**“Particularly God”**

Psalm 8

Genesis 1:1—2:4a

Acts 2:14a, 22-36

Matthew 28:16-20

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing **them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to **observe** all that’s been commanded … and behold, **God is with His people always, to the end of the age**.”

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**… Particular in Being (Triune)**

“**God** **loves me**.” What a **simple phrase** that is … it fits on a bumper sticker. “**Jesus** loves me” is the **variant** to it; and gets **sung** in the simplest of tunes and of the **simplest seeming of concepts**: *(sung)*“Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong. **They are weak**, but **He is strong**. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so.”

**That**, however, can **stick** as a tragic **reduction** (or **minimalization**) to the fact of the **vastness** that is the Godhead: Triune in Person (3), but singular (as in, of one subtance), **bigger-by-far than the minuteness of His creation** yet **capable-in-ability to interact with i**t. Of our documentation about God, “theology” articulates “words about Him”, and the Athanasian Creed is the closest to how we explain His **structure**. And we’re but half-way through, even, the **saying of it** (but **doing it today**). “Christian Dogmatics”, by Francis Pieper (my systematics book from seminary) dedicates 325 pages to all **he** can **say about God**. **Scripture** (**about** God and **God-for-us** totally) has its own **thickness**:

“In the beginning, God” (“Elohim” in the **plural** form of “El”), in the 3rd person **singular** form (“He) created the heavens and the earth.” “And the Spirit of God” (the **Holy Spirit** / the third Person in the Trinity) “was hovering over the face of the waters.” “And God **said**”, which (“saying”) is the **Word** / the second Person of the Trinity, “let there be”, and there was. God (“El”) the **Father** / the source of all that, then, **proceeds** even the other two of the Godhead in which none **proceeded from any other in time** (always **there**, uncreated and together in the unity of one but of three persons).

Then as “the fulness of the Godhead bodily”, the **Son** said: “have I been with you (Philip) so long and still you say that you have not seen t**he Father**?”), the **explicitly revealing** the Holy Trinity by **name and essence as** “**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**”.

**… Particular in Expectation**

So God is **particular**. And as particular He is in **Being** (and never short-change that with a minimization, that becoming harmful as a “throw-away” or make-believe or as something so far less than what He needs to be for each one of us, God is **infinitely beyond a minimal expression**. **“I Am that I Am**”, He said. That that’s about as close to expressing Him fundamentally as He could to mere humans without the incarnation to help. As particular as He is (God) in **Being**, He is also that particular in **Expectation**. I hope you heard the His **Expectation** through the Creation account? “God said” and it **was**, with a **structured daytime effort** then a **step-back look at the end of each day, “seeing that every new addition was Good”** … and He **expected all He’d made to stay GOOD THAT WAY, perfect and Good in itself, pure (not relatively sort-of so like we’d like to excuse it), but comparable as was His creation in HIS OWN IMAGE**.

God (who is JUST) demands that all things that He’d made to be that particularly Good way, should **remain that way** **(AS HE’D MADE THEM)**. Implicit in every definition of God becomes a definition of creation. **From** the “**Creator”** **comes** “**creation**”, and we-of-mankind had better get to know ourselves a**s His** creation demanding of us what He expects, **living-up-to those expectations**, or **thankfulness for grace and forgiveness ought consume us** … either …

**… Particular in Saving Love (Gospel Actions)**

… which brings us to the particularity of God’s **love:** **IT** enacted to atone for **mankind’s deficiency**. “God **loving** the world by sending His only begotten Son” (of the same substance with Him), that sending Himself sacrificially and into humility, shrinking-Himself-down to crawl-into creation’s existence and essence and dying that way, buried as any death would be buried as a corpse, “that whoever believes **in Him**” (and that’s not the **minimized** “**Him**”, but God Him, the “Word through Whom all things came to be Him”) “should not perish” (as our missing of the marks of His Expectations would make of us), “but have **eternal life instead**” (what He’d **wanted for humans in His image**). …..

One of the great compassionate gifts God gave to what-had-become a fallen humanity was (and is) this: “It shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be **saved**”. And that “name” that mankind’s to call-upon is **PARTICULAR** (not gene**ral**, and gen**eric**, but specific and, as I said, **PARTICULAR**). It must never be **diminished in mind or heart**. Yet God’s given His own name not only in the **preciseness of detail** but, also, **relation to people calling upon it**. If we get no further that enjoying the wonder of and responsibility in that, then praise and honor and fear and love (to say the very least) might be how we can participate back to Him for the Good News of His Gospel …

Which, also, is **one more thing BEYOND the saving work of the Son made also human**: **God** **baptizes sinners** **INTO ALL OF THAT**, **covered receivers of His with that Divinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), hiding them under the umbrella of His content**. So **praise Him, then, earth all of creation:** “**O Lord, our Lord, how** **majestic IS Your name in all the earth!**” …..

“What is mankind that **You are mindful of them**, human beings that you **care for them**? And, yet, You **have** made them a little lower than the angels and **crowned them** with glory and honor. You made **them** **rulers** **(responsible) over the works of Your hands**; You put everything **under their feet:** all flocks and herds and the animals of the wild, the birds of the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas”.

God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit originally made us to **BE** **in His image … to decide FOR HIM on our own**. He gave us **responsible control** yet **freedom to make our own choices either His direction or not**. **That is** **gracious in form**, beyond **fair** to **blessed** **in structure** (**empowering, scary as that is, and should be**). **But what we have done with that liberty and responsibility** stands evident, even over the last couple of weeks. Past (well past) Eve and Adam’s decision to **know evil and death** with Good and life, **criminal** police officers (not many, but some) **show themselves unjust** … and, even, **kill**. Others, then, take to streets to, **themselves,** **victimize**. And every **minute of every day**, 87 of those youngest and most needful-of-care in our midst **we-as-a-society / humanity eliminates (kills) in abortions**.

But God allows the **regeneration of many … even makes is happen … restoring some semblance of His image to baptized believers**. And then says: **“I am with you always”**. Let’s pray:

“**Holy God, triune God, the true and living God, the one and only Lord of all**, **ACCEPT** **OUR worship and adoration … find it appropriate and properly directed, or forgiven as we repent of our errors**. Though we cannot **understand**, we as that You’ll let us **join** seraphim in covering our eyes and our feet in **deepest reverence, and in crying ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! Heaven and earth are full of Your glory!’** Yet in Jesus Christ we’re given to **know You** because **in Him You have made Yourself known**. God the **Father**, we **adore** **You** because You made Yourself **our Father in Jesus Christ** and **sealed Your fatherhood to us in baptism**. God the **Son**, we **praise** **You** because You **became flesh, that we might see the glory of God in Your life and death for us**. God the **Holy Spirit**, we **trust** **You** because You have **led us to know Jesus Christ and covered us with His holiness**. We **confess** **You, O triune God**, in the power of Your majesty. To You alone **BE** all glory now and forever. In +Jesus’ name. Amen.”