

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, IL
Rev. Martin R. Eden

The Holy Trinity
Saturday, May 29, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 30, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. & 10:15 a.m.

“Faith, Hope & Trust”

Acts 2:14a, 22-36

Today we are celebrating the “Sunday of the Holy Trinity.” Trinity Sunday is the day that we take a special look at the relationship that we have with the three persons of the Living God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Trinity is truly one of the great mysteries of faith. We confess the creeds. We confess our faith in the Triune God, we know and believe that there is a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, yet not three gods but one God: as we confessed in the Athanasian Creed. But this is a hard thing to understand from an intellectual point of view – in fact, it is impossible.

We like things to make sense and be mathematically and scientifically consistent. It is in our nature to be doubting Thomas’s and only believe it when we see it. That is why faith, hope, and trust play such important roles in our lives. Faith is putting trust in something that we have not seen or do not understand. Scripture says, “Faith is being sure of what you hope for and certain of what you do not see” [Heb. 11].

The three Persons in One God does not make sense mathematically, or on any other level. But as Christians, we should not be frightened by the unknown. We rejoice in this mystery of faith.

As I like to say, if we only believe the things in the Bible that our minds can understand, then the god that we believe in can only be as smart as we are, and that would be frightening.

We rejoice in the fact that God is complex, infinite, and incomprehensible. He is not just some divine spiritual essence floating out there in the universe. He is a God with personality. He is full of mystery, but He is also full of truth. He has presented Himself to us so that we may know Him, but to fully understand everything cannot happen in this lifetime.

Our three readings for today are just a few examples of God's three Persons being presented to God's people. Throughout Scripture we see evidence of the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – their relationship with each other, and their relationship to us.

In Proverbs 8, we see God the Father's creative work through the eyes of Christ His Son, who was "beside Him, like a master workman." John says in his Gospel, and we confess in the Nicene Creed, "through Him all things were made." God the Father was the architect of creation, but Christ was His contractor. He was the "master workman" saying "let there be light.

In our second reading, we see the work of the only-begotten Son in our lives. Through Christ's death and resurrection, we have been forgiven, the path of life is open to us, and we have "received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit." We an amazing reality we have right now. We have access to the Father – the architect of the universe – through Christ the Son seated at the right hand of the

Father as our high priest; the mediator between us and our Father in heaven. He listens to us, and He actually cares what we are doing – not just here but in our daily routine.

And in the Gospel, we hear one of the most clear public statements Christ ever made concerning who He is, “before Abraham was, I AM.” He is eternal. He is also present and active. It was His voice coming from the burning bush. He is One with God the Father. He is Yahweh – “I AM”. It is the personal name of God.

According to our *great* intellect, God does not make sense – the three Persons being One God. But then God is not just a mathematical God. He is a creating, saving, sanctifying God. He makes us, He redeems us, He makes us holy, and He sets us apart as His own. He is the epitome of love and He cares deeply for His children. God has shown this from the day He created Adam.

The Persons of God have always been plural; three of them, and since creation, the focus of God’s attention has been on His relationship to the people of this world – to His children. We are the reason that God created this marvelous universe. He has known us from eternity. He has loved us from eternity. And He sent His Son to die for us so that we will be with Him in eternity.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being three Persons in One God is a hard thing for our feeble minds to comprehend. We confess rightly that God is incomprehensible. Which is why we openly profess that we are a people of faith, hope, and trust. It is not necessary for us to completely understand everything in the Bible. It’s a good thing that

God does not require that of us, or we would all be in deep trouble.

We are a people of faith. Although we may not be able to understand some of the mysteries of God, we know that they are true because God's Word is true and God has sent His Spirit of truth into our hearts. The greatest philosophers in the world cannot adequately, completely describe the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. However, even the smallest child who has received the Holy Spirit through Baptism has that truth dwelling in his or her heart.

The Sunday of Holy Trinity is a day that we take time to marvel at the greatness of the One True Living God. We see the greatness of the Father's creation when Christ was "beside Him, like a master workman." But more importantly for us, we see the greatness of God's redemption. Ever since Adam ruined God's perfect creation through sin, God has been working in our lives to do away with that sin.

There have been thousands upon thousands of pages written explaining the complexities of the Trinity, but for God's people of faith, hope, and trust, we proclaim with confidence the words of King David, "You have made known to me the paths of life; You will make me full of gladness with your presence." Those words are true today, and they will be true for all eternity. Amen.