

The One Word Jesus Said Ten Times

Written by Bill Perkins

The outdoor survivalist talking on television sported a stubby beard, worn jeans, a faded camo-shirt, and dirty hiking boots. Holding a small magnifying glass he had swiveled out of a vinyl case, and speaking out the side of his mouth he said, “If you ever need to start a fire, this is an essential tool.” After watching him demonstrate on a self-made bird-nest of kindling, I felt inspired. So I grabbed the magnifying glass out of my desk drawer, fielded a piece of newspaper, and walked onto our front porch where the fall sun sent soothingly warm light through the nippy air. I folded the newspaper, placed it on the porch, and waited. The sun’s light hit the paper, but nothing happened. I waited a bit longer, and still nothing. I bent down and touched the paper. It felt cool. I then held the magnifying glass between the sun and paper and focused a few inches of sunlight into a beam that formed a bright spot on the paper. Almost instantly, gray smoke curled up from the white dot. In that moment I saw the power of focused light. Water is the same way. Steam rising from a tea kettle is unfocused and puffs harmlessly into the surrounding air. But directed steam surging through a turbine generates electricity. What’s true of light and water is also true of people. We’ve all seen the difference when we focus on a topic we’re studying or a task we’re performing. When we channel our mental, emotional, and physical energy into a single purpose, we possess great power. How do we do this in the spiritual realm? Jesus shows us the way. In John 15:1-11 he used one word ten times.

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Jesus could have told us the focus of our lives should be performing religious rituals, abstaining from certain foods and drinks, giving money to the poor, or attending church. Instead he repeated one word ten times so we wouldn’t miss the point. When we channel all of our mental, emotional, and physical energy into abiding in Jesus, we possess great power.