

Superlative Words  
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Stepping up on my soap box, I want to tell you that I have this wooden plaque proudly on display at my house. It says, “I am silently correcting your grammar.” Upon reading it, some people will chuckle and roll their eyes, vowing to stop talking around me because they’re afraid I’m having more fun correcting their grammar than listening to what they’re saying. (Sadly, there may be more truth to that than what I’m willing to admit.)

Before you judge me, please understand: Poor grammar and lousy spelling is all around. Billboards and printed advertisements can be found with wrong verb tenses and misplaced and dangling modifiers—and even incorrect words. I won’t even start my own rant about social media rants of rambling sentences void of punctuation and clarity of thought. I recently read a particularly crude epithet with even the four letter words misspelled!

Before you finish rolling your eyes, realize that when you have something important to say, you need to learn to say it correctly so people will listen. Lazy language skills send a message you might not want to be sending, leaving your original message lying useless at your feet.

Knowing about grammar is good. Using good grammar is better. Having used good grammar is the best. (Did you catch that comparative and superlative grammar tool?)

Okay, I’m stepping off my soap box now.

But back to that comparative and superlative thing. Jesus used that grammar tool quite effectively in His communication. Remember that story about Martha and Mary and Jesus in Luke 10:38-42? Martha had invited Jesus to her home. Mary had done nothing but sit at Jesus’ feet and listen to him. Meanwhile, Martha was busy with all the preparations that had to be made: the meat to set to cooking, the servants set to doing what they were supposed to be doing, the good linens aired out and spread on the table, the goats milked, the butter churned, the vegetables peeled and roasted. All while keeping the fire blazing enough to finish meal preparation. Martha was getting mighty upset that Mary wasn’t lifting a finger to help. So she ran to Jesus and told Him to make Mary help her.

Instead, Jesus said, “Martha, you are worried and upset and many things, but few things are needed—indeed only one.” Did you catch that comparative statement? He accepted Martha’s distractions about the many things she was trying to do. He compared her many things to just a few things that He felt were needed—indeed only one thing. “Mary has chosen what is better,” He said.

Mary chose to put aside the things that distract. Mary chose what was better: to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to what He had to say. She chose better over good. And the best part of all? “It will not be taken away from her.”

Sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to His teaching. That is the best thing, and it will never be taken away from us. Superlative words, indeed.