

# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

God the Father is the maker of heaven and earth. He made me and all creatures.

### Bible Words

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.  
Genesis 1:1

### Law/Gospel

My sinful flesh wants to forget that God created everything and is the one who gives me all good things. **By His Word, God created the world and still sustains it for the benefit of all His creatures. He daily showers me with every good gift for the sake of His Son, Jesus, who has restored creation—and me—through His death and resurrection.**

### Fun Facts

- Our sun is 93 million miles away from Earth.
- It takes 8 minutes, 20 seconds for sunlight to reach Earth.
- Earth's nickel-iron ore core and rapid rotation make a powerful magnetic field that protects Earth from solar winds.
- Seventy percent of Earth's surface is covered in water. Three percent is fresh water; the rest is salt water.

SOURCES: factretriever.com/sun-facts and space-facts.com/earth.

## God Made Us: God Creates the World

### Genesis 1–2

In the beginning . . .

Many people speculate on how the world came into being. The ancient world was filled with creation myths, and today scientists and others have their own theories.

But we don't need to wonder how the universe was made. God tells us in the first chapter of His Word: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

God created the world and all creatures, including humans, in six days. How did God do this? Simply by speaking, "Let there be . . ." God spoke, and it happened. God's Word literally is the source of all life. Here's a quick review of the days of creation:

Day 1: God made light, day, and night.

Day 2: God made the sky.

Day 3: God made dry land, plants, and trees.

Day 4: God made the sun, moon, and stars.

Day 5: God made animals that live in the waters and the skies.

Day 6: God made land animals and humans.

Day 7: God rested.

### Talk about It

Talk about God's creation of the world with your family this week. Here are some discussion-starters:

- God created the world and humanity freely, out of love. What does this tell us about God?
- God gave Adam and Eve dominion over all of creation. What does this say about our responsibility for the earth and its creatures?

### Prayer

*Heavenly Father, we praise You for Your wonderful creation. Help us give You thanks for everything You made. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our

### Triune God

#### Key Point

God sent an angel to help Peter. God's angels also help me.

#### Bible Words

He will command His angels . . . to guard you in all your ways. Psalm 91:11

#### Law/Gospel

I am tempted to believe that God abandons me to the world and doesn't care for me in my suffering. **God loves me so much that He sent His Son to save me. He is with me always and sends His angels to protect me and to care for me in times of need.**

#### Fun Facts

- When the angel appeared, Peter wasn't sure it was real. He thought he saw a vision.
- The angel safely led Peter away from two soldiers chained to him and past two guards.
- An iron gate leading into the city opened on its own.
- The angel left once Peter was safely on the street.
- Peter went to Mary's house in Jerusalem. Christians came there to pray for him, but they did not believe he was at the door.

## God Made the Angels:

### An Angel Rescues Peter

Acts 12:4-17

**W**hat do we know about angels? Are they really the beautiful humanlike creatures we see in paintings with halos, wings, and long, flowing white robes? There are many imaginative stories about angels, but if we really want to know the truth about angels, we need to go to the Bible.

Today's lesson tells us about an angel God sent to free Peter from prison. King Herod had seized Peter and put him in jail, intending to execute him to please the people who were against Christianity. God's angel woke Peter from sleep and led him past sleeping guards and through an iron gate to safety. Peter served God for many more years.

#### What does the Bible teach about angels?

- God created angels, spiritual beings (Nehemiah 9:6).
- Good angels are many and powerful (Luke 2:13; Psalm 103:20).
- Angels are God's messengers and servants (Luke 1:13, 26-28).
- Angels protect God's people (Psalm 91:11-12; Hebrews 1:13-14).
- Angels worship and praise God continually and lead us to do the same (Luke 2:13-14; Psalm 103:20-21).
- Angels wage war on God's behalf and rescue and protect God's people (Genesis 16:9; Exodus 14:19; 23:20; 2 Chronicles 32:21).

