends on God's loving kindness and God's provision how precious is your loving kindness oh God not only does the word grace appear in the old testament that this word is a very strong spiritual synonym for grace some versions translate it loyal steadfast love God's faithful

commitment to his people it just is there all the time his loving kindness how precious it is just like his grace therefore in light of that children of men love to run under the shadow of God's wings when they're willing not to trust in themselves they end up abundantly satisfied with God's fullness he lets us drink of his river of life with him as the fountain of life life flows from him not from us and as far as light knowing light from darkness and living in the light it's in God's light we see light in man there's only darkness real light has to come from God beautiful new covenant truth in the old testament psalm 37 commit your way to the Lord verse five let's start at verse three trust in the Lord and do good dwell in the land and feed on his

faithfulness delight yourself also in

the Lord and he shall give you the desires of your heart commit your way to the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass what a tremendous picture of new covenant living trust in the Lord verse three feed on his faithfulness delight in the Lord let him be our joy our thrill our all in all then he'll give us the desires of our heart all the way from causing the right desires to sprout there as well as then fulfilling them it's not just delight in him and you can get whatever you want it's delight in the Lord and then he'll be giving your heart the kind of desires he'll give you the desires of your heart he'll put them in there there'll be desires that fit his character in his heart because he's your delight your heart's wide open to whatever he wants you're thrilled with what

thrills him you're blessed with what blesses him your will wants his will commit your way to the Lord Lord here's my path it's in your hands you're in charge i entrust it to you to lead to guide to guard to develop trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass he'll bring to pass the unfolding of the path where to walk in personally fantastic picture of living by faith in God which lets God's grace have room to work in our lives Isaiah 40 there's another great new covenant truth in the old testament Isaiah 40 i love this passage maybe you do too think of it in light of all the things we've looked at over these 11 plus weeks concerning the grace of God Isaiah 40 29 he God gives power to the weak and to those who have no might he increases strength think how many in the American church

immediately habitually disqualify themselves from God's strengthening why because they're all into being strong you know you got to be strong you got to be tough you got to be able you know and that's those aren't the people God gives strength to he gives power pardon yeah the power team oh man you know how to push my button the power team oh lord help us oh my goodness oh oh do we have the time to even reflect on that oh man now we don't have time for that Jonathan yeah look who tiger yeah we need a new power team just a bunch of weaklings going God help us then the right message would be coming forth you know he gives power to the weak and to those who have no might he increases strength the last thing people want is to be weak without might people fight it to look tough be strong act

strong you know it doesn't matter just at least put forth the image you know what a what a farce God gives power to the weak even to those who have no might he increases strength that's the grace of God see again we're talking about God's sufficiency not man's sufficiency you think it's likely in light of that that samson was probably just a very ordinary stature and very normal strength yeah i i think uh that the common way of depicting samson is a very humanistic view of him it's like hey he doesn't need God he can rip pillars down by himself really really no no doubt no doubt look at this verse 30 even the youths shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall you know the strength the vitality of youth i remember when i was 18 i i thought i was going to live forever

not because i was saved because i was invincible you know sickness disease aging inability who's that about must be those old 20 30 40 year old people even the youth shall faint and be weary there's even a a limit to that natural human vitality of youth but those who wait on the lord of any age those who wait on the lord shall renew their strength they shall mount up with wings like eagles they shall run and not be worried they shall walk and not faint don't get fooled by that word wait word wait is not just allowing the passage of time it's not an activity inactivity kind of word generally involves passage of time because every moment of our existence involves a passage of time but that could be translated in effect in some versions it is and in some other places in scripture this exact

word is translated hope hope but those who hope in the lord shall renew their strength those who put their expectations in god they find a renewed measure of strength god's strength they shall mount up with wings like eagles they shall run and not be worried they shall walk and not faint look at those promises shall renew their strength shall mount up with wings like eagles shall run and not be weary shall walk and not faint how did they enter into that by waiting upon the lord hoping in god as time passes putting expectations day by day step by step issue by issue in the lord so often we're just almost driven to reduce the christian life to do's and don'ts and it's natural in all of us make it more manageable more workable more doable i mean it's just i don't know if there are any

