

Sermon #103 — John's Gospel

Title: **SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN**

Text: John 15:1-8

Date: Sunday Afternoon — December 12, 2010

Tape: *John #103*

Subject: *The Vine and the Branches*

Readings: *Larry Criss and Frank Hall*

Introduction:

“Does it glorify God?” — That is the litmus test by which all doctrine, all preaching, and all teaching must be proved.

All the heresies which have arisen in the history of the Church have had a decided tendency to dishonor God and to flatter man. Their aim is always the exaltation of man and the abasing of God, the exaltation of man's imaginary “free will” and the denial of God's sovereign will, the uplifting of man and the mockery of God. — Robbing God of the glory which is due unto his name, false prophets attempt to put a counterfeit luster upon the head of the rebellious and depraved creature.

Human religion magnifies man; but the gospel of the grace of God sinks the creature very low and

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

presents the Lord God, the Triune Jehovah, before us as One sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up. This fact is so evident that the most uneducated believer, even if he is incapable of refuting the heresies men everywhere proclaim, is able to spot the devil's lie with ease. — If it glorifies man it is not of God. By this test you may judge, and judge infallibly, truth from error. By this rule you may determine whether any doctrine is true or false, orthodox or heretical: — “Does it glorify God?” If it does it is true. “Does it exalt man?” If it does, it is false.

All gospel doctrine lays man low in the dust and speaks of him in terms which are intended to make him feel his degradation.

- Sinful! — Ruined! — Depraved!
- Wicked! — Vile! — Helpless!
- Hopeless! — Undone! — God Hating Rebel!

All gospel doctrine puts the crown upon the head of God, not upon the head of man's free-will, or free agency, or good works. Test everything I preach (and everything preached by any other man) by this rule: — “Does it glorify God?”

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

With that in mind, I want you to open your Bibles with me to John 15. The title of my message is — **SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN**. Our text will be John 15:1-8.

(John 15:1-8) “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every [branch] that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast [them] into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

Proposition: Because Christ is the true Vine in whom is all life, and grace, and strength, and we are but branches in the Vine, without him we can do nothing. — “*We are [not] sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God*” (2 Corinthians 3:5).

THE TRUE VINE

“*I am the true Vine*” (v. 1). — The Lord Jesus compares himself to many things, by which he condescends to teach us who he is, what he has done, is doing, and shall hereafter do for his chosen. By the use of these images, very familiar and simple, the Savior graciously uses common, everyday things to remind us constantly of himself.

- He said, “*I am the **Door**; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved.*” — There is no other Door.
- He said, “*I am the true **Bread** from heaven.*” — He alone is the Bread of Life we must have, upon which our souls live.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

- Our Savior says, “*I am the Water of Life.*” — He who drinks of this Water shall never thirst!
- The Master declares, “*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*”

Everything that God has for sinners is in Christ. All things spiritual and eternal are in Christ, by Christ, and through Christ (John 3:35; Colossians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

(John 3:35) “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.”

(Colossians 2:9-10) “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

Acceptance, forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life, redemption, justification, and sanctification, propitiation, pardon, and peace, holiness here and heaven hereafter, all are ours by a living union with Christ. He is the true Vine. All life is in the Vine and from the Vine.

Try to imagine the condescension of our Lord Jesus in using this imagery. The Lord of Glory compares himself to a vine to show us the lowliness and meekness of his person. Isaiah described him “*as a root out of a dry ground.*” Nothing in the field appears less promising than a dry vine in the winter. Truly, in the vine there is “*no form nor comeliness that we should desire him.*” Yet, our blessed Savior calls himself “*the True Vine.*” He could not have chosen image more unsightly.

Zechariah said that when the Savior would come with salvation he would be meek and lowly. Nothing is lower than the vine that spreads its branches along the ground. Nothing is weaker and nothing more feeble than the vine. It has to have something to prop it up, a stake upon which it must be upheld.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

Yet, by this comparison, when our Savior says, “*I am the True Vine,*” he also assures us of his own super abounding grace and infinite fruitfulness and love to us as the people of his choice. — **What can be more useful than the fruitful vine to the branches growing out of it?** Our great “*Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall*” (Genesis 49:22). The fruit of this Vine is like the wine of Lebanon (Hosea 14:7), reviving, exhilarating, and rich. Truly, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great Savior, is that **Plant of Renown** God promised by his prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 34:29).

(Ezekiel 34:29-31) “And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. 30 Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God [am] with them, and [that] they, [even] the house of Israel, [are] my people, saith the Lord GOD. 31 And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, [are] men, [and] I [am] your God, saith the Lord

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

GOD.”

THE HUSBANDMAN

(John 15:1) “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.”