Use the concordance in your Bible to find more verses about angels.

#### Luther's Evening Prayer

*I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.*



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## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

God cared for Elijah through the widow and for the widow through Elijah. Through others, God cares for me.

### Bible Words

[Cast] all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.  
1 Peter 5:7

### Law/Gospel

My sinful nature believes I deserve God's goodness. I am resentful when things do not go my way and when I encounter trials of any kind. **God sustains all things by His wisdom and power and, for the sake of His Son, causes all things to work together for good for me and all those who love Him, especially in the gift of faith through the power of the Word, that I might have life, now and forever.**

### For the Whole World

Jesus said, "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

## God Cares for Us: Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath

1 Kings 17:8-24

**N**obody cares about me! Most of us have felt like that at some time or another. Today's Bible text shows us that Someone always cares and helps us care for one another also.

God sent the prophet Elijah to tell wicked King Ahab that He would stop the rain in the land for years because of his evil ways. Then God sent Elijah away to the city of Zarephath, where He provided for him through the care of a widow who lived there.

As the widow cared for Elijah, God cared for the widow and her son as well. God constantly filled her supply of flour and oil, and it never ran out. Then the widow's son died, and in the midst of her sorrow, she probably thought, "Who will care for me now?" God again showed His love and care as He raised the widow's son back to life through Elijah.

In this way, God graciously provided for His people through the loving service of their neighbors. "He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life" (explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed).

## God Cares for All People

We may think that the Bible only tells about God's love for the Jewish people, or that bringing Gentiles into the Church began with the apostles.

However, both Old and New Testaments show God caring for and interacting with other nations. Non-Jews left Egypt with the Israelites (Exodus 12:38). The widow at Zarephath lived in Sidon, north of Israel. God sent Jonah to preach repentance in Nineveh, a foreign city (Jonah 1:2). Jesus told a Samaritan woman He is the Messiah (John 4:25-26). He healed a Canaanite's daughter (Matthew 15:22-28).

God extends His care, mercy, and salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus to all people.

## Prayer

*Heavenly Father, thank You for Your continual love and care. Thank You especially for sending Jesus to rescue us from sin and death through His work on the cross. Help us to love and care for others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

God protected His people from danger and rescued them from their enemies. God protects me from danger and rescues me from my enemies: sin, death, and the devil.

### Bible Words

The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom.

2 Timothy 4:18

### Law/Gospel

Because of sin, I deserve death and eternal condemnation. **God, who is rich in mercy, pours out His wrath on an innocent sacrifice instead. The Passover lamb points forward to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who took the punishment I deserve on the cross; in the paschal feast of the Lord's Supper, He gives us forgiveness, life, and salvation.**

## God Protects Us: God Rescues Israel

Exodus 12:1–28; 13:14

**W**hom do you turn to when you're in trouble? We can turn to our faithful, powerful God, who promised to protect us and rescue us.

The Israelites lived in Egypt for 430 years. At first, they thrived, but as the years passed, a new Pharaoh came to power who did not know Joseph and the good he did for Egypt. The new Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites and made them miserable. God's people cried out for rescue. God heard their cry and sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from slavery.

In today's Bible account, Moses had already told Pharaoh to let God's people go nine times. God sent nine different plagues to persuade Pharaoh, but he would not agree.

God sent a tenth, final plague to convince Pharaoh, the death of all firstborn animals and people. To protect Israel, God told His people to sacrifice an unblemished lamb and smear its blood on the doorposts of their houses. When the angel of death came, it passed over all households marked with blood. Finally, Pharaoh let God's people go.

The Passover pointed to Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, sacrificed to free us from slavery to sin, death, and the devil.

