

We worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Every Sunday is a Trinity Sunday as we begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. However, on this Sunday in particular, we focus on why it is that we believe that the Trinity is the one true God.

What makes true Christianity stand out from another religion such as Islam, Judaism, the Jehovah's Witnesses, or the Mormons is the centrality of Jesus. Today, we learn JESUS CHRIST REVEALS THE TRIUNE GOD.

First, let's talk about the Father. I. Throughout time, the Son of God reveals the Father. And that's the heart of our Gospel text today. Jesus is in another argument with the Jews. Jesus argues with them about what it means to honor the Father. What it means to glorify the Father. What it means to know who the Father truly is.

Earlier, John tells us **“No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.”** The Heavenly Father is invisible. We read elsewhere in the Bible the Father **“...dwells in unapproachable light, [and] no one has ever seen or can see.”** How does somebody make the invisible visible?

Jesus makes the Father known. Jesus told His disciple Philip, **“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”** Likewise, we read elsewhere in the Bible, **“[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”** Also, we read, **“[Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”** To put it in folksy terms, Jesus is the Father's selfie.

Let's pause and do some basic teaching on who Jesus is. We teach that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man. He became man at a specific point in history: when He was conceived in Mary's womb—life begins at conception, folks. However, Jesus was always fully God. We often refer to Christ before His conception as the Second Person of the Trinity, or the Son of God.

The Son of God has always existed. And when Jesus tells the Jews in today's text **“Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.”** Jesus is saying that He, as the Son of God, knew Abraham and visited him.

I'll make a bold claim here: every time in the Old Testament the Lord appears to an Old Testament person, it is the Son of God, the Second person of the Trinity. It was the Son of God who walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden. The Son of God wrestled with Jacob. The Son of God appeared to Moses in the burning bush. The Son of God was the one Isaiah saw in the vision of the throne room. The Son of God was the fourth man in the fiery furnace with the three young men in the book of Daniel.

What this means is that if you want to look into the heart of God, look at Jesus. Read the Gospels specifically and see how Jesus interacts with the crowds, the disciples, and His opponents, and see that that is the same God throughout the rest of Scripture. The Father may be invisible to us, but Jesus makes known what the Father did and does.

The question everyone seems to ask these days is the question of why could God let X happen? The War in Ukraine. The Uvalde Shooting. The personal tragedy in my life. Our Heavenly Father isn't some kind of puppet master who works in the shadows. He lays His cards out on the table. He demonstrates what He's about by sending Jesus to die for you.

So why did your mom die? Why did that kid get away with killing twenty-one people? Why does Putin get away with war crimes? I don't know. But on Trinity Sunday, I do know we have a Heavenly Father who demonstrates His love for us by sending His very image and exact imprint, Jesus Christ, to suffer, to bleed, to die, for you and for a broken and sinful humanity. By the way, He rose again too, and if that's any hint on the repair job He'll be doing later on, that's something to look forward to.

Moving along, we see that Jesus is indeed God. II. Through His earthly ministry, Jesus reveals Himself as God. This is perhaps a different side of the same coin, but Jesus is at pains to prove to people that He is the Lord, the God of the Old Testament. We read in our text from John 8 **“Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.”**

In John's Gospel especially, there are several “I am” statements of Jesus. And there's more there than meets the eye. When Jesus tells the crowds, “I am” He is linking it back to the incident with Moses and the burning bush. When Moses asks for God's name, God simply tells Him, “I am who I am.” In fact, the personal name of God, Yahweh, likely comes from the Hebrew word, “I am.” And so Jesus' claim that got Him killed ultimately was the claim that He is Yahweh. He is the Great I am.

A few years ago Rapper Kayne West came out with the album “Jesus is King.” Which is a good confession, but the Bible does one better. The earliest, simplest Christian confession is Jesus is Lord. Paul writes, **“if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”** Paul isn't just talking about making Jesus your personal Lord and Savior. Bob Dylan said you gotta serve somebody, but it's not just about who you serve.

To confess Jesus is Lord is to say that Jesus is Yahweh. Saving faith involves believing Jesus is king. But it's more than that. Saving faith proclaims that Jesus is the same God as the God of the Old Testament, that He *is* Yahweh, the

Lord, the Great I am. **“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”** There’s a reason why the Jews pick up stones when they hear Jesus say that. They knew Jesus was calling Himself God incarnate.

The point of Trinity Sunday is to understand that Jesus and the Father are two peas in a pod, they are inseparable. You can’t have one without the other. That is the unity in the Trinity. Do Muslims and Jews worship the same God as us? Do they worship Jesus? If not, then they don’t. Case closed.

Finally, III. Through His actions, Jesus demonstrates the ministry of the Holy Spirit. You’re probably wondering, Pastor, how were you going to fit in the Holy Spirit into this text? You’re right, the Holy Spirit isn’t mentioned in this text.

We are sinners in need of a savior. And even after the Holy Spirit brings us to faith, we still struggle with sin. To be a Christian means to live by the Holy Spirit rather than our fleshly desires. This side of the resurrection we will never fully live by the Spirit.

However, if you were to live a life with the Holy Spirit providing perfect direction and guidance this side of heaven, it would look almost exactly like the life of Jesus. Jesus demonstrates walking in the Spirit. In that way, every chapter and verse of the Gospels is a manifesto on the Holy Spirit, as we look to Jesus as the prime example of life lived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

So don’t throw away your “What Would Jesus Do” bracelet. Jesus through His earthly ministry is showing us how to live as Christians, yet we do this through the Holy Spirit alone.

Jesus said, **“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.”** The Holy Spirit’s job is to show you Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the Jesus fan club, the Jesus marketing board, even the Jesus delivery system. The Holy Spirit as true God, works tirelessly to make Jesus known.

And what we find is that as we know Jesus through His Word preached and read. As we know Jesus through baptismal waters washing over us. As we know Jesus through living that baptismal life of drowning to sin daily and rising again to new life. As we know Jesus through His body and blood coming to us in the Sacrament of the Altar, as we know Jesus through all these means—we find the Holy Spirit is right there with Him.

The Holy Spirit is not the silent member of the Trinity, He’s the loudest. If you knew how much hooting and hollering the Holy Spirit does, you’d file a noise complaint. But He’s always screaming, **“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”** So you forget sometimes that He’s there. You’re too busy looking at Jesus. And that’s the point, isn’t it? Jesus *is* how we get to know the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.