



If I Could Tell You Just One Thing

The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.” —Jeremiah 31:3

Dear one, if I could tell you just one thing, it would be this ...

God. Loves. You.

God.

Yes, there is one. Perhaps you already know Him or perhaps you have wondered. Think about this. When looking at a freshly baked cake, no one ever says it “just happened.” There was bound to be a baker—who mixed ingredients just so, in a certain order, in specific amounts, and popped it in an oven for a specific number of minutes. In the same way, the more we examine the intricacies of the human eye or the beauty of a sunrise or the precise distance between our planet and the sun that warms us without burning or freezing us to death, the more it makes sense that Someone made this world. Someone made us. We did not “just happen.” God made us. God made you. And this God that I firmly believe exists? He loves.

Loves.

Yes. He loves. Why go to all the trouble of creating a world of magnificent diversity and beauty if He had no desire to delight and amaze those He created? Why communicate with us at all?

He loved us so much, in fact, that He actually clothed Himself in a human body and walked among us for a season. Those who witnessed His life on earth believed it with such fervor that, when challenged on their crazy claim that they saw Him killed and then alive again, they chose to die rather than renounce what they had seen. Although tortured, many died singing.

These eyewitnesses were actually eager to declare their conviction that this man had allowed Himself to be killed in their place. They were eager to share His promise of eternal life. All they had to do was simply receive His gift of taking their punishment. And not just one or two, but hundreds in the first century died rather than renounce what they had seen and experienced. Seriously, maybe a few would be that crazy, but hundreds? They actually saw a dead man walking again. He really did return from death with the great news that He had conquered death for humankind and that He wanted His loved ones to live with Him forever. His Name is Jesus. And His loved one is you.

You.

Deeply ingrained in each of us is a sense of unworthiness. A shrinking from the stupid things we’ve done. A sense of shame over the times we’ve lied, betrayed, gossiped, and hurt in order to look good or get our own way. We can’t even live up to our own expectations for ourselves, let alone others’. We sense that our deeds require punishment, and so we often self punish by reliving our worst moments and cringing. Or we hide by drugging ourselves in various ways, some obvious like alcohol and some subtle like staying too busy to think about it.

Guess what? We do deserve punishment. We aren’t worthy. You and I mess up time and time again. I don’t know about you, but I’m often super thankful no one can read my mind and see my thoughts. Yet this God, who made us and who deserves our love, chose to take the weight of our disobedience and our yuck as if it were His own. He declared that He would take our punishment. And God did. It’s paid in full.

And Jesus lived after dying to proclaim to you that you are loved that much. Ponder one of the most famous Bible verses: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). You are included in that “whoever.” All you need to do is turn to Him and receive what He wants to give: His love, His mercy, His forgiveness, His peace. Fullness of life lived in the understanding that ... *God. Loves. You.*

I just can’t think of anything I’d rather tell you. Ever.