### The Ten Plagues

- |                          |                       |                            |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Water turned to blood | 5. Death of livestock | 9. Darkness                |
| 2. Frogs                 | 6. Boils              | 10. Death of the firstborn |
| 3. Gnats                 | 7. Hail               |                            |
| 4. Flies                 | 8. Locusts            |                            |

### Prayer

*Almighty God, graciously behold this Your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and delivered into the hands of sinful men to suffer death upon the cross; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (LSB Altar Book, p. 592)*

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## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

God sent His Son, Jesus, to be born on earth so He could keep the Law for me and also suffer and die in my place.

### Bible Words

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.  
John 1:14

### Law/Gospel

Without a deliverer, I, along with all humanity, would suffer eternally in hell. **To redeem His creation, God sent His Son to become a part of it by taking flesh from His mother and being born under the Law, fulfilling it, then suffering and dying to pay for the sin of the world. His resurrection guarantees that I and all who trust in Him will live in heaven forever.**

### Poor and Rich

Jesus' earthly parents were so poor they could only afford the least expensive sacrifice when they dedicated Him at the temple forty days after His birth, two pigeons or two doves. But God gives us His rich grace in Christ. "Though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

## Jesus Is True Man: Jesus Is Born

Luke 2

Everywhere we go, there are rules to follow. School, work, driving from place to place. We are always subject to the laws of government.

We are also subject to God's Law, the Ten Commandments. But breaking God's Law brings greater consequences than detention or tickets. Born as sinners, we cannot keep God's Law perfectly, so we earn the wages of sin—death (Romans 6:23).

To save sinners, God sent His Son, Jesus, as our Savior. Though Jesus is God and was with God in the beginning (John 1:1–2), He took human form when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). He was born humbly in a stable, likely surrounded by animals.

As true God and true man, Jesus became a worthy sacrifice for our sins. Jesus never sinned, but paid for our sins with His death on the cross (Hebrews 4:15; Romans 3:24–25). He rescues us from sin, death, and the devil. In His death, He gives us life.

### Sing

"From heav'n above to earth I come  
To bear good news to ev'ry home;  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,  
Whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child  
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This little child of lowly birth  
Shall be the joy of all the earth."

"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come," stanzas 1–2, by Martin Luther; tr. Catherine Winkworth, *Lutheran Service Book* 358, copyright © 2006 CPH.

### Prayer

*Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son to die in our place so that through Him we might have life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

Jesus is the true God who stilled the storm. Jesus continues to do the works of God in my life.

### Bible Words

[Jesus Christ] is the true God and eternal life.

1 John 5:20

### Law/Gospel

When I am in danger, I fail to look to Jesus for rescue; in my sin, I doubt His ability to help me when I am afraid. **Jesus is the man who is also God, and He has been given all authority in heaven and on earth to protect me from anything that might threaten me. As true God, He is at work in my life, protecting me from danger and rescuing me from sin, death, and the devil.**

### The Sea of Galilee

First-century Jewish historian Josephus reported a thriving fishing industry at the Sea of Galilee, with about 230 boats regularly working the lake. Archaeologists discovered a New Testament-era boat in 1986 when the sea receded.

SOURCE: [Seetheholyland.net](http://Seetheholyland.net)

## Jesus Is True God:

### Jesus Rebukes the Storm Luke 8:22–25

**C**rashing waves. Thunder. Lightning. Rain beat down as the stormy sea threatened to capsize the boat of the disciples. And yet, Jesus, their Teacher and the Son of God, slept.

Many of the disciples were veteran sailors and fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. Yet this raging storm caused them to wake Jesus and say in desperation, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” (Luke 8:24).

Jesus woke up and rebuked the wind and raging waves. Calm settled on the waters. But He also rebuked the disciples, asking, “Where is your faith?” The disciples felt afraid and marveled, asking, “Who is this, that He commands even winds and water, and they obey Him?” (v. 25).

God’s Word provides the answer. The Bible says that Jesus is the all-powerful Son of God. In human form, Jesus showed His divine power through miracles of healing, power over nature, and resurrection of the dead.

