

The Holy Trinity
May 27, 2018

Romans 8:14-17
195-278-277-334

We Are Children of the Triune God

- I. Led by the Holy Spirit.
- II. Loved by the Father.
- III. Saved by the Son.

Dear Christian friends,

Trinity Sunday brings home a point even **many Christians** have forgotten or ignore - there is ONLY ONE **real** God. It does make a difference – a **difference for all eternity** – WHAT GOD a person believes in. Allah of the Moslems – the **“god”** of the Mormons and the JW’s – the thousands of gods and goddesses of the Hindus – the generic god of **society** and the **lodges** – they are all false gods. They are AS WORTHLESS as the **“golden calf.”** even though hundreds of millions of people fervently and devoutly worship them.

As important as knowing WHO is the real God JUST AS important is a **person’s individual relationship** with the **triune** God. That also has eternal consequences. Looking at these verses we can joyfully and confidently say, “WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE TRIUNE GOD!” We are 1)led by the **Holy Spirit**, 2)loved by the **Father** and 3)saved by the **Son**.

I. Led by the Spirit.

“Indeed, those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” It’s God the Holy Spirit who led us to **know** and **believe** in the triune God. Nobody in their **right mind** would ever come up with such a doctrine. It makes absolutely no sense. There is only one real God who **at the same time** is THREE separate and distinct Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Or to use the words of the Athanasian Creed, “The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, yet they are not three Gods, but one God.” There’s NO WAY you can explain that except to say GOD SAYS that’s who He is **so that’s who** He is. Who are we to TELL GOD who He **can or can’t** be?

The Holy Spirit has also led us into a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP with the **triune God** – He has made us children of the **triune** God. Nobody decides to **become** a Christian – the Holy Spirit makes us Christians. THROUGH the gospel the Spirit has led us to TRUST IN Jesus as our Savior from sin and death.

The Spirit also leads us in LIVING our Christian faith. Paul here has been talking about our living HOLY lives. He’s already said, **“To be sure, those who are in harmony with the sinful flesh think about things the way the sinful flesh does, and those in harmony with the spirit think about things the way the spirit does. Now, the way the sinful flesh thinks results in death, but the way the spirit thinks results in life and peace. For the mind-set of the sinful flesh is hostile to God, since it does not submit to God’s law, and in fact, it cannot. Those who are in the sinful flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the sinful flesh but in the spirit, if indeed God’s Spirit lives in you.”**

There is only ONE REAL God – the **triune**. God. There are only TWO KINDS of **people** – believers and unbelievers – Christians and heathens. A person’s life is **either** CONTROLLED by the Holy Spirit or by his **sinful nature**. EVERY Christian also has a sinful nature that every day fights God and leads us Christians into **all kinds** of sins. The **sinful nature** is daily battling the Holy Spirit trying to REGAIN CONTROL of our hearts. If the **Holy Spirit** is not in control – or is NO LONGER in control – of a person’s heart that person is NOT a Christian **no matter what** they may think.

Let’s be clear here. DAILY the Christian sins – and **daily** the Christian repents. It DOESN’T BOTHER the unbeliever – it **doesn’t bother** our own sinful natures – if we miss church – if we push God off to

the side. But AS CHRISTIANS ***“being led by the Spirit”*** that does bother us. If it DIDN'T we wouldn't be Christians any more.

We can look at our DAILY **Christian lives** and wonder if we **really are** Christians. Here too the Spirit helps us. ***“The Spirit himself joins our spirit in testifying that we are God's children.”*** The Spirit testifies to us THROUGH His Word – ***“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”*** We don't base our relationship with the **triune God** on the lives we live as Christians but SOLELY on Jesus and all He's done for us. Through Word and sacraments the Spirit points us to Jesus as our Savior – He keeps ***“our eyes fixed on Jesus”*** – FOR THE ASSURANCE that in Jesus we really are children of the **triune God**.

II. Loved by the Father.

The Spirit has led us to **know** and **believe** in the LOVE of God the **Father**. We call God our ***“Father”*** because He is our CREATOR. All three Persons of the Holy Trinity **were involved** in creating the world but it's especially the work of the Father WHAT A WORLD He made for us! **Even though** we no longer live in the Garden of Eden it's still a fantastic world!

