

## Getting Farther Away

A young man named Roscoe was arrested for driving under the influence in rural Kentucky.

He pleaded guilty, and the judge sentenced him to community service. When Roscoe showed up at the jail to begin his sentence, the sheriff informed him that he would be painting a yellow line down the middle of a newly constructed road.

The sheriff purchased several gallons of yellow paint and a dozen paint rollers, and Roscoe began his task, fulfilling his sentence.



The first day, Roscoe painted the line two miles down the road, and the sheriff was impressed.

On the second day, Roscoe painted the line just one additional mile farther. The sheriff was still satisfied, but less impressed.

On the third day, Roscoe only covered one-quarter of a mile.

Now the sheriff was upset, so he decided to talk to Roscoe and express his displeasure at the performance.

“You haven’t been painting as much road as you did on the first day,” the sheriff said. “What’s the problem?”

Roscoe replied: “I’d be painting more, but the bucket keeps getting farther and farther away!”

We can chuckle at the story, but there is a spiritual corollary, and a warning.

All that God has called us to accomplish in this life is only made possible by His grace, along with our union and ongoing communion with Jesus Christ.

The farther we drift from Jesus, the less productive we will be in Kingdom work. He is the source of the life of God that dwells in us, and flows through us, so long as we remain in intimate fellowship with Him. Don’t waste precious time engaged in life without Jesus.

Jesus is speaking: *Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from Me, you can do nothing* (John 15:5 NLT).

– Beecher Hunter