

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

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Date: 20 July 2025

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0 : 00] In Genesis chapter 1 verse 21 we read, And God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves with which the waters abounded.

And God saw that it was good. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and like a great artist, he filled the world with spectacular beauty.

Lush vegetation, a variety of land animals, and teams of fish and sea creatures lie beneath the vast oceans and bodies of water that fill creation with life and beauty.

All was well in this extraordinary paradise until Adam and Eve chose to follow the enticements of the devil rather than following the word of God.

The desire of Adam and Eve to choose their own autonomy, their own independence over God is what led to their downfall and ours.

[1 : 08] And this not only affected them, but brought devastation to the whole creation. We read in Genesis chapter 3 verses 17 through 19, Cursed is the ground for your sake.

In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you. In the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread.

Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken. For dust you are. And to dust you shall return. These events from Genesis provide the backdrop to what we hear in our gospel reading this morning from Luke chapter 5.

Simon Peter and the sons of Zebedee, James and John, were out all night toiling to catch fish in order to provide for their families and to make a living.

But they had no success. Jesus then got into Simon Peter's boat and he told Simon to go out further, away from the shore.

[2 : 22] And after our Lord taught the people who listened to his voice from the shore, he told Peter then to cast out into the deep, to cast his net into the water.

Simon Peter saw this, quite frankly, as a waste of time. They had been out all night. But he did what he was told. And suddenly, the fish started piling into the net.

So much so that the net began to break. Others came with their nets and the fish kept piling up. Boats were being filled with fish.

So much so that these vessels then started to sink. So here's what we've learned this morning. We heard how the Lord created the world, which included all the creatures in the sea.

Sin, however, brought devastation not only to human beings, but to all creation. Simon Peter, James and John, they felt this burden, this toil, as they had been out all night with no success in their vocation as fishermen.

[3 : 39] Those words from Genesis rang true for these beleaguered fishermen. In the sweat of your brow, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground.

But the defeated, these depleted disciples experienced an extraordinary miracle, as Jesus not only provided them with a monumental catch, he gave them an overwhelming abundance of fish.

But this amazing miracle is not the point of the story. The focus of the story is what happens afterwards.

The focus of the story is on the revelation of who Jesus is. After this amazing miracle, we read, When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

Peter realizes that this Jesus is not just some great rabbi or teacher. He fell at our Lord's knees and he cried out, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

[5 : 03] In calling Jesus Lord and in prostrating himself before Jesus, Peter recognizes that he is in the presence of God. The one who created the heavens and the earth is now before him.

Therefore, like Adam and Eve, who hid from the presence of God when they realized that they had sinned against their creator, so now Peter asked the Lord to depart from his presence.

This is what happens when people realize that they are in the presence of God. The casual attitudes, the flippant prayers, the superficial religious language, they all cease.

And we pray, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner. And that's because Jesus is not a good luck charm.

Nor is he one who just gives us a smile and turns a blind eye to our selfishness and our sinfulness. Jesus is not your self-esteem coach.

[6 : 19] Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. And it is those who acknowledge their own sinfulness that Jesus fills with an abundance of grace and joy beyond what we can comprehend.

Jesus is the creator, as we hear in the opening words of St. John's Gospel. In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God.

And the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, speaking of Jesus. And without him, nothing was made that was made.

In him was life. And the life was the light of men. Peter's response is to be our response.

We are to recognize who Jesus is. We are to trust in the one who created the heavens and the earth. The one that all creation obeys his voice as evidenced by the fish piling into the nets and boats of these weary disciples.

[7 : 34] Therefore, let us not miss the point of our gospel text this morning, which is, we are to recognize and we are to respond to the presence of God in our lives.

How? By living a life of continual worship of our Savior. Do we really believe that creation owes its very existence to the command and creator, Jesus?

Do we really believe that we owe all that we are to Jesus, who is creator and Lord over all, who every breath that we breathe is a gift from him?

Do we really believe that he is Lord?

And are we willing to humble ourselves before him? How much attention do we pay to our Lord?

How much time do we allow our thoughts and minds to be distracted by our phones, following the sensation that skews reality and creates false images about ourselves, of who we are, or about the world around us, lulling us into a practical agnosticism that is unbelief?

[9 : 10] Satan is still enticing. Satan is still deceiving. He is tempting us to think that we are our own lords and our own gods.

He is the master of deception. He is planning in our minds the lie that we know what's best and we're smarter than anyone. And that our faith, our church, or even the scriptures must be read and understood with the opinions and values of this self-serving and rebellious world.

We often think if only we had more material things, stuff. If only we had more stuff. Or more followers on social media.

Or more fun or excitement in our lives. Then we could achieve the happiness painted on the fake smiles of those around us.

But our real need is to fall at the knees of our King and our Creator, Jesus. And to confess our own sinfulness before our Lord.

[10 : 30] My friends, true freedom and real joy are found only as we confess our sin to God.

And we follow and worship Jesus who is our Creator and our God. Amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Amen.