



# Simple Gifts

Words to Inspire the Spirit

IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL

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## Yes, Jesus Still Loves Me

By The Rev. Rachel Rickenbaker

Maybe you've noticed, as I have, that when it comes to children's Bible songs so many are a reminder of God's love. My husband and I are at a place in life where we listen to and sing these songs with our two girls, along with more modern ones that we're learning, too.

"Jesus Loves Me (This I Know)"  
"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"  
"Jesus Loves the Little Children."

As we get older, we tend to venture away from the message of those songs. We forget about God's love. And it's not that we intend to do that. It's just that life happens. We get busy and distracted. Our wonder at God's love for us and our wonder at the world God made is replaced with disenchantment and weariness with events we see happening throughout the world.

We've seen behind the curtain now, and we know the world is not all roses. Someone we love gets sick, or we get a diagnosis we are not expecting. We

turn to the news and see a world at war with itself, even within our own nation. We might start to think, that God must have forgotten us. God must not really be as powerful as he says.

And then questions begin to creep in – does God really love ME? Will God really keep his promises? Will God actually return again to make all things right?

Through the stories and lessons of the Bible, we see our ancestors with many of these same questions. When the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt, they cried out to God, wondering "Will God ever hear and deliver us (Exodus 2:23-25)?"

When the Israelites had been brought through the Red Sea and into the wilderness, on route to the Promised Land, they began to long for what they had left behind – "Has God brought us out into the wilderness to leave us to die (Numbers 21:4-5)?"

Again and again, God promised his people to care for them. He reminded them of his love for them. God provided for them. But, life happened, and they forgot. The days were long, and the people became impatient. When things seemed bleak, it was easy to forget God's promises.

We find ourselves in a world that often feels bleak and certainly doesn't always feel so loving. As a world, we make simple platitudes about love – heck, I'm currently watching a trashy reality show with love in the title. But these statements we make about love and these ideals we lift up about love just seem to cheapen it.

It can be hard for us to understand God's love for us. It is not a feeling that depends on the day. It is not swayed by our physical appearance, or how we've performed in a given day. You can have your absolute worst day, where you feel nothing is right with yourself, where you feel nothing is right with the world – and God still loves you. Always and forever.

When we see a world that doesn't seem so loving, we begin to have those questions creep in – the same ones that affected our ancestors in the wilderness. Does God really love ME? Will God really keep his promises?

Has God abandoned us to the wilderness forever? Will God actually return again to make all things right?

Yes, God loves you. So much so that he sent his Son to live and die and rise again for you. Yes, God keeps his promises. He is always faithful; no matter how human beings act, God always keeps his promises. God has not abandoned us. He has gifted us his Holy Spirit, who breathes and moves and transforms us and gives us life even now. And yes, God will return to make all things right, all things new. Don't ever forget it. And when you do, come back to the songs. Come back to the Scriptures. Come back to a God whose love never ceases.

I invite you to jump back into that childhood wonder a little bit by listening to this updated version of "[He's Got the Whole World.](#)"