The reason we no longer live in a perfect world is that little three letter world that **begins** with “s” and **ends** with “n” and has a big “I” in the middle. Sin is putting “I” – self - AT THE CENTER of everything in place of God. Sin is not letting God BE GOD of our lives. God may say what He wants but I'll decide if I want to do it or not. God may have HIS IDEAS of **how I should live** my life but I'll be the FINAL JUDGE. Do you know some people who think like that? That the society we live in! That's ALSO your sinful nature – and **mine!**

Pushing God out of the picture doesn't make God disappear. We can ignore and avoid – even FOOL – **other people** – but you can't get away with that with the **triune God**. Go back to that OT reading – Isaiah summoned into the presence of the **holy God**. ***“I am doomed! I am ruined,”*** Isaiah cried out, ***“because I am a man with unclean lips, and I dwell among a people with unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the LORD of Armies!”*** God's holiness is REAL. Our sin and guilt are ALSO REAL. The holy God REALLY SHOULD send us to the **eternal realities** of hell.

But WHAT A LOVE our heavenly Father has for us. ***“For you did not receive a spirit of slavery so that you are afraid again, but you received the Spirit of adoption.”*** The Spirit has given us the JOY and the CONFIDENCE that **for Jesus' sake** God has forgiven all our sins. Trusting in Jesus we DON'T HAVE to be afraid of God or wonder what kind of mood He's in. **Trusting in Jesus** there's no need for us to HIDE from God or avoid Him. God LOVES us!

In Jesus we have received ***“sonship.”*** That's actually a legal word. God the Father so loves us that He's ADOPTED us – given us the LEGAL STANDING of being **His own** children. **Yes** we have ignored and defied and **disobeyed** Him. **Yes**, we've hurt God in **so many ways** – so disappointed Him and taken advantage of His **grace** and **goodness**. Our heavenly Father doesn't say, “It's OK – don't worry about it.” But He does say, “It's ALL FORGIVEN **because** of Jesus. You are My child – My DEAR, dear child!” WHAT LOVE!

So ***“we call out, “Abba, Father!”*** Abba is what a little Hebrew child would call as he came running to his dad. ***“Abba, Father!”*** That's not a TIMID WHIMPER but a cry of love and **confidence**. This is MY “Abba” – He loves – He'll help me. WHAT A LOVE to be able to call God our ***“Abba, Father!”***

III. Saved by the Son.

“Now if we are children, we are also heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.” It's all because – and ONLY because – of Jesus that we are ***“children of God.”*** Jesus – the Second Person of the Holy Trinity – took on our human flesh and blood – took our place under God's law – and took care of everything to save us. **With Jesus' perfect life** every commandment has been **perfectly**

obeyed. With **Jesus' innocent** sufferings and death on the cross all sins of **all** people have been PAID IN FULL. With Jesus' **triumphant resurrection** from the dead death and the devil have been defeated. WITH JESUS we have a whole new relationship with God. We are the redeemed, beloved – FORGIVEN – children of the **triune** God.

We are so loved – so blessed – but we are also called to **“suffer with Christ.”** Being a Christian is not God's promise of an EASY life. Right after this Paul deals with **“our present sufferings.”** Read Romans 8 in your devotions this week. You'll be glad you did. You'll find yourself going back to it **again and again.**

We also suffer JUST BECAUSE **we are** Christians. **As Christians** we have different morals and **values** and priorities than unbelievers do. They don't like that. Look at how our country is becoming more and more ANTI-Christian. **How dare** you say homosexuality or **abortion** or **living together** are sin – say that only Christians are going to heaven. We say that BECAUSE GOD SAYS that. But rather than FACE UP to their sin and **repent** so many just want us Christians to SHUT UP.

As Christians we not only have to STAND UP to the unbelieving world but ALSO TO our own sinful natures. **As Christians** we are called to **“deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus.”** EVERY DAY we have to tell our sinful natures, “NO, I can't live like that. I'm a Christian – a child of the **triune** God.” It's NOT EASY or FUN **doing that** when everybody else has **no problem** with it. But God's forgiveness is NEVER God's permission to **keep on** sinning.

Now we **“suffer with”** Jesus. ONE DAY we will **“inherit”** with Jesus – share **“in His glory.”** SAVED by Jesus we can confidently look forward to eternal life in heaven the moment we die. WHAT A LIFE that will be – God having **“made everything new”** – having **“wiped every tear from our eyes.”** When you get frustrated fighting that **“good fight of faith”** look again at the goal – the VICTORY of heaven. Then you'll say as Paul does in the very next verse, **“I consider that our present sufferings are not worthy comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”**

Led by the Holy Spirit – loved by the Father – saved by the Son. WE ARE children of the **triune** God. Our God is the ONLY REAL God. He's ours to cling to – ours to SHARE with the world. Amen.

Hymn #277