

Theme: Thank God...For Our Triune God!

Text: Romans 8:14-18

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

If you were to "rank" the blessings in your life what would you put at the top of your list? Maybe health, family, friends, your spouse, your children? Perhaps, since you're in church, you might think a little more "deeply" and think of some of the spiritual blessings that we enjoy as believers in Christ: forgiveness, salvation, the spiritual peace that comes from a clear conscience, or perhaps the privilege of prayer?

It's a hard thing to do, isn't it? There are so many great blessings that God gives us that we have a difficult time picking which ones we appreciate the most. We know there are many, but we're sure we're leaving out some really good ones either because we forget about them or take them for granted. Perhaps the number one blessing that we all take for granted most often is God Himself! Did He make your list? Don't we often just take for granted that He's always there; always merciful; always forgiving; always loving? Talk about an incredible blessing! But how often do we just simply stop and take the time to thank God for being *God*? Well, today, Trinity Sunday, is an excellent opportunity for us to think about God—who He is and what He has done for us—and to thank Him for being HIM! That's why our theme for today's sermon is, **Thank God...For Our Triune God!**

When we think of God and thank God for who He is, our thoughts probably first turn to His *greatness*. Our God is so great, the Scriptures remind us, that the depths of His wisdom, His judgments, and ways are absolutely "**unsearchable**" (**Romans 11:33**). Even His very nature as God is impossible for us to fully understand. God has revealed Himself to us as "**One**" (**Deuteronomy 6:4**), but as three distinct "persons" "**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**" (**Matthew 28:19**). How can that be possible? Three persons, but still one God? It's "**unsearchable**" isn't it? Can you completely understand it? I can't either, and we never will in this lifetime. We can describe the nature of God and we can use words like "Trinity" or "triune," which mean "three-in-one," to try and explain Him, but we will never fully be able to comprehend God.

But, really, isn't that a good thing? After all, if we could fully understand God—or even come close to fully understanding God—that would mean that God is really no greater than us! I don't know about you, but if God is only as "impressive" as we are, that isn't much of a god! The God who created and sustains this universe, controls the laws of nature, and provides for all things had better be a whole lot more intelligent, a whole lot more powerful, a whole lot more holy and just in His judgments and ways than we are. He'd better be just plain incomprehensible to our feeble, limited minds. Personally, the fact that God is "unfathomable" is a great *comfort* for me! I thank God for the incomprehensible "mystery" of the Trinity! It reminds me that God is still way up "there," and I'm still way down "here." He's much greater than I am, much wiser, and much more deserving of my trust and confidence than I am. Fortunately, God Himself does not call on us to "fully comprehend" Him. When He reveals Himself to us in His Word He calls us to *believe in Him!*

And yet despite all God's greatness; despite the "**unsearchable-ness**" of His wisdom and nature as the Triune God He has made Himself approachable, accessible, and has even chosen to make each one of us a member of His family and has even invited us to call Him "**Father!**" (**v. 15**). Notice that Paul mentions each person of the Trinity in our text for today—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and he reminds us that each person of the Trinity had a hand in making us members of God's family.

The Father created us and adopted us into His family by giving us His **Spirit** by bringing us to faith in His **Son, Jesus** through His Holy Word. This, Paul says, is the “proof” that we are the children of God, **“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God... The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:14, 16).**

Now, just think of all that this means for us, the fact that we are the children of God. That’s another blessing we probably too often take for granted. We get so used to the thought that we are children of God through faith in Jesus that we hardly ever stop to think about what it all means for us. Paul reminds us, **“For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’” (Romans 8:15).** The fact that we are the adopted Children of God, first of all, should wipe out our slavery to our fears.

Think of it this way: if you were the child of King David, for example, or some other great ruler in history, would you really be very worried about your house getting broken into at night? Are you kidding?! You live in the mighty king’s palace with all those guards keeping watch! Of course not! Or what if you were Bill Gates’ kid? Do you think you’d be worried about where your next meal was coming from, or if you were going to have enough to pay the monthly bills. No way! Your dad’s a billionaire!

Well, our “Dad,” is God Himself! He loves us, cares for us, and has adopted us as His own sons and daughters. In fact, we are so near and dear to Him that Paul uses a phrase to address God that a child would use, **“Abba, Father.”** “Abba” is the Aramaic word for “Father” and this expression that he refers to, it has been said, is similar to the affectionate children’s term, **“Daddy!”** Do we need to fear, then? Do we have any need to worry? Not with God as our Father! We can cast all our cares and fears on Him; we can place our lives into His strong hands; and we can pray to Him *“as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear father,”* as Martin Luther explained it in his Catechism.

Being children of God has even more incredible benefits than just love, protection, and provision. Paul reminds us in the last verse of our text, **“we are children of God, and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (Romans 8:16b-17).** If we are God’s children, then Christ, our Savior, God’s only begotten Son, is also our Brother. Whatever Christ has received from the Father also will be given to us as our inheritance. How do you get an inheritance? First of all, an inheritance is a gift which is freely given and completely unearned by the inheritor. It usually comes to you simply because you are a descendant or relative of someone. Also, usually, you receive an inheritance after someone dies. Jesus died for us in our place on the cross, and by His death and resurrection He *earned* our inheritance for us. Have you ever received an inheritance before? I remember when I was young that my dad inherited a small amount of money from a relative after she passed away. I think we used it to buy a new couch. A nice inheritance, sure, but still it’s just a couch! The inheritance we will receive from our heavenly Father is the very kingdom of heaven itself! By His suffering and death, Jesus made us **“heirs”** with Him of heaven!

But, wait a minute! Doesn’t Paul also say, **“if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (v. 17)?** Yes, it’s true, and we all know this from experience, that because we live in a sinful world we must go through some sufferings and difficulties in this life. And because we are followers of Christ, we will also **“suffer with Him”** at times because we proclaim His name and live by faith according to His Word. But don’t worry, Paul reminds us, **“we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (Romans 8:17).** In fact, He goes on to say in the very next verse, **“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (v. 18)!**

Yes, the Triune God is **“unsearchable”**—even unreachable—by us mortal humans. Fortunately, He is also all-loving and all-merciful and He has reached down to us! He has called us His children and we call Him **“Abba, Father” (v. 15)** through faith in His Son, Jesus. Faith which was created by His Holy Spirit, who **“Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:16).** When we think about our God and when we think about the blessings we have in Him may we always respond with thankfulness in our hearts and in our lives, and always **Thank God...For Our Triune God!** Amen!