“My Father is the Husbandman.” — With those our Savior gives us another word of sweet assurance, that his joy might remain in us and that our joy might be full (v. 11). Christ is the Vine. We are the branches. The vineyard is the Lord’s. It belongs to and is unceasingly tended by the Almighty God, our heavenly Father. He is the Husbandman, the Vinedresser. He who purposed the Vine planted and supported it for the purposes of his will and for his own glory.

- He planted the Vine in the Incarnation (Hebrews 10:5; Galatians 4:4-5).
- He filled with his Spirit.
- He upheld and supported the Vine, and made it strong for himself (Psalm 80:15, 17).
- The Father made Christ our Vine and made us branches in the Vine, putting everything in him

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

for his own glory (Ephesians 1:11-12).

- He takes infinite delight in the Vine, this Plant of Renown, “His Pleasant Plant” (Isaiah 5:7).

Read on...

(John 15:2) “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

This is the Father’s work, as the Husbandman. — **Robert Hawker** suggests that the opening words of this verse would be more accurately translated, “Every branch that beareth not fruit in me.” Without question, that is our Lord’s meaning. It is not possible that any can be truly in him and not bear fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).

But there are many who appear to be in him who are not: (Judas, Simon Magus, Demas, Diotrephes, etc.). They appear to be in Christ by association, outward profession, and the performance of religious duties; but they bear no spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

Religious duties and what men call good works (works of religious austerity) may be produced without any true spiritual union with Christ (Luke 16:15). — Carnal professors, lost religionists, are dead branches which will eventually be exposed and taken away.

(Luke 16:15) “And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”

There are myriads of professing Christians in the world whose union with Christ is only outward and formal. There are some in every local church. Some are joined to Christ by baptism and church-membership. Some go further and are regular in attendance. Many talk loudly about religion and doctrine. But they all lack “*the one thing needful.*” They have no grace in their hearts, no faith in Christ, no inward work of the Holy Spirit. They are not one with Christ. They are not in Christ; and Christ is not in them. Their union with him is only outward. It is

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

not real. They have “*a name to live,*” but they are dead. Their end will be destruction. They will be separated from the company of true believers, and cast out, as withered, useless branches, into everlasting fire. They will find at last, whatever they thought in this world, that there is a worm that never dies, and a fire that is not quenched.

The true branches, those who are savingly rooted in, joined to, and one with Christ by the Father’s will and work, always bring forth fruit by the power and grace of his Spirit.

- The fruit of the Spirit is grace in the soul (Galatians 5:22-23).
- The fruit of the Spirit is not something men can produce.
- The fruit of the Spirit is not something men can see.
- The fruit of the Spirit is not something men are competent to discern.

You and I are incapable of determining which branches are in the Vine and which are just hanging on the Vine. God alone knows and can

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

distinguish the false from the true.

Dead, withered, fruitless branches that are hanging on the Vine by mere profession, the Vine dresser takes away and burns. **Those living branches savingly in the Vine he constantly prunes, cleanses, and purges by trials, afflictions, and instruction that they may grow and bring forth more fruit** (James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:7; Psalm 119:71).

(James 1:2-4) “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing [this], that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have [her] perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

(1 Peter 1:7) “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

(Psalms 119:71) “It is good for me that I have

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.”

The Lord God declares, “From me is thy fruit found” (Hosea 14:8). Let us never forget it. Christ is the Vine. Every portion of life and fruitfulness comes from him. Grace is not a self acting principle. Grace is not an evolutionary process. Grace is God’s gift and God’s work. All our fresh springs are in him. — Of his fulness we receive grace for grace. That is to say, we get grace from Christ’s fulness day by day, hour by hour, and moment by moment. — “All my springs are in thee” (Psalm 87:7).

CLEAN THROUGH THE WORD

Now, look at verse 3...

(John 15:3) “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”

The Lord Jesus had told his disciples in John 13:10 that they were “*clean, but not all,*” because Judas was then still among them. Since Judas was now purged from the Vine, the Savior says to the eleven, “Ye are

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

clean.” — Not by works. — Not by law. — Not by baptism. — Not by works. — Not by ceremony. — But by grace!

They were and all who are born of God are clean, regenerated, sanctified, and justified, by the precious blood of Christ, by the Spirit of God, through the word preached and believed (Zechariah 13:1; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Titus 3:4-7). — **Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ we purify our hearts by faith** (Acts 15:9).

- Blood Bought!
- Blood Bathed!

(Zechariah 13:1) “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but **ye are washed**, but **ye are sanctified**, but **ye are justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

(Titus 3:4-7) “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by **the washing of regeneration**, and **renewing of the Holy Ghost**; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being **justified by his grace**, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

These men were all true branches in the true vine, Christ Jesus. By the grace of God they believed in Christ, loved Christ, and were in Christ, never to be separated from him (John 10:27-30; Ecclesiastes 3:14; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

(John 10:27-30) “My sheep hear my voice, and I

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave [them] me, is greater than all; and no [man] is able to pluck [them] out of my Father's hand. 30 I and [my] Father are one.”

