

# Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.07.30

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## Sermon recordings

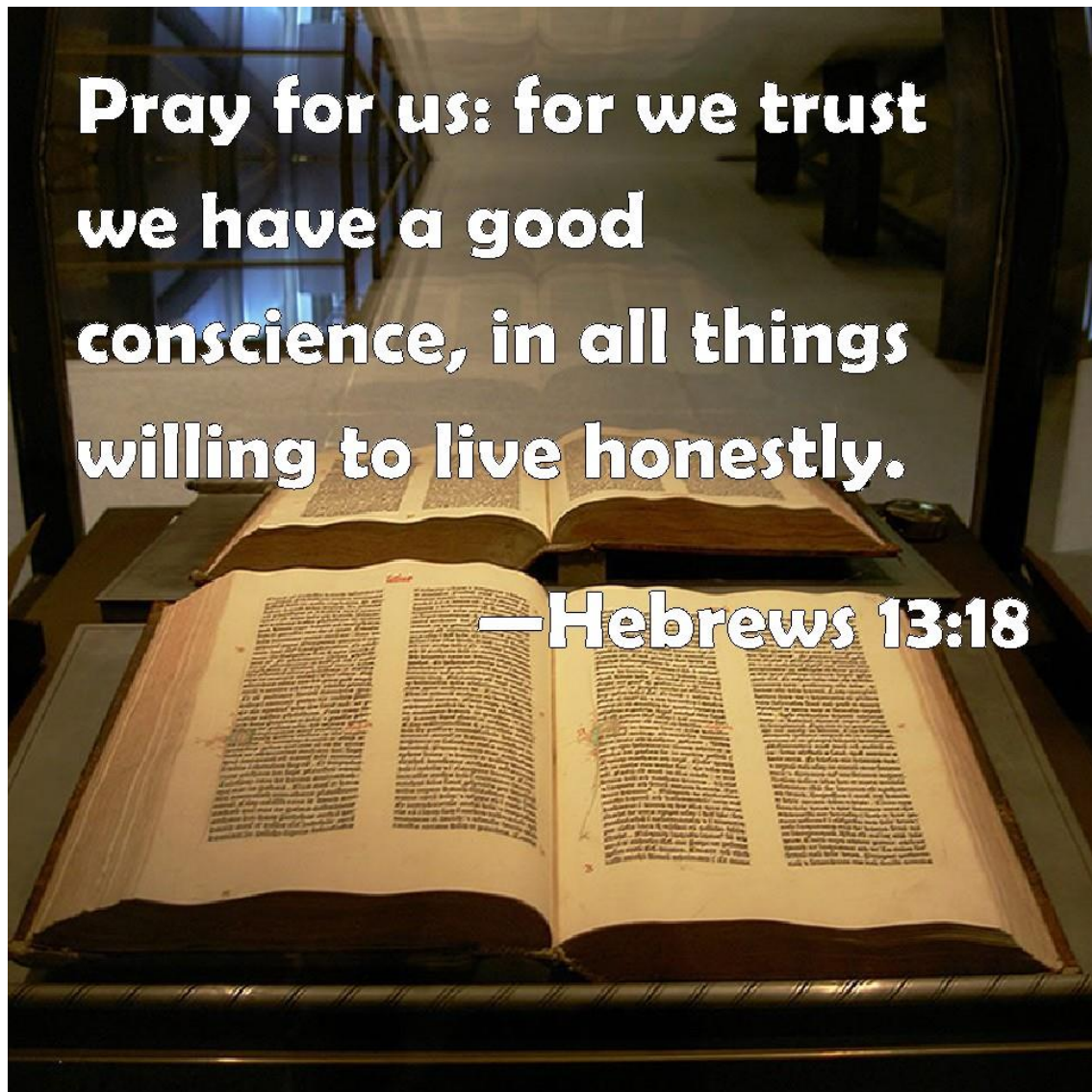
Click or type the short URL, or visit [oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/](http://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/).

**Speaker-AM:** Josh Vinyard

**Title:** Retraining Your Conscious

**Recording:**

[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/retraining-your-conscious/](http://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/retraining-your-conscious/)



**Something In My Teeth, 7/27/23 By Sam Bunyard**

“If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away and immediately forgets what kind of a man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.” (Jas. 1:23-25)

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves” (II Cor. 13:5). Scripture can be used like a mirror to this effect. The general use for a mirror is to make sure you don’t have anything in your teeth and that nothing about your appearance needs fixing.

