

Jesus 101

“Grace Thoughts”



IF THE SON SETS YOU FREE,
YOU ARE FREE INDEED!
JOHN 8:36

A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

“Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.” –Acts 23:11

It’s amazing that God is triumphant and His cause advances even in the midst of the most disheartening of circumstances. For example, consider what happened to Joseph back in Genesis 37. The sons of Jacob stripped Joseph of his colorful tunic, sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver, and he was taken to Egypt to Potiphar’s house. Yet God was triumphant in the midst of this tragedy, and Joseph became a ruler of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. God used him to save the lives of many people and to preserve the race through which the Messiah would come. I am amazed that “God causes *all things* to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

Paul was in trouble, as he had often been, but this time he was seized in the temple in Jerusalem. After telling the Jews the story of his conversion and the calling he received from God (Acts 22), he then appeared before the council (Acts 23). But a great dissension occurred between the Pharisees and Sadducees about Paul being a Pharisee, “on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!” (Acts 23:6), and the commander ordered Paul to be taken away by force and brought into the barracks, because he was afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces (verse 10). The following night, the Lord Himself stood by Paul’s side, as He had done at other pivotal times in his ministry when his circumstances looked disheartening. The Lord said: “Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also” (verse 11). No doubt this meant so much for Paul and sustained him on his journey to Rome, which took a long time and was filled with perils, trials, and opportunities to witness. God used this difficulty in Jerusalem to spread the gospel further, and His cause was advanced in that way. We don’t always understand how God can turn all things for good and for His glory, yet we can fully trust His ability to do exactly that. After all, the cross looked as if it were the greatest defeat, and yet it was His greatest triumph!