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Sermon

May 30, Trinity Sunday

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (Rev 1:5-6 NKJ)

Our sermon text for this Trinity Sunday comes from 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, beginning with verse 4:

There are various kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of ministries, and yet the same Lord. ⁶ There are various kinds of activity, but the same God, who produces all of them in everyone. ⁷ Each person is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ To one person a message of wisdom is given by the Spirit; to another, a message of knowledge, as the same Spirit provides it; ⁹ by the same Spirit, faith is given to someone else; and to another, the same Spirit gives healing gifts. ¹⁰ Another is given powers to do miracles; another, the gift of prophecy; another, the evaluating of spirits; someone else, different kinds of tongues; and another, the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ One and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them to each one individually as he desires. ¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so also is Christ. ¹³ For by one Spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free people, and we were all caused to drink one Spirit.

This is the Word of the LORD!!!

Mercy, Grace, and peace are yours through your God and Father, and through His Son, Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Spirit, dear beloved of God!

“Two is company, but three’s a crowd.” Have you ever heard this phrase before? It’s often used in a romantic context. You wouldn’t want to be that pesky unwanted third, would you?

But here is another saying about a group of 3: “Three people can keep a secret if two of them are dead”. That was written by American founding father Benjamin Franklin. That’s a dramatic thing to say, but the truth behind it is this; the more people involved in something typically makes the situation more complicated. This idea brings to my mind a line from a recent movie: “Two people in a room can get more done than one hundred...Unless you need to move a piano.”

Today is Trinity Sunday. It is a unique Sunday. Every Sunday in the Church calendar is based off an event. Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost. But Trinity Sunday is the only Sunday in our Church year which is based on a doctrine. It’s a unique Sunday

dedicated to the most unique doctrine, the Holy Trinity.

Today we will bless the LORD, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As they are connected to each other, so too have we been made apart of the union of God. The Triune God is a God of unity and diversity. He is Three, and He is One. We, His people, are many. But we too are also one. He gives diverse gifts to many, but it is all for the singular purpose of serving each other and Him. We have all been made the body of Christ, a body with many members but the same united purpose. We pray: LORD, SANCTIFY US BY YOUR TRUTH, YOUR WORD IS TRUTH, AMEN!

Where do you find the word “trinity” in the Bible? Anyone? The reason why no one will come up with an example of the word trinity being used in the Bible is because it’s not in it. No passage ever says the word “trinity” or “triune” in the Bible. This is something that

other dominations love to point out to you. They would like you to think that one of the most foundational doctrines that we rely on is not biblical. But just because the word trinity is not in the Bible doesn't mean that the teaching of the trinity isn't there.

It certainly is. Our scripture readings prove this out. In Isaiah 6, you have the angels crying out "Holy, Holy, Holy". Three times for the three persons of the God head. Or, look at the great commission, the standing orders for the church today. What did Jesus say? **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"**

Sometimes it can be easy to miss. Let's look at the first few verses of our text here this morning. **There are various kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.** ⁵ **There are different kinds of ministries, and yet the same Lord.** ⁶ **There are various kinds of activity, but the same God, who produces all of them in everyone.**

Here Paul mentions the same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God. Spirit, Son, Father. They are all the same God, but they are also 3 distinct persons. He is One. He is Three.

While it is important to know this great concept, which this text clearly speaks to, we also need to see what the text says that Triune God does. There are various kinds of gifts, ministries, and activity, but they all come from the same God. The Holy Spirit gives all kinds of gifts. There are various ministries in which we serve the LORD, but they all come from and are based around the same Lord. And, there are all kinds of activities which all people perform. But the same God produces these things. One LORD, but many different things that He gives to us, His people.

Just like the LORD is divine but not divided, so too are the things He gives to us. You can't say that you are able to do something without first acknowledging that it is through the LORD that you are able to do it. He empowers us to do all kinds of things. It is only through Him that we can be any type of productive at all.

To one person a message of wisdom is given by the Spirit; to another, a message of knowledge, as the same Spirit provides it; ⁹ by the same Spirit, faith is given to someone else; and to another, the same Spirit gives healing gifts. ¹⁰ Another is given powers to do miracles; another, the gift of prophecy; another, the evaluating of spirits; someone else, different kinds of tongues; and another, the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ One and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them to each one individually as he desires.

Last week we talked about the gifts of the Holy Spirit which were given at Pentecost. There are certain church bodies out there that try to recreate these gifts, like the ability to speak in tongues. To them, it's proof that they have indeed been saved. But that's not what Pentecost was really about. It was about the Helper, the Holy Spirit, filling the believers with Him. Then, they were able to go on and do great things in the name of Christ.

The problem with striving for these gifts is that they produce a spiritual superiority complex. "I can speak in tongues, and you can't. Therefore, I have great faith and you do not!" But the gifts of the Spirit do not separate, rather they unify. They never divide.

Many people feel superior to others for a variety of reasons. But it's mostly based on things that they do not control. Things that were given to them. Look at how wealth often separates people. Just because someone is wealthy, whether or not they were born wealthy or they earned it themselves, it does not make them superior. The same can be said for looks, or social status, or athletic ability. They are all gifts. Why would someone be better than someone else when everything they have is given freely to them by God?

We like to feel better than others because of these things. But really that is missing the whole point of what we should do with what we have been entrusted with. We should use what God has given us for His glory. Use what God gave to you to give to others. This is how the body of Christ is built up.

God richly blesses us all. What has God given you? What are you blessed with?

