

Christmas Day – December 25, 2015
Text: John 1:1
Theme: "The Plan"

Every year we read this text from John on Christmas Day. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." The beginning is an important time for us to remember because it is the beginning that makes sense of the now. If we don't know the beginning, then we do not know from whence we have come and we cannot know the importance of where we are going. In addition to that, I hear so often a general despair that everything is out of control in the world. Shootings, bombings, wars, hatred, the world spiraling out of control as though we are in a rudderless ship in a hurricane.

Well it makes sense that if you do not know the plan, and have not watched the plan unfold for several millennia, you might be worried that no one is minding the store. Or if you have become sucked into the science vortex where Science is the judge and God is on trial, again you might be pretty worried because God is not actively defending himself and since he is silent, beyond what he has already revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures, one might conclude that science is right, and there is no God in control of the universe, so we are at the mercy of whatever comes along.

Remember that in the beginning we were created out of a divine conversation among the Holy Trinity. Apparently they were

discussing what to do one day and one of them said, "Let's create man in our image!" I'm not being flippant. That is really what was said in the Bible. Genesis 1:26,

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'"And so they did. They created Adam and breathed life into him and later created Eve from Adam and breathed life into her and Man and Woman were created above the earth but lower than the divine. Genesis 1:1 says,

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Human beings are the "and" in that phrase, "heavens and earth." We stood between heaven and earth. Higher than earth and lower than heavens. Adam and Eve could have been content with their place as keepers of the earth. They had everything. They had a personal relationship with the creator. They had a beautiful sinless earth in which to live. They had beauty, joy, happiness but they were not God and, of course, predictably, they wanted the one thing they were not given. In his reaching to be somewhere higher than the place he had been given, Adam fell, and he took us down with him. His fall into sin left God's creation lower than he should have been and God had to adjust the plan.

It was always God's plan for us to be with him in heaven. Eden was just a training ground, a foyer to paradise but when Adam and

Eve fell, they had to be cleansed from the corruption of sin. To do this God became flesh because you cannot do the work from outside the system. That is what we celebrate on this day, the day God became flesh, enabling him to suffer our punishment and replace us between earth and heaven. God promised the new plan in Eden and fulfilled it later on the Friday we call Good Friday – not that it was good in and of itself, but that it was good in that the plan had been completed. But now we wait to receive the full benefits of the new plan, which is really the same as it always was, when we will be able walk and talk with God for all eternity in a sinless world.

During this time, while we wait, some will return to the corruption into which Adam and Eve fell. It is sad, but it is their choice because just like in the beginning, we have always been given free will. Some, like us, will continue to rejoice in this little oasis of light that Christ has created for us where we wait for full restoration. Jesus has restored us to the middle, the and between heaven and earth, and Jesus will fulfill his final promise and take us all the way into heaven on the great and glorious day of our resurrection.