

Mark Montgomery

Statement of Faith

I believe that God, maker of all things, is excited about and in love with creation. I believe that God among us, Jesus, showed us the way: Justice, hope, challenge, love, mercy, peace. I believe that the Holy Spirit connects us to God, to Christ, and to one another. I believe in the Communion of Saints. I believe that sin is present when we turn from God. We are shown the way from sin through the life and work of Jesus. We are redeemed from sin through the sacrifice of Christ.

These statements provide foundation for my faith, yet I was frustrated that I, a pastor, could not find the perfect words to communicate the *experience* of these statements. I shared with two mentors that I was struggling because God extends beyond description and vocabulary. They both said, "The words will come."

Laptop in front of me at Starbucks, coffee in one hand and my head in the other, I prayed for inspiration. Next to me, there was a shouting child in a stroller. His mother saw my exasperation and said to me, "I'm so sorry. He's autistic and some days are better than others, but he really likes looking at the lights just outside this window." She pointed to thousands of lights that surrounded a booth where Santa was greeting children. Her son was mesmerized. His gaze fluctuated from a pink string tied to his stroller to one particular light next to Santa. Realizing that she may be reacting to my frustration, I explained to her that I appreciated the distraction because I was working on writing what it is that I believe about God. I admitted I was having difficulty finding the right words.

She said, "Wow. Well, you didn't ask, but if you spent just an hour with Josh (her son) you would know that God loves the big picture but is fascinated with the details most of all. You would know that sometimes we don't understand what God is trying to say, but the desire to communicate is still there." Then, looking at Josh with what seemed like a confession, she added, "You would know that even though we may lose patience with each other and don't always feel like we are acting in a very loving way that love is still there, and that's the most important thing."

My friends were right, the words came. The words were not my own, but in their sharing, became part of my story. I thought, "The word became flesh and dwelt among us."

Hearing her wisdom, I reflected on God who created us, with all of our perceived imperfections, but knows the perfect balance of every detail. I thought of Christ who calls to Josh, "Come here child, for you are most like the Kingdom of God." I was reminded of the Holy spirit which draws us together, even strangers, so that we can share our stories which help us know more fully the essence of God.

The word became flesh in Christ. The word continues to be made flesh as we tell the story again. The word becomes new when we understand it through the lens of our own faith journey. And the word becomes flesh, again and again.