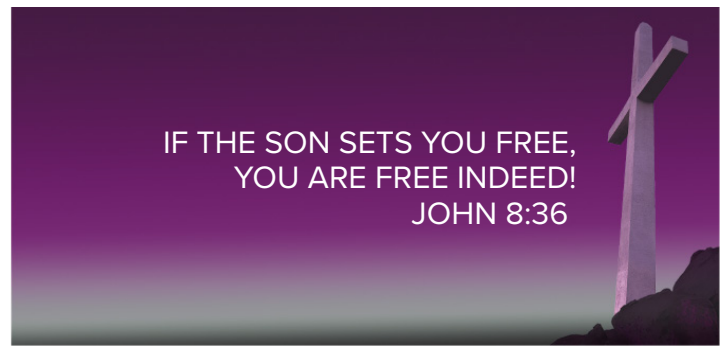


Jesus IOI

“Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

"I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative." –John 10:17, 18

You may have heard the name of Salman Kunan, a retired Thai Navy officer who volunteered to help in the rescue that captured the world's attention in June–July 2018. Twelve boys and their soccer coach were trapped in Thailand's Thum Luang cave. Kunan lost his life while delivering oxygen to them during the rescue mission. He was a hero. Sources say that when he realized that the oxygen level in the cave was low, he left his own oxygen equipment and tried to swim back without it, knowing that it would be difficult to make it. In selfless love, he made the choice to save those thirteen lives by giving up his.

Jesus' sacrifice was His own choice. The fact that He was laying down His life for His sheep is repeated four times in this short narrative (John 10:11–18). John emphasizes that the sacrifice of Jesus was not an accident or a simple misfortune; it was the plan all along, and He submitted Himself to it voluntarily, in order to save the human race. The Greek original word is often translated as "myself": "I lay it [my life] down *myself*" (verse 18). Frankly, it is a mystery to me that Jesus loved us so much, to the point of not only choosing, but planning ahead to die in our place for our salvation. That's why we find our personal worth at the Cross, as we realize how much we mean to Him. Barclay explains: "Jesus was not helplessly caught up in a mesh of circumstances from which he could not break free. Apart from any divine power he might have called in, it is quite clear that to the end he could have turned back and saved his life. He did not lose his life; he gave it. The cross was not thrust upon him: he willingly accepted it—for us."* Jesus continued to be in control to the very end when He gave up His spirit (John 19:30). It was not the nails that kept Jesus on the cross. It was His love for you and me! He had the power to get down from the cross and avoid additional torture and death. But His love for us was greater than His physical, emotional, and unsurpassed spiritual anguish. Yes, my friend, you are loved that much!

*William Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, vol.2 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 67.