

Good Shepherd, June, 2023

2 Corinthians 13:11-14

The Christian church in Corinth had quite a few problems. When Paul wrote his first letter to this church, he was filled with distress. He loved those Christians but their love for Jesus and each other was lacking.

When Paul wrote a second letter to those Christians, some problems still existed. As weak as those people were in the faith, they were still part of the family of God. Paul wanted those people to be faithful to the Word of God so that the Word could strengthen them. They were to be rooted in the gospel so they could live in love and peace with each other. Paul reminded those believers that they did not stand alone, they were part of the world-wide church of believers in Jesus.

Paul closed with a benediction in which he mentioned the Trinity. Today we consider

THE SPECIAL BLESSINGS OF THE TRIUNE GOD.

Like Ascension Day and Pentecost Sunday, Trinity Sunday is a special day of the church year. And Like Ascension and Pentecost, Trinity Sunday does not always get the respect it deserves. The teaching of the Trinity is a fundamental teaching of the Christian Church. The Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed all speak of the importance of the Trinity. The teaching of the Trinity is what separates the Christian religion from all other religions of the world.

The word "trinity" is not found in Scripture, yet, we believe in the Trinity and must believe in the Trinity! Christians believe that God is three persons in one God. We believe that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, yet, there are not three gods, but ONE God!

Our puny brains cannot comprehend the mystery of the Trinity. When we add 1 + 1 + 1 we get 3. But when Christians add the persons of the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we get 1 God. The concept of the Trinity is way beyond our understanding! When we get to heaven we might understand – not now!

The clearest showing of the Trinity is seen at the baptism of Jesus. John the Baptist was baptizing Jesus when the Father spoke from heaven saying that He was pleased with His Son. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus in the form like that of a dove. All three persons of the Trinity were present!

Our text is a blessing used by pastors to bless those who are worshipping. This blessing points to special blessings of the Triune God. The first blessing comes to us through Jesus. This blessing is **grace**. Grace is the undeserved love that God shows to us through the work of Jesus when He became the world's Savior. Jesus showed His grace to us when He became a human being. This grace was very evident when Jesus died on the cross for the sins of every human being. This grace became glorious when Jesus arose from the dead to give us life. This grace of the Lord continues as Jesus pleads for us before the Father's throne. This grace of our Lord is truly amazing and without that grace of our Lord, we could have no salvation!

The second blessing that comes to us by means of the Trinity is the **love** of God, the Father. The love of the Father for us is easily seen in His preservation of the world. The sun shines, the rain falls, and we enjoy the blessings of this life. These are just some of the examples of the love of the Father. There is a Bible passage that shows us another aspect of the Father's love, John 3:16, God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Before Creation God had

already planned out our salvation. When Adam and Eve sinned, God the Father made that plan public when He promised that the Messiah would come and crush Satan and destroy the power of sin and death over us.

We see the Father's love for us not only in sending Jesus into the world, but also in His accepting the sacrifice of Jesus as the payment for our sins. We didn't deserve the Father's love! Without the love of God the Father, we could have no salvation!

A third blessing of the Triune God is the **fellowship** of the Holy Spirit. The fellowship of the Holy Spirit is the close relationship we have with God through the gospel in Word and Sacraments.

Because the Holy Spirit works in us. We sinful human beings want to hear the Word of God, realize our sinfulness, and believe that Jesus is our Savior. Because of the working of the Spirit, we have saving faith, we enjoy a peace that the rest of the world doesn't have, and we enjoy the certainty of heaven. The fellowship of the Spirit is nothing we deserve, it is God's gift. Without the work of the Holy Spirit, we would have no salvation!

In this short verse of Scripture, the Trinity is mentioned: the Father who showed His love to us by sending Jesus to be our Savior; the Son, Jesus, who shows His grace to the world as our Savior from sin; and the Holy Spirit who brings us to faith and who keeps us in faith through the Means of Grace.

If someone doesn't believe in God the Father; if someone does not believe in God the Son; and if someone doesn't believe in God the Holy Spirit, they will be damned to hell. It is as simple as that! The Trinity is very important. Each person of the Trinity is important. Without the Father, without

the Son, or without the Holy Spirit, we could have no salvation.

Be happy that the Triune God has done all things for our salvation so that we are united with God and with each other in a common faith for now and for eternity.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all!

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