

Second Sunday of Christmas
January 2, 2022

How did I come to be? Why am I here? Wherever there have been thinking people, these questions have been asked. We ponder, but we do so from our own perspective and do not see things as they are, but often through the eyes of what we want them to be.

In the beginning was the Word.

The source of everything is something. We have been told. Do we believe? For some, the word is the Big Bang. That's enough for them. An impersonal pop and all that we call existence came into being. By a thousandth chance, the bang shaped our sun. By another thousandth chance, the earth came into being. By another thousandth chance, the conditions for life came together and life began. By another thousandth chance, the life changed such that humans came to be. That is plausible, but why would I be concerned with more if there wasn't something in me that calls me to desire more? What caused this thing inside me to desire more if all of this is happenstance?

And the Word was with God.

When God created our first parents, they were with God. They knew God. The opposite has never changed. God knew them. God knows us. Something happened and they no longer knew God. The world does not know God. That is the state we have gotten ourselves into. We are born not knowing God. That is the problem. Ultimately there are only two positions one can live: either you will be your own god, or else you will look for the other who is not you who is the one to whom you will look to as the source. This is the struggle, for I may acknowledge there is a god outside of me, but then turn right around and demand that the god of my imagination must do things in a certain way.

The Word was God.

How can this be? That is what the world asks. How can God be a mere mortal? How can God say, "Let there be," and there is? How? Those who are in rebellion against truth are hung up on the simple truth that there is something, or as we know, Someone, who is behind all of this.

All things came into being through Him. Apart from Him is nothing.

Through Him, for Him, and with Him we have life and our being. Born separated from Him, we have been invited into a living and eternal relationship with Him. In this age of rebellion, we can pretend that we have a life of our own making. Yes, we can live that illusion which many do. It will last four score and perhaps a few more years and then the illusion will be over. Or, as the invitation of our baptism proclaims, we can come into that relationship and walk with Him. It really is that simple. Walk with the Lord or not, all things exist because of Him.

He is called light. He is called life. Light and life are in Him and apart from Him is the momentary illusion that is the foundation of this age of rebellion. The One through whom all things have their being has done this and for His own reasons, some of which we can know and others which are, for now, are beyond us.

We have heard the testimony. I have given you testimony. Some will believe and some will not. I am not the light, nor is anyone who has come before, save the One who was born in the manger of a virgin. He alone is the light, for the Eternal One has come to lead as many as would see the truth of His coming and see Him repair the breach that has separated the creature from their Creator.

Many in this world do not want to believe. I do not know why and yet, I can understand a

bit why this must be so. Those who are of the world and in rebellion are constantly fighting for control. Whether it is in a family, a church, a civic organization, or government, the world, which is out of control, seeks to control, each with their own idea of how things are supposed to be. God is in control and He does not control, for He has given us that ability to decide for ourselves. Our hearts want control. Our rebellious hearts. The contrite heart desires the Lord who is in control. Submitting to the Lord is not being controlled – that is what the world always tries to do – its your life under control.

You can get up and walk out of here right now, in this moment. Yes, you have the ability and freedom to do so. Why don't you? Are you driven to not do so by what those around you think? Are you worried about your reputation? Are you thinking of yourself? This is often the starting place in our reasoning. But, for whatever reason, you do not get up and walk out. You were not controlled to come here. You came freely. Yet, there was a call to have you come. You listened to the call and here you are. I suspect there are some this morning who heard the same call and chose not to come. Do not judge them. I am making a point about you.

The world does not know God. The world rejects what we have heard, that God has come into the world and walked a human life as you and I walk a human life. But you have heard the Word, you have seen the light, and here you are. What will come of this? That really is the question.

To as many as receive Him, He gives power. You are called to receive Jesus. You are called to take Him in. You have before You the offer to come back into the position for which you were created. Not just for you, for the offer is for the whole world. But today, I am focusing upon you, for the faith must be taken up by each one of us individually. What it means is everything, for it means no longer hanging on to your own ideas, but laying them down and having the Lord's reality – reality itself – become your reality. The will you have to rebel is the very thing that is needed. You must willingly and freely give it up to come into the relationship before you. "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Every couple walking in a loving relationship in marriage knows how to do this. Maybe not perfectly, but they know how to do it. You do what is best for the other. The "Do as you would be done by" of the Golden Rule is the heart of the action of love. For God so loves us that He has done all that is needed so that we may freely come into a love relationship with Him. Of the fulness of His presence and purpose, we have received grace upon grace. That is, we are given all the opportunities we need to grow in a loving relationship with Him. He does not stop there, for we are to practice the same principles with one another. The world will continue to struggle with people scrambling to be number one, but the Lord calls us together to be a family. Children of God and sisters and brothers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

The world does not see God. The pollution of sin clouds the mind and the heart. Through grace, the word makes your heart clean so that you can not only see, but come to know the Lord even as He has always known you. When the word comes in you, you know that this was not done by your will, nor the will of any man, but of God, for He has come to you in order to raise you up to be one of His children. All that is needed has been provided for. Believe and know that the promised eternal life is yours through the Word made flesh, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The law is a reflection of God, but the Word made flesh is God. Yes, the law is good, but the Word is life. Come into the light and life and know God. Amen.