

**SERMON: Genesis 1:1-3**  
**BEYOND YOUR GRASP FROM THE BEGINNING!**

<sup>1</sup>*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

*And the earth was without form, and void;  
and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*

<sup>2</sup>*And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

<sup>3</sup>*And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

True or False: **There are a lot of things about God we don't understand.** True! *Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever! (Romans 12:36).*

I remember a man who thought he knew all about God, even though the Bible didn't say the things he thought. He was a pastor who wrote an article for the weekly "religion page" in the newspaper. He disagreed with the teaching/doctrine that only those who trust in Christ for forgiveness will be in heaven. The Bible says, *Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.* The man, however, was making the case that the Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, etc., all sincere in their faith, will also be in heaven. He pointed out the narrowness of thinking that only Christians will be in heaven. He ended his article with, "My God is bigger than that!" I stewed about his words. His claim made sense to cold logic, but not the Bible. I realized the vast error in his closing statement "My God is bigger than that." In reality, his god was not big at all! His god was really very small! a god whose actions line up with man's limited sinful logic. How sad. God's ways and God's actions do not line up with ours, because He is indeed bigger than we are! We can only humbly stand before Him trusting His loving, wise, and powerful ways. Man cannot sit above God and say to Him, "Yes, that's a good move God. That's exactly what I would do, God." God sits above us; the gap is huge! That fact is especially obvious on Trinity Sunday as we ponder the "essence" of God.

The words of the text are the very first words of the Bible. The words explain the origin of all things. *In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.* "In the beginning" is talking about the very beginning, "Beginning" is a term used in reference to time. The beginning of the week, of the year, of the United States of America, means it did not exist before that point. Here we are talking about the beginning of the heavens and earth, actually the beginning of time itself. The Bible calls this the "first" day. The very first day. Before this first day, there was not any day, nor any time. It's similar to an elderly gentleman who talked about the "first years" of farming the land of the the Sisseton-Wahpeton Reservation, when it opened up for claims in the 1890's. Before those "first" years, there was no farming of that land. It was the beginning. So in the text, before the first day, before the beginning of the heavens and the earth, there was no physical "substance" nor "time." There was eternity. Only God was there. Eternity is impossible for us to grasp—whether it is in the past or into the future. Eternity in either direction is outside of time. We can only think in terms of time. However, with God it is always the "now." God is bigger than you. You can't understand His eternal presence.

In the beginning "God" created. The word in Hebrew for God means the one who is respected. He is above all. Nobody sits over Him. God "created." He "made." He "produced." He "cut and shaved" things making them just right. It wasn't by trial and error—scrap this idea, scrap that idea, now this one is close. His wisdom has no limit. He established all the laws of physics, astro-physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, music, genetic reproduction. God is bigger than you. Don't try to make Him as small as you. Imagine the power involved in creating the heavens and the earth. Producing and controlling the solar system, the stars, thunder, lightning, magnetic force, gravity, visible light and the entire electro-magnetic spectrum. He made it, put it into action, and controls it. In addition, He made life! How much power does it take to make life? to make a grain of wheat grow, a kernel of corn, a seed of an apple? Can you make them grow? How much more power it takes to give life to a human being! Perhaps you could make the shape of a man. But could you give it life! It can't be done. Sure, there is the so-called artificial intelligence, machines with man-made intelligence of sorts. But there is no man-made life! God is bigger than you.

In the beginning God made / created "the heavens"—the regions above us—"and the earth"—the regions below us. He created them out of nothing; there was no material to use. This was the Beginning! The word "create" of itself does not mean to make "out of nothing." God did use "material" / dust (which He had already created) to make man, and the Bible says God "created" man. The Hebrew word translated "create" describes a very special making. It is only applied to God. In this "creating" of the heavens and the earth, God even made "Space." How can one make "Space"? It's emptiness—whether "outer Space" or ordinary "space." However, "Space" is actually a physical phenomenon—emptiness between objects of the heavens or between objects on earth,

or even between molecules. God put that space there. God Himself exists outside of “space.” He does not live somewhere among the stars. He is beyond that! When Jesus returned to the Father, *He ascended far up above all heavens* (Ephesians 4:10).

