

God Made the World for You and Me – Genesis 1 & 2

How do you show someone you love them? You use words and actions. One without the other would leave your expression of love incomplete. Our gracious God didn't fail to use both words and actions to show his love for us. In the beginning, God used "words" like "Let there be..." to create an amazing world filled with life. He used his hands in a way to create man and woman from the dust of the earth. In love God made the world for you and me, but Adam and Eve ruined it when they disobeyed their loving God. Still God showed them his love and promised a Savior to free his people from their sin. God kept his word by sending "the Word"—Jesus our Savior to live, to die, and to rise again to give us forgiveness and life. Now in love Jesus makes us his own to love and serve him.

Jesus Transforms You and Me – John 2:1-11

A miracle! The wine had run out too quickly at the Jewish wedding celebration Jesus attended. To prevent social disgrace to the couple, Jesus' mother, Mary, had informed him of the problem, but he said the time wasn't right to reveal himself as God's Chosen One—the Christ. Still the Lord in his grace generously provided as he transformed nearly 150 gallons of water into good wine. A miracle, but with an even greater miracle Jesus reconciled us with God through his innocent death and his glorious resurrection. He, then, sends his Holy Spirit to transform our hearts and minds through the Word of God and the waters of Holy Baptism so we can believe in Jesus, our Savior. What a miracle!

God's Word Grows in You and Me – Luke 8:4-15

Are you listening? When it comes to what Jesus has to say through his Word, we often have to admit that we're not listening...just like his disciples. Jesus used stories with familiar images to teach the basic truths about God's kingdom. Not everyone understood what he was teaching, especially those who rejected him, but there were times when even his disciples didn't listen. Jesus story or "parable" of a sower tossing his seeds in the fields is one of those examples. It was common for farmers to toss seeds on small, unfenced patches of ground that often had thin, rocky soil and a path running through them, but still the disciples didn't understand. So Jesus had to explain that the seed is his Word and the different soils are the different kinds of people who hear and receive it. So are you listening? Are hard hearts, trials, troubles, or pleasures blocking your ability to hear God's Word and grow in faith? If so, Jesus offers a remedy—spend time with his Word and let it take root and grow in you.

Jesus Showed His Power for You and Me – Luke 9:28-36

Who was this man, Jesus? Even his disciples wondered about that. When Jesus asked, "Who do you say I am?", his disciple, Peter, answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Later Jesus later took his disciples Peter, James, and John up a mountain. He wanted them and us to see that he is indeed God's Son and our Savior, so Jesus briefly showed them his power. On the mountain, Jesus' appearance suddenly changed and glowed with dazzling white light. Moses and Elijah, the great prophets of the Old Testament, also appeared in order to talk with him about his upcoming suffering and death. In the midst of this dazzling appearance, God declared, "This is my Son. Listen to him" and everything returned to normal. The disciples wondered about what they had seen and heard about Jesus and why this happened. So who do you say that Jesus is? Open your eyes and see the Savior who loves you and gave his life so you could live for him, now and forever!

Jesus Creates New Life for You and Me – Luke 24:13-35

Why did Jesus come to earth in the first place? He didn't come to make a name for himself or to give us an example of how to live a good life. No, Jesus came to walk the path God prepared for him—to be born in lowliness, to live perfectly, to be rejected, suffer, be condemned and die on a cross in humility, but the story doesn't end there. No, Jesus rose from the dead. He conquered death and abandoned his tomb forever. He did all that to ensure that we have the forgiveness of sins, new life, and salvation. Jesus rose from the dead for you and me, but his disciples didn't realize that...until Jesus came walking along the road to Emmaus with two of them. When he found them confused and slow to believe, Jesus used all of Scripture from Moses to the prophets to explain why it had to all happen the way it did. Their hearts burned as he told them the truth about himself and so do ours as we hear the same good news through which Jesus creates new life for you and me. In Christ, God is always doing great, exciting things!