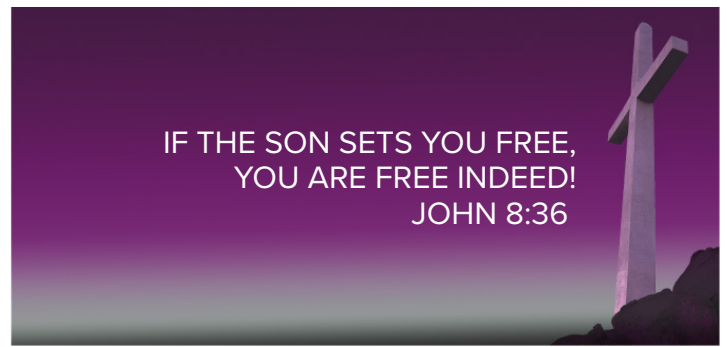


# Jesus IOI

## “Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

*“Come away . . . to a secluded place and rest a while.” —Mark 6:31*

Sometimes your soul needs to catch up with your mind and body. I had a strong sense that God was asking me to take some time off and concentrate on my PhD dissertation. But I was the senior pastor of a church and things were going well, and there was so much to do . . . yet God seemed to insist. God knew I needed time away from my ministry to be instructed and refreshed. However, requesting leave without pay, to finish my doctoral studies, was one of the hardest things I've ever done, because it went against my personality and my sense of mission.

As the disciples wrap up their mission to the Galilean region, they come to Jesus and joyfully report to Him, “all that they had done and taught” (verse 30). I can imagine how excited they were to recount their experiences. This is the only time in Mark (with the exception of 3:14 in certain manuscripts) that the disciples are called apostles (one who is sent). They had been sent on a mission (see Mark 6:7-13) and they had plenty of testimonies to share with Jesus. In response, they receive an imperative from Jesus, which in the Greek original reads: “Come you yourselves privately to a desolate place and rest a little” (Mark 6:30).<sup>\*</sup> This is a command from Jesus that we all need to heed. The mandate of Jesus was to rest in divinely-ordained seclusion, in solitude in an uninhabited place, in contrast to the many people coming and going when they were ministering (verse 31). You don't need to be a professional minister to observe this command. During times of seclusion and solitude, God provides true rest, spiritual nourishment, guidance, revelation, instruction, and much more. Jesus often instructed His disciples privately (for example, see Mark 9:28; 13:3), and He does the same with us. In a culture that celebrates busyness, results, and achievements, let's remember that sometimes less is really more. Overextending ourselves, even in ministry, leaves us depleted of energy and insight. God wants private time with us, to remind us of His love. During times of retreat, He reveals to us the magnitude of His grace, the sufficiency of His sacrifice, and His assurance for the future.

<sup>\*</sup>J.D. Douglas, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament*, 4th rev. ed. (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 1993).

Talbot, Elizabeth *Jesus Wins!*, p. 176.