

JESUS' EXPLANATION OF GOD'S WORK
REVEALS THE HOLY TRINITY

John 16:12-15

SUNDAY, JUNE 16, 2019 | PENTECOST
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
THE HOLY TRINITY
YEAR C

Old Testament Numbers 6:22–27

Psalm Psalm 150

New Testament Romans 5:1–5

Gospel John 16:12–15

COMMUNION

GRANTS PASS

The Entrance Hymn – ELH 16 From All that Dwell Below the Skies
Chief Hymn – ELH 403 God Loved the World So that He Gave
Distribution Hymn – ELH 324 O Jesus, at Your Altar Now
Closing Hymn – ELH 580 Almighty Father, Bless the Word (Tune #592?)

MEDFORD

Psalm 150, p. 122
Opening Hymn - CW 250 From All that Dwell Below the Skies
Hymn of the Day – CW 391 God Love the World So that He Gave
Distribution Hymn - CW 313 Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior
Closing Hymn - CW 323 Almighty Father, Bless the Word

Faith & Our Savior Lutheran Churches
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John 16:12–15 (CSB)

¹²“I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.

Dear fellow redeemed: Who is the God who is really there? What is He like? While there may be some differences in the way that we think of Him, if we actually worship the One who has created all things and revealed Himself to us in the Scriptures, then we must agree on those things. If God speaks of Himself in one way, we don’t get to think of Him in another.

God is a Spirit, for example, a being with mind, will, and emotions, but no body. As Jesus told the woman of Samaria, “**God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.**” (John 4:24, CSB)

On this Festival of the Holy Trinity, we reflect upon the realities of the true and living God that have been revealed to us, so that we may distinguish him from all the counterfeits and imaginings of the people of this world.

Our text is not about the Trinity, or who God is. It is about the way that God deals with the disciples (and us), which incidentally tells us about the nature of God. It picks up where we left off last week, when Jesus taught us that the apostles and the Holy Spirit would tell the world about Him.

Here now He gives some detail, and in so doing...

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The Holy Spirit is God. He has divine names and divine characteristics. Because of this perfection and holiness, He will guide the disciples into all truth. “**He will also declare to you what is to come,**” Jesus says. His point is that we will know the truth about God because of the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Besides that, we know about such things as the growth of Christ’s church in the world, the power of the gospel, the return of Christ, our resurrection, judgment day, and eternal life because the Holy Spirit will reveal them. This is more than the disciples could absorb before the whole plan of our salvation played out, but it was coming.

But don’t get the idea that the Holy Spirit is a God. Jesus says, “**For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears.**” As we confessed in the Athanasian Creed, “there are not three gods, but one God.” In our experience if there is one being, there is one person; that is the way God made us. But He is different. He is One being and three persons, so what one person does, God does, and what God does, all the persons of the deity do. So what the Holy Spirit teaches is the truth of the Father and the Son as well.

Scripture often reflects this reality about God, e.g., (Genesis 1:26, CSB) “**Then God** [singular] **said, “Let us** [plural] **make man in our image, according to our likeness.**” So also here, what the Holy Spirit reveals is in concert with the Father. He is God with the Father.

But also with the Son. All the glory of the Son, all that shines forth of His grace, mercy, power, and all the other divine attributes, will be proclaimed by the Spirit: **¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.** Yet these divine attributes of Christ are the same as those of the Father. **¹⁵Everything the Father has is mine.**

The significance of this is that this word of the Holy Spirit is the word of the living God, as Jesus concludes with emphasis: **This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.** This is so that they will know that what is revealed to them is the very word of God.

Let's recap. John is telling us that in the upper room, the night of His betrayal, Jesus was preparing his disciples for the next day, bloody and terrible, and for the time of despair before they were confronted with the wonder, joy, and victory of Jesus' resurrection. And He was also preparing them for what was to come, the New Testament age, in which the gospel goes out into the world to create the everlasting kingdom of the Lord.

They needed to know that the word that would come to them, the word that would in turn bring you and me to faith in Jesus, the word that would be a testimony to the world, was and is the testimony of God.

They faced their executioners certain of it.

What this means for you and me is that we must treat this word as the sacred truth. We don't give it a certain "spin." We don't take what we like and leave what we don't. It means that if someone does twist it or contradict it or demean it, that we are to treat them as the enemies of Christ, however well-meaning they may seem, as Paul writes to the Romans: "***Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who create divisions and obstacles contrary to the teaching that you learned. Avoid them, because such people do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites. They deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting with smooth talk and flattering words.***" (Romans 16:17–18, CSB)

But more importantly, it means that we have here the absolute truth for our comfort, consolation, and salvation. So that you may face your sins with the certainty of forgiveness, your troubles with the certainty of deliverance, and your death with the certainty of life, Jesus imprints the word of the Holy Spirit and the apostles with the seal of the Triune God. For that is the God who is really there, to whom we pray and from Whom we receive everlasting life.

AMEN This is most certainly true.

The Athanasian Creed

Whoever will be saved shall, above all else, hold the catholic faith. Which faith, except it be kept whole and undefiled, without doubt, one will perish eternally. And the true Christian faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the Persons nor dividing the substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father infinite, the son infinite, and the Holy Spirit infinite. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet there are not three eternal, but one eternal; just as there are not three uncreated, nor three infinites, but one uncreated and one infinite.

Likewise the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, and the Holy Spirit is almighty. And yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet there are not three gods, but one God. Likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord. And yet there are not three lords, but one Lord.

For as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be both God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the true Christian faith to say that there are three gods or three lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three fathers, one Son, not three sons, one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another; but all three Persons are coeternal together and coequal, so that in all things, as said before, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped. Whoever will be saved is compelled thus to think of the Holy Trinity.

Furthermore it is necessary for everlasting salvation that one also believe faithfully the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect Man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood. Who, although He is God and Man, yet He is not two but one Christ; One not by changing of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God; One indeed, not by confusion of substance, but by oneness of person. For just as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, God almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming all will rise again with their bodies and will give an account of their own works. And they that have done good will enter into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith; whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.