



The Holy Trinity

Exodus 34:5-7 Psalm 8 Matthew 28:16-20

May 26, 2024
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The second and third words of the Bible introduce us to the Holy Trinity. In Genesis 1:1 it says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*”¹ If you were going to study this in detail, you would find that the word “*God*” is *plural*, and the verb “*created*” a *singular*. There is a plural-ness and a singular-ness to God in the beginning. The rest of the Bible will unfold that for us until the Son of God finally reveals that there is *one Name*, and *three Persons*: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, “... go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...” Matthew 28:19

The words that the **One, Holy, Christian, and Apostolic Church** uses to confess the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is that there is “*One God in Three Persons.*”

As conservative Lutheran Christians, we stand with the historic Christian Church as we confess this truth to the world. Here are the words we use to echo Scripture in the Lutheran Confession of faith²:

¹ Literally, the 1st three Old Testament Hebrew words say – in this order: “In the beginning / created (singular) / Gods (plural)”

² The Lutheran Confessions are contained in the Book of Concord of 1580. You can easily find them online, such as this site: www.bookofconcord.org. Men, we are studying the Book of Concord in the “Men of Faith” Tuesday night class if you want to come and join us! I can get you a copy of the book for \$20. Come and join us; meet some new friends and study theology with us!

[Lutheran Churches] teach that . . . there is **one Divine Essence** which is called and which is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible; and yet there are **three Persons**, of the same essence and power, who also are coeternal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Book of Concord, Augsburg Confession I abridged

The Holy Trinity is our God.

That is Who we put our faith and trust in. This is the God of your Baptism; the God who washed you clean and put His Name on you. You are a part of His Family; and you have been given an eternal inheritance through faith in Jesus. Your identity is that of a “Baptized Christian” -- *washed clean* and *belonging to* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit³.

The Holy Trinity is our God.

That is Who we put our faith in and trust. We look to Him for all good things, and turn to Him in times of trouble. We **trust** in His love, care, and protection over us. We **believe** that He knows us by Name and cares about the details of our lives. We **know** that He has saved us from our sins through Jesus’ death and resurrection. We **understand** that the Holy Spirit lives within us. We **recognize** that everything we have and everything we are gifts from His good hands. We cling to God the Holy Trinity *for all things, through all things, and in all things.*

THE DANGER IS IDOLATRY.

Idolatry is when you cling to something else for *all things, through all things, and in all things.*

The temptation of idolatry is not that you are going to convert to Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, or some other world religion. That kind of idolatry is pretty

³ Note the masculine pronouns, and the words “Father” and “Son”. God has revealed Himself in masculine terms; most clearly that Jesus, the Son of God, was a man. The modern attempts within the Church to disgender God or to feminize God is blasphemous. Words matter, and how we speak of God reflects on God. We hold to Holy Scripture and it reveals God in masculine terms to us. The feminization of God has led to women’s ordination, gender neutral Bibles, goddess worship, gay pride, and drag-queen pastors within apostate churches.

rare. The temptation to idolatry that you face **every day** comes in the form of your money and possessions; your intellect or skill; your fame, power or honor. It could be your work, your accomplishments, or your hobbies; it could be your kids or their activities. *The temptation comes from the things that make you feel secure and "puff up" your pride.* The temptation is that you turn to these things for your **identify, satisfaction, comfort, and help**. Your heart gets entangled with them; and before you know it, you fear, love, and trust in them **more than** the One, True, and Only God: *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*. These things choke out your faith, take up your time, fill your schedule, and preoccupy your mind. Pretty soon there's no room for the One, True, and only God; not even to worship Him on a Sunday or to listen, and learn His Word.

In our culture, idolatry is a **heart issue**; it is *not likely* to be a piece of stone, a pillar of wood, a star in the sky, nor a statue of gold. Idolatry happens in your heart. It's what you really trust. It is where you find your identify, satisfaction, comfort, and help.

The **simple test** for idolatry is this: **what are the things that interrupt your spiritual life?** Whatever those things are for you, they could be idols in your life. Is it your work? Your hobbies? Your freedom to come and go? Your busy schedule? Your family? Someone once described idolatry as taking **"good things and making them the ultimate things"**. What is it that interferes with your spiritual life? What does it take to keep you from the Lord worshipping weekly? What stops you from praying? What keeps you away from Bible study? **These are the kind of questions that you can ask yourself to look for idols in your life.**

Idolatry kills faith, so if you have something that is interfering with your spiritual life, then you must deal with it immediately. Identify it, repent of it, and make changes in your life! Put those "good things" in your life in proper perspective and don't let them consume you or interfere with your faith in Christ. Set boundaries, parameters, and priorities in your life. The forgiveness that you have in Christ Jesus empowers you to live for the Lord,

and to shape your entire life around the Him. Christ's death and resurrection leads you to repentance, forgiveness, and new life.

The First Commandment teaches us that

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

As Christians, our God is the Holy Trinity, One God in Three Persons: Father Son and Holy Spirit. We fear, love, and trust in Him alone. **He is Who we look to for all good things and to turn to Him in times of trouble⁴.**

The First Commandment makes you fiercely loyal to the One, True, and Only God. You strive to love and honor God in your heart, your mind and your life. Faith in the Holy Trinity permeates all areas of your life. No matter who you are with, and no matter where you are at, you belong to the Holy Trinity and carry His Name with you. You are a Baptized Christian, your identity is that of a baptized Christian. **This is WHO YOU ARE!** You belong to God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the God of Your Baptism, and you are determined not to let anything interfere with your relationship with Him! *The First Commandment makes you fiercely loyal to the One, True, and Only God.*

On this Holy Trinity Sunday, we thank God that He's revealed Himself to us as *one God in three Persons*.

We thank Him for the faith to believe it.

We thank Him that He has claimed us as His own.

And we ask Him to empower us to live as His people,

Amen!

⁴ Martin Luther explains: "Therefore it is the intent of [the first] commandment to require true faith and trust of the heart which settles upon the only true God, and clings to Him alone. That is as much as to say: "See to it that you let Me alone be your God, and never seek another," i.e.: Whatever you lack of good things, expect it of Me, and look to Me for it, and whenever you suffer misfortune and distress, cling to Me. I, yes, I, will give you enough and help you out of every need; only let not your heart cleave to or rest in any other." Martin Luther's

**God the Holy Trinity,
the One, True, and Only God,
we thank you for providing all
good things to us;
and for helping us in our times of
need.**

**Help us to be fiercely loyal to you
all of our lives.**

**Help us to fear, love and trust only
in you;**

**so that we can glorify and serve
you throughout our lives.**

**We pray this in Jesus the Son's
Name, amen!**

Exodus 34:5-7

Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."

Psalm 8

1 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. 2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger. 3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? 5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, 7 all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Matthew 28:16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."