

## INI-SDG

In the Name of Jesus – To God Alone the Glory

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### 6.7.2009 *Trinity Sunday – St. Stephen Lutheran (West Bay) Mountain View, CA*

*Grace, mercy, and peace... continue to be with you from the Triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

How do you like believing in something you can't explain? I just referred to the Triune God once again here. This is the God you and I believe in right? How do you explain that there is only one God? I just named three persons...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How is that one God? I have to laugh at myself once in awhile. I remember in High School I was pretty horrible at chemistry. There was a time that I needed to explain a project and I really had no idea what I was talking about, the knowledge simply wasn't there. But I find myself trying to do something like that with God's Word quite often... especially when it comes to the Triune God.

You've heard many of the man made explanations for the Trinity I'm sure. The Triune God is like a math equation...  $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ . Or the Triune God could be thought of by thinking about the word G-O-D itself, three different letters but still one word. Some like to picture the three different forms of water... solid, liquid, and gas, but still all water. And there are of course many more. The point is that although these pictures might help us grasp the idea of a Triune God, our limited minds cannot explain and are not able to fully understand what that same Triune God tells us to simply believe in our hearts without question.

In our text for this morning, the Triune God speaks to us yet again from His Word. In the greater context of our verses Jesus has been speaking some of His last words to His disciples on the eve of His death. The Gospel of John points out the loving comfort that Jesus departs to His disciples, as a Shepherd would lovingly instruct and care for His sheep. Notice immediately here, that the Son of God (Jesus Christ) is the one speaking. Jesus makes mention of God His Father and of God the Holy Spirit whom would be sent; three different persons, but yet still only one God.

**NKJ John 14:25 These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

This is the Word of our Triune God... dear fellow sinners and fellow redeemed. And so we pray, "May the Grace of the Father, the Mercy of His Son, and the Peace of the Holy Spirit be with each of us as we mediate on His Word of truth." Amen.

That prayer we just prayed could also be called a Doxology. I was reminding the catechism students at the end of the school year what a doxology is. Do you know or remember? It is a compound word coming from two Greek words... logos and doxia: word and praise. I find it comforting to speak of the **Grace of the Father** because we by faith see His undeserved love for sinners in that He was willing to offer up His perfect Son as a sacrifice for the world. I like to speak of the **Mercy of the Son** seen in Jesus Christ, because He showed such great compassion and loving kindness when He went willingly to the cross for our sins. I like to speak of the **Peace of the Holy Spirit** because through the Word of God the Holy Spirit brings us true peace. That is why our theme for this morning in view of the Word of God found in our text teaches and reminds us to: **Depart in the Peace of the Triune God!**

#### **1. He Teaches us NOT to be Troubled**

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The words "trinity" and "triune" are not in the Bible. Are you surprised? But not to worry, those words don't need to be there for what the LORD God reveals to us as truth. Our scripture this morning points to this truth about there being three Gods in one. We speak a lot about the Triune God when we refer to the

one and only name we are to Baptize with... ***in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*** as recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20. When God (singular) created His special creation of man He conversed with Himself in the plural saying in Genesis 1:26 ***Let us make man in Our image, and in Our likeness.*** The minute we think we have grasped this concept of a Triune God we are on dangerous ground. Yet this is what God's Word teaches. Jesus said in verse **25 These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, ...the Father will send in My name...**

As we have been celebrating Pentecost, it helps for us to be taught by God who the Triune God really is. This is why we will say maybe a couple of times during this time of the church year the Athanasian Creed. A creed is after all a statement of what one believes. We would say as Christians it is a statement as it has been taught to us from God's Word in the Bible. The Athanasian Creed makes statements such as:

- *There is only one God: but in this one divine Essence are three distinct, separate Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*
- *The Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Ghost is God. Yet there are not three Gods, but only one.*
- *The Father is eternal; the Son is eternal; the Holy Ghost is eternal. Yet there are not three eternals, but only one.*
- *Each is not a third part of God, so that the three together make the complete God; but each one is the full God.*

When we study the teachings of the Triune God we need to remember we are dealing with God's Holy Word. Many false teachings have risen because of a failure to put reason and intellect to the side rather than relying on simple faith and trust in what God's Word says alone. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians ***1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.*** Should we make the same mistake of the world? We should not reject God's Word simply because this teaching of the trinity or any other fails to make sense to our human reason. Rather, God teaches us to believe by faith what we cannot understand.

