

## Reflection for May 31, 2026 – In The Beginning Inspired by Genesis 1:1, 2:4a The Inclusive Bible

Trinity Sunday, God is seen as “three in one,” Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A traditional reflection on this day would have the preacher, I guess that’s me today, dive into a theological dissertation of how we might sort that out. Alas, I have to disappoint you if you were hoping for that today, because I am not inclined to go there. Rather, given I have but three Sundays left with you, I hatched another idea. I thought, how about I offer three reflections, one about a beginning, one about journeying and one about exiting. I hope that is OK. If not, M and P get ready for some flack! So today, the first, In the Beginning.

***2“But the earth became chaos and emptiness, and darkness came over the face of the Deep – yet the spirit of God was brooding over the surface of the waters.”*** Apparently, the closest English equivalent of the Hebrew original for chaos and emptiness, *tohu va-bohu* (“**toh-hoo vah-boh-hoo.**”) is “topsy-turvy.”

Topsy-turvy about describes much of my youth and young adult life. Not that topsy-turvy is a bad thing. To me it means up and down, unsettled, uncertain. Those were the times when I was quite introspective and inquisitive. I suppose if we all look back at our formative years, we have something in common there.

But one thing I had which many of you might not have; was a stubborn streak. Yes, that is hard to believe isn’t it!

I was not, not, not going to swallow any of that nonsense about God creating the earth. Lovely poetic language yes. But everything under the heavens made by a singular entity, the creator, nonsense! And in only six days to boot, what kind of craziness is that?

And from within the chaos comes the creation of mankind.

***27 Humankind was created as God’s reflection:  
In the divine image God created them;  
Female and male, God made them.***

I was a science guy. Biology, Chemistry, Math, Microbiology. Yes, to Darwin, nyet to the biblical texts, especially God in the heavens, omnipotent, in control.

And the church itself? Not just the United Church, but any church? No thanks, not interested. To me those believers were brainwashed and naïve. None of what is written in the bible made any sense. I wondered how anyone could believe that stuff?

And then, my engagement. Lenore and her family want us to be married, yes, in a church, Canadian Memorial if you please, the same church her parents had been married in, and with a minister presiding! Oh, do I have to? Why a church? Lenore and her family had not been church goers for years. This seemed like a bit of a contradiction.

OK, OK, I’ll do it, I’ll keep the peace. We’ll get married at Canadian Memorial. (Actually, it wasn’t too bad except that the minister forgot to say “you may kiss the

bride,” after we completed our vows, so I just stood there wondering what to do, and then walked off with Lenore to sign the register. I kissed her in the narthex).

Topsy-turvy and chaotic in normal. I think it’s normal anyway. Marriage, children, buying a house, changing careers, moving. Experiencing the death of a parent and working through that grief. The worry and stress of children hospitalized. A real estate transaction that goes horribly wrong. Up and down and chaotic.

If the maker created this marvelous world and everything in it, surely, he would have foreseen the potential for human suffering and accounted for that. Her cosmic design has a fundamental flaw. Tragedy, misery, anguish and sorrow permeate every aspect of our living. If there was a God in the beginning, and if that was a benevolent loving presence, I was not seeing it.

Well Mr. Science Guy needed to stop taking things so literally. He had to get out of his head and into his heart. And when he managed to do that, he began to see the light. Not the light that distinguishes night and day or the light that peeks out from behind a clouded sky, not the physical light radiating from above, but an epiphany.

I began to consider, If God, was the creator of everything then didn’t that mean God was “in” everything? Every blade of grass, every rose, tulip and dandelion too as part of creation, has creation in it. Every bird that rises up on its wings, every fish of the deep, every clam on the beach, every sand dollar and yes, even every pesky mosquito, has come from universal star dust. Everything is a part of creation, and a part of creation is in everything. And if I can perceive God in everything, can I feel her presence in the warmth of a day and in the hug from a friend? Am I able to hear his wisdom through prayer and meditation? When I gaze upon her beauty on the landscape and in the miracle of birth, what is evoked in me?

I began to realize I was awestruck, amazed, captivated by what God could be.

It took some time for God to sort out my chaos. I’m fortunate she is patient. She has been with me all of my journey. I just didn’t realize it at first. But Holy Mystery has left me a lot of clues over the years. Clues that have led me to discover the Holy Spirit. Something that has been with me since my first breath. I didn’t see it early on because I had shut it out. I wasn’t open to its presence. I was in “ignore” mode, caught up in my preconceptions to see clearly what had been in front of me all along.

As I contemplated my understanding of God, the Holy over the years, I opened my heart to a new concept. If a creator we call God, or perhaps the “Universe of God” formed the earth and the galaxies and all they contain, that is an incredible act of Love. It is love in its most magnanimous revelation. A creation for all to live with abundance and all to live abundantly.

God blessed humankind and said, ***“Bear fruit, increase your numbers and fill the earth. Watch over the fish in the sea, the birds in the air and all the living things on the earth. I give you every seed bearing plant on the face of the earth, and every tree whose fruit carries its seed inside itself: they will be your food, and to all the animals of the earth and the birds of the air and things that crawl on the ground-everything that has a soul in it-I give you the green plants for food.”***

Ian, this creator you are contemplating defines the essence of love, offering of self for the world, the created order. Caring, compassionate, life-giving, selfless. Little wonder throughout biblical history God and Love are seen as synonymous. **1 John 4:7-8** <sup>7</sup> *Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.* <sup>8</sup> *Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

In my beginning I was closed off, inflexible, unwilling to consider a God that created and still creates, a real and constant presence that reminds us to care for the creation we are part of. As that presence has shown so much compassion for our well-being, so too are we called to be loving, compassionate soulmates for those we meet who like I was, don't envision divine love as a reality.

In my beginning was a kind of a void, an emptiness I suppose. Perhaps a lack of perception on my part? Perhaps ignorance, a lack of openness? It took some time to get the message. And I am so grateful that the creator had the time for me to do that. She has the time. She has been around for eons. She will hold us in her tender embrace until we come home to love.

Thanks for listening this morning, Amen