



Holy Trinity Sunday-June 7, 2020
Baltic and East Nidaros Lutheran Parish
Genesis 1:1-2:4 and Matthew 28:16-20

"I Am With You Always"

-Sermon by Pastor Randall J. Questad

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

Not everyone felt the same when they saw Jesus. We are told that some worshiped and some doubted. Those that doubted were like the rest of you in my children's message this morning who didn't get to taste the delicious rhubarb bars. You saw them, but you didn't know if they were for you simply by looking. And it doesn't help you when someone else is eating them and you are not. In order to believe what God has to give is for you, you must hear it for yourself.

*Ever since the very beginning of time, the Trinity has a perfect track record. But since we also live in this world where things aren't so predictable, a world where promises are made and broken, we apply the uncertain experiences we have had in this world and doubt like those "some" who saw Jesus. When we question the promises that God gives to us, our tendency is to use the same slogan with the Trinity that financial advisors qualify their advice to you, "Past performance is no guarantee of future results." There is only one way to be certain. And that is to hear for yourself what Jesus said to his disciples as he left this earth, "And remember, I am **with you** always, to the end of the age."*

*Not only is Jesus with you today and forever, but Jesus was making and keeping promises from the beginning of time. Jesus was present when God first spoke his first words that we heard in Genesis this morning. When we confess the Apostles' Creed, we say that we believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. Few of us listening today would dispute God the Father's role as a creator. But when you hear the words, "let **us** make humankind in our own image", you know that God the Father was not alone as the Creation account is told. As the creation account begins you also hear how a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. This wind is the same wind that was blowing last week on the day of Pentecost. From this we believe that God the Holy Spirit was also present in Creation. But this is Holy **Trinity** Sunday-**three** in-one. Were there only two members of the Trinity at work in Creation? Did Jesus only appear and begin his work as a member of the Trinity after his birth?*

The gospel writer John informs us where Jesus is in the Creation story. In fact, nothing would have been created without Jesus. John tells us that in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. God is the person who is speaking, and Jesus is the word that is spoken and the Holy Spirit is giving ears to the hearer so that what is said takes place. The Holy Trinity, God

the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was at work creating new things in the beginning and it is still creating new in the lives of people today.

As we sang in the gathering song, "Holy, Holy, Holy" this morning, we are reminded that God is three persons in one and they always work together. In the creation story, things are not made like they are in an assembly line. God the Spirit doesn't show up for work first and breath on everything to set the stage for what should happen that day and then wait for another member of the trinity to take over. God the Father doesn't show up later for work and says what is going to happen and then moves out of the way for Jesus, the word, to finish the job. No member of the Trinity moonlights doing other jobs outside of the unified work of the Trinity. Each day in creation, God the Father speaks and God the Son is present in the words spoken and God the Spirit brings ears such as light, the sky, the sun, moon, stars, birds, fish, wild animals, and humankind near to the word and they obey his command to come to life.

When Jesus sent out his disciples into the world to make disciples of all nations, he didn't divide them into three groups. He didn't train one group to speak God's word, another group to be the word, and the third group to be the ears of this word. As Jesus commissioned his disciples on this worldwide evangelism project, Jesus instructed his disciples of the plan to follow when making new disciples. Jesus told his disciples how to create faith where there was doubt, just as there was a plan to create light and life where there was only darkness and a formless void.

*The plan to create faith begins with the Trinity making the first move in the faith of people in their baptisms. In baptism, God the three in one appears at the same time and functions the same way it did in creation. God the Father speaks to the unbaptized, God the Son is the word that is spoken, and God the Spirit opens the ears of the unbaptized to hear the promise delivered. Once ears have been opened to listen to the Father, there is no question that the promise is for them. The same promise, the same last words that Jesus spoke to his disciples before he ascended to heaven, "And remember, **I am with you always** to the end of the age."*

You may wonder why there is a picture of a church to show what God did on the seventh day rather than God relaxing in a hammock under a shade tree that he created or by the beach when he separated the waters from the dry land? God indeed rested on the seventh day, but he also made the Sabbath day holy. He set this day aside for you so that you can listen to him speak to you so that you will know that God is with you, today and always, no matter what challenges or joys you are facing. God set aside the Sabbath day so you can hear a preacher from a church give you promises to know that God is for you. Some of you may recognize the church that was in the slide representing what God did when he finished creation. It is the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, Norway. You can easily see the architecture of this church that is approaching 1000 years old in the design in the altars of our churches. It was a memorable day when Kim and I were able to visit this historic church knowing that 850 years later what was happening in that church is still happening in our churches today.

Seeing the church was impressive, but what is lasting is what has been heard throughout the ages. The same promise that was delivered to the disciples and delivered in the Nidaros Cathedral has now

again been delivered to you. “And remember, I, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, am with you always to the end of the age, Amen.