

# Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.10.01

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## Sermon recordings

Click or type the short URL, or visit oakgrovecofc.org/Sermons.

**Speaker-AM:** Steve Helterbrand

**Title:** What If They Don't?

**Recording:**

[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/what-if-they-dont](https://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/what-if-they-dont)

**Speaker-PM:** Kraig A Benney

**Title:** Value Of Trails

**Recording:**

[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/value-of-trails](https://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/value-of-trails)

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

**Colossians 3:18-19**

CONSIDER IT PURE JOY,  
MY BROTHERS, WHEN YOU  
ENCOUNTER TRIALS OF  
MANY KINDS,

*- JAMES 1:2*



Thorns, 09/29/23 by Doy Moyer

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (II Corinthians 12:9).


Paul had a weakness, a “thorn in the flesh” that he thought was keeping him from being as productive as he could have been without it. He prayed to the Lord three times to have it removed, but the Lord would let it remain, telling Paul that His grace was sufficient. Paul concludes, “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (II Corinthians 12:9-10).

This is difficult. We feel hampered by various walls that appear in life, from personal physical and emotional health to barriers erected by others. We want the freedom to act without barriers and think that is what will benefit the kingdom the most. It makes sense to pray that these be removed from our lives so we can do our best in serving the Lord.

But what if these thorns are actually what put us in a position to have a greater effect for God’s kingdom? What if the way we handle our thorns serves to help others more, spread the gospel more, and glorify God more? Are we willing to endure the thorns for the sake of more glory to God?

Perhaps we think, “I want to glorify God, but can it be without these thorns?” Isn’t that for God to determine? To one, He may grant a life without severe difficulties; to another, He may ask to endure great hardships. Instead of asking what we think is fair, let us ask what will work to the benefit of the kingdom and the glory of God. If we must endure some difficulties so that the work of God is magnified, then let our response be like Paul’s: “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

The question is, will people see Christ in you when your life is met with trials, hardships, and calamities? Whether big or little matters, if our lives are not pointing to the Lord then where are our hearts and where is our treasure?



## **Abraham Believed God, 09/28/23 By Sam Bunyard**

“And Abraham believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness” (Gn. 15:6).

This simple statement is one of the most important declarations of the Old Testament. Misunderstanding it could have dangerous consequences to your soul. Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation – and he is also the spiritual father of Christians by our shared faith (Gal. 3). It was through the promises God made to Abraham that Christ came into the world so that “all families of the earth will be blessed” (Gn. 12:3). Through faith Abraham maintained a relationship with God; and by faith like his we also can be found righteous.

Abraham’s faith in God was not a singular event in his life – it describes the pattern of his life. Abraham believed God when he left his homeland bound for an unknown place and it was accounted to him for righteousness (He. 11:8, Gal. 3:6-8, Gn. 12). Abraham “did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief” when the time came for Isaac to be born in his old age (Rm. 4:20). He and Sarah did their part, and they believed that God would fulfill His promises through the birth of their son. They believed God and it was accounted to them for righteousness (Rm. 4:3, 19-22, Gn. 17). When it came time for that son of promise to be offered up as a burnt sacrifice on Mount Moriah, Abraham was willing to offer his son on the altar – but he remained convinced that God would fulfill his promise anyway. He believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness (Jas. 2:21-23, Gn. 22).

New Testament writers understood (by the Holy Spirit) that Abraham’s faith as described in Genesis was not a snapshot moment in his life, but a character trait demonstrated time and time again through his trust and obedience to God.

May we have such faith!