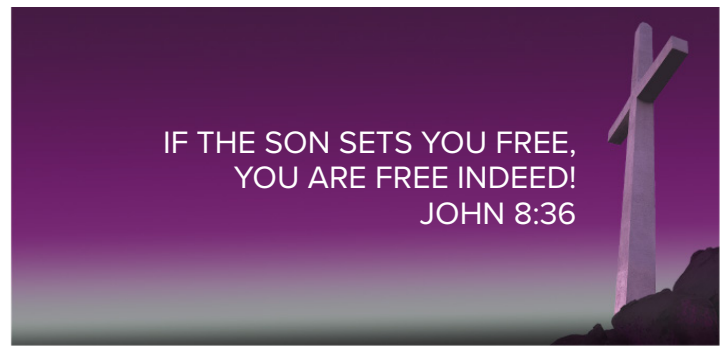


Jesus IOI

“Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.” –John 15:5

We recently had a problem with our air-conditioning unit, which was still under warranty, and we waited for several days while the new parts were shipped. When the technician found evidence of scorched cables, he made sure that we wouldn't use the unit while waiting. He disconnected it from its source of power, and it stopped working. Not connected to the source of power, the air-conditioner could no longer serve its purpose and was useless until it got reconnected.

Jesus said: “Abide in Me, and I in you” (John 15:4). I have always been intrigued with the word abide, which means to remain or stay connected; and this “remaining” has two sides: Jesus abides in us, and we abide in Him. In the Greek, the pronouns “Me” and “I” are next to each other, highlighting both sides of the equation. This intimate union is necessary for productivity, because we do not have the vitality to produce fruit on our own. Jesus explains this in detail: “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (verses 4, 5). He is the Source, and we are the branches; we shouldn't get confused about these roles. Every day the branches experience the miraculous vitality of the Vine producing fruit in them. Apart from Him, God's followers can do nothing. On our own, we lack skills, energy, time, insight, patience, joy, hope, et cetera. Without Jesus' life-giving power, we can't even begin to grow spiritually nor minister to others. I am convicted of the absolute opposites: with Jesus, we can do everything (see Philippians 4:13); without Him we can do nothing. Both our salvation and our Christian walk are God's doing. By grace we have been saved, and by grace we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to be fruitful (see Ephesians 2:8, 10). He has designed us to live purpose-filled lives for His glory. If you find yourself lacking today, remember the Source of everything! And abide in Him!

Talbot, Elizabeth *Jesus Wins!*, p. 247.