What is it that troubles us? Our human reason and weakness plays a key role when we don't understand God's will. On the eve of His death, Jesus' disciples at that point still did not understand that their Master and Teacher *was* going to be leaving them very soon. They didn't fully understand His words which taught them of His suffering and death that must take place to complete His work of world peace through His self sacrifice of the forgiveness of sins. How often did Jesus speak about peace that rested in God's wisdom, God's power, and confidence in God's control? Our favorite passages comfort our troubled hearts as they speak of our Triune God who ***works all things together for good to them that love God. (Romans 8:28)*** For ***God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble. (Psalm 42)*** Yes, Jesus was about to depart from His disciples, but not without leaving them peace and comfort in the promises of His Word. Therefore, through His Word of comfort Jesus also **teaches us NOT to be troubled.**

## **2. He Reminds us NOT to be Afraid**

The disciples were very troubled by Jesus' words, but Jesus brought more words of comfort and promise to them when He said **25 These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.** What a promise for those first disciples to have from Jesus! Jesus was teaching them NOT to be troubled. But He was also reminding them that there was no reason to be afraid. Why? What was Jesus promising them? Jesus was promising that the Father would send the Holy Spirit 50 days later at Pentecost. Now it is helpful to remember that the Holy Spirit also has many names. He is described as the Paraclete, or the Comforter, Counselor, the Spirit of Truth. He acts as an advocate or lawyer, like a spokesman for God who comforts, strengthens, and aides the guilty. Because you and I as sinners *are* the guilty ones! And it is a blessing that Jesus' Word **teaches us NOT to be troubled,** as well as the fact that **He reminds us NOT to be Afraid.**

Jesus said, **27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.** Jesus' peace is not the same as the peace of this world. It isn't the type of peace that is longed for by so many between countries, or in the midst of family quarrels. Jesus' peace is one that relaxes the guilty conscience, which gives confidence to the soul accused and troubled by sin. It is a peace that cannot fully be put into words because of the promises of our God to us.

I might ask you, what was the sermon theme last Sunday? Or, what scripture was studied two Sunday's ago? We need to be reminded of God's promises because we are forgetful by nature. We need to be reassured of our hope and confidence DURING our troubles, while our hearts are afraid of what might come! Jesus did this for His disciples! He told them that in view of His peace of forgiveness, peace of mind they had through His Word and message, they would have a peace this world had rejected. Jesus would a little bit later on say to His first disciples **12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (John 16)**

Those first disciples had great reason to fear. They didn't remember all Jesus' words at that time, they were afraid of being put to death, they were troubled by what the Lord was telling them... in reality, they had no clue what to do! Isn't it great then that Jesus *taught* them, and *reminded* them of the one true Triune God? He had promised them, no guaranteed them a Helper that would be sent to them...God the Holy Spirit. It is through these gifts that Jesus continued to show them His love and compassion for them. Jesus had pictured this for His disciples at an earlier time also when He said **28 "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. 30 "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Matt 10)**

For our graduates, we continue to keep them in our prayers as they continue on in their next stage of life. We wish them peace in Christ no matter what comes their way in the years ahead. How important it is for young Christians, and Christians of all ages and stages of life, to make faithful use of these "tools" of the Holy Spirit. May the heavenly Father enable us and our children so to do, for the eternal benefit of our souls.

You and I believe in the one true God who far surpasses all understanding, but He is the God who continues not only wish us peace... but gives us peace through God the Holy Spirit. Our peace in Christ comes through this working of the Spirit through the promises of His Word! They are promises similar to those made to the first disciples of Jesus that assures us of the peace of eternal life in heaven through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We can relate to those first disciples. When our minds become troubled by our continuous battle against our sinful flesh and the devil who is so prevalent in this world, or when we are fearful of what is going on around us... Jesus teaches and reminds you and me today through His Word once again to **Depart in the Peace of the Triune God!** Amen.

***This peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard and keep your hearts and your minds in our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Amen.***