### Calm in the Storm

We all encounter storms in life—financial troubles, broken relationships, illnesses, death, and the loss of loved ones.

When we struggle, we often act like the disciples in the boat. We think, “Lord, in the midst of the storms of this sinful world, don’t You care that I am hurting?” We doubt God’s love. We wonder if He is with us. We cry out. Even those with the strongest faith may doubt.

Jesus’ disciples saw His miracles firsthand, and they still wondered and questioned. They, and we, are frail humans. We find comfort and assurance in the Bible that Jesus is always with us. He guides us through life’s difficult storms.

### Prayer

*Lord, be with us and guide us through the storms of life. In Christ, our Savior. Amen.*

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## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

Jesus has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person.

### Bible Words

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8

### Law/Gospel

For my sin, I deserve to be forsaken and condemned; yet when I suffer, I protest and blame God. Jesus was arrested, beaten, and tortured to death on the cross for my sin, not His. **When He is reviled, He does not revile in return. Instead, Jesus prays for me from the cross, asking His Father to forgive me. Through the evil of His death, He works the good of my salvation.**

### A Delivery System

The Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts through His Word and the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. The Word and Sacraments are the Means of Grace, the system through which God delivers His grace to us.

## Jesus Is Our Savior: Jesus Suffers, Dies, and Rises

Matthew 27:27–54; 28:5–6

**S**oldiers placed a scarlet robe on Jesus' back to mock Him as King. Scarlet blood poured from Jesus' wounds as He was flogged, beaten, and crucified.

Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, washed his hands in front of the people to abdicate responsibility for Jesus' death. In response, the Israelite crowd loudly proclaimed, "His blood be on us and on our children!" (Matthew 27:25).

The people did not understand the true meaning of what they said. Their sinfulness, and ours, sent Jesus to the cross. We are all responsible for His crucifixion; we are the ones who deserve death.

But when the people called for Jesus' blood to be upon them, they also did not realize the saving grace it provided. Christ willingly gave up His life, like a lamb to the slaughter. As true man, Jesus died. As true God, Jesus was a worthy substitute, taking our place on the cross and paying for our sins so that we might live.

### Life in Christ

Jesus' story does not end with the cross, but with an empty tomb. Three days after Jesus' death and burial, He rose from the dead. When the women went to the tomb to tend to His body, they encountered an angel who told them the joyful news: "He is risen!"

Because Christ defeated death, we have the hope of eternal life, received by grace through faith in Jesus. We also enjoy the gift of abundant life on earth as God continually cares for His creation.

In this sinful world, we also suffer. But instead of trusting in God for help, we sometimes blame Him for our troubles. How blessed we are that God does not reject us when we doubt Him. Instead, He offers mercy, forgiveness, comfort, and strength for living through Christ our Savior.

### Prayer

*Lord Jesus, by Your great mercy and love, You have redeemed me. Please grant me forgiveness and help me to trust You in times of suffering. In Your holy name. Amen.*

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## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

After Jesus descended into hell and rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven to prepare a place for me and all believers.

### Bible Words

[Jesus says,] I will come again and will take you to Myself. John 14:3

### Law/Gospel

My sinful flesh sees our Lord's ascension as abandonment. **The glory and wonder of the ascension is that now that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, He is truly with me to the very end of the age. When He comes again, He will bring me to the place He has prepared for me through His death and resurrection.**

### Ascension Accounts

The Bible records Jesus' ascension in four places: Matthew 28:16–20; Mark 16:19–20; Luke 24:50–53; and Acts 1:1–11.

## Jesus Is Our Lord:

## Jesus Ascends to Heaven

Acts 1:9–11

**B**efore Jesus ascended, He promised to be with His disciples always and to send them the Holy Spirit. When they received the Spirit's power, Jesus said the disciples would be His witnesses throughout the world.