When you properly use the mirror of God’s word, you can “present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15).

Unfortunately, mirrors can be misused. We may, as James writes about, look into the mirror absentmindedly. We gaze at our reflection for a moment, ignoring that our shirt is only half tucked in and our collar is half popped. We stare straight at the sin in our lives and fail to recognize them as problems, walking away from the mirror without making a change.

We may look into the mirror of God’s word in vanity – thinking about how good we look. In this case we would have a self-righteous attitude that does not recognize the need to eliminate sin in our lives and draw closer to God.

Or, we may look into the mirror of God’s word in search of someone else’s face. We are not interested in making applications in our own lives – but we love to point out the failures and shortcomings of others!

Let’s make sure we are using the mirror properly – getting that ‘something’ out of our teeth!

## Grace Is Sufficient, 7/29/2023 By Doy Moyer

Paul describes certain visions and revelations that were beyond his understanding (II Corinthians 12). He then spoke of what he calls a “*thorn in the flesh*,” given to him to keep him from becoming conceited. He implored the Lord three times that this thorn would be removed from him. Whatever it was, and we do not know, Paul apparently thought it was keeping him from being able to do the work that he wanted to do. One might expect that the Lord would have removed this thorn, but Paul came to realize that it was necessary to keep him humble. The Lord's answer is intriguing: “*My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness*” ([II Corinthians 12:9](#)). Paul did not need to be perfect in his body to accomplish what the Lord desired.

The sufficiency of the Lord's grace is difficult to grasp, yet it is a concept that the child of God must accept. Failing to recognize the sufficiency of God's grace, we may find ourselves proud and arrogant in the face of God. Yet remember that God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble ([I Peter 5:5](#)). The recognition of the grace of God on our part is a confession of our need to be humble. Think, then, about a handful of areas in which we need to be thankful in our acknowledgment of the sufficiency of God's grace.

### Grace is sufficient for life

We are given life by God: “*The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything*” ([Acts 17:24-25](#)). God did not have to make us, but by His grace, He gives us life and breath and all things. We must not live as if we made ourselves but rather live for Him who gave us life in the first place. By grace, we live.

### Grace is sufficient for God's revelation

The common problem of humanity is sin, and the consequences of sin are devastating. What can be done about this? Only God can tell us His plans. God was not content to let us die in our sins, but through love and grace, He has revealed His mind so that we may know His will and be reconciled to Him. God did not have to tell us anything, and He would have been perfectly just to judge us. But by His grace, we can “*understand the things freely given us by God*” ([I Corinthians 2:9](#)).

## Grace is sufficient for salvation and hope

The revelation of God's will includes His desire for our salvation from sin ([1 Timothy 2:4](#)). Scripture shows that salvation cannot be earned, *“for by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”* ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). This gift of salvation, in turn, provides us with the hope of eternal life. Paul tied hope and grace together when he wrote of *“the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing — as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth”* ([Colossians 1:5-6](#)). Salvation and hope flow from God's grace.

## Grace is sufficient for handling suffering

This is the context in which Paul writes about his desire to be relieved of the thorn. Perhaps, in our suffering, we feel that we are being held back from all that we might otherwise accomplish. Would it not be in the Lord's interest to take these trials away and let us meet our full potential? What we may be failing to see is that our potential is met in the context of our suffering. Paul's influence may indeed be greater because he suffered, and he learned that strength was gained through his weakness. God's grace is sufficient for suffering as it teaches us to rely on Him and not ourselves. If we don't recognize our weaknesses, we won't see the Lord's grace as sufficient; when we think we are strong, grace may seem unnecessary.

## Grace is sufficient for facing death

Death can induce fear in our hearts because we do not know what to expect. But by God's grace through Christ sharing in flesh and blood, He destroyed the one who has power of death and delivered *“all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery”* ([Hebrews 2:14-15](#)). By the Lord's grace, we can face death without fear.

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”* This needs to serve as a continual reminder of our need to trust the One who has the power over all life and death. Praise the Lord for His grace!