**I Love to Tell the Story**

**Day 236 The Vine and Branches John 15: 1-17**

Guided reflection:

Remember, Jesus is spending his last times with his disciples. Every word is important. This metaphor uses a vine to represent Jesus; the gardener/pruner is God; and we are the branches. We will die if we do not stay connected to the vine, and we will not be as fruitful as we could be if we do not yield to the pruning! The goal of our lives is to produce fruit. Jesus wants our joy, our fruitfulness to be complete. Bottom line Love God, means you Love Jesus, Love Jesus means you love others; love others means we love God... and the circle continues. Pay attention – Love one another! How are you going with that? What needs to be “pruned” in you to make you more fruitful?

Guided prayer:

*“I want to abide in you, O God. I want to be fruitful for you. Do what you need to do in me so I can mature and be connected to the source. Show me where my connections are weak. Amen”*

**Day 237 Jesus predicts the world’s hatred John 15: 18-16:4**

Guided reflection:

Have you ever felt like you do not belong to this world – you think differently than what seems to be the norm? Well, bravo! In this passage, Jesus promises us that the world will hate us if we do His will. We are citizens of heaven, just passing through on this earth… so we are not to think like everyone else. We are to live on another level. But we have the Holy Spirit to be with us and in us. So, don’t be surprised if you don’t fit in! Jesus was letting go of this world, too!

Guided prayer: (words from a song from my childhood come back to me as our prayer)

*“****This world is not my home****, I'm just a passing through/****My*** *treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue/The angels beckon me from heaven's open door/And I can't feel at* ***home*** *in* ***this world*** *anymore...Amen”*

**Day 238 Jesus comforts his Disciples John 16: 4b – 15**

Guided reflection:

Sadness has filled the hearts of the disciples as they take in all that Jesus is saying. They have been with him when he walked on water, when he fed 5000, when he turned water into wine, and now it is going to be over? What is that about the Holy Spirit that will keep on with the teaching of us? Can you feel the sorrow and panic in their hearts? But we know the

whole story… we sit on this side of the cross and empty tomb… and yet, do we still long to know the truth… to have the Holy Spirit reveal new things to us? Are you still open? What new is the Spirit teaching you?

Guided prayer:

*“Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Fill me, Mold me, shape me, use me. Amen”*

**Day 239 `Victory over the world John 16: 16-38**

Guided reflection:

“In a little while, you will not see me anymore.” John is the Gospel writer that has the feeling and passion around Jesus’ relationship with his disciples. “What do you mean, a little while?” Jesus goes on to say that they will weep and cry… but hold on, weeping only lasts for a little while…. Joy is coming on Sunday morning! Be brave, for I have over come the world. Sometimes when I read the news or listen to the TV, I wonder, where are you God? Surely you must be weeping too!

Guided prayer:

*‘Help me hold onto these promises that you are greater than this world. Help me to know that you are my strength. When I am in a time of sorrow and weeping, help me remember this is not all there is! You have the last word, and it is one of hope and love and grace! Amen!”*

**Day 240 Jesus prays for his Disciples AND US!!! John 17:1-26**

Guided reflection:

This is Jesus’ prayer for his Disciples and for us (vs 20). What does He pray? That we be safe by the power of God’s name; That our joy might be full; that we be made God’s own; THAT WE BE ONE! That’s the prayer for his disciples and us! He wants us safe from the evil one, He wants our joy to be full; He wants us to know that we belong to God… AND He wants us to be ONE with each other! Our unity; our one mindedness, is what Jesus had on his mind on that last night! Is Jesus prayer being answered in you? Reread this passage and imagine walking in on Jesus praying about you… feel his prayer for YOU!!!

Guided prayer:

*“O God, this scripture seems to say that Jesus was praying not only for his Disciples right there, but for us who would be coming to believe – that is me! Jesus was praying for me on that last night! I was on His mind! My joy, my safety, and my unity with my brothers and sisters in Christ were on Jesus mind! May Jesus’ prayer be answered in my life. Amen”*