Then Jesus rose up into heaven before their very eyes. A cloud covered Him. The disciples stared up at the heavens with amazement. Two angels appeared and said, "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

What did this mean? And what would they do now that their Teacher was no longer on earth? The next days, weeks, and years showed them.

Physical separation from God sometimes troubles us too. We believe in a God we cannot see, but take comfort in Jesus' promise to always be with us and to send the Holy Spirit to us. The Spirit gives us faith to believe and trust in Jesus. The Spirit energizes and empowers us to serve God and tell about Christ.

Jesus' ascension is a source of joy for all believers. It does not mean He is no longer with us, only that we cannot see Him. He conquered sin and death forever and reigns in heaven with God the Father. We look forward to the day when He returns and brings all believers to the place He has prepared for us through His death and resurrection.

## Catechism Connection: The Apostles' Creed

In the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed, we confess: "And [I believe] in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. **He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**"

## Prayer

*Jesus, thank You for being with us always. Keep us in the one true faith and grant us joy as we look forward to Your return. In Your precious name we pray. Amen.*

# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

In Jesus' story, the wise women were ready for the bridegroom. Jesus helps me to be ready for His return.

### Bible Words

The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command. . . . And the dead in Christ will rise first.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

### Law/Gospel

In sin, I believe that my deeds are good enough to earn salvation. I neglect the oil of God's Word. When Jesus returns, He will reject those who are not waiting in faith. **The faith planted in my heart by the Gospel keeps my lamp trimmed, so I am ready for Christ's return and can be confident that I will live with Him in heavenly joy forever.**

### Holy Week Teaching

Jesus continued to teach His disciples in the week before His arrest, trials, crucifixion, and resurrection. You can find details about Jesus' Holy Week in Matthew 21–27; Luke 19–23; Mark 11–15; and John 12–19. The resurrection accounts follow these chapters in all four Gospels.

## Jesus Will Return: The Parable of the Ten Virgins

Matthew 25:1–13

In the days leading up to His death, Jesus told the disciples a series of parables to teach them about the end times. Parables are stories that help believers understand how we are called to live as God's people. One parable Jesus told was about ten virgins.

In first-century Israel, it was common for a bridegroom to spend hours negotiating a bride price, money or goods given to the bride's family. Then, under the cover of night, he met the bride, attended by ten virgins, and escorted her back to his own house for the wedding feast.

In the parable, the ten virgins wait for the bridegroom to appear. Five virgins wisely brought oil to keep their lamps burning through the night. The other five foolishly brought no oil and were unprepared for the bridegroom's arrival. When the shout came that the groom arrived, the wise virgins met him, while the foolish virgins ran back to the oil dealer and returned too late to enter the wedding feast.

### What Does This Mean?

Jesus used this parable to help us understand that the Church, Christ's Bride, must be prepared to meet our Bridegroom when He returns. We prepare by waiting patiently and refilling our lamps of faith with the spiritual oil of God's Word and Sacraments. We come regularly to confess our sins, receive Absolution, and hear God's Word.

Those who reject Christ and are not prepared for His return will be condemned. But faithful Christians look ahead with joy to the day when Christ our Bridegroom returns to resurrect our physical bodies and take us to eternity to live with Him. What joy we'll experience in the marriage feast that has no end (Revelation 19:6–9)!

### Prayer

*Dear Lord, thank You for the blessing of eternal life. Keep us watchful as we await Your second coming. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

3 in 1: Discovering Our

Triune God

## Key Point

Jesus taught Nicodemus that the Holy Spirit works a new birth of faith through Baptism. This is true for me too.

## Bible Words

No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.  
1 Corinthians 12:3

## Law/Gospel

My sinful nature does not believe in Jesus as Savior or understand God’s ways. **God the Holy Spirit works in a sure and certain way through Baptism and delivers all His good gifts to me, especially faith.**

## Prayer

*Holy Spirit, help us always to remember our Baptism and the gifts You provide in it—forgiveness, life, and eternal salvation. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

## The Spirit Creates Faith:

### Jesus Teaches Nicodemus

John 3:1–16

**N**icodemus was a Pharisee, a teacher of the Law, and a member of the Council, a group of scholars and priests in charge of the temple and Jewish legal proceedings. When Nicodemus heard Jesus teach, the Holy Spirit began to work in his heart. This knowledgeable and powerful man realized he still had much to learn.