exceptions to that you know there are i haven't come across them certainly i'm not one but it isn't that it's other issues like who are you counting on where's the source of your resource those are the issues and sometimes the christian life is a very active season and sometimes it's a very inactive season but listen you can be inactive by the flesh and by the spirit you can be active by the flesh and by the spirit it isn't in those quantifiable things of how busy or how unbusy or how much do or how much not to do it's in a whole different realm you can quantify human life a lot in those things you know how busy or how many hours did you put in you know and how hard did you try and all that you can you can kind of get at human life that way but jesus said my kingdom is not of this

world he has a whole different realm for us to walk in has to do with trusting or not trusting looking to him or looking to self has to do with his grace poured out or us trying to perform up i mean those are the kind of issues and god's spirit is willing to reveal those to us and be convicting our heart all along the way and those are the arenas where growth comes this is a fantastic revelation of new covenant truth in the old testament those who wait on the lord shall have all these wonderful spiritual benefits here's a mighty one this is a powerful one this is one of the first ones i ever came across in the old testament jeremiah 17 i remember teaching on this in the early 1970s in dallas just as the lord is beginning to explode this new covenant in my own heart and life and i'd seen

it in the new testament but i didn't realize it was woven through the old testament as well jeremiah 17 5 through 8 thus says the lord cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength you know human resource his hope that's not just inadequate that is cursed cursed is the man who trusts in man himself or others and makes flesh human resource his provision whose heart departs from the lord that is shifts from hoping in the lord to hoping in man look at the curse involved here for he shall be like a shrub in the desert and shall not see when good comes but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness in a salt land which is not inhabited we're talking about barrenness of life the curse of man trusting in the resources of man is the human life becomes like a shrub in

the desert you know you drive through the desert you see these dry scraggly bushes out there every now and then that's a human life spiritually viewed depicted so we can see it when man trusts in man it's a curse but look at the other hand verse 7 blessed is the man who trusts in the lord and whose hope is the lord whose expectation confidence sense of certainty and guarantees in life and time and eternity is the lord why why is such a person so blessed because he shall be like a tree planted by the waters which spreads out its roots by the river and will not fear when heat comes i know i drive a lot from down here in north san diego county out into the calvary chapels across the southern half of the state usually if it's beyond oh i don't know fresno or somewhere like that i don't drive

i usually fly because it seems to reverse in in the utility of time or whatever the west why why is such a person so blessed because he shall be like a tree planted by the waters which spreads out its roots by the

river and will not fear when heat comes i know i drive a lot from down here in north san diego county out into the calvary chapels across the southern half of the state usually if it's beyond oh i don't know fresno or somewhere like that i don't drive i usually fly because it seems to reverse in in the utility of time or whatever the wisdom and and but in just driving that that's like you know 300 mile or whatever stretch you know in a lot of directions like calvary chapel barstow you could see a little desert when you drive out that way you know as well as a lot of other

calvaries i drive to indio palm springs and it's interesting because you can see a lot of lifelessness and down there and you see a little shrub out there just a shriveled excuse for a plant you know but you can look off in the distance and you can see a a winding line of green vibrant lush undergrowth and trees well you know in an instant what what's happening there's a stream running out there and there are plants without that water and then they're the plants with the water the curse of trusting in man is there's no living water innately in man to find fullness of life from but blessed is the man who trusts in the lord the lord is the fountain of living water and we hope in him we become like a tree planted by the water just anchored in there which spreads out its roots by the river

