

## SERMON FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 7 AND WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2020

Trinity A 2020 Genesis 1:1-2:4 “Light in the Darkness” HYMN: Thy Strong Word

Dear fellow redeemed of the Triune God, who created, redeemed and sanctifies you, in the beginning, God said, **“Let there be light.”** And there was light. The light of life. And God declared it was very good.

Then man said, **“Let there be darkness.”** And there was darkness. The darkness of sin and death, as mankind was separated from God, the source of light and life. And it was not good.

But into this darkness, God shined a light. He promised to reunite what man had torn apart. He promised a Light to overcome the darkness of sin and death.

And so, in the fullness of time, **“God sent His Son to be born of a woman, born under the Law in order to redeem those under the Law in order to purchase out of slavery those who were under the Law, in order that we might receive adoption.”**

In effect, God was again saying: **Let there be light.** And there was light. For Jesus, the Light of the world, came into the world, to shine upon us the light of truth, life, and of forgiveness.

But, in effect humanity again said, **“Let there be darkness,”** And so Jesus, the Light of the world, was hung up on the cross.

His truth and life and forgiveness were rejected by His rebellious creatures who loved the darkness more than the light.

Yet the light of God is eternal, it cannot be extinguished; God brought forth the light in the resurrection of His Son, Jesus, from death and the grave. He rose to scatter the darkness, that the light of His truth, life, and forgiveness might shine forever.

Yet in this work of creation and re-creation, it is not just the Father and the Son at work, but the entire Triune Godhead.

The same Spirit that hovered over the face of the waters in creation, and that overshadowed, the waters of Mary’s womb at the incarnation of Jesus, also now hovers over the waters of Holy Baptism. Each time bringing forth eternal light and eternal life.

That's why the ancients often called baptism *illumination*, or enlightenment. In those waters, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are active, just as in the beginning, bringing forth life. Your life.

A new and spiritual life for you who were **dead in the darkness of your trespasses and sins**, but now made alive by the Word and Spirit of God.

And so, the Holy Trinity has brought light into your life. But what will your response to His goodness, to His Light, be?

Will you, too, say: **“Let there be darkness?”** You do, don't you? I do. More often than I would like to admit.

By nature, we prefer the darkness of sin to the Light of truth.

We prefer the darkness of anger, bitterness, and resentment rather than the Light of love and forgiveness.

We enjoy wielding power over those weaker than us. We **want to be served** instead of serving others.

We prefer the darkness of selfishness to the Light of faith, seeking and getting for ourselves, rather than trusting in our loving God who has promised to provide for us all that we need.

And all of this is **not good**. That's why we need the Holy Spirit to overshadow us, to bring about repentance, for that is a change that we cannot do, since our natural will is turn inward.

No, this is a change that only God, who shines the Light into the darkness, can do. And He does. He did it with Adam and Eve, shining the light on their sin and exposing it.

That wasn't pleasant for Adam and it isn't pleasant for us. Like us, Adam wanted to hide himself and his sin, but God knew that was not good, for if Adam or we remain in the darkness, hiding from God, we'd die eternally.

And so, He comes to His children to expose and cleanse our sin with His forgiveness and give us life again.

***Not life as we know it, but life as we don't know it.***

A new and better life - the life of Christ. A life where we don't have to hide in the darkness, but one which basks in the warm light of His love and forgiveness.

That's why Jesus, the Great Physician came into this world, to give life and hope and purpose to those whose lives, due to the fall, had been maimed and distorted.

His eternal light shown through each time he healed the sick, gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. His light shown through every time he cleansed lepers, made the lame to walk, gave voice to the mute, drove out demons, and raised the dead.

But greatest of all, **He became sin for us**. He took all our sin upon Himself and entered the darkness of sin and death and **for us** emerged triumphant in His resurrection, scattering the darkness in our lives once and for all.

By grace through Spirit authored faith, we too emerge triumphant over the darkness of this life, that which we create by our sins and that which is inflicted upon us by others.

## **PAUSE**

And so this morning, let us praise the work of the Holy Trinity for us. The **Father** who in love sent His Son to die for us.

The **Son** who in love sent the **Holy Spirit** to enlighten us and gather us to Christ, who gathers and takes us to His Father.

God does this to make all things new, so that the world which, in the beginning, was very good, might be very good again.

Which is why Jesus, as we heard in the Holy Gospel, sends His apostles out **to all nations** –

to shine God's eternal light into the darkness of our world of sin and death with the Good News of His forgiveness and life, and to do **so by baptizing and teaching**.

For in these ways, the Holy Trinity is not **just proclaimed to us, but given to us**. To **be with us always**, as Jesus said, **to the end of the age**. **PAUSE**

If there's one word that best describes God, one word from the words of Matthew that we heard today, the Great Commission, it would be **given**.

For our God is a giving God. Giving His gifts. Giving Himself. Giving us all that we truly need.

**And even when He takes away from us, He is giving to us still**. For in *taking away* those things that we turn into false gods, the unholy objects of our love, He is *giving* us life and true faith. Right faith, that we look to Him and trust in Him alone.

For in truth, our God withholds nothing that is good and right from you. He seeks only the best for you, as a true and loving **Father should**.

And the **Son**, who laid down His life for you, now gives to you that very same Body and Blood in His Supper, that you be strengthened in your new man with the forgiveness of your sins and live the life to which you have been called.

And the **Holy Spirit**, the gift of God to be with you always, gives you the light of wisdom and guidance that you need in a very dark world.

To strengthen you with His love, to strengthen, and at times to correct your prayers with His own, and to make you holy - in thought, word, deed, and desire. That God's "**Let there be light**" be true in you and your life, both now and forever.

And now we are sent forth from this place, to home, to work places, to neighbors, to friends, to all the nations, telling others of God's mercy and the light of His love and forgiveness.

To live that light and to shine that light in the darkness. That may not be easy, but you know what? **It will always be good**.

And so, to this good end, let me remind you of the words we sang from "**Thy Strong Word**."

Give us lips to sing Thy glory, Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,  
Throats that shout the hope that fills us, Mouths to speak Thy holy name. Alleluia,  
alleluia! May the light which Thou dost send fill our songs with alleluias, Alleluias  
without end!

God the Father, light-creator, To The laud and honor be.

To Thee Light of Light begotten, Praise be sung eternally.

Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to Thee.

Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the holy Trinity! **AMEN**