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and told Him that he believed Jesus was from God after seeing His miracles. Jesus said, “Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Nicodemus was confused and thought Jesus was saying he had to enter his mother’s womb and be physically born again.

Instead, Jesus pointed Nicodemus to Holy Baptism, where we are born again through water and the Spirit and adopted into God’s family as His own children. The Holy Spirit works through God’s Word and Sacraments to give us faith in Christ our Savior so that we might have new life, now and forever.

The words of life Jesus gave Nicodemus are for us also: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (v. 16).

## Catechism Connection: Baptism

*Who instituted Holy Baptism?*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, after His death and resurrection, commanded His Church to baptize all nations.

Matthew 28:19–20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Question 299, Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation

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## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

The Holy Spirit renewed Mary's life, enabling her to show love for Jesus. The Holy Spirit renews my life so that I strive to overcome sin and live as God's child, showing love for others.

### Bible Words

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.  
2 Corinthians 5:17

### Law/Gospel

My sin troubles me and condemns me to eternal death.

**Jesus gives His love and forgiveness to me and all sinners who call upon Him for mercy and, through His Spirit, gives me new life, enabling me to love others.**

### God Prepared These?

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

Ephesians 2:8–10  
(emphasis added)

## The Spirit Renews Us: Mary Shows Her Love for Jesus

John 12:1–8

**D**uring Holy Week, Mary, sister of Lazarus and Martha, anointed Jesus' feet with an expensive jar of perfume and wiped them with her hair.

Mary believed Jesus was Christ, the Savior. The Bible says that Jesus loved Mary and her siblings (John 11:5). Earlier, Mary sat at Jesus' feet and listened to His teaching while her sister worked (Luke 10:38–42). She witnessed Jesus raise her brother Lazarus from the dead after he was in the grave for four days (John 11).

Now, the Spirit led Mary to know that Jesus was about to die. Anointing Jesus' feet was an act of worship that gave Him glory and honor.

Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus later that week, scoffed at Mary's actions and said she shouldn't have wasted the perfume. He said it was worth 300 denarii, almost as much as a laborer made in a year. Judas claimed they should have sold the perfume and gave its proceeds to the poor. Jesus rebuked Judas and praised Mary, saying she had prepared Him for burial.

The truth was that Judas was a thief and wanted to steal the money. While Mary acted out of love for Jesus, Judas was motivated by greed and selfish desires.

### Resurrection and Renewal

Mary did not earn Jesus' favor with her actions. She did it because the Holy Spirit used Jesus' love for her to move her to do this good and holy work. So it is with us; the Holy Spirit moves us to live as God's children, not to *earn* God's forgiveness, but *because* of God's forgiveness.

Renewed and washed clean in Holy Baptism, we love and serve others with gladness because we have received Christ's forgiveness.

### Prayer

*Holy Spirit, please help us to praise and serve You with gladness.  
In the name of Jesus. Amen.*



# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

The Holy Spirit helped a poor widow give a rich offering. The Holy Spirit helps me do good works too.

### Bible Words

We are . . . created in Christ Jesus for good works . . . that we should walk in them.  
Ephesians 2:10

### Law/Gospel

I do not rely on God or credit Him with the things I have; therefore, I give offerings or serve others sparingly, reluctantly, or for the wrong reason. **For Christ's sake, God forgives my sinful motivations and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, makes my works into good and holy acts that please Him.**

### Dig Deeper

Read Ephesians 2:4–10 to learn more about the special gifts we receive from God through Christ Jesus.

