

Confessing Our Faith

Trinity, Alamogordo

Proverbs 22-31

6-6-2022

This is Trinity Sunday. It is a day when we reflect on our Triune God and the wonderful blessings He has bestowed upon us. On this Festival of the Holy Trinity we enter a realm of mystery. We celebrate and worship God, whose ways are beyond human understanding, whose nature is beyond the grasp of our small minds. We confess Jesus, the carpenter's son from Nazareth, to be **“God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God.”** However, all too often we try to bring God down to our level of understanding.

In the book of Job (11:7) Scripture addresses this issue when it asks, **“Can you fathom the mysteries of God?” “Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?”**

In spite of Scripture reminding us not to do so, we often try to do just that. We try the impossible. Over the years a large number of people have tried to limit God to their human ability to reason things out. These people refuse to believe that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are true God. They think of God as a physical person who can not be three in one. They even deny John 4:24 which says **“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”**

This action led to extensive efforts by theologians to show from Holy Scripture that man can in no way think like God thinks or act like God acts. We are reminded of that in Isaiah 55:8 which reads, **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.”**

Our forefathers in the faith put a great deal of effort into creating our Scriptural confession of faith in the Nicene Creed. That took place in AD 325. The Nicene creed confesses that Jesus is, in fact, true God. Toward the end of the fifth century, another creed was written that delved further into the mystery of the Holy Trinity. That creed is the Athanasian creed which we just confessed a few moments ago. This creed teaches that it is a basic foundation to the **“Catholic faith.”** This reference is not to what the Catholic church teaches, rather is a reference to what some refer to the **“Universal Faith.”** In other words, this is what the true Church of all times and all places has confessed,

What is important for us to understand is that both of these creeds are based on Holy Scripture. If we carefully search to find what the Scriptures say about Jesus and His role in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, this is what we will find:

Jesus is True Man

The Bible clearly calls Jesus a man. He was born in Bethlehem of a human mother. He had hands and feet, flesh and bones, a soul. He exhibited all the usual traits and emotions of a human being: He was hungry; He was thirsty; He got tired out; He slept; He suffered pain; and He died.

In all respects Jesus was a human being like every human who ever lived – except in one thing. Jesus never sinned. Only in this way was Jesus different from other men.

As a human being, Jesus was naturally inferior to the Father. He called the heavenly Father **“greater than I”** (John 14:28). As a man, Jesus prayed to the Father, tried to do the Father’s will, and lived in humble submission to the law of God.

It is necessary for the Christian to know that Jesus was a human being, but if we stop here and see Jesus as only a human being, we make the greatest mistake of our lives.

Why? Jesus Is Also True God.

Although Jesus’ mother was a human, His Father was God Himself. Jesus was recognized as the Son of God by His follower – by John the Baptist, by an angel, and by the heavenly Father Himself, speaking in a voice from heaven. This happened when Jesus was baptized. The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus and God the Father said, **“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”** (Matt 3:17)

We might wonder exactly what the title **“Son of God”** means, because the Bible also describes believers as **“sons of God,”** but there’s a big difference. Christians are not natural sons; they’ve been adopted into the family. Jesus is the **“one and only Son.”** (John 3:16) He is unique – one of a kind.

Old Testament prophecy pointed out that the Child who would be born as Messiah, the Son who would come, was none other than the “**Mighty God**” (Is. 9:6). His name would be “**Immanuel,**” which means “**God with us**” (Matt. 1:23).

Jesus is true God, who has appeared to the world in human, fleshly form. In Him is all the fullness of the divine nature. If we look closely at the Biblical witness, we note that Jesus shows the characteristics of divinity, attributes that He can possess only because He is God.

Jesus is eternal. The Child born in Bethlehem existed from everlasting. Before the time of Abraham, He was. Before the world was made, He existed, sharing glory with the Father. He was, is, and will be present with all of His people everywhere, just as He has promised.

Jesus knows everything. He has power over all things. He has supreme power over the spiritual world, over the church, over the forces of nature and the entire universe. He is superior to all created things because He Himself was involved in the creation of the world. As the very first words in John’s gospel tell us, “**without him was not any thing made that was made.**” Through Him all things are preserved.

Jesus not only has the power to perform miracles and heal diseases, but He also has the power to forgive sins. He shares with the Father the power and the privilege of raising the dead. Indeed, Jesus Himself states that He has the power to grant eternal life.

Can any mere human make the same claims that Jesus did? Has any man in history ever possessed any of these qualities? No. Such powers and authority belong only to God, and they prove what the Bible says – that Jesus is God and is to be blessed forever!

As Jesus died and rose again to give us forgiveness, He ascended back into heaven. But, before He did that, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to us and He did. Having just celebrated Pentecost, we got to see the power of the Holy Spirit as He creates faith in us and guides and directs us. When we study God’s Word, we quickly see that the Triune God is with us today.

Each week as we gather to worship – to pray, praise, and give thanks – we are not asked to explain God’s might or to understand why He is merciful to sinners like us. We need only confess, by God’s grace, that our faith in the Triune God is **“most certainly true!”**

We confess the mystery that Jesus Christ is true God and true Man. We confess the mystery that through the death of this Jesus the debt for all our sins has been paid. We confess the mystery that by the resurrection of Jesus, all who believe in Him will live forever. We confess the mystery that although we are sinners, through the blood of Jesus we are also God’s holy people. We confess the mystery that in, with, and under the bread and wine of the eucharist we receive the body and blood of Jesus. We confess the mystery that through the washing of water and the Word in Baptism, we were adopted as God’s children. We confess the mystery that through faith in Jesus’ death, we have an open door to a new life with Him forever.

On this day we rejoice that we are not asked to understand but only to believe, as a child might, that we can say with confidence, **“Jesus loves me; this I know.”** On this day, we rejoice that we are not asked to explain but only to proclaim, so that all the world may know His name, from the smallest to the greatest – to know and believe that Jesus saves sinners, which includes each one of us.

We don’t pretend to be wise. We don’t understand even one of the mysteries. We don’t need to. Christ is our Wisdom! All thanks to Him, and all glory to our loving Triune God. No matter how bleak the future may look for our world, our Triune God is faithful and will never abandon us.

As you look to the future, pray for a strong faith, pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and direct you, that you may keep your eyes focused on our Lord and Savior. Walk daily with the Lord until He calls you home. Amen

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen