

The title for today's message is: **Can We Really Believe In The Holy Trinity?**

Jesus said: **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

A preacher proudly boasted that he doesn't preach doctrinal sermons. There boring he said and besides, people don't understand, or relate to them.

He continued to say; I'm a preacher and not a theologian. I get down to the practical issues, such as Christ crucified.

Well, this preachers way of thinking is very wrong, the fact is he is wrong when he says that he isn't a theologian.

You see the fact is, everyone to a certain extent, is a theologian. Look, theology is nothing more than what you think and believe about God.

I would also take issue with him when he claims that he doesn't preach theology, rather he preaches practical issues such as Christ Crucified.

Now in my way of thinking there is no difference in good theology and good practice. Good, solid theology gets right down to the very core of our existence.

Finally, I would disagree with him when he says the only kind of preaching a pastor should do is Christ crucified.

I know that is what the Apostle Paul said but this preacher doesn't mean what Paul meant. This preacher is saying that he only preaches Christ crucified.

Now, I submit to you that the cross, Christ crucified is not central in theology; but rather, it is Christ Himself.

Now the idea of the Holy Trinity is not actually stated as a doctrine in the scriptures. Yet, by implication its stated many times.

The early Christians soon discovered that they couldn't speak of God without speaking of the three ways in which he had revealed Himself to them.

This in no way means that there are three Gods. Rather it means that there is one God, who has shown Himself in three ways, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Now Let's look at these three different persons this morning: First, we affirm God the Father. So the issue is not whether or not there is a God.

A Gallop pole shows that 96 percent of all Americans believe in the existence of a God in some form or another.

Yet, the real question is what kind of a God? Now, according to Thomas Jefferson, God is like a big cosmic watchmaker.

He created the universe and wound it up and let it go. So some say the world is now in the process of letting itself run down.

Meaning that God has completely detached Himself from His creation. And others like to say that there indeed, once was a God, but that He is now dead.

They say that the God of the universe so completely poured Himself into the person of Jesus Christ, that when Jesus died on the cross God Himself died.

Now, these views are foreign to the Christian way of thinking. We affirm that the same God who molded the universe.

Also cares about what happens in our life. Indeed, he is actively and mysteriously involved in helping to shape the events of our life.

The fact that we refer to the first person of the Holy Trinity as Father says something about what God is like.

In fact, Jesus went so far as to refer to God not only as Father but as Abba, which in the Hebrew means “Daddy.”

Can you imagine referring to the creator of an endless universe, the creator of countless solar systems as, Daddy?

When I was a child I used the word dad or daddy. Then when I went into high school I became sophisticated.

So, I dropped the word daddy and started using the word “father.” But now I have come full circle, and I am back to using the word “dad again.”

If we could only think of God as that loving daddy who waits patiently for us while we foolishly wonder off and do our own thing.

Then, when we have come to ourselves, He is there to meet us at the door and joyfully take us back.

It’s easy to think of God as the omnipotent, holy other, righteous, all-powerful, judge.

These are all traits of the divine and we must indeed learn to think of Him in these terms.

But if our Christian understanding of the nature of God is to be correct, then we must also learn to think of God as.

Our kind, sympathetic, understanding, compassionate, gentle and loving Father.

To be sure there are stern images of God in the Old and New Testaments, even in the Gospels themselves.

But the love of God is the major emphasis, which runs throughout the Bible. The prophet Jeremiah caught the true message when he heard God say: “I have loved you with an everlasting love.”

There’s a great misunderstanding among some Christians even today who say that when Christ came to earth God the Father somehow changed.

Where He had been stern and judgmental, they would say, He now became loving and compassionate.

It’s easy for us to say that God changed when Christ came and lived among us. Yet the fact is, God is unchanging.

God’s divine purpose has always been one of redemption and love. And there was nothing wrong with the law He gave to Moses and the Jews.

What was wrong is our turning it into an end in itself. The very reason of creation itself is that God is a God of overflowing love.

The result of that love was life itself. Secondly, we affirm a belief in the Son, Jesus Christ.

We say that God took on human form, came and lived among us, suffered the same trials that we suffered, experienced the same feelings that we experienced.

Jesus was purely human and purely divine. Jesus was not God. Jesus is God, incarnate. There is a difference.

Jesus never drew attention to Himself but always pointed to God. God came and lived, among us. And I’m glad that this