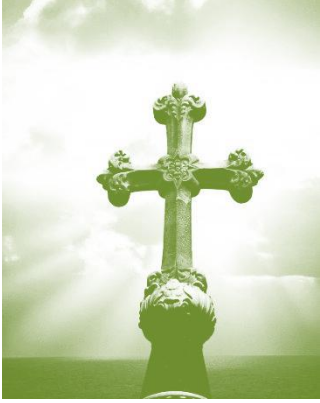


Symbols, Metaphors, Similes



“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;”

I Corinthians 1:27

Symbols, Metaphors, Similes. What are they? Well, almost anything can be made to stand for something else. A symbol is defined as a sign, a figure, an icon, an image, or as a representation. A metaphor is a figure of speech often used by poets where a comparison is made between two objects that can appear to be very different, but actually have something in common. A simile is defined as a symbol, an image, an allegory, or an idiom. Why did he teach us through these things? Perhaps the Scripture in I Corinthians answers this question for us. If you read Chapter 1 of I Corinthians you may see how God uses these things because we are the simple people who need to have simple things to help us understand. We cannot ever fully comprehend God’s power, but we can see glimpses of it through many items in nature. We can look out at the rain in the spring and see God. Or, we can complain because it is raining. We can look at the beauty of the leaves in the fall and see God, or complain because we know winter is coming.

I read this answer to the question of who Jesus really is? Please note the symbolism. He is the answer to every human need. When someone is hungry, He is “The Bread of Life”. For those who are thirsty, He is the Living water”. When someone needs peace, He is the Prince of Peace. He is the Balm of Gilead and the Great Physician to those who need healing.

Do you remember lying on your back as a child and looking up a cloud and thinking it looked like a car, or a boat. What happened to our imagination?

When our son was young, I remember walking to school with him. As we approached the one tree, all the leaves seemed to start falling off at once. I knew that we had a hard frost the night before and the sun’s warmth was making this happen. We stood and watched the beauty and awesomeness of nature. What an awesome display of fall. Today, we both remember how much we were impressed with being at that spot at that time to see God’s nature in action.

Another time, I took our very young grandson out into the woods in the spring. It was always a favorite time of mine to be in the woods. In his hand he carried a copy of a nature magazine that asked him to answer many questions about nature in an effort to make him actually look at nature. One question asked him to tell how many shades of green he could see. Without hesitation, he said “Infinite, Grandma!” He had just learned that word and knew when to use it. Needless to say, I was impressed! But he saw the beauty of God’s environment without being “preached” to! We saw the beauty of God.

At Christmas time, most of us have favorite ornaments on the tree or favorite decorations. The ornament or decoration is maybe not worth a lot of money, and it would not mean much to anyone else. But to us, it stands for something else. It may be a family member that has passed away or something that was bought when we didn’t have much money when we were first married. Its financial value may be great or small, but its value to the owner is very significant because it means something much more than what someone else’s eyes see. It brings back many happy memories.

The loss in a fire is financial, but what people most often say is “We are all safe, but we lost all our pictures.” Those pictures hold untold memories that cannot be put into words.

God’s “weak things” or “foolish things” as they are called in the King James Version of the Bible speak volumes to us if we listen. God doesn’t preach to us in words, but he shows us these things that tell us beautiful things about nature while they also tell us about ourselves.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, please help us to understand how you have given us so much through the simple things of life. Help us to see love, faith, and hope through these items so that we may understand the mightiness of your love to us. Help us to be as a child and see the beauty and awesomeness rather than the negative. Amen

1. Can you see God through a child’s eyes? What do you see when you look at a tree, a cloud, the rainbow?
2. Can you name the “foolish things” and the “weak things” mentioned in today’s Scriptures?
3. Think of Christmas and the many memories that are not worth, as older folks used to say, “a plug nickel.” How valuable are they to you?
4. Are certain songs meaningful to you? Why?

5. Why can't you part with that tool, kitchen utensil, or knick-knack that just sits on the shelf while you use the newer one? After all, the old family Bible is treasured by many families while a newer one is also available, and it is much easier to read.

©Gail Kennedy Keffer