This too can be easy to miss or easily dismissed. We often feel like we aren't talented, at least not like other people we know. But not only are we wrong when we think that, it also diminishes what your Giver God has given to you. Sometimes we are poor self-evaluators, and this produces low self esteem. But God has richly blessed us all! Maybe we are as talented as someone else. But each believer has been given gifts and talents by God. God want us all to use what He has given to us to serve Him and serve our neighbors.

But there is the other ditch which we just as easily fall into. On one hand, we don't think we are as skilled as someone else. We can be quick to think that. But we are just as quick to compare ourselves to others negatively as well. "At least I am not as bad as that person!" This is the downfall of all of our sinful natures. We are quick to dismiss how God has blessed us, and we are just as quick to justify ourselves by comparison to someone else. Both attitudes are sinful. Both lack truth.

When it comes to evaluating yourselves, do so with Biblical truth. First start with confession. Acknowledge the sin that you have done. Confession has nothing to do with anyone else beside yourself. I am sinful. It doesn't matter how it compares to anyone else. Don't be like the Pharisee who said, **"God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector."** Rather, be like that tax collector who **would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'** (Luke 18)

Then, see that your God has handled your sin. He did so through His Son going to the cross for your sin. This was the plan of the Father since the fall. And it is the Holy Spirit who has given you the gift of faith to be able to believe it. The LORD, the 3-in-1, gives you the ultimate gift of salvation. He gives you the gift to believe it. What more could we ask for?

What more? Much more! Not only does He give us the ultimate gift, He gives us other gifts to accentuate it! What gifts are mentioned here specifically? **a message of wisdom ... a message of knowledge, ...faith ... healing gifts ... powers to do miracles; ... the gift of prophecy ... the evaluating of spirits; ... different kinds of tongues ... the interpretation of tongues.**

This was written in the Apostolic age. Some had some of these gifts where we don't see them in the same way our times. Such as miracles and tongues. The Apostles did things that we would be foolish to try to attempt. But that doesn't mean that these same gifts aren't still given. They are, but just in different ways. Some are given wisdom. Some are given knowledge. There is a difference. Maybe you know someone who is wise but not knowledgeable. Maybe you know some one who knows a lot but isn't particularly wise. But both are still gifts! Some still have healing gifts. Maybe not in the way that the apostles healed. But some still have been given medical minds which heal and help people greatly today.

Case in point. I have the gift of interpretation of tongues while I don't have the gift of tongues. I have been trained to be able to understand Greek and Hebrew in my seminary training. But I can neither speak Greek or Hebrew. This is by no means to say I am a linguist or a scholar. But the LORD has blessed me through my education to be able to understand the original language's of the Bible for a working knowledge.

The whole point here is that we are given spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit for Spiritual reasons. **One and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them to each one individually as he desires.** There are also many other gifts which He gives that aren't mentioned. The point is that He gives to all of us different gifts. His gifts are diverse, and we see that in ourselves still. Some are talented in some areas, while others are talented in others. But it's all given for one single purpose. The reason why He gives

different gifts is for the single purpose of blessing the one body of Christ, that is, the Church!

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so also is Christ. ¹³ For by one Spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free people, and we were all caused to drink one Spirit.

We are many different people and personalities. But we all serve ONE LORD. We do so in different specific ways. But it all has the same goal.

We see this play out today. The Pastor serves the LORD in the office he is called to. But the other members of the congregation have the same calling through many different ways. How can you serve in your congregation? Maybe you have been blessed with the ability to teach. You can teach a Sunday School class, or even just family members. Maybe you are given the gifts to fix things. There are maintenance and upkeep issues for every church. Do so to serve the LORD! We are many different people. But we are all One in Christ!

Paul writes similarly in Romans: **For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. (Rom 12:3-5 NKJ)**

There are practical ways we do this. But the ultimate way we serve the LORD and our neighbor is to be His witnesses. No matter who you are or what your gifts are, you can still preach the gospel and proclaim Jesus. He, after all, is the one name given by which we must be saved. Maybe you would shy away from this idea. "I cannot speak boldly about Jesus, I don't know enough, or speak well enough, or am

brave enough to do that". But that is not true! Why am I so certain of this? Because it's not you who does this. It is the Holy Spirit who does the work of faith. You simply are the vessel that brings the Word through which He works so mightily. **For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord (2Ti 1:7-8 NKJ)**

It is a temptation to feel weak when it comes to our faith. But we aren't, we can't be! The faith inside of us is strong because that is its nature. We can succumb to the feeling of weakness, but that never means that faith the believes in Jesus for salvation is ever weak. It's the Almighty LORD who has given you this ultimate gift! So use it! Use it to serve Him! Use it to serve others. He gave His life to redeem you from sin and death forever. You now can use that same gift and give it to others.

Yes, many people have many strengths. They may be different from ours, but their gifts and strengths come from the same source as yours, THE LORD! We see this in the very LORD we worship. There are 3 different natures of God. But they are all the same LORD, they are One! We too are many different persons. But we are all one body, the body of Christ! We are united to our united LORD, so use those united gifts to serve His Gospel message!

Usually, the more people involved in something makes it all the more difficult to get things done. Three's a crowd. Two people in a room can get more done than 100... unless you need to move a piano.

The piano the Church needs to move is the biggest one. It is the weighty message of Christ crucified. One or two people is not enough. We all need to move it. We all have been called to do so. So that is what we will do. If you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together. We need to go far with the message of the Gospel. So we go together in the LORD. He has given us all gifts. The gifts many differ, but they are all given for the same purpose. We will go far with the Gospel message. We will do so with

what we have been blessed with. We are blessed by the same God. There are various kinds of gifts, kinds of ministries, and are various kinds of activity, but the same Spirit, Lord, and God who produces all of them in everyone. Let us all serve the same LORD, the 3-in-1, for we have been united in Him! AMEN!!!