

May 22, 2016
Proverbs 8:1-4; 22-31

Trinity C
God's Delight

Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and from the Holy Spirit – one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.

During the month of May, many people celebrate a special time of life. Their high school or college graduation. Several of you have walked across the stage and received their diploma. Perhaps you have even thought about the past, your memories. If you were asked as a capstone project to make a time capsule that you could place in a cornerstone, what would you add? I'm sure you'd put in pictures...pictures of the past, pictures of friends and special moments. What else would you put in? Would you put in remembrances of your faith and those that have helped you grow in that faith? I sure would hope so, because that is part of who you are as God's special children. Would you add a Bible, your catechism, other images of faith? Perhaps you have thought about the future as well? Your future schooling, your future jobs, your future family. What do you want the future to know of you today?

As it has been made aware we are celebrating 130 years (125 years) of ministry to our community. What do you think should be in the capsule going into the church's cornerstone? About 25 years ago, my home congregation built a new church and at the dedication the cornerstone of the 1900 church was opened. What was found? Let me tell you...there were newspapers, an old German Bible, I believe there was an old German Hymnal. There were other things as well placed by those who went before us to remind us of our faith. In these three specific things, you have a picture of God's work among and through His people: The Word of God, the words of His people, and the words of the world.

Here is the Word of God by which God proclaims the saving work of Jesus Christ and brings salvation to all people. Here are the words of the people, their hymnbook, by which they give praise to God. And, along with the Word of God and words of the people, one has the words of the world. A newspaper gives a glimpse of the world out of which God calls his people and to which God sends his people as part of His Saving Mission.

With these small objects, those who laid the cornerstone offered a prayer for future generations, that they would continue in God's mission. Those who have laid cornerstones in churches long ago or even today in the building of a new church, we could bury a prayer that people would hear the Word of God, proclaim that Word in the world, and lift up to God their songs of praise.

Today on Trinity Sunday, our text from Proverbs, doesn't give us a time capsule with objects, but we do have a rare glimpse of what was there at the earth's foundation.

We are given a glimpse of creation in Proverbs 8. I would bet that most if not all of us are familiar with and given a glimpse of creation in Genesis 1 and 2. "In the beginning

God created the heavens and the earth.” Out of nothing, God brought all things into being. God created *ex nihilo*.

What is even more marvelous in our text from Proverbs this morning is the fact that we are given a glimpse of God: God, before His Work of Creation. And what we see there is delight: God’s delight. Before the world began, God was rejoicing, and his delight begins the story of our salvation.

What actually was God delighting in? The text answers this for us with two verses. ³⁰ *then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always,* ³¹ *rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.* ¹ The Lord was delighting in Wisdom, and Wisdom was delighting in the people God made to inhabit the world.

The apostle Paul clarifies for us what this is all about. In writing to the Colossians, Paul testifies to Jesus. He says, “By him all things were created, in heaven and on earth.” Before creations, Jesus was with God the Father, and all things were created through Him. Thus, Jesus is this figure of Wisdom, the master workman who is with the Father before the world was created. The Father delighted in Jesus, and Jesus rejoiced before the Father. The world itself was created with exuberance and joy. Father, Son, and Spirit, worked together to bring all things into being, and after the world was created, God called all things good.

This delight, however, spreads from God to his creation. Jesus is seen “rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.” Before the world began, Jesus was filled with delight for all people, and after the fall into sin, Jesus held on to this original delight. Out of joy, Jesus came to save these people and to restore creation, which had been cursed because of human sin.

If one were to go to back to the foundation of the world and recover a time capsule, within the capsule one would have the delight of God. God the Father had delight in His Son Jesus, and Jesus, the Son of God, had delight in all people. The story of our salvation begins with this delight of God.

Sometimes, people, approach God as a momentary fix for a problem in life. They turn to God only when something is wrong. A divorce. A death. A disaster. A disease. A lost job. A lost relationship. A lost loved one. And God is the temporary healer, the momentary fix for a problem in life. God unfortunately becomes very small. In sin, we reduce God.

How do you reduce God in sin? You reduce him by putting him near the end of the line in your time, talents, and treasures. You tell Him, I don’t need you when things are going well. You tell him by your actions, my education, my athletics, my hobbies, my career, my family, MY LIFE is more important than you. You reduce Him by kicking

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Pr 8:30–31). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

Him out of the time capsule of your life. Sometimes you might even make God a divine vending machine to fit your needs.

Opening this time capsule from Proverbs, however, gives us a different version of God. Forgiveness is not simply a momentary fix in our lives. It's part of a much larger story. It is part of God's delight before the world began. God the Father delighted in Jesus, who was His master workman. Jesus formed us as creatures and found delight in us. After we fell into sin, God the Father still delighted in His Son. Why? Because Jesus chose to come, to die for your sin, and rise for your salvation. By His death and resurrection, Jesus promises to bring you from this world into the new creation of God, where you will sing an everlasting song of praise.

This Song from Proverbs teaches us to sing a song of praise. To give God thanks for his delight in Jesus Christ, who not only created us but also came in love to save us after we fell into sin.

When you read the Book of Proverbs, it is easy to think about us pursuing Wisdom. That is, in the Book of Proverbs, we expect to encounter short, proverbial saying that will help us in discipleship. Proverbs teaches us how to walk in the ways of God.

What is amazing about this passage from Proverbs, however, is that we don't come across words about us pursuing God. NO. Instead, we come across words about God pursuing us! Wisdom goes to the crowded places, calls to all people, and sings of God's delight. Before we even pursue God, God pursues Us. Before we ever delight in God, God already delights in us. God already Delights in YOU!

Thus our salvation begins and ends with God's delight! That's quite remarkable.

As our salvation begins and ends with God's delight...it means that God will certainly pursue you always. He will come even to you in your sin. He will come to you even in the midst of trial and hardship. He will even come to you in your good times and times of rejoicing. He delights in you, because you are His. He has chosen you!

It wasn't just the Father and the Son at creation and delighting in you: The Holy Spirit is also one of the Trinity, one of the persons of God that was there at creation and delighting in you.

This proverb takes us to the beginning of time to see God's delight so we can faithfully look ahead to the end of time, knowing His love will pursue us all our days. His love pursues us through the Holy Spirit as He creates and sustains faith in us.

His love pursue us through the Holy Spirit as He sanctifies us – as He makes you Holy in Him and guides you in Your Life to Live for Him, even as He constantly pursues you.

What do you have in your time capsule? My prayer for you is that it includes your faith given to you by Spirit, the Word of God, the Words of praise on your lips, and the Words given to you to speak to the World.

As you think about your past...think also about the future. Where do you want your future to go? Maybe you're thinking about college, careers, husband or wife, children, family. Let me tell you this...as you are out in this world in the future...pursuing after things, worldly and sinful things, because you will – know this, God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – is pursuing after you and wanting to be part of your future.

In the Name of the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now may the peace of God which passes all human understanding, guard your hearts and your minds and keep them focused in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.