

Romans 8:14-17 We believe in the Triune God! Trinity Sunday May 31, 2015

By Pastor Kenneth Mellon, Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Pleasant Valley Rd., West Bend, WI

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

God's Word to give us confidence in Him as our triune God is written in Romans 8:14-17

These are Your words heavenly Father that we may live as Your children in truth. Your Word is truth!

Dear Christian Friends,

Today is Trinity Sunday; a day when we confess the great mystery for the Christian faith. It sets us apart from every other religion. Most religions believe in many gods. Islam believes in only one god and only one person. Our God is one in essence yet three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! We cannot understand this teaching, but how privileged we are to be blessed from our Triune God! We should be grateful our church is named: "Trinity", because it reminds us of God's great blessings! We confess:

We believe in the Triune God!

First, we believe in the Holy Spirit who has made us children of God. Paul wrote, "*Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship.*" (v.14-15) Paul wrote about a spirit that makes us slaves. This was our nature without the Holy Spirit and faith. We were slaves to worry; doubt, and fear, which still plague us at times. We've looked to our own solutions for life rather than to our God, because we lacked faith in Him.

But, God sent the Holy Spirit, who changed our hearts by His truth. The saving message of Jesus' death to take away our sins and of His resurrection for eternal life has given us faith to trust in Him to save us. I'm not just talking about getting to heaven some day. Even now, we have confidence in our Triune God to care for us, to guide us, to provide for us and to defend us. We have this trust because we are the sons of God. "Sons" is a reference to legally being in a family. We no longer need to fear, because we have the Holy Spirit who gives us the peace which Christ established with God through His sacrifice on the cross.

Can we be sure God's inheritance is ours? Paul wrote, "*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*" (v.16) How does the Holy Spirit tell us we are God's children? God does not promise that we will see or feel the Holy Spirit. But, God does tell us that we will see the affects of the Holy Spirit. Earlier in Romans 8 Paul wrote, *Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires.... The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*" (8:5-8) By God's grace, we are not going to be consumed by the power of sin over our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin that we must follow it. That doesn't mean that we are perfect, but when we sin against God, we repent. As we hear of Christ's death for the forgiveness of all sins, the Holy Spirit leads us to take this to heart and so we receive His full forgiveness by faith. Jesus said, "*He who belongs to God, hears what God says.*" (John 8:47) Evidence that we are the true children of God! The Holy Spirit opens our hearts to God to receive Christ,

Second, we believe in God the Father, who opens His heart to us. Paul wrote, "*By the [Spirit] we cry, 'Abba, Father.'*" (v.15) At Jesus' time, the Jewish people used the word "Abba" to speak to their physical fathers. Yet, they never called God "Abba." But, Jesus used it as He prayed to God and Christians have used it ever since. Calling God our "Abba," means that we speak to God whom we love and trust. We speak to Him as a loving Father who is waiting to hear every word we say! David described His love:

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.” (Psalms 103:13) God cares about what we are going through in life. He is concerned about every one of our needs. With Christ as our Savior, we can be confident that God will work for good with whatever happens in life. We can rest in His love knowing that God, as our Father, will bless us and bless those we love because He has a plan of love for us. John wrote, *“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1)* We’ve described the work of the Holy Spirit and the Father.

Third, we believe in God the Son, who shares His inheritance with us. Paul wrote, *“Now if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory.” (v.17)* Jesus won an inheritance in heaven by His perfect obedience, which included His suffering and death on the cross. He lovingly shares this inheritance with all who trust in Him as their Savior. But, as we trust in Him, it should not surprise us that the devil will try to sidetrack us as individuals or as a congregation or school. He tries to make us forget that we are here to save souls or bring in lost souls to Christ. Our mission is to be as one working together for all believers. With the Holy Spirit’s help, we will overcome the devil’s temptation and work together for the Kingdom of Christ.

The devil will also try to bring suffering into our lives, just as he did for Jesus and His disciples. Again, we are not to be discouraged. Jesus warned us that suffering would come and promised to give us His Holy Spirit to comfort us and guide us through these tough times to eternal glory!

Later in this chapter of Romans Paul wrote, *“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18)* Because of Jesus’ victory, we will share in His inheritance and we will see Jesus in all His glory. We’ve all seen awesome sunsets or scenery on vacation. But, the sight of Jesus will be overwhelming. His majesty and honor will be there for all to see. And, we’ll be amazed in joy at His loving welcome for us as He calls each of us believers by name.

Because of Jesus’ perfect life as our Savior; we will have perfect lives in heaven. Because of His suffering and death, we will not have to suffer eternally in hell. We will have eternal contentment. Instead of God’s anger we will experience God’s perfect love. Instead of feeling out of place in heaven, we will join Christ Himself as joint-heirs with Him. How thrilling it will be in heaven which will have no end! Peter wrote, *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into ... an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you.” (1 Peter 1:3-4)*

God’s Son has provided all we need to enter heaven. God, the Holy Spirit has given us faith so we receive Christ’s work as our own. And when we get to heaven the Father will honor us as we celebrate the victory of His Son. We’ve all been part of a team or group that wins or accomplishes something good. How much more we’ll celebrate our victory in Christ over the power of sin, death and the forces of the devil! (3)

It’s Trinity Sunday here at Trinity Lutheran Church! I’m thankful that our congregation is called Trinity which describes our God who saves us. The Holy Spirit is active in our church and school and He will continue to bless our faith as we hear God’s Word in Christ. We thank God our loving Father for His plan to save us. We thank God the Son for carrying out God’s plan by His innocent death to win an inheritance for us in heaven. We thank the Holy Spirit for making that inheritance ours through faith in Christ alone! This is the truth that we confess about our saving triune God. Amen.