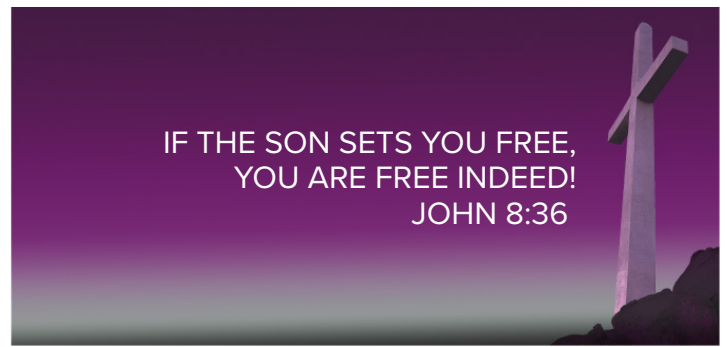


# Jesus IOI

## “Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

*“A battered reed He will not break off, and a smoldering wick He will not put out.” —Matthew 12:20*

Deborah Hall just wouldn't give up. She convinced her husband Ron to join her in volunteering at the local mission, where they met Denver, a tough homeless man who often had outbursts of unfriendly and threatening behavior. However, through Debbie's perseverance and gentleness, God broke down the barriers in Denver's heart and won him over; Ron and Denver became life-long friends. When Debbie died of cancer, Denver gave an emotional testimony at her funeral about the life-changing influence she had on him.

After Jesus healed a man with a withered hand, Matthew reports that He withdrew from there, yet many followed Him, and He healed them (Matthew 12:15). Then Matthew presents another prophetic formula, the longest Old Testament quotation in this Gospel (Matthew 12:18-21). It is the first of four songs in Isaiah about God's coming Servant (Isaiah 42:1-4). This is the only time in the Gospels that Jesus is called God's Servant ("My Servant," Matthew 12:18). It is striking that this passage highlights the gentle and hope-filled ministry of Jesus, particularly for those who are at their wit's end. "A battered reed He will not break off, and a smoldering wick He will not put out . . . and in His name the Gentiles will hope." (Matthew 12:20, 21). A bent reed could no longer be used as a measuring instrument nor to sustain any kind of structure; a smoldering wick had to be replaced in order to serve its purpose. But Jesus refused to give up on people like that. R. T. France explains: "The imagery thus describes an extraordinary willingness to encourage damaged or vulnerable people, giving them a further opportunity to succeed which a results-oriented society would deny them. . . . Here Matthew finds a further portrait of the meek and lowly Jesus who offers a kind yoke and a light burden; the giver of rest to the toiling and heavily loaded (11:28-30)."\* Are you in the midst of hopeless circumstances? Jesus is gentle, patient, and kind, and He is not giving up on you; you can count on that!

\*R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 473.

Talbot, Elizabeth *Jesus Wins!*, p. 205.