

Apart From Him, We're a Boat Anchor

January 14, 2014

My computer had no battery and no way to connect to the power supply. It was useless. All the programs installed on it, all the information on the hard drive, were completely inaccessible because it needs power to run.

It needs power to do what it was designed to do.

It needs power to be a computer and not a doorstop. Or a boat anchor.

I was reminded of Jesus' simple statement (that we really don't believe): "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).

Apart from a power supply, my computer can do nothing. It, however, has the good sense to demonstrate the startling truth of Jesus' statement, unlike us. We're more like a car out of gas that can still roll downhill without power, boasting in the delusion of self-deception: "Hey, look at me, look what I can do all by myself!"

But Jesus really meant it. Apart from Him, we can do nothing. He's the glue that holds the atoms and molecules of the universe together, and He holds us together. Unless our lungs inflate and our hearts continue to beat, unless there is air for us to breathe in, unless our red blood cells dump out carbon dioxide and absorb oxygen, we can do nothing. We're as dead as my computer without a power supply.

Write a poem, a novel, or even a shopping list? Apart from Him, our brains don't work and our thoughts, if they exist at

all, are meaningless, random biochemical explosions.

Plant a garden, fertilize and water it, eventually harvesting vegetables or fruit? Apart from Him, the creator of seed and soil and fertilizer and water, we got nuthin.'

Get a job, any job? Apart from Him, we have no connections to people that He made, there is no structure within civilization to provide for employment, there is no basis for money for trade.

Actually, apart from Him, there *is* something we can do. We can sin. We can act independently of God, in either active rebellion or passive indifference.

Apart from Him . . . we can do nothing of value, nothing that lasts, nothing to be proud of or grateful for.

What Jesus called us to do is to abide. To hang out with Him. To teach ourselves to live in awareness of His presence, reminding ourselves of the truth that He is always with us, as He promised (Matt. 28:20). To actively depend on Him. That may look like mentally taking His hand no matter what we're doing. Or mentally sliding over into the passenger seat in the car to let Him drive through us. When we're afraid, clinging to the truth of scripture, praying over and over, "When I am afraid, I will trust in You" (Ps. 56:3).

Abiding is the spiritual discipline of staying plugged in, connected, to our power source.

Just like my poor little powerless computer.