

Trinity: Why Relationships Matter

John 17.24-26

Main Idea

There is One God in Three Persons who have been eternally Loving One another. We are created to participate in that love by loving the Son in the power of the Spirit to the Glory of the Father. We show that love by loving one another as Christ loved us.

Overview

Trinity Sightings/Boundaries:

- Creation: Genesis 1.26: From the beginning we see that God is an “Us”
- Jesus’ Baptism: Mark 1.9-11, etc.:
 - Father speaks of His love for the Son
 - Spirit descends and anoints the Son
 - The Son is ‘fulfilling’ all righteousness in Baptism
 - Three distinct Persons, all fully God
- Great Commission: Matthew 28.19:
 - Jesus says to baptize in the Name (singular) of the Father, Son, and Spirit
- Scripture frequently references this formulation: 2 Cor. 13.15, 1 Peter 1.2, John 14.6, Titus 3.4-6, etc.
- All Three Persons are Equally and Fully God

What is the Triune God doing?

- John 17.24-26:
- 1st Person of the Trinity Reveals Himself as “Father”
 - This tells us that God wants us to see Him primarily as a giver of life since to be a Father is to have given life
 - This is the “Name” that the Son has made known to the disciples (v 26)
 - The Father has given life to the Son by giving Him Glory that came “because” the Father Loved Him before the foundation of the World (v 24)
 - Before the creation of the World we see that the Father was loving the Son from forever which spilled out into glory
 - The Father is a life giver by loving to the point of glory
- The Son is revealed to us as Son in order that we would understand that, like any Son, we are the recipients of the Father’s love
 - The Son Loves the Father back (John 14.31)
 - The reason behind the Son’s obedience in the Gospel is to make known to the world they created that He loves the Father
 - By doing so, the Son mimics the Father’s love for Him by offering us life giving love that spills over into glory
- The Spirit is not a “force” or a “thing” but a Person (Helper, Counselor, “He”)
 - Since God never changes, we can learn what the Spirit does in the Trinity by seeing what He does for us in Christ:
 - John 14.15-17: He will help us obey Jesus’ commandments which will come as He makes it possible for us to Know God
 - John 15.26: The Father gives life (proceeds from Him) to “bear witness” or make known the Son (this is what the Father has been doing from eternity...the Spirit is enabling this)
 - John 16.13-15: The Son will guide us into Jesus (The Truth) and He will glorify Jesus...the very thing the Son and the Father have been doing towards one another

- In order for this to happen the Father has to set His affection UPON the Spirit and the Son UPON the Spirit to go back and forth to one another
 - In this way, the Trinity is forever sharing love towards One Another through the Power of the Person of the Spirit
 - The Father and the Son love the Spirit because He participates in this “love fest”
- Take away one of the persons of the Trinity and God fails to be able to Be God in that He fails to be the thing that is most fundamental to His nature...loving:
 - Consequently, God is One God...they have Oneness in the Three, Distinct Persons
- This explains both why Jesus would say that Loving the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and loving your neighbor is the fulfillment of the law since that is what God has been doing from eternity (Matthew 22.37-40, Romans 13.9-10, etc.)

How does this Apply to us?

- 1 John 4.7-8: To Know God is to Know God as Love since He IS Love:
 - If you do not love or are oriented towards loving God and others then you do not know God since this is what God does
- 1 John 4.9-11: Jesus came to make manifest this Love of God so that we might LIVE through Jesus
 - Jesus was sent by the Father (He gave life giving love)
 - Jesus showed the Love of the Father
 - The Spirit delivers the Love of God into our hearts through Faith
- Since God is in Community in Himself and we are created in His Image (Genesis 1.27) therefore we will never be complete unless we have meaningful, life giving, love filled relationships that are primarily oriented towards one another

Questions

Discussion Starter: *How did Sunday's service encourage you? Was there anything particular in the sermon that helped better understand the Trinity? How does this lead you to greater worship of God?*

1. Read Genesis 1:26-28. What's the importance of understanding we are created in the “image” of God who is an “us”?
2. Read John 17. What seems to be the main desire(s) of Jesus in this prayer, especially in verses 20-26 as it relates to believers. How does this desire reflect Jesus' relationship with the Father?
3. In verse 26 Jesus says, “I made know to them your name.” What name is Jesus making known? Can you think of places in Scripture where he taught this?
4. Why is it important to understand God as “Father”? Why would God choose to reveal Himself to us in this way? How does this encourage you?
5. In verse 24 Jesus says the Father “loved me before the foundation of the world.” What does this mean? How is the Holy Spirit involved in this love (c.f. Jesus baptism in Mt. 3:16-17)? How does this help us peer into the depths of the Trinity?
6. Read John 14.31. How does the Son respond to the glorious, life giving love of the Father? What does this tell us about love toward God?
7. Read John 14.15-17, 15.26, 16.13-15. What do we see God the Spirit doing? How does this help us share in the fellowship between the Son and the Father?
Jesus, being filled with the Spirit, obeys the Father in love. Love results in obedience. And How does the gospel reveal the love of the Father, love of the Son, and love of the Holy Spirit? Share how this encourages your heart, mind, and will.
8. Read John 13:31-35. Why is love such a powerful witness? How does this point to the nature of God and the good news of the gospel? How does this inform our need for loving relationships?

9. If we are not oriented towards loving as God loves (exciting a passion for Christ's glory) what does that say? Where have you seen this type of love manifest itself in the life of Restoration Church?

Accountability: In what ways are loving others? In what ways are you not?