God created. “God” often refers only to the Father, as in “*God*” *so love that world that he gave His only begotten Son* (John 3:16). However, the name “God” also refers to Jesus—“*My Lord and my God!*” Thomas said. It also refers to the Holy Spirit, “*Why have you lied to the Holy Spirit? . . . You have not lied to men but to God!*” Peter said to Ananias. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each “God,” yet they are one Being, not three—the mystery of the Trinity.

The Son and the Holy Spirit were also present and involved in this creation. It was not just the Father, who created the heaven and the earth, and continued to increase the perfection over the next six days. The Holy Spirit was also there. *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.* Was it a spooky, forbidding, frightening place? Not at all, for God was there—God the Holy Spirit! *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* He was present—wherever the water was. This is hard to fathom—to be in two places at once, or five, or fifty, or everywhere! “Whither shall I flee from Your presence? (Psalm 139:7). God is bigger than you are. *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* He was there, moving, hovering, “trembling”—not just a dead chunk, but alive and blessing all things with His presence. The New Testament describes the Holy Spirit as the “Paraclete” which means “one called to another’s side,” a Comforter, Helper, Counselor, Advisor, to lead each one forward in life. “Do you not know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?” (I Corinthians 6:19). “God breathed into his [Adam’s] nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). Where God the Holy Spirit is, there He imparts life. Life! The Holy Spirit is “bigger” than you are. He gives life and comfort to created beings.

God the Son was also present and active at creation. Genesis says: *God said, Let there be light: and there was light.* Where is God the Son? Am I saying that Jesus was the “light” that God created?—for Jesus did say, “I am the Light of the world.” No. For then the Father created the Son on Day One. God the Son is seen here in the words, *And God said.* It’s a rather abstract concept. But consider John’s words at the start of His Gospel, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. . . . The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory!*” (John 1:1-14). Jesus is the “Word.” He was present at the beginning—God said. When some “gives the word,” he gives the OK, and the action is done. His “word” declares his will. One may also ask another, “Give me your word on that,” and the deal is made. Spoken words reveal what is in one’s heart. Jesus was God’s “word” at creation. He put into effect each of His commands to begin physical creation. The same is true of our spiritual life and creation. Jesus declares what is in God’s heart—His merciful love for sinners. Jesus declared that love with His life, teaching, and miracles. When He suffered under Pontius Pilate, when He was crucified, when He died and was buried, He served as the Father’s sacrifice of atonement (peace making), as the innocent lamb slain to save the helpless sinners, as the propitiation (appeasement) for man’s sin. Jesus is the Word declaring the Father’s love and forgiveness to you. Jesus says “Saved!” In Hebrews we read, “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son!” (Hebrews 1:1-2). *And God said!* Jesus was the “word” by which God’s will was declared and put into effect at Creation. Jesus is also then the Word by which God’s will was declared and put into effect at Golgotha’s cross and the empty tomb-- new spiritual life, forgiveness, salvation, rescue, from sin and hell. Could God the Father ever have spoken a kinder Word to you and for you than He has spoken through His Son?!!

Jesus is the center and the point of the whole Bible. Jesus is the “Word” of God. To know God’s power, might, wisdom, etc. is all quite marvelous; but for the sinner, to know His GRACE—His un-merited love in Christ—is supreme! For helpless sinners already over the edge of the cliff, GRACE means Jesus went over the cliff for you and hit the bottom that He might rescue you before you reach rock-bottom. Nothing is greater than that! For sinners, God’s grace in Jesus is His most outstanding character-trait. Jesus is far bigger than you. Who would ever have considered such a rescue! Jesus did—for you! Apart from Jesus there is not hope.

God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Triune God, is beyond your understanding. Whether His will and His ways suit your sin-dimmed and sin-warped logic doesn’t matter. He doesn’t look for you to approve of His actions of love or to understand His essence. He is One, One Being, One God, yet three distinct “persons.” The Father did not die for your sins. The Triune God has done all things for you. Your salvation is His story and His glory. Stand in humble awe and love before Him on Trinity Festival! He cares for you.

Amen! So be it!

Pastor Kanzenbach--