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A word Jesus used 10 times in 3 verses

Written by Bill Perkins

Confused and afraid the disciples left the upper room and stepped onto the narrow Jerusalem street. They felt the frigid air nip at their faces and cut through their robes. Holding their fluttering torches high they followed Jesus out of the city. Suddenly he stopped. A key moment had arrived. He would tell them, in the simplest language, a mystery so amazing it would transform their lives.

Stop Fighting, Stop Striving

In essence he said, "From now on I want you to stop fighting to improve yourself and stop striving to please God and stop wrestling with your evil urges. Instead, rely on the fact that as long as we're connected, and we always will be, I'll work in you and through you to accomplish my purposes. So instead of fighting to become someone you'll never be, and striving to accomplish something you can't achieve, give it up. Relax and rely on me."

Of course, if Jesus had said it like that the disciples might have missed the point. And so he took a grapevine in his hand and said, "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 NASB).

The analogy of the vine and branch contained life-changing power. To make sure his disciples understood the source of that power, Jesus used one word ten times in three verses.

Not Ten Commandments, One Word

Think about it. Jesus could have said, "If you want to be fruitful clean up your act, perform a religious ritual, tithe, abstain from alcohol, go to church, think positive thoughts, carry a big Bible, put a bumper sticker on your car, and definitely, definitely, stop having fun. Instead he repeated a single word ten times:

Abide
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Abide

A Flesh-and-Blood Friendship

It occurred to me that unlike the Ten Commandments that Moses received on the mountain, Jesus repeated one word ten times. Moses came with a rock-hard set of rules. Jesus came with a flesh-and-blood friendship. He knew what the disciples would soon discover and what we must learn. Namely, a friendship with Jesus, not iron-willed determination to live up to the standards of God or man, produces a life that pleases God and changes the world.