

# Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2024.07.07

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## Sermon recordings

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

**Speaker-AM:** Steve Helterbrand

**Title:** Making Powerful

**Recording:**

[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/making-powerful-things-of-no-effect](http://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/making-powerful-things-of-no-effect)

**Speaker-PM:** Kraig Benney

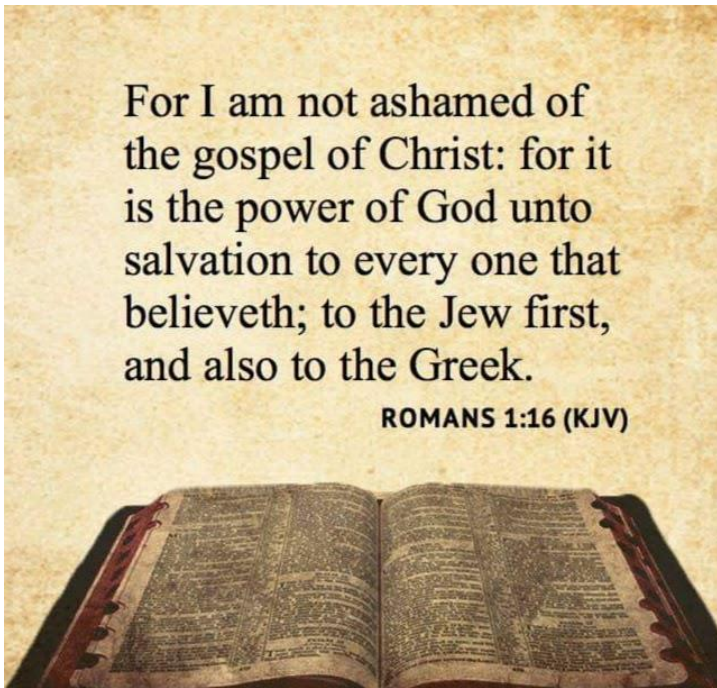
**Title:** Abide With Me

**Recording:**

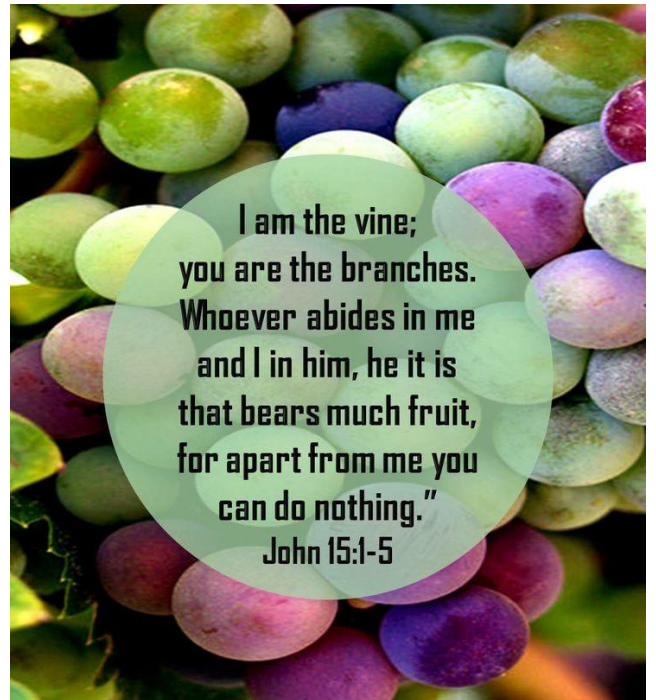
[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/abide-with-me](http://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/abide-with-me)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

ROMANS 1:16 (KJV)



I am the vine;  
you are the branches.  
Whoever abides in me  
and I in him, he it is  
that bears much fruit,  
for apart from me you  
can do nothing."  
John 15:1-5



## Articles

### **Precious in the Sight of the LORD, 7/5/2024 by Tommy Peeler**

*“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones” (Psalm 116:15).*

Psalms 116 is best described as an individual psalm of thanksgiving. He is thanking God for saving his life. The writer had an experience where the “cords of death encompassed me and the terrors of Sheol come upon me” (Psalms 116:3). The LORD “rescued my soul from death” in Psalms 116:8. He thanks God for saving his life in Psalms 116:4, 6, 8, and loosing his bonds in Psalms 116:16. He is thankful to be walking before the LORD in “the land of the living” (Psalms 116:9). In gratitude for God’s mercy in saving his life, he keeps his vows (Psalms 116:14, 18) and offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving (Psalms 116:17). The writer rejoices in God sparing his life.

Does this mean that death is a beautiful thing among the godly? Often, it is interpreted this way. I do not deny there is some truth in this idea (Philippians 1:20-23; Revelation 14:13), but is that what this specific passage teaches? Remember, the overall context of Psalm 116 is about God saving and sparing lives. The interpretation of death being precious and beautiful does not easily fit the overall context of this psalm.

What does the specific word “precious” mean in this context? This Hebrew word is an adjective, and it is used as an adjective around 35 times in Old Testament. It is most often used of precious or costly jewels or wealth (II Samuel 12:30; I Kings 5:17; 7:9, 10, 11; 10:2, 10, 11; I Chronicles 20:2; 29:2; II Chronicles 3:6; 9:1, 9, 10; 32:27; Job 28:16; Proverbs 1:13; 3:15; Ezekiel 27:22; 28:13; Daniel 11:38). What else can looking at this word tells us? The verb form of this word is used in II Kings 1:13-14. A commander of fifty men begs Elijah that their lives be precious in Elijah’s eyes (and God’s). The same verb appears in Psalms 72 in a description of an ideal king who rescues the poor and needy, and “their blood will be precious in his sight” (Psalms 72:14). Both these passages use this verb in the sense of someone’s life being precious, costly, or valuable. Therefore, it is used to save precious lives. That seems to be the same sense of using the adjective in Psalms 116:15. I think the NET translation captures the meaning of Psalms 116:15 when it says, “The LORD values the lives of his faithful followers.”

While death for the godly leads us into God’s presence, God also delights in saving lives and rescuing his servants from death. The New Testament also teaches this truth (Philippians 2:25-27; II Timothy 3:10-11).

### **Closer Than They Appear, 7/7/2024 By Warren King**

We have all read the warning in the rearview mirror: ‘Objects in mirror are closer than they appear’. And while humorists have had a field day with it, the warning serves to remind us that depth perception really does make a difference while driving. A similar warning should be mandatory on all calendars: ‘Dates on calendar are closer than they appear’. It is a Biblical admonition, similar in effect to Romans 13:11, “...now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.” Like the rear-view mirror, it is a warning that we ignore to our peril.

And what dates are closer than they appear? Certainly, birthdays would qualify. It may seem unbelievable to a teenager that their thirtieth birth day is just around the corner, but it is (God willing). And it may seem inconceivable that the day of our death will come as quickly as the dissipation of a morning fog – but it will (Ja 4:14).

Such thoughts may seem negative or even macabre; but to a Christian they are fundamental truths – and provide motive for us to keep looking ahead (Ph 3:13-14).