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Holy Trinity Sunday
May 31, 2026
Text: Genesis 1:1 – 2:4a
Title: Mysterious Limitations

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. There are many things in this world that we know about, and each and every day more things are discovered.

When I was a kid in school, Artificial Intelligence was something that came up in science-fiction stories. Today it's a reality, and the world is completely caught up in a debate about how to use it and whether or not the technology and results are worth it.

Thanks to other technological advances, science has allowed us to see the surface of other planets. Again when I was a kid the best capabilities of NASA and other agencies had them able to get distant pictures of these planets with extremely powerful telescopes and cameras. But it was just a couple of years ago that we were able to see live video and direct photographs from the surface of Mars thanks to a special robot that our country sent there, and in the not too distant future our astronauts are going to attempt to build a station on the surface of the moon.

During the course of my lifetime medical researchers have unlocked many secrets about the genetic code in human beings. These discoveries have opened the door to possible treatments for diseases that have plagued people since sin began attacking our bodies. Suddenly doctors are talking with greater hope about their chances of fighting or even preventing things like cancer or multiple sclerosis. And I even saw a report this past week of a doctor in South Africa who was able to use a 3D printer to restore hearing for a deaf person.

But no matter how many mysteries we are able to solve about this world and the surrounding universe, there is still a vast amount of knowledge that we simply don't have. Yes, medical science has made incredible advances, but it is still clueless about what it takes to prevent and cure the common cold. We can see video and photographs from Mars, but the only

surface in space that a human has stood on is our moon. No one has been able to land on another planet. And even though Artificial Intelligence is now a reality in today's world, there are still plenty of limitations that we have not overcome, and computer experts fully admit that we aren't really completely sure how it works.

The more we learn the more we realize how much we don't know. Our minds are severely limited when it comes to many things, including why we use only 10% of our brains during our lifetime, but that never seems to keep us from trying to unlock the mysteries of our existence. But the hardest mysteries are the ones that deal with things beyond our existence, such as the power of God and, especially today, the person of the Holy Trinity. Our God is three separate and unique persons that are also the same person. Our mortal and sinful minds are so limited by time and space and human language that we can barely begin to contemplate how great a mystery the Holy Trinity is, let alone understand three beings are the same yet unique.

The first person of the Holy Trinity is God the Father. He is equal to the Son and the Holy Spirit, but both willingly submit to Him and His will, just like Jesus said He would do in the garden of Gethsemane. The Father is who we most often associate creation with in the three creeds. In the Apostles' Creed we confess together that, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." We depend on our Father in heaven for literally everything that we need just like we depend on our earthly father to provide for us here.

But in spite of the multiple ways that the Father takes care of us, we sin against Him constantly. He cares for us out of His divine mercy, love and grace, but you and I convince ourselves that we earn everything that we have. Our Father in heaven makes sure that we're provided with "our daily bread" which includes all of the items that we need in order to survive, like food, shelter and clothing. But we fail to even so much as thank Him on a regular basis for the blessings He provides. Finally, even though our Father does all of these things without us

deserving it, you and I have the nerve to approach Him like we actually deserve the blessings that He provides for us, and to add to our sinful arrogance we demand that the Lord act when and how we want Him to act. Of course, when He doesn't listen to us, we compound our sin by getting angry with Him for not obeying us and not doing things our way.

Thankfully the Father is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Although He will judge the world for its sin and punish those who are evil in their unbelief, He still shows His mercy and love by providing for unbelievers too. And He promises even more of His love, mercy and grace for those who have faith in Him, and that's a promise that He kept by sending God the Son into the world to be born of the virgin, Mary and to be named Jesus. Because you and I have faith in His Son, Jesus, the Father is merciful and loving and forgives all the sins that you and I commit against Him.

We call the second person of the Holy Trinity God the Son. The Son is equal to the Father, but He chooses to submit to His Father's will. In the Apostles' Creed we confess that we believe "...in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit...was crucified, dead and buried...rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead." God the Son is the only person of the Holy Trinity who is completely God and completely man at the same time. He became human so that He could be the final sacrifice to pay for the sins of the world. It's only through God the Son that we can know God the Father.

Of course, in spite of the beautiful things that God the Son has done for us, we sin against Him just as much as we sin against the Father. The world around us makes every effort to question who Jesus is, and to cast doubt on His identity as the Son of God and to minimize His sacrifice for us. In our weakness, we listen to these doubts and false teachings, and might even

ask ourselves whether or not their challenges may be true. That means that we question whether or not Jesus was for real, and we question the value of our faith.

But it doesn't take anything as obvious as questioning the Lord's identity to sin against Him. Sin wants us to maintain as much control over our own life and salvation as possible, and it has a great method to get us to do it. This favorite method of sin is to convince us that we somehow contribute or add to our own salvation through something like a prayer or some other action. As soon as sin has you believing that you contribute to your salvation, then it has convinced you that you no longer completely dependant on Jesus as your Savior.

But you do need Him. You and I are sinners. Our sin means that we deserve to be condemned to hell. We are helpless and hopeless on our own. Period. But the Father knew that we were in this condition, and that's why He sent His Son. The Son's work pays the price for your sins, even the ones that you commit against Him. The Son's sacrifice means that you are saved from the fires of hell and eternal damnation. Because of God the Son, we have all of the help and hope that we could possibly desire. Period. When the day comes that the Father has chosen to judge this world, all people will stand before His throne, and those of us who have faith will simply need to point to Jesus for salvation. The Lord will do the rest.

The third person of the Holy Trinity is the Holy Spirit whom we celebrated last Sunday. Equal to both God the Father and God the Son, He willingly submits to the will of the Father and is sent by both the Father and the Son. As we heard last week, the primary goal of the Holy Spirit is to point people to Jesus Christ as their Savior. He works where and when He chooses, and that is why Jesus compares Him to the wind. In the Apostles' Creed we confess that, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen." Although only one of these phrases directly refers to the Holy Spirit, each of the others describe an aspect of His work.

As with the other persons of the Trinity, we sin against the Holy Spirit also. In fact, Jesus refers to “the sin of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit” as the only sin that is unforgivable. Now, that’s a terrifying statement, there is a sin that is not going to be forgiven, and it is the sin of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit.

First, it’s important to keep this point about this terrible sin in mind. If you are worried that you have committed this unforgivable sin, then that’s almost a guarantee that you haven’t done it. The sin of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit is to deny Him and His work, and that means that you would deny Jesus Christ. Someone who still has faith in Jesus Christ would simply not deny the work of the Holy Spirit. But it’s clear from the rest of the Lord’s word that this sin does not condemn a person until death, so forgiveness is still possible for even this sin until it is no longer possible to repent of it. But someone who dies while denying the Spirit’s work of pointing them to faith in Christ, that person is without hope.

The Holy Trinity as it is described in the Apostles’, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds is the God who we believe in and confess. He is three persons in one person. Because of this mysterious and incomprehensible connection whenever one is present, the other two are there as well, we just might not be aware of them. Only Christians confess these truths about God. Islam and Judaism do not confess God the Son or God the Holy Spirit, and that means that they don’t believe in the same God that we do. Because of this difference with Judaism, we close any Psalm reading by clearly saying Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit so that there can be no doubt about who we are proclaiming. And in this day and age when there are still mysteries all around us and so much doubt and pluralism, we can never afford to be ambiguous or unclear about who our God is. And that is why we make sure to clearly confess that we worship, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”