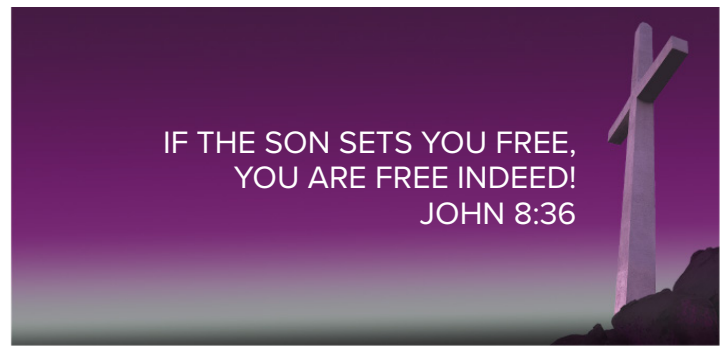


Jesus IOI

“Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again . . . and sells all that he has and buys that field.” —Matthew 13:44

Children and adults alike enjoy a good treasure hunt. I live in a gated community where every once in a while there is a popular community garage sale and many participate in the selling and buying. There was a story in the community newsletter about a resident who had found a great bargain in such a garage sale. Later she discovered that this item had a great value and she was able to sell it for approximately a million dollars, most of which she donated to the homeowners association. How is that for finding a treasure?

In the ancient world, it was common to bury coins and valuables in the ground, and sometimes the owner would die without anyone having information about the treasure. In the above-mentioned short parable, the owner of the field is not aware of the treasure, otherwise he would not have sold the property. The man who found it hid it again. Then he joyfully sold everything he had and bought the field, becoming the legal owner of the field and the treasure. The kingdom of Jesus is the greatest treasure. Nothing that we must leave in order to possess it comes even close in value. To leave everything else behind and make Jesus the first priority is not a sacrifice but rather a pure joy. The second parable on this topic is similar: “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:45, 46). Divers then, as now, sought pearls in different places (Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, etc.) and some pearls were worth millions in the equivalent of today's dollars. The merchant in the parable sells everything to have the one pearl of great value. What things did Matthew's listeners have to “sell?” Other religious systems? World views? Ideas? Behaviors? The gospel of Jesus is worth more than everything we possess. Is God asking you to let go of something in order to embrace the gospel fully? Whatever we give up for Jesus cannot even compare to the joy of having Him! I'd rather have Jesus than anything. . . .