(Ecclesiastes 4:14) “For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.”

(1 Peter 1:3-5) “Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

ABIDING IN CHRIST

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

In verse 4 our Savior says, — “*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*” — I remind you, this is a promise of grace, not a precept of law. **How can you abide in him and he in you, except by his own work?** Our Lord is not warning us that if we decide no longer to abide in him, we will cease to bear fruit, wither, die, and be burned forever in hell. — I have no idea how that misunderstanding of this verse could cause his joy to remain in anyone, or make anyone’s joy full. Remember, that is our Lord’s intention in this passage (v. 11). This verse must be understood, in the light of that stated intention, as a promise of grace.

Our Lord’s intent is that his joy remain in us and that our joy be full. That being the case, our Lord’s words here must mean: — **You shall abide in me; and I will abide in you.** That is exactly what he promised in his everlasting covenant (Jeremiah 32:38-41).

(Jeremiah 32:38-41) “And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: 39 And I will

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: 40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. 41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.”

Our abiding in Christ is not a condition which we fulfil before Christ gives us life, but the result of Christ’s gift of life. — “**By the grace of God I am what I am**” (1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

Remember, we are looking at a parable, the parable of a vine and branches. And remember that a parable is an earthly picture of a spiritual lesson. The parable may suggest many thoughts; but it is intended to show us just one thing. Look at verse 5, and you will

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

see what our Lord's intent is in giving us this parable.

(John 15:5) “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

This parable is intended to slay every thought of self-sufficiency. The Lord Jesus says, “Without me ye can do nothing!” The sooner we learn that the better. The more fully we realize it, the better. The more broadly we apply it the better. — “Without me ye can do nothing!”

I know this in theory, as well as I know that I am a sinner; but I am forever failing in this knowledge, when I come to put it into practice. Teach me, O Holy Spirit of God, teach me, how to live in the constant realization of this fact. — “Without me ye can do nothing!” It is a fact that cannot be denied that neither the judgments of God nor his mercies have the slightest effect upon the heart of man, without his grace.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

Robert Hawker wrote...

“Behold the prosperous sinner bathing in a full river of blessings, himself in health, his circumstances flourishing, his children like olive-branches round his table, wealth pouring in upon him from every quarter; and yet he lives without God, and without Christ in the world; and as he lives, so he dies, in the vanity of his mind. See him amidst distinguishing preservations, in battles by sea or land, still preserved, while floating carcasses, or opened graves, are all around him: do these things bring his heart to God? Not in the least. The sum total of his character may be comprised in a few words; *‘God is not in all his thoughts.’*”

Look at him in the opposite side of the representation; let such an one be visited with chastisements, in his own person sickness, in his family misery, in his substance want; in short, in all that concerns him, a life of sorrow, care, anxiety, disappointment, ruin. Perhaps to all these, a body long the dwelling-place of some

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

loathsome disease, under which he groans, and at length dies, and dies the same unawakened sinner as he had lived. And suppose these accumulated evils had been distinguished also with some more peculiar maladies, in perils in the sea, in perils in the war, in perils among men; nay, let him be maimed in his limbs, let him be rotting in a prison, let him be worn out with misery from evil upon evil, like waves of the sea following each other; yet still he continues the hardened, unsubdued sinner under all, and as unconscious of God's rods as the prosperous sinner before described is of God's blessings.

Are these things so, my soul, and hast thou seen them? Yes, in numberless instances. Oh then, learn, that without Jesus thou canst do nothing. Outward circumstances, unaccompanied with inward grace, leave men just where they found them; and plain it is, that grace alone can change the heart. Lord Jesus, let these loud and crying truths, day by day lead my soul to thee! Be thou *'all in all,'* my hope, my guide, my strength, my portion; for *'without thee I can do nothing.'*”

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

“Without me ye can do nothing!” — Outward circumstances, unaccompanied with inward grace leave men just as they find them. Only Christ can change the heart! Only Christ can convert the sinner! Only Christ can save. I say we should apply these words of our Savior as broadly as possible to all things spiritual. — **“Without me ye can do nothing!”**

- “Without me ye” cannot believe.
- “Without me ye” cannot pray.
- “Without me ye” cannot watch.
- “Without me ye” cannot learn, know, or understand anything spiritual.
- “Without me ye” cannot know the meaning of my Word.
- “Without me ye” cannot preach.
- “Without me ye” cannot worship.
- “Without me ye” cannot hear me speak by the gospel.
- “Without me ye” cannot persevere.
- “Without me ye” cannot withstand the devil.
- “Without me ye” cannot resist temptation.
- “Without me ye” cannot resist sin.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

- “*Without me ye*” cannot stand.
- “*Without me ye*” cannot recover when fallen.
- “*Without me ye can do nothing!*”

(Romans 9:16) “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”

As these words apply to all men, believers and unbelievers, they are especially applicable to preachers. Let every gospel preacher understand that the Lord Jesus is speaking to him, when he says, “**Without me ye can do nothing.**”

Pastor Henry Mahan wrote...

