



Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **AMEN**

Today is the first Sunday after Pentecost. It is also known as Holy Trinity Sunday. Today we celebrate and take a close look at the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our Gospel text for this morning comes again from the Book of John. Nowhere in this Gospel or anywhere else in all of Scripture do we find the term “Trinity”. Neither will you find a Biblical text which mentions the trinitarian nature of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Our understanding of God as three persons in one comes from our experience of God. God, after all has been revealed to the disciples and to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So today is the day for us to marvel at the mystery and majesty of Almighty God.

Chapter 16 in John finds the disciples once again in the upper room. You might get the feeling that the disciples are a bit uneasy. This night, Jesus will be arrested after a visit to the Garden of Gethsemane, but first Jesus has a few last words for his friends. Something ominous is coming, a storm is rumbling on the horizon. Their fellowship with Jesus is about to take a twist. The disciples are scared and confused. Our reading is just a snippet from that conversation that they shared with Jesus.

Jesus mentions that the Spirit of Truth he will send, will be a guide for them in understanding all that is to happen. The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus and will make it clear that all the Father has belongs to Jesus. What confusing statements for these scared and upset disciples?

So don't feel bad. The concept of God in three persons is still confusing to most Christians today. After all the role of the Son is to glorify the Father and the role of the Spirit is to glorify the Son. The Spirit will reveal this all to us as we grow in knowledge of God. This is the same truth that was revealed to Moses, the prophets and now through Jesus. But are we ready to hear them with an open heart and mind? I think that with time God's truths

will become more apparent. It will take until we are in God's presence at home with him in heaven to fully understand the concept of the Triune God.

Most of you know that I am a huge Brewers fan. And it has been a tough week to be a die-hard fan! If I had to pick another career for a do over in life and could not be a meteorologist (I love watching weather), I would want to be the TV analyst, a play-by-play announcer for the Brewers. Well, since that is not likely to happen, I would like to think about what it means to be on a team this morning. For the Brew Crew that means a group of 26 men with lots of support staff and many coaches play 162 regular season games. Although players come and go due to injuries and trades, they must play together to win games. 9 Men on the field at a time gives opportunity for all to lift one another up when someone is in a slump. They must learn to work together toward one goal of going to the World Series. No one player can do that alone. It is a wonderful team sport, in my opinion, where even a superstar needs help from his teammates to reach the ultimate goal.

So, what do you think of when you think of a team? I remember years ago hearing an acronym for team and it was "Together Everyone Achieves More". What a lovely thought that is, whether you are on a baseball team, a service team, a production team. Most of all major achievements in life, I believe are the result of people working together, teamwork.

July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon. Did he accomplish this monumental feat alone? Certainly not. He had quite a team of scientist, and engineers, a huge team who helped him get there. Or how about Usain Bolt, considered the fastest man alive? I bet he has a great group of trainers, doctors, coaches that helped him use his God given ability to run. Or Serena Williams, bet she has coaches, teachers, nutritional gurus that have helped her reach the top of her game as a tennis pro.

Truth be told, there are teams that are successful and teams that make people successful whether in the workplace, on the sporting field or maybe even in churches. Yummmmm. Here at CTS, I think we have a wonderful team that gathers on Tuesdays to make mission quilts. Doubt that just one person could have made all the quilts that have been sewn this year all alone. And I do think that there is something special about being part of a team.

Teams that have success run well. They are efficient and work together for the good of the team. Their success rarely happens overnight but rather builds as do their relationships, over time. Members of a good team care about each other and work toward the same goals using the same plan. I think that our Christian life is very much like being part of a team. We are called to be part of the body of Christ, God's team.

Several weeks ago, we talked about the church and do you remember the number one rule. Christ is the head of the church. Jesus is the leader of our church team. Many times, in the New Testament, Jesus encourages us to live and work as part of the body of Christ, a team. He said we should love God, love one another, which means to love our neighbor as ourselves. Ultimately, our team as followers of Jesus, is to do what God has asked us to do allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our pathway.

Last week I spoke about Lutheran's being a credal people. This is where we confess our faith in God as three in one. All three of the creeds we ascribe to in the ELCA, The Nicene,

The Apostles and The Athanasian creeds demonstrate the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These creeds are expressions of what we believe about the God we worship. They have shaped our mission, our ministry, and our vision for our congregation here at Christ the Servant. Do you remember our mission statement? “Christian Serving God by Serving Others”.

Our theology, or how we talk about God, is formed through Scripture and experience, and then expressed together in credal form. This all helps us to live and work together as part of God’s team, the church. Everything we do in our church should be all to God’s glory.

Ah, a beautiful recipe for a great team. But when you start adding people to the team, we find there can be issues. Human nature encourages us to think for ourselves and to seek ways for us to be comfortable rather than to work on a team. Yet it is so important to look toward God for love and forgiveness and see who God really is, a gracious and awesome God who loves us so much that he continues to give us these free gifts. A God who calls us together to be His team in the world. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God, working together in harmony to save us from ourselves.

The Athanasian Creed, which I think is the most succinct in getting at the nature of our God: Three in One and One in Three. As this creed states, “Nothing in this trinity is before or after, nothing is greater or smaller; in their entirety the three persons are coeternal and coequal with each other.” Folks, there is no competition between God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are a team. Not one person of God is more important than another. And Scripture tells us that they work together for our good.

Remember the Romans verses 1 and 5 of chapter 5 that were just read, “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.” And “hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given for us.” All three persons of our Triune God are present in the work of salvation. And our Gospel reading brings it home as well, the Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus who has all the Father has. The three persons of our God are all working to bring us the Gospel truth, the message of love for all people.

And I do believe that the three persons of our God express the unity of Father, Son, and Spirit and is a model for how we are to relate and live as a church, as a congregation. And although it is a life-time journey to understand the Holy Trinity, what a wonderful team we are on, together trying to make sense of such a concept. St Augustine once said, “Trying to understand God fully as Trinity is like trying to pour the whole of the ocean into a little bucket, it will never happen.” Truly, this discussion is one of the beauties of being a Christian. There is always more to discover about God. And the more we discover the more we come to rely on God as Father, Son, and Spirit.

When we first came to the baptismal font, we were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And so, we have been claimed in those waters by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to be disciples of all. And as Matthew says in Chapter 28, it is our command that we go and continue to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. As when we do this our team will grow. We have more fellowship not just with God, but we will have communion with those who have also entrusted themselves in faith to the same

God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In other words, as Christians, our life is about being and growing in relationship with God which then means we are also growing in relationship with other believers. We are a team that lives, works, and encourages each other with the love of God.

So let us continue to grow in our relationship with God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the perfect team. Rely on him for the life He has given us now and for the life He promises for all of eternity. Let the love of the Trinity rub off on us and affect who we are as God's children. And even though we, as the family of God are not the perfect team, we can continue to be shaped by the Perfect team, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **AMEN**

**THE PERFECT TEAM--FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT
SUNDAY JUNE 12, 2022**