This is our third Sunday in our Creation series. We have listened to the stories of our earth’s beginnings in Genesis, and we have read how God instructs the people of this planet, to care for the dirt, the trees, and for every living thing. Humans are to be caretakers, not consumers, we are to be people who call the very ground we stand on sacred. Today, we explore the heavens or what we call the solar system, and we again try to examine God’s true intention above us and below us. I want us to explore today’s scripture through three lenses, devastation, incarnation, and re-recreation.

**Devastation.** If you carry a cell phone or watch TV by satellite, then you are among millions of people who value from scientific exploration over the years. In 2019 an article published in the Wall Street Journal said this about making money from satellites, “the Wall Street’s consensus is that space will become a multitrillion-dollar economy in the next 10 to 20 years — a view investors today are banking on.’”

In 2021 there are currently 7,389 satellites, with an additional 10,400 satellites failing before they reach orbital space. And the thing not talked about very often is that one satellite on average falls toward earth annually. Falling satellites are called ‘falling debris’ by debris experts. Oh by the way, these debris experts are paid to alert the human population about satellite ‘junk’ that may fall onto your home, which from their opinion is very unlikely. But here is the catch, what happens to the satellite junk? The debris experts say that a large portion of satellite junk burns up on the journey back to earth, but a certain amount of satellite ‘junk’ does fall into our oceans or unoccupied land, at least, you hope a satellite doesn’t fall into human occupied areas.

Once again, humans are treating our solar system as a means to make money. So, as I read these words from Psalm 19, “The heavens are telling the glory of God,” I wonder if we are treating our solar system with the same disregard as we treat the earth, where making money is more important than safeguarding our planet and solar system from ecological damage. Are we again repeating a cycle of devastation?

The Psalmist uses the image of the sky and heavens as a way to help people reconnect with God and with God’s beloved creation. Do you recognize the tension between God and capital gain? It might seem like the gap between our worship of God and making a living, is too large to bridge, but God’s Word says quite the opposite.

If we were to read the entire 14 verses in Psalm 19, we would be given instruction on how to maintain a healthy balance, between meeting human needs while also staying connected to God. The latter verses in Psalm 19 say this, “The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.” We know from reading the Old Testament that the writer of this Psalm is referring to the Torah, and telling the Jews how important it is to follow God’s direction. By following the wisdom of the Psalmist people will bring glory to God and each other.

But the Psalmist is practical, understanding how humans can also lose their way and writes this, “*But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins, may they not rule over me…May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer*.” Yes, who can discern my willful mistakes? Our call is not simply to receive God’s good gifts for our own nourishment and enjoyment. As children of the Creator God our call is to share God’s good creation with others and to take bold action to mediate God’s intention for our earth, our solar system, and all people. To do this we need to understand the role Jesus has in our world.

**Incarnation** is our second lens to view God’s intention for our solar system. This religious word, incarnation, lies at the heart of our faith in Jesus Christ, yet, this word is rarely spoken outside the doors of the church. To speak about incarnation is to confess that God has come to be one among us, that God has in fact come to be one of us, that the Creator God stepped into God’s own creation, walked on earth in human form as a part of the human family. Jesus, as both man, prophet, and God said he was leaving the Holy Spirit to fill us with understanding. Incarnation means taking God with us.

With the Holy Spirit as our guide, we examine our motives in caring for the earth. We take these words in Philippians to heart, “*Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure*.” The Spirit of God is at work in you and me so that we can claim the glory of God in our lives.

**Re-creation** is our third hope for fulfilling God’s intent for humans to be caretakers of our planet. The Jews understood the need to keep the Torah and God’s commandments relevant, and they accomplished this by writing commentaries on how to reinterpret the Torah. This collection of commentaries, started sometime after 70 C.E. is called the Midrash. The Midrash is the Jewish way of saying that everything to be venerated in the present must somehow be connected with a sacred moment in the past. It is the ability to rework an ancient theme in a new context.

The ancient theme of finding our planet sacred, as the book of Genesis states, is a task that all of us must take part in. During my lifetime, I have seen huge areas of land suffer at the hands of people. However, I am also watching as more and more people are stepping forward to halt coal mining, to stop the continued destruction of our land, our water, our air, and now our skies. We are the current caretakers of our planet; we must become responsible landowners. And we do this by creating new from old. We do this by telling ourselves, first, we become the gardener of our planet, and then we seek how to monetize that effort. Rather than make money the foundation of re-creation, we reach back to our ancient roots and claim God’s goodness by blessing our planet. What would capitalism look like if our mission statement was designed to protect the planet at all costs, and then the fruits of that labor is monetized.

Otherwise, the devastation of our planet will continue and the promise of living in a way that honors God and the planet becomes a church ‘thing’ rather than an obligation by all people living on our planet. The New Testament, the Good News, is that God is with us. If we claim that the Spirit of God is with us, then becoming gardeners over consumers will change how we live our lives. And with that change, comes re-creation. Something new will be invented from something old.

And then all of us can proclaim, as the Psalmist did, “The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. God with us will be seen all around us, and I call that very good, indeed. Amen.