

Sermon for June 19th 2011

Theme: "Our God of Love"

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

Our text for meditation is from the gospel of Matthew 28:19. Jesus says to His disciples, **"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.** No doubt you have heard these words before through other preachers. It is the so-called Great Commission of the Church where Jesus declares the mission of the Church until He returns.

But today we are not going to meditate in this Commission, but in the Holy Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Let us pray: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, Oh Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer." Amen

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In our text, the Lord Jesus Himself declares the identity of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and you cannot find a better source for this than the Son Himself. So, on this day, we celebrate who God is: The Holy Trinity; One God composed of three persons.

We do not worship three gods, but one. We do not worship one God who puts on three different masks to deal with us; we worship three distinct persons of the one God-the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Athanasian Creed cannot even contain it, though it gives it a good try. You and I would never have invented such a God. But on the other hand, remember, gods we invent are not God. They are useless idols; gods that sit on the mantle pieces of our lives so we can be spiritual without believing anything.

The Lord's ways are not our ways; His thoughts are not our thoughts. He is not the sort of God we would invent for ourselves. And for that we are grateful.

You may try to picture the Holy Trinity, but be careful. Analogies tend to break down as quick as an old car on the 401. Some compare the tri-unity of God to the three phases of water - solid ice, liquid water, gaseous steam. Liquid, ice, steam - three forms but it is all H₂O. It sounds good, but it does not hold water for long.

You can have ice without steam and steam without liquid water, and in the end they are only three different forms of the same thing. It would be like saying that I wear three hats or have three roles. For example; I am a pastor, a husband, and a son.

Three roles but only one person. But that does not work either. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not modes or phases or roles. They are persons with whom one has a personal relationship.

The best I can offer is the mathematical cube, or as we have it all over the place around here, the triangle. The triangle has three distinct legs. Take away any leg, and you no longer have a triangle. The cube has three dimensions; lose any one and you no longer have a cube. So it is better to put my theology to rest and say, "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" and let us celebrate God for who He is, even though we cannot comprehend Him.

No wonder many might consider this a silly holiday in the Church year. However, there is good reason that we celebrate today that we believe in one God-the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Human beings are always tempted to set aside what they cannot fully understand: How terrible it would be if we set aside the very identity of God.

My dear friends in Christ; there are people who accept God as a supreme being and that He is the source of all things; that He is the driving force; that He is the creator of the universe and who made it work to keep it going.

But then they say that creation continues its path on its own. So they reduce God to a mere observer of His creation. Do you imagine our loving God seeing us suffering, failing, and struggling in life without intervening in our behalf?

We; Christians do not agree with this theory. We do not agree that our God is only watching us in a big projector like the one that is there. No, we believe that God is an active servant. God is not limited only to His creative act, but His action and love is present at all time. There is one fact which confirms God' mercy and love toward mankind, and this is the coming of the Second person of the Trinity to redeem the world; Jesus Christ.

If we do not believe in the Trinity, we declare that the Word of God is wrong; and if the Word of God is wrong, we can no longer trust that our salvation is secure. If we do not believe in the Trinity, then we believe in a false god: God the Father is a god out there somewhere, and Jesus was just some nice guy; therefore, the price has not been paid for our salvation.

If we do not believe in the Trinity, our prayers to our other god go unanswered, because there is no other god except God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If we do not believe in the one true God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, then we are not Christian.

God tells us who He is, even though we cannot fully comprehend who He is. And God tells us who He is because He wants us to know Him, to trust Him, to pray to Him. Especially, God tells us who He is that we might be comforted in His three-person love for us.

The Holy Trinity has many different attributes like "eternal" and "all-powerful." I ask you today to consider one more attribute: **servanthood**. Among the Trinity itself, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are busy at work serving one another.

Jesus, the Son of God, submits Himself to the authority of the Father (John 10:30). God the Father give His Son all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son to fulfill Their will.

What do the Father, Son and Holy Spirit do as almighty God? They serve one another. But They do not serve one another as an example to us before getting back to their more godly duties. They serve one another because that is who They are by Their godly nature. By nature, They are servants!

But even more surprising is this: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit do not just serve each other: They serve you. For you, God the Father provides all good things for this body and life, as well as for eternity. Especially, He has sacrificed His Son for your sins, and continues to shower all sorts of blessings upon you.

For you, God the Son has gone to the cross and died for your salvation, and continues to give you forgiveness by His means of grace. For you, God the Holy Spirit continues to call, gather, enlighten and sanctify you with the forgiveness of sins that you might remain a member of the one, holy Christian Church.

Is it not wonderful that God left His throne of glory and came down for us? He came to this world; to this valley of tears, death, misery, hatred and violence. He came to heal the suffering of mankind, to ease their pain, to defend justice, to be a light in the darkness and to give a new meaning to our life.

And He still intervenes in our lives in many ways. He hears our prayers. We believe in a loving and merciful God that despite His majesty He is ready to help us in our minor issues of our daily life. He is near us and He is always willing to serve us. He always gives us what we need even before we ask Him.

In Jesus Christ we see the continual intervention of God toward the world. On the person of Jesus Christ the divine promise and human hope is found. What God has done through Jesus Christ is summarized in the 3rd chapter of Saint John, **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”**

The intervention of God toward men did not end up with the work of redemption by Jesus Christ. Since Pentecost Day the Holy Spirit works among us. He gives us faith in Christ, assist, accompany, guide, strengthen and inspire us till the moment our Father in heavens calls us home.

It is reasonable and convenient to stop in our daily routine of our life and analyze our relationship with God; The Triune God; God the Creator, Redeemer and Comforter. From

our relationship with our immutable and eternal God depends our life in this world and the world to come. Do we recognize the greatness of God? Do we recognize His Love toward us? Are we faithful to His Word? My dear friends: God is still speaking and revealing Himself to us and to all nations.

Let us open our ears so we can hear His soft voice of love. Let us open our eyes so we can see His goodness shown to us in the cross, and let us open our hands so we can receive our generous gift in order that you can give to those who need you. We live by the mercy of God so we also should be merciful toward others. In Jesus' name. Amen

That the Triune God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit pour out his richest blessings to all of us and fill us with peace. Amen