

Spirit In God – 06.07.09

Introduction - We continue our series, Connected. Last week we talked about the Spirit in us. Today I'd like to talk about the Spirit in God. Today is Trinity Sunday, the one day each year on the church calendar when we consider the Trinity.

What does "Trinity" mean? God is one, yet exists eternally in three persons in the Godhead: (1) Father, (2) Son - Jesus Christ, Savior, (3) Holy Spirit. One eternal Deity has 3 eternal and essential distinctions: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "Three persons in one substance."

Six Aspects of Trinity that is Uniquely Christian:

1. The unity of God is basic. We say that Christianity is monotheistic. God is one, not several.
2. We affirm the deity of each of the three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each is qualitatively the same. The Son is divine in the same way and to the same extent as in the Father. Same is true of Spirit.
3. The threeness and the oneness of God are not in the same respect. Three persons, but one substance
4. The Trinity is eternal. There have always been three: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and all of them have always been divine. One or more of them did not come into being at some point in time, or at some point become divine. There has never been any alteration in the nature of the Triune God. *He is and always will be what he has always been.*
5. The function of one member of the Trinity may for a time be subordinate to one or both of the other members, *but that does not mean he is in any way inferior in essence.* This is a functional subordination to accomplish a given end, not a change in essence.
 - a. The Son did not become less than the Father during his earthly incarnation, but he did subordinate himself functionally to the Father's will.
 - b. The Holy Spirit is now subordinated to the ministry of the Son (John 14-16) as well as to the will of the Father, but this does not imply that he is less than they are.
6. The Trinity is incomprehensible. We cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He is the unlimited God and we are limited in our capacity to know and understand, so he will always exceed our knowledge and understanding.

You may be asking... "Why the theology lesson on the Trinity?"

- (1) Today is Trinity Sunday. It's worth knowing what we believe and affirm as Christ followers.***
- (2) There is also a living application to knowing this. It gives us some understanding of the mystery of how we live out the Christian life. We do it in relationship with God. We do it with the Help of God. How does this work?***

Jesus explained this exact message to us in John 14:15-26. It would be impossible to even begin to grasp this passage without some beginning comprehension of the Trinity - God is one, yet three persons. READ JOHN 14:16-26.

(Like peeling layers of an onion, from the outside in. Talk about *inclusio* and concept of wrapping the most important with matching sentences. We have something very much like that here.)

I. The Paraclete is our **CONNECTION** to the Godhead.
John 14:16, 26

Jesus begins and ends this section talking about sending us another Helper - Paraclete. Remember from last week that Jesus Himself is the first Helper and remains as such with the Father (1 Jn. 2:1).

Note the connection is “forever.”

There is a “remembering” and a “teaching” function of the H.S. (26)

II. This Connection - **THE PRIMARY DIFFERENCE**
between us and “the world”
John 14:17, 22

One of Jesus’ disciples actually asks this question: “How is it that you will show yourself to us and not to the world?” **Let’s consider this in detail:**

The world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. This is a gift to you from God. There is no obligation on God’s part to give His Holy Spirit, but He does so because He is a good and gracious God. We should recognize this gift and appreciate this gift.

“If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more with the Father GIVE the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”
Luke 11:13

We are told that the world cannot even “see” or “know” Holy Spirit. How did the disciples know the Holy Spirit? Note the two tenses:

1. “You know Him, for he dwells with you...” (17a) Speaking of Jesus dwelling with them. The Holy Spirit dwells with Jesus and while Jesus was with them, they knew the Holy Spirit because they knew Jesus.
2. But there was coming a time when Jesus would “go away” (16:7), when “the world will see me no more.” (v. 19)
3. Then we have the future tense. The Holy Spirit “will be in you.” (17) and “But you will see me.” (v. 19)
4. Summarize: The present tense, the disciples knew the Holy Spirit because they had the presence of Jesus with them. But, in the future, they would know Jesus because they had the presence of the Holy Spirit with them.

CHALLENGING CONSIDERATIONS:

How would knowing this CHANGE your perspective both of yourself with the Holy Spirit and of the world without the Holy Spirit?

A. Are you appreciative of the tremendous gift in and with you?

B. Are you more understanding of the world without the Holy Spirit?

How would you act around a blind person or a mentally handicapped person? Wouldn’t you tend to be MORE gracious? Wouldn’t you pray to God for them? For their healing? For them to have the same gift as you?

STORY OF MY GIFTS AND MY BROTHER: When I have something really neat, I want my brother to have it too! Recumbent bike, iPod, GPS, now Kindle. Why? Because I love him! I want to share!

THE PRIMARY SIMILARITY

III. This Connection - between us and the Godhead.

From our earlier teaching of the Trinity, we see 3 persons in one essence. There is a relationship of the three, loving one another. One “loves” the other. One is “in” the other.

Our relationship, *through our connection of the Holy Spirit*, has this same scenario - a relationship of “love” that leaves us “in” God. Without some understanding of the Trinity, it would be difficult for us to grasp these words from Jesus (not that it’s ever easy!):

- The Holy Spirit “will be in you.” (v.17)
- “Because I live, you also will live.” (v. 19)
- “I am in my Father.” (20a)
- “and you in me.” (20b)
- “and I in you.” (20c)
- “he who loves me will be loved by my Father...” (21a)
- “and I will love him.” (21b)
- “and manifest myself to him.” (21c)

I do NOT mean by this that we ever become God. We do not. We are finite, even if we live eternally. God is God and we are not. God is the Creator. We are the creatures.

It is clear, however, that God is love and love is relationship. It is clear that God has a deep desire to share Himself with us. He has provided His Holy Spirit as our connection point to the Trinity. Because of the Holy Spirit, you and I are “in” Jesus and Jesus is “in” the Father. If we love Jesus, the Father will love us back, as will Jesus.

All of this is possible because of the Holy Spirit! And it is possible because Jesus asked His Father to send us the Holy Spirit. And it’s possible because God the Father gave the Holy Spirit. The “giving” of the Holy Spirit is possible because Jesus gave His life. Jesus gave His life because the Father loved so much. The Father gives the Holy Spirit, but gives Him “in the name of His Son!” All three persons of the Trinity are involved in our salvation and in our relationship with God!

APPLICATIONS TO OUR CHRISTIAN LIVES:

- 1. We are not EVER by ourselves in this Christian experience.** The very definition of hell is to be apart from God. The very definition of heaven is to be in the Presence of God. Jesus tells us here that when I am in Christ, I am in the Father. When I love Christ, the Father loves me. Think of the the Trinitarian God loving and including you in His presence, surrounded by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and filled with His love.
- 2. God is NOT “out there” somewhere. He is “here” “in here” closer to you than you can imagine!** Some people imagine a God that starts everything and then leaves it to go on its own. Jesus does not teach of a transcendent God we cannot reach, but an involved God who reaches down and includes us in His life.
- 3. God does not love you in general... He loves you in particular!** You are NEVER a statistic to God. He loves you like His son. He adopts you. He doesn’t love His son in general, but specifically! He feels the same way about you!
- 4. God loves others, besides you, in the same way.** Because I experience this great grace and love, I extend it to other people.