

“The Triune God for me”

[Based on the reading for the Trinity Sunday.]

Today is a very special day in our Church's year. Today we celebrate the Trinity Sunday. Today is the day when we meditate on the greatest mystery of all, that is, on the Triune God Himself, on one, holy, eternal God, who has revealed Himself in a way that makes our minds to stumble.

He has revealed Himself as God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. How many gods? That's right, – one. How many persons? That's right, – three distinct persons. How is this even possible?

It is interesting a thought, see, even the way the true God reveals Himself establishes right relationships with Him. He is infinite and incomprehensible, outside of time and space, one God, but three persons.

We are finite and simple. Leading our lives in space and time. He is God, we are His creatures. He is in control, and we are not. Even with the best efforts of our most brilliant minds we can't comprehend the mystery of the Trinity.

And, frankly speaking, not too many are today interested in understanding God or knowing Him. Why so? And you know the answer. Because people are mostly interested in ... yes, in other trinity, – me-myself-I.

This is what the whole world seems to be about. About me, about myself, about I. Do you think that we Christians are spared from this other trinity? If you think we are, don't deceive yourselves. By no means we are spared!

Even many who call themselves Christians, instead of fearing, loving and trusting the Triune God, want to teach, command and tell Him and His Church what we are supposed to believe and how we are supposed to live.

Some want to be bosses over the Scriptures and to use them as they please, instead of humbly listening as our God speaks to us through His Word. Some want to tell God where and how we are going to meet Him on our terms, instead of coming into His presence as beggars, with nothing to offer, but our sins.

To live in this world is like to walk in rain. Even if you have appropriate clothes, sooner or later you get soggy. It is true, that as we live in this world, that cares so much about me-myself-I, we sometimes get more shaped by the world, than by God's Word and His Spirit.

Now, what can we do to resist this terribly plague of self-centeredness. I want to offer to you a Christian alternative of this 'me'. For there is a place 'for me' for Christians as well, and a wonderful one at that.

I want to offer to you something very fitting for this Trinity Sunday. I want to offer you the Triune God, who is for you. God for you. Or you can say, – God for me. God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for you.

When God reveals Himself in the Bible He doesn't simply reveal Himself, He wants to be your God. And you don't know God properly unless you know Him as God for you. It doesn't help you much if you know that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, if you don't know Him as your God, and God for you.

Already in the Old Testament, the holy God explained what the purpose of His self-revelation is. So that He may be your God and that you may know Him as your God. As God for you. This phrase appears many times in the Scriptures.

Dr. Martin Luther understood it well, that it's not enough to know what God has done and does in general, what is the most important for a Christian, is to know what this God has done and does for you. What God does for me.

This is, why Dr. Luther wrote his simple and beautiful explanation to the Apostles' Creed, as we find it in the Small Catechism. That was his intention and focus, to show all Christians, what God does for them, for you.

Let's see, how Luther brings it together. We just heard it read from Genesis, where the Triune God reveals Himself as the Creator of the Universe, of everything that exists.

Luther in his explanation shows that God the Father is also your creator. What does this mean? Sweet, sweet news. You can repeat after me if you wish, for you need to have these words engraved on your hearts and minds.

"I believe that **God has made me**; that **He has given me** my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my limbs, my reason, and all my senses, and **still preserves them**.

He gives me 'clothing and shoes, food and drink, house, spouse and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods. **He provides me richly and daily with all that I need to support this body and life**.

Moreover, He "**protects me from all danger, and guards me and preserves me from all evil**; and all this out of pure, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, **without any merit** or worthiness in me."

See, this is what God the Father, God the Creator does for you. He is your God, He has given and gives life to you and whatever else you need for your daily life. He also protects, guards and preserves you. And He does it without any worthiness in you. Out of His fatherly goodness and mercy.

And He does this for you. This is what you need to know. He is your Creator. He is also your Savior, your Redeemer. God the Son, Jesus Christ, true God and true man is your Lord.

What does this mean? This is properly the Good News. The Gospel. We all were born enslaved to sin, death and the power of devil. This was our state when we were born. And there was nothing we could do to free ourselves.

Worse, like a mentally sick person we even didn't realize our situation. But Jesus Christ has redeemed you, purchased and won you from all your slave-masters, not with money, but paying the ultimate price, with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death.

Why did He do this? Here it comes. The best news for you. He did it in order that you may be His own. That you may belong to Him and live under His care, and protection rejoicing in His love and faithfulness in His Kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting blessedness.

The Son of God did it for you, with the result that you are no longer enslaved to sin, death and devil, but can live in wonderful freedom, in His presence, and serve Him in never-ending blessedness. This is why we call Him, our Lord.

For He is not a lord who lords over you, He is your Lord, who cares for you, and sacrifices Himself for you, so that only you could be with Him and enjoy all that is His. He is your Redeemer. God for you. Your God.

And He is also God who sanctifies you. What is this about? As we are born enslaved to sin and death, we can't even be interested to know this God. We are focused on ourselves. But the Holy Spirit comes and creates in us new hearts.

As Luther put it, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him." See, no one can decide to know this God as their God or to come to Him.

It is the Triune God who comes to you. "The Holy Spirit has called you by the Gospel, enlightened you with His gifts, sanctified and kept you in the true faith. [...] Here, "in this Christian Church He forgives daily and richly all sins to you and all believers, and at the last day will raise up you and all the dead, and will give to you and to all believers in Christ everlasting life."

Do you see how wonderful our Christian alternative is to the worldly obsession with me-myself-I. You have something infinitely better. They have 'me'. We have the Triune God for me!

Instead of deceiving yourself that 'I am in control', you have God the Father who is your Creator, God for you. Instead of boasting that you are good and moral person, you can boast in Jesus Christ, for He makes you good, and holy, by taking your sins and granting you His undeserved and unconditional forgiveness. He is your Redeemer. God for you!

Instead of being wise in your own eyes, and, in fact, blinded and fooled by sin, you have God the Holy Spirit enlightening you, making you truly wise and keeping you in one true, saving faith. He is God for you and with you.

Even if we can't comprehend the mystery of the Trinity, we can rejoice and marvel in how this Triune God desires to be our God, in how He provides

everything, everything for you, even as there is nothing in us that would compel Him to do that. He does it out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

So, how are we to respond to these undeserved gift and love? Luther puts it in simple words. For all this “I owe it to Him to thank, praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true.”

How can we do this? Jesus Himself tells us. “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

We just listed things that the Triune God does for us. Now, this is how He expects us to respond. Telling about Him to all nations, beginning with those people whom He has put in our life.

In our conversations bringing this God to all people, so that they can know Him as their God as well. For this is what He desires. This is what gives Him greatest joy. This is how we can express our thanks for everything He has done, does and has prepared for us as our God.

Let’s do whatever we can to respond to God’s grace. Let’s not be like people who think that God owes them anything. We owe Him everything, and our greatest thanks is when we proclaim His wonderful works to all people.

And when He says to us “do this”, let’s not pretend He doesn’t say it to us. He does. And as we try to respond to God’s grace in our imperfect and stumbling ways, sometimes with fear and trembling, remember Jesus’ words.

“All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me, and I am with you till the end of the age.” He is with you. Your God. God for you. So that you may belong to Him, and serve Him in everlasting blessedness. This is most certainly true.

And the peace of God that surpasses all our understanding, keep your minds and hearts in Jesus Christ. Amen.