you know life life living water from the lord and will not fear when heat comes hey what's the problem with the heat coming if you know you're plugged into living water but its leaf will be green there'll be signs of life and will not be anxious in the year drought oh how i make it through the dry time because that living water is eternal ever flows ever available nor will cease from yielding fruit fantastic what a tremendous new covenant passage here in the old testament cursed by trusting in man flesh our strength like a parched shrub oh the blessing of trusting in the lord hoping in the lord makes our lives like a green tree bearing fruit constantly fantastic new covenant truth you know these verses we've just read in many ways they summarize everything we've been studying for 11 plus

weeks and we're reading the old testament it's not that we have a old testament god and then a new testament god we have the lord god almighty the great i am he always is and there always shall be who he has been and will be now he knew man needed to have him god revealed to us little by little digestible portions to us it's like yeah but thousands of years in this process oh yeah what's that to god a few days thousands of years you know the promises to abraham and you know all that down to the prophets and the messiah to come and the messiah came and then afterwards the the writing of the new testament and all happened like that before god you know it's nothing you know just he knew what man needed to have a revelation of who he was and how to approach him and he just starts to unfold it

no wonder we look way back there we find things that that now you don't find that on every page what concentrates on most pages is the early lessons the shadows boy the shadows get pretty crisp when some of these passages you know it's like oh i can almost recognize that face then you get into the new and you just you find these everywhere you look you know one more micah don't we all agree that's one of the great new covenant books micah where is it first yes i remember coming across it amos obadiah jonah micah and all that soon after daniel micah 7 verses 7 through 9 therefore i will look to the lord i will wait for the god of my salvation my god will hear me do not rejoice over me my enemy when i fall i will arise when i sit in darkness the lord will be a light to me i will bear the

indignation of the lord because i have sinned against him until he pleads my case and executes justice for me he will bring me forth to the light i will see his righteousness what a fantastic passage of grace and faith and not man's sufficiency but god's sufficiency look to the lord wait for the lord while i'm in this predicament and that mess even sin and needing to repent the lord will do this the lord will do that and the

lord will bring me forth to the light and i will see his righteousness here is a man learning to live by the sufficiency of god not of man now shifting from new covenant truth in the old testament which is confirming exhilarating reminds us of the everlasting character of god and beautiful indicators of what was to birth forth in burst forth in fullness when jesus

christ came the messiah our life our light our salvation now to bring that to some other issues like bearing fruit and then good works let's launch into the bearing fruit one get started and then we'll take a break before we look at good works and the much more grace of god bearing fruit how does this new covenant of god's grace relate to bearing fruit i mean we do want to be fruitful christians we have the desire we sense it's right we're called to it in the scriptures well here's the beauty beauty of it the new covenant grace of god is designed to produce fruit in and through our lives the new covenant the grace of god is available to develop fruitful lives colossians 1 6 fruitful lives you could even say the development of a godly christ-like life and you think the fruit of the spirit

christ likeness colossians 1 6 speaking of the gospel which has come to you as it has also in all the world and is bringing forth fruit as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of god in truth what is it that these believers at colossi had heard and got to know in reality in truth the grace of god well what was it doing bringing forth fruit since the day they heard it and knew it in truth in reality in actuality they heard it god gave understanding and it was their experience their reality to put another way the grace of god is the heavenly dynamic behind the bringing forth of spiritual fruit in our lives there is another way to say this and maybe we're more commonly familiar with this way and that's galatians 5 22 and 23 but the fruit of the spirit is love and

it well may be that fruit singular therefore is the fruit of love love manifested in many forms like joy peace long-suffering kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness self-control all these things are the fruit of the spirit not a work of the flesh that is an activity based on human resource that's not what produces the fruit of the spirit not activity based on human resource it's something that grows fruit is something that grows what's the cause the spirit now in colossians 1 6 it says the grace of god was bringing forth fruit here it's the fruit of the spirit well remember we had a study about grace and holy spirit living by the grace of god and walking in the fullness of the spirit there are two different ways to say the same thing you know no surprise that here when it gets to fruit