## The Spirit Produces Good Works: A Widow's Offering

Mark 12:41–44

**W**omen who lost a husband in the ancient world lost everything. In this agrarian culture, women generally relied on husbands or sons to finance the families. The widow in this narrative had nothing to her name except two coins valued at a few cents.

When the widow placed both of her coins in the temple offering box, Jesus saw that the Holy Spirit led her to give more than the rich people who gave large sums of money. They gave small amounts of their abundant wealth, but the widow gave “everything she had, all she had to live on” (Mark 12:44).

This poor widow had a rich faith in God. She trusted God to provide for her even though she gave all her money to the temple. While rich people flaunted their apparent generosity, the widow humbly gave everything she had to praise and honor to God. She trusted in God's care, while the wealthy people relied on themselves.

### God's Workmanship

The Holy Spirit also gives us, like the widow, the ability to do good works, serving others and furthering the work of God's kingdom. These actions are pleasing to God because they glorify Him.

We do not earn forgiveness or salvation by doing good works. These spiritual gifts come from God by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live as God's children, thankful for what He does for us. Because of Christ's work on the cross, we can love, serve, and forgive others as He loves, serves, and forgives us.

### Prayer

*Holy Spirit, lead us to perform the works You set before us, that we might glorify our Savior. In Jesus. Amen.*

# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## 3 in 1: Discovering Our Triune God

### Key Point

The Holy Spirit led Philip to extend God's Church by helping the Ethiopian understand God's Word and then by baptizing him. The Holy Spirit extends God's Church through pastors and other church workers and also through me.

### Bible Words

As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.  
John 20:21

### Law/Gospel

Apart from faith in Christ, my sinful mind is clouded and cannot understand the Word of God. **The Holy Spirit works through God's Word, proclaimed by pastors and shared by other believers, including me, to bring people to faith in Jesus as Savior.**

### The Ethiopian Church

- Sixty percent of people in Ethiopia are Christians today.
- Ethiopia was the first country to make Christianity their state religion in the fourth century.
- Church history says the apostle Matthew preached the Gospel in Ethiopia after preaching in Judea.

SOURCES: Britannica.com, www.linkethiopia.org, and mcah.columbia.edu

## The Spirit Makes the Church Grow: Philip and the Ethiopian Acts 8:26–39

Philip became one of seven deacons prayerfully chosen to serve food to the poor and widows. The Church chose these deacons because the apostles could not do all the work themselves. However, their work did not stop with serving meals. Some also testified about Jesus in the many synagogues in Jerusalem (Acts 6:9).

Philip traveled to Samaria and told these people about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Many believed and followed Jesus.

Later, an angel of the Lord appeared to Philip and told him to go south on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. The Holy Spirit led Philip to a man riding in a chariot. This man, Ethiopian court official for the queen of Ethiopia, was a God-believer on his way home from worshipping in Jerusalem.

The Ethiopian was reading, but did not understand, a scroll of Isaiah 53, the prophecy of the Suffering Servant that so aptly points to Jesus. The Spirit gave Philip wisdom to understand and explain the Scripture to the man.

Philip also likely told the Ethiopian about the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation that believers in Jesus receive in Holy Baptism because the man asked to be baptized. Through His Word and Baptism, the Holy Spirit brought the Ethiopian to faith. Philip gladly baptized him.

### Go and Make Disciples

Jesus commanded His disciples to "Go therefore and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19). Today, missionaries travel the world to share the Gospel of Christ. Pastors preach His Word and administer the Sacraments. Teachers, deaconesses, and directors of Christian education, music, family life, and evangelism serve His Church in many ways.

Every Christian shares the Good News of Jesus as we live our vocations in life—such as parent, spouse, friend, and servant of Christ.

We can trust the Holy Spirit always to be with us and to give us opportunities to share the love of God in Christ.

### Prayer

*Dear Holy Spirit, help us to proclaim God's Word boldly, according to Your will. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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