“I suppose the most difficult thing any believer has to learn is that ‘*Without Him we can do nothing.*’ This is our creed but not our experience! We will never be effectually used for God’s true glory until it becomes our experience. God will never use men that are proud enough to think themselves necessary or capable. He will throw away the vessel which

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

begins to boast in itself or allows others to boast in it. Whatever is our strength in the flesh is sure to become our weakness in the spirit — whether it be our intelligence, our morality, our length of service, our doctrine, our courage or whatever. Gideon feared the Midianites because of the small number of his soldiers, but the Lord said, ‘Your soldiers are yet too many for me.’ I wonder if we will ever become weak enough, empty enough, and ignorant enough for God to use us for His glory! The logic of the Lord is strange to the natural mind. *‘For when I am weak, then am I strong’* (2 Corinthians 12:10). *‘Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me’* (2 Corinthians 12:9). The Lord must go back to the seashore and raise up some fishermen — we’ve all become masters and doctors, wise men in theology and great counselors. I disqualify myself for God’s use when I become qualified. My fine talents and lofty credentials become hindrances rather than helps. I thought to prepare myself for great things, only to learn that it was the rough voice in the wilderness He planned to

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

use, not the polished preacher; it was the weak, impulsive shepherd with the sling He planned to use, not the mighty warrior with his armor of wit and arsenal of facts, doctrines, and learning. It may not be too late for some, but most are too proud to become expendable. If we don't pour contempt on ourselves — God will!"

FRUITLESS PROFESSORS

In the 6th verse our Lord tells us again that all fruitless professors of religion shall perish in hell.

(John 15:6) "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Soon, your refuge of lies will be swept away and you will perish without hope (Isaiah 28:14-20).

(Isaiah 28:14-20) "Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which [is] in Jerusalem. 15 **Because ye have**

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for **we have made lies our refuge,** and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: 16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. 17 **Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.** 18 And **your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand;** when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. 19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only [to] understand the report. 20 For **the bed is shorter** than that [a man] can stretch himself [on it]: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself [in it].”

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

EFFECTUAL PRAYER

Then, in verse 7, our Lord assures us that because we are one with him, ever abiding in him, inseparable from him, our prayers are accepted before God and effectual with God. — *“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”*

Abiding or living in Christ is expressed here simply as *“my words abide in you.”* His word is called “the word of life” (Philippians 2:16; Hebrews 4:12; John 6:63). It is the Seed of life (1 Peter 1:23-25; Luke 8:11-15). You cannot separate the incarnate Word and the written word. It is impossible for a man to abide in Christ who knows not, loves not, and obeys not his Word.

Then, the Lord Jesus says, *“Ye shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.”* This must not be understood of temporal things, such as riches, honors, material wealth, and earthly luxuries. Prayer is not putting covetousness in pretty words.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

The person who abides in Christ, in whom his word abides, desires and seeks the will of God and the glory of God and prays accordingly (Matthew 6:9-13; 7:7-11; Romans 8:26; Philippians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23).

(Matthew 6:9-13) “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

(Matthew 7:7-11) “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children,

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”

(Romans 8:26) “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

(Philippians 4:19) “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

(1 Corinthians 3:21-23) “Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; 22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; 23 And ye are Christ’s; and Christ [is] God’s.”

GOD GLORIFIED

Now, watch this — Verse 8...

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

(John 15:8) “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

What do you want, more than anything else? Is it or is it not the glory of God? Unless I am totally deceived by Satan, I want the glory of my God more than anything in this world. Nothing in the world could give me such fulness of joy as the certain knowledge that by some means or another, I have done something by which I have glorified God. —— O wonder of wonders! —— O matchless, wondrous, unfathomable grace! —— Here our Savior assures every sinner who trusts him, he assures every branch in the Vine, that our God is and shall be forever glorified in us!

- He chose us that we might bring forth much fruit, and that our fruit might remain (v. 16).
- He redeemed us, regenerated us, and called us that we might be the firstfruits unto God (Romans 8:23; James 1:18; Revelation 14:4).
- He has given us his Spirit of Life, by whom we bear fruit unto our God (Galatians 5:22-23).
- The Lord God sees to it that we bring forth fruit, as our great Husbandman.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN

- And he is glorified in us by that which he works in us by his grace!

Just in case you don't know what to call that, I'll tell you. That is call "Grace! Free, sovereign, omnipotent, effectual, saving grace!"

Amen.