

The Greatest Story Ever Told

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. John 3:16-17 ESV

Those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. Daniel 12:2 ESV

Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" John 11:40

God's people had been waiting for the coming of the Messiah since sin entered the world and God promised a Savior. The birth of Jesus was foretold thousands of years before He was born. An angel appeared to Mary to tell her that she would be the mother of Jesus. Later an angel told Joseph in a dream. When Jesus was born, angels appeared in the sky and told the shepherds. A star led the shepherds and the Wisemen to the place where Jesus lay in a manger. Do you know some of the other prophecies?

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Wisemen came from the east because they had studied the ancient prophecies and followed the star. When they reached Jerusalem, Herod told them to return to him when they found the new king so that he too could go and worship Him. In reality, Herod was jealous and wanted to kill the new Baby King. He had all the babies less than two years old put to death to make sure that he killed Jesus. An angel warned Joseph in a dream to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt before the massacre happened. What could ever make Herod and the soldiers take the lives of innocent babies?

John the Baptist was a powerful prophet who called people to repent of their sins. When Jesus came to be baptized John said that he was unworthy. Jesus said that it needed to be to fulfill righteousness. John baptized Jesus. When He came up out of the water the heavens were opened to Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove on Him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased." To repent of our sins means that we confess to God that we have gone our own way and ask for His forgiveness. When we ask Him, He will forgive us and change us to be more like Him.

After Jesus was baptized He was led into the wilderness. The devil tempted Him three times, first saying that if He really was the Son of God that He should make stones into bread. Then the devil took Him to the pinnacle of the temple and told Him to throw Himself down because God would send His angels to protect Him. The third temptation the devil showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world and said he would give them to Jesus if He would bow down and worship him. Jesus answered with scripture saying that we should worship God and only serve Him. The Bible will help us escape temptation. When have you felt tempted?

Jesus performed many miracles and taught people about the Kingdom of God. He was a servant leader. Jesus said that He didn't come to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom. Jesus used His miracles to help people. He healed the sick, fed the 5,000 with five small loaves of bread and two fish, and even raised Lazarus from the dead. The most wonderful miracle of all, though, can happen to us today. He offers to come to us and live in us. He will change our lives if we ask Him.

Jesus came to sacrifice His life in order to break the power of sin and death. Because of this we can live with God here on earth and in heaven forever. Jesus will come again to take all believers to be with Him.

After Jesus rose from the dead He appeared to His disciples several times before He ascended into heaven. When He walked with two of His followers they didn't recognize Him, but when He broke bread with them their eyes were opened and they knew it was Jesus. When He disappeared from their sight they said, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as He talked with us?"

Dear Lord, thank You for the gift of life that You offer so freely. Break the power of sin in our lives and set us free to live triumphantly and joyfully. Raise up a mighty church that will sing Your praises. Let our hearts burn within us as we live for You. Touch the world with Your Spirit so that all will know that You alone are to be worshipped and praised. In Jesus' name, Amen.