

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and

moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. <sup>3</sup> And

**God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.** (NIV 84)

Theme: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—True God from Eternity

1. All three active in creation
2. All three active in salvation

The doctrine of the Trinity is one that we'll never be able to fully understand in this life. There is one God—but three persons in that one God. There is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are clearly distinct, yet they share the same essence. They are all eternal and all equal in every way.

There is much we don't understand about the Triune God. It gives us a headache trying to wrap our minds around him—it just doesn't make sense to our feeble minds. So the devil tries to convince us that it isn't true. If it doesn't make sense, we should reject it as false—as if it's just a doctrine cooked up centuries ago by the early church fathers. The devil doesn't want us to confess the Holy Trinity, so he attacks this Biblical truth on every side.

But today we see that the Bible clearly teaches the Triune God—The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As we read the first inspired words ever recorded we see that all three persons of the Trinity were active in creation and in salvation.

Not only is the devil busy attacking the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, he spends a lot of time and effort in attacking the truth that God created the world in six days. He uses reason and so-called science to promote evolution. Evolution may seem innocent to most people. But in the end it is contrary to the basics of the Christian faith. Think about what evolution means for just a second. If evolution is true, that it's not just creation that God lied about—but pretty much everything in his Word. Evolution says that humans descended over millions of years from different life forms. God didn't create the world. So there is no god. And if there is no God, then there is no Son of God and no Savior. If there is no God, there is no sin since there is no law to break. It also says that this life is all there is and nothing else. But none of this is a big deal because we have no soul anyway—we are just like the animals. To hold to evolution is to deny the main teachings of the

Bible. That is why the devil attacks Biblical creation so vigorously. But as we see today, God created the world. This is not just found in Genesis, but throughout the pages of Scripture.

The Bible begins where it only can—at the beginning of the world. **In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.** It doesn't get any simpler than that. God created the world and everything in it. Here we can say that God the Father created the world out of nothing. By just his word the world came to be. In just six days—regular days—24 hour periods, the world was created. Not millions of years, the world didn't change over a long course of time; but God created a mature and sustainable world in six days. This is not something we'll be able to prove through science or observation, but it is something we believe and hold firmly to. As the Writer to the Hebrews says in chapter 11. **By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.**

But the world wasn't just created by God the Father. We see that right away in verse two. **The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.** The Holy Spirit was also present and active during creation. Here we see that he is separate from the Father—yet he is God. He can only create the world if he is true God from eternity. The rest of Scripture backs this up. For instance in Job 33 we read, **The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.**

Now it is true that the Son isn't mentioned in our text for today. But that doesn't mean he didn't create the world. He is God after all. The rest of Scripture backs this up. In the opening verses of his gospel, John makes a strong allusion to Genesis 1. There he refers to Jesus and says, **Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.** In verse 10 John also says, **the world was made through him.**

So the Father created the world, the Son created the world, and the Holy Spirit created the world. Yet there are not three who created the world, but there is one who created the world. For there are three persons. Yet one God. All three persons created the world because all three persons are one God. And as God they all carry the same characteristics. We can't comprehend the Trinity. We don't know the inner workings of the Triune God. That is because as the one true God,

all three persons are infinite. That is, they are beyond comprehension. We cannot measure or fully grasp the Trinity.

But we do know some things. For instance, God created the world with just his word. I can say “Let there be light” all I want—but nothing is going to happen. I can try to create something out of nothing, but again—nothing will happen. But God can—God did. How? Because God is all powerful; or Omnipotent. He is also omniscient, or all-knowing. Just think of how the human body works, the complexities of the solar system, and the earth’s fragile eco systems. By just his Word, in an instant, all of those rules that govern all of these were created.

There is another characteristic of God that we learn through creation. He is eternal. He has to be—otherwise he isn’t God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all were present and active in creation. That means they were before the world was. So God is eternal. He will dwell forever.

But we were created. And we will die. We are not eternal. But all three persons of the Holy Trinity are active in our salvation to make us eternal.

We who are New Testament believers benefit from a fuller revelation of the Holy Trinity. We have numerous references to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit being God. The Old Testament believers didn’t have this benefit. The Triune God wasn’t spelled out as clearly for them as it is for us today. But as the years would God on, God would give his Old Testament believers more information on the one true God—the Triune God. While the Old Testament believers never did use the terms trinity or triune, they did believe a plurality of persons. They knew and believed that there is only one God, yet they also knew and believed that there were multiple persons in that one true God.

We see this right away in Genesis one. In verse 26 God decided to create man. **Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.**

Here the persons of the Trinity are talking to themselves. Notice the plural pronoun, “our.” This gave the Old Testament believers insight into the one true God. If he was just one—he wouldn’t have used, “our.”

The Triune God created humans in his own image and likeness. What exactly does that mean? Sinlessness was at the core of the image of God. He created us to be without sin. And we were able to not sin. It means that he created us perfect. We were holy. We knew his will. It means that mankind was created in conformity with God’s will. And was obedient to his will.

But that didn’t last long. The devil came in the form of a serpent. He convinced Adam and Eve that God was lying to them. Adam and Eve doubted God’s Word and his love for them. This led them to eat the forbidden fruit. Sin entered the world. And death through sin. Man lost the image of God. They no longer knew his will, nor could they conform to it. As a result they deserved punishment. Not just a slap on the wrist—but the punishment of eternal death.

But the Triune God came up with a plan in which all three persons would be actively involved. Actually the plan was made before the world was created. Before Adam and Eve ever lived in the Garden of Eden. Before they ever sinned and needed a Savior. In eternity, God chose his children. The Father chose you and me to be his own. Not because who we are or what we would do. We were born as sinners and enemies of God. Out of his love and grace he chose us to be saved through faith in his Son. And now he is carrying out what he had decided in eternity to do—our salvation.

And then he sent his Son into the world. Jesus, God the Son, would live on this earth for more than 30 years. And not once did he sin and go against God’s will—but kept it perfectly. Yet he still found himself betrayed, arrested, mocked, beaten, flogged, and crucified. It was on the cross that Christ took our sins upon himself. He became a sinner in our place and suffered the eternal punishment that we deserved. Then he gave us his perfect obedience. His life was transferred to us, so that we may be declared not guilty. Then he rose from the dead and promises us that we too will rise from the dead. And we will live with him in heaven forever.

Christ did this for the whole world. But not everyone will be saved. These amazing gifts are only received through faith. And faith is given to us by the Holy Spirit. And he works through the means of grace alone. It is through the hearing of the Word and the sacraments of baptism and communion that the Holy Spirit creates and increases faith in our hearts. Now he dwells in each one of his believers. He

brings to faith all the Father has chosen. And through faith we will receive everything the Son has won for us.

That Father chose us and sent the Son. The Son lived a perfect life, gave that perfect life to us, took away our sins, and gave us the sure hope of eternal life. The Holy Spirit brought us to faith through the means of grace and keeps us in that one true faith through the same means. They are all active in our salvation. And we cannot be saved without one of them. They are all motivated by the same grace and compassion. Love for us that they have had since eternity.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is essential for salvation. That is why the devil attacks it so often and in a myriad of ways. This doctrine doesn't just teach us who God is—but also what he has done. He is the Triune God—three persons yet one God. And out of his love he created the world and when the world rebelled against him, out of his love again he sent a plan in motion to save us—he chose us he died and rose for us and he brought us to faith. And that is why we celebrate and praise God in three persons! Amen.