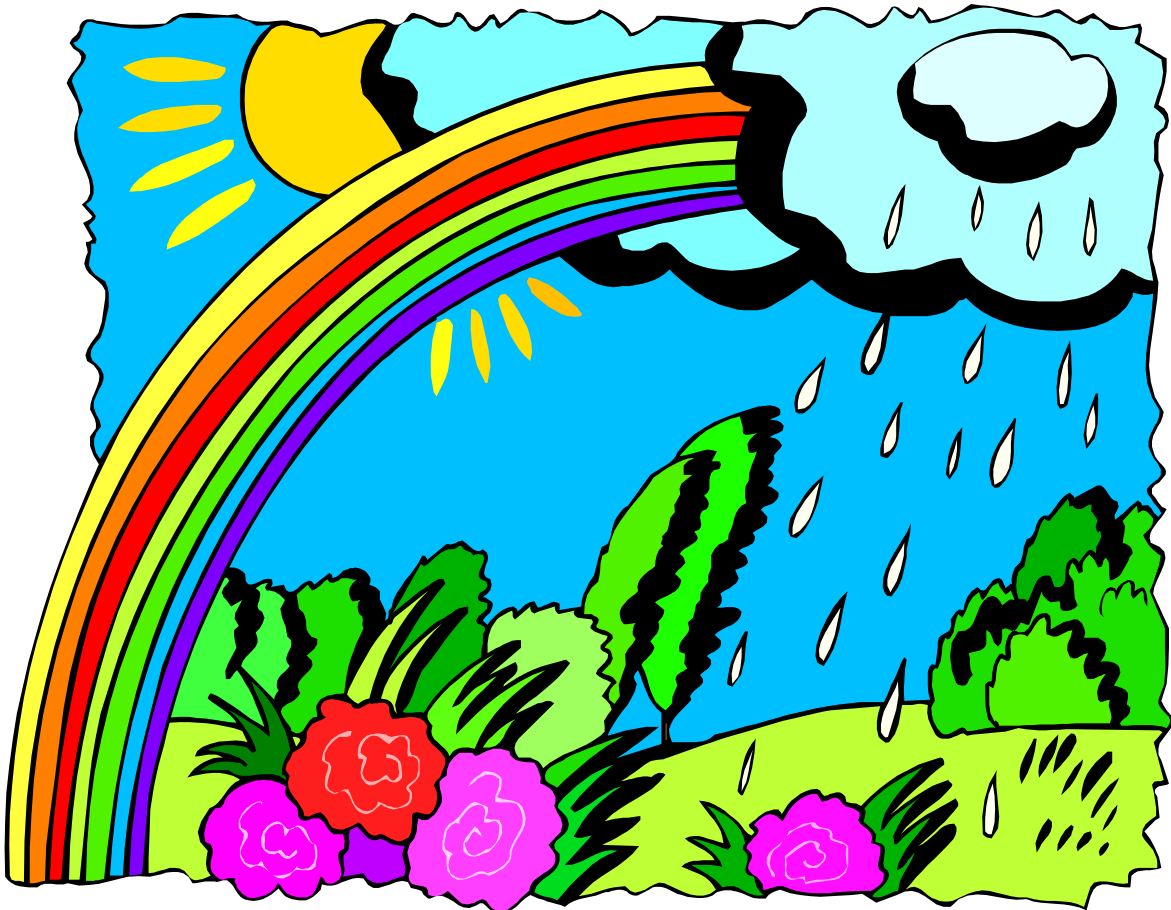


SPRING



Spring is a glorious time of the year. After the cold and lifeless winter we see the world come alive again. We can slowly begin to come back to life also as the weather becomes warmer. We can go out and play again. We can begin to change from the heavy clothing of winter to the light clothes of summer. We are filled with happiness as we see

sunlight last longer each day and flowers springing up everywhere. Once again birds are singing and animals are waking up from their winter sleep.

What can we learn from God's creation of spring?

The most wonderful lesson God teaches us with His creation of spring is about the resurrection of the dead. This is the hope and joy of every Christian. Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins. Because of what Jesus did for us, we have peace with God the Father. Our place in heaven is waiting for us. Jesus tells us this is the truth in John 14:1-3 when He says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." What a wonderful promise Jesus gives to us! He himself is preparing a place in heaven for each of us!

God uses the new life we see all around to show us a picture we can understand so that we will learn about new life springing up from the old life. The old worn out life of sin will be changed into a new life of eternal joy. The Bible teaches us this lesson in 1st Corinthians 15:51-52, "We will all be change - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable (alive forever) and we will be changed." What this means is that when Jesus returns to take us to heaven, even if we are dead, we will be raised from the dead just as He was and we will go with Him to live in heaven forever.

Another lesson God teaches us with the new life we see in the springtime is that of how we are changed by our faith. Jesus died to save us from our sins so that we are no longer dead in our sins. We have been given a new life of peace with God the Father. Because of this new life we have been given, we must live a new life of faith rather than sin. We can never be perfect like Jesus is, but we should try to show our thanks to Him by living the way He wants

us to. How do we know what God wants us to be like? The Bible tells us what to believe and how to live. The Bible is God's own word and we can believe everything it tells us. The Bible teaches us in 2nd Corinthians 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come." We are not to live the old way - the way of sin but rather we should live to please God who loves us and has done so much for us. God has given us faith in Jesus so that we can have forgiveness of our sins and eternal life. We must try to live by the faith God has given us as the Bible teaches us in 1st John 3:4-6, "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he (Jesus) appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him (Jesus) keeps on sinning."

Thanks to Jesus, we have a new life. The springtime shows us what that new life is like so that we can begin to understand God's love and mercy. Like the new life we see all around us, we also have a new life in Jesus our Lord and Savior. We should

be full of joy just like the birds that begin to return to our neighborhood. We can be so full of joy that God loves us so much that we want to sing as the Bible tells us in Psalm 33:1 "Sing joyfully to the Lord." The Bible also tells us in Psalm 30:2-4, "O Lord my God, I called to you for help and you healed me. O Lord, you brought me up from the grave; you spared me from going down into the pit (hell). Sing to the Lord, you saints of his; praise his holy name."

