

St. Matthias Day  
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Rev. David A. Kind  
University Lutheran Chapel  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

✠ Jesu juva ✠

## CREATOR MUNDI

Isaiah 66:1-2; Psalm 134; Matthew 11:25-30

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

his Lenten Season we will be exploring the Apostle's Creed. I don't plan to lead you to everything found in the Creed, for that would take far more than five or six weeks; but rather to highlight a few of the chief things that pertain to our salvation and to our life in Christ. All of the doctrines taught by the Creed are, of course, important; so important in fact, that one cannot truly be called a Christian if one denies these chief doctrines of the faith. This is, simply put, what the Christian Faith is. Any sort of "faith" that is less than what is taught in the Creed is less than Christian. And any sort of "faith" that denies what the Creed teaches is heresy. What we confess is not unimportant. God is not formed after our image, after all (each of us having a belief regarding God that can differ from that of others and still be true) but is exactly who and what He says that He is. He defines the truth concerning Himself and what He has done. Not us. We rather receive what He says and either believe and trust in it (and be saved) or reject it in favor of our own ideas (and be condemned).

Tonight we will start with the First Article of the Creed, an article that is often under attack, especially amongst the educated, and yet is often not considered as important by many Christians. We confess in this article: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth".

Creation has been a pretty hot topic for the past 150 years or so, ever since Darwin published his *On the Origin of Species*. The religion of evolutionism has taken over the elementary school classroom, the university, the museum, the airwaves and cable networks. And you have been told countless times over the course of your life that this is just the way it is. Every living thing, they tell you, evolved from a lower state to a higher state over the course of millions and millions of years to come to the form it is in now. And who knows what each thing will be like millions of years from now; for, we are told, we are continually evolving.

Many Christians, perhaps lacking knowledge or perhaps having been brow-beaten for so long, have even adopted this religion (the theory of evolution) as fact but have attempted to say that God is not excluded by this theory but rather could be, or is, the One who causes it to happen the way that it supposedly does. We call that theistic evolution. After all, as we heard tonight from Isaiah, the Lord did create everything: "all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist."

Some say that is fine. Others, fearful that those who hold to this religion of evolutionism must necessarily exclude God in the end, have fought to have a theory of "Intelligent Design" given a place beside evolution in the classroom and in the public forum. After all, it isn't that important how God created, so much as to acknowledge that He did indeed somehow design creation. Right? Wrong.

Absolutely wrong. We confess the first article of the creed that God is the creator of heaven and earth precisely because it does matter both that God created and how God created all things. Psalm 33 says: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" The Holy Scriptures teach us that God created all things that now are from nothing; and that He did it not through evolution or through long drawn-out processes, but by speaking things that were not into being, fully formed and functional.



Please note that I am not saying here that the things God has created are not able to adapt, somewhat, to their surroundings. Clearly that do, and that, I would argue is something that God has given them to do. But one thing does not change into another quite thing over time through such minor adaptations. Microscopic single cell organisms do not over time become insects and fish and animals. And monkeys do not become men.

But why is this creation by speaking, creation by the Word of God, important to our faith? How God creates, you see, is related to who God is. God is not a god that evolves with his creation, as some seem to think. God is source, not result. And His actions flow from who He is. He is the God who speaks. And His speech is all-powerful. His Word is the One who brings forth all things; not just a sound, but a Person, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God. Nevertheless, at the sound of this Person's speech, reality is created and brought into being. To deny this is to both God's own description of His Son and to deny His power to do these things as He has said.

What's more; if you deny these things about God and His power, you also deny your own salvation. That may seem like quite a leap in thinking, but it is not really. For how are you brought to faith? How were you made a Christian? How are you to be considered righteous before God? How will you be raised up on the last day, your body recreated from the dust of the earth? And how will heaven

and earth be newly made in that great Day? All of these things happen or will happen by the Word of God exercising His creative power and speaking them into being.

According to the Scriptures you are brought to faith by the preaching of this Word, and made a Christian through the washing of this Word in holy Baptism. The Word enters ear and water and creates something new – a new man who is after the image of Christ, who is covered by and with Christ, and in whom Christ dwells. And by this Word of Christ, you are declared to be righteous and holy before God. And it is not a lie, despite what you might think, feel or experience. If God says you are righteous for Christ's sake, you are. His Word makes that, rather than your thoughts and deeds, the actual and effective reality. By this Word your body will be reformed or reconstituted from the dust of the earth on the last day, just as Adam's was on the sixth day. By this Word a new heavens and new earth will come into being after the old is destroyed. There is no process here, no evolution of being, of standing, or of holiness. God speaks and it is. And if you cannot believe this about creation, which you already see all around you as evidence of God's being and power, then how will you believe these things regarding that which you cannot see?

God does not change. And the way He works does not change either. Upon His Word and the power of it, all our hope depends. Our salvation, to put it plainly, depends on God's Word doing what God says it does. It is dependent upon the creative power of that Word. And God's Word certainly creates what He calls into being. St. John tells us: "All things were made through Him [Christ, the Word of God], and without Him nothing was made that was made." And the writer to the Hebrews says: God "has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds..." Do you see the connection? He who created all things by His speaking now speaks to you to bring you new life and salvation through the forgiveness of sins. He is creating even now by His Word, just as He did in the beginning.

And it is for this reason that He sent forth His holy apostles, like St. Matthias, whom we remember today. He sent them to preach the Gospel, that people might receive this creative work of God in themselves and be made new. He sent Matthias and the others, that you might hear; and though those who are supposedly wise and prudent have rejected, you whom Christ calls "babes" (for you are completely dependent upon Him and must put your trust in Him the way an infant puts trust in its mother) might believe. And you should. For His Word is power and it is life. And what He creates becomes and is; to whom be all honor and glory now and forever, our creator and our savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

✠ Soli Deo gloria ✠