

+ In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti + Amen.

Text: Matthew 28:19-20

Theme: Trinitarian Fellowship



Dear people of God blessed by the Spirit,

To celebrate the Trinity as the one God who exists in three persons is to celebrate His self-revelation to us. One in essence, three in persons, the triune God is disclosed to us through the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, Jesus says today, *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*¹ God’s name is not an honorary title. It is descriptive of His identity, the way in which He chooses to be made known. Wherever His name is called upon, there His presence and power are attendant.

And that’s exactly why the Holy Spirit gathers us for the hearing of divine truth. Of course, those who hear cannot all be painted with the same brush. Some are “all ears”. They eagerly expect the blessing of God. They understand and receive the benefits. Others perceive the sound but fluctuate between their interest being piqued and their apathy being affirmed. Still others filter very discriminatingly wanting to avoid any exposure that would threaten their perspective on life and the way it’s governed. God knows all this. He knows our needs.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit commences conversations through crisis. He’s doing that all around the world right now as people work through the trauma of losing freedom, opportunities, assets, and life itself on a scale not seen in recent memory. Sorrow in the world is opportunity for rejoicing in heaven. Only the sick need a doctor. Each soul the Spirit brings to a knowledge of the truth is a cause for rejoicing. God is always in pursuit of lost souls. He pursues lost sheep to the very moment they take their last breath.

That’s true not just for strangers out there who we hope will be reached with the message of the gospel. It’s true also for your family and friends who have wandered from the faith and become estranged from the church. The Good Shepherd is pursuing these lost and wandering sheep also. Many of them don’t recognize they are lost and still consider themselves to be firmly in the fellowship of believers. It’s a subtle and powerful deception. But God is not deceived. He reads the heart.

Faith, you see, is not a token assent to truth. It entails the irrepressible desire to follow. Faith is conviction in action. Yes, it struggles constantly with the confidence that God is faithful, that God is honest, that God is attentive. Sometimes God’s goodness is abundantly clear to us. At other times it may appear God is aloof, judgmental, or even cruel. Your faith may be strong

or weak, or somewhere in between, but it's no good claiming that your faith is invariable because it is a living thing. There's nothing static or linear about faith. It's not one dimensional. You can't put it on the shelf for a while and expect it not to diminish.

It's no coincidence that on this Trinity Sunday we hear the very first words of the Bible. God's creation reaches its pinnacle with the formation of Adam and Eve. "*God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*"² It's profoundly humbling to know we are created in the image of God. It's also the lens for our understanding of the entirety of existence.

If we don't believe that humanity is tied organically and without exception to Adam, the first man, and propagated through Eve, the first woman, then our worldview is not biblical. Our truths and values are then resting, at least partially, on different foundations. When the storm that is Second Coming and final judgment arrive those foundations will crumble away like sandcastles on the beach.

The Trinity made Adam in His own image. He placed Adam and Eve in an unspoiled paradise where they could live as recipients of His blessings forever. Death was not in the world before the fall into sin. Death is not natural; it is part of the curse. It is the result of separation from God. Perpetual cycles of propagation and mortality do not explain the origin of life, but only describe what we now observe. Evolutionary science has not explained the origin of life and it never will because it is impossible to repeat it.

These matters aren't just issues of curiosity. The biblical witness is all tied together- from beginning to end. It is seamlessly woven. Like the tunic of Christ, it's all of one piece³. If Christ is mistaken in His commendation of the Mosaic account of creation, then redemption too becomes unhinged from history. Furthermore, Jesus is found to be a false interpreter of the Scriptures. A world that has always had death in it cannot be restored to its original purity. Death is not a property of perfection. If we stand in judgment over particular teachings of the Bible what's to stop us from claiming judgment over all of Scripture? The emasculation of the Scriptures continues apace in many parts of the church.

Dear friends, the self-revelation of God is tied exclusively to the Bible. If we could truly understand God through the wonders of creation- and the creation is mind-bogglingly magnificent- there would be no need for the publication of the gospel. If we could grasp God, access Him, come to Him, truly know Him by applying only human intellect, determination, and ingenuity, there would be no need for the righteousness of faith. There would be no point to the coming of Christ in the flesh, His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension. His atoning work would be unnecessary. Yet, God decided not only to save us, but to spare no expense in doing so. The immortal, holy, Son of God, sacrificed Himself for your sins and mine.

It was an act of grace when God spoke creation into existence. It was a profound outpouring of His love. The fact that we exist, that anything exists at all is not due to obligation or entitlement, but to the free act of the Holy Trinity desiring to be in fellowship with creation. We can throw all kinds of why questions and other queries at this truth, but we won't be able to uncover the mystery. Why was God compelled to create? Was He compelled? Why did He not abandon His fallen creation? He is eternal, incomprehensible love. Beyond this we can say little more. But the coming of Christ says everything that God needs to say. The Holy Spirit doesn't waste words. And He doesn't speak in riddles. He communicates to us clearly and consistently the redeeming love of Jesus. We hear it in the delightful words of the gospel, we taste it in the Sacrament of the Altar, we are cleansed by it in the waters of baptism.

Trinity Sunday, is a day to celebrate your baptism. In your baptism the triune God severed your identity with the old eon, the fallen age, the dominion of Satan and claimed you for His kingdom of light and joy and immortality. Today is a day to celebrate your creation in the Father's image, your renewal in the image of the Son, and the companionship you have in the Spirit. Today is a day to remember how small your problems are compared to the largeness of God's solutions; how temporary our sufferings are compared to the permanency of His glory. The intent is not to make light of our struggles but to put them in perspective. There is nothing we lack that God cannot supply.

It doesn't matter what you have, if you don't have the gospel you don't have anything of lasting value. It doesn't matter what you lack, what you've been deprived of, or what things rightfully yours, that have been taken from you, when you have the grace of God in Jesus Christ, you have everything. Hell is no treat to you. Death cannot harm you. There are no earthly treasures or riches, accomplishments or acclamations that compare to possessing the righteousness of Him who covered your sins. Through the cross we come to the day of resurrection and into the presence of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The promise of Jesus Christ cannot fail, "*Behold, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*"⁴ The triune God established our existence and He will bring it to completion eternally. Amen.

+ In nomine Jesu +

Holy Trinity
7 June 2020
Reverend Darrin L. Kohrt

¹ Matthew 28:19

² Genesis 1:27

³ See John 19:23

⁴ Matthew 28:20



THREE IN ONE