we find that grace causes it well i thought the spirit caused it well that's just somewhat redundant but we need god to give us all those insights you know i must confess before god showed me the connection between living by the spirit living by the grace of god i had a significantly diminished understanding of each of them when i realized that each was describing the same thing in different terms each of them took on a whole new meaning you mean walking in the spirit is living by the resource of the grace of god wow i had it more down to a technique than something like that you know oh you mean living by the grace of god is just the holy spirit unleashing god's grace in my life wow praise god that's exciting that's encouraging that's helpful the holy spirit brings forth fruit in those

who walk according to the spirit thereby allowing god's grace to work in and through their lives just two different ways to say the same thing let's do one more verse on the next page because it's be a better place to stop john 15 four and five good place to take a break after we get started on that because that's so obviously about fruit bearing and we're talking now about bearing fruit and its relationship to new covenant grace abide in me and i and you as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine neither can you unless you abide in me i'm the vine you are the branches he who abides in me and i

in him bears much fruit for apart from me you can do nothing nothing wow kind of humbling isn't it well living by the grace of god necessitates a willingness to walk in

humility brothers sisters we want to live by the grace of god and we want to bear fruit we've got to be willing to walk humbly with god to the extent that we won't believe won't agree won't humble ourselves and say yes lord without you i can do nothing our fruit bearing will be restricted restricted to just those brief moments of spiritual clarity when we have a hundred percent desperation for god you know how about spread that out that desperation over a life and just say lord i not only need you when it really gets tough and it seems so impossible i need you when i think i've got it all together and it's going well because apart from you i can't do anything anything that matters i can do a lot of things that impress people i do a lot of things that impress the church maybe but apart

from you i can do nothing why because we're not sufficient in ourselves to consider anything that's coming from ourselves our sufficiency is from god hmm fruit bearing is related in part to our facing that we can't produce one heavenly grape think about it not even not even a shrivel of raisin exactly now a lot of us most of us get pretty good at producing religious wax fruit looking like we're really with it posturing talking acting appearing posing you probably wonder why there are holes in my knees i'm not trying to be stylish i just pray a lot you know i mean we have a lot of ways of of kind of showing religious wax fruit there's no life in it can only impress the flesh it cannot share the things of god with anyone we've got to be willing to agree we can produce zero fruit on our own

effort that's humility but living by grace also involves faith by faith we access the grace of god romans 5 2 says through jesus by faith we access this grace we have access into this grace in which we stand so what is there to believe here that abiding in christ we can bear much fruit abiding in depending on him like a grape branch must depend upon a grape vine abiding in him we can bear much fruit bear fruit have that fruit developing in and through us not producing it bearing it god produces it the vine produces the fruit the branch bears it the vine and its life is the dynamic behind the fruit it's so obvious to prove that so simple it is clipped the branch off the vine and see how many grapes come it's all related to the connection to the vine which has the life we can bear fruit

have it develop in and through us but the life in the vine must be the dynamic that causes it so what do we do abide in the vine just hang in there with him unlike a grape branch we have a choice a great branch doesn't that's you know that's the limitation of that picture but the fact that the word abiding is here covers the limitation we can abide we can look lean hope in the vine instead of in ourselves let's face it a whole lot of american christianity is exhortation to branches to grunt and groan strain and strive harder you know how hard you trying how serious are you you think god's gonna be pleased that you think you're gonna be fruitful that way come on you know bear down get with it do more try harder i mean let's be let's be grown-ups here we can't expect god to do everything

well then what is our hope what is our hope come on you branches you're putting too much strain on that vine do your own part you know well what is the branches part abide and bear not produce abide and bear that's a full-time job right there be caught up in the vine attentive to him hoping in him looking to him relating to him and then just bear the fruit he produces just bear just hold it out need some nourishment here you know you share some of what the lord has given much fruit much fruit great measures of christ likeness in word and deed and attitude much fruit you know why that's christ likeness because it's manifested life of christ flowing from the vine through the branch appearing in fruit fruit that came from his life it's christ likeness love joy peace another way to describe

it well fruit bearing it's built into new covenant living by the grace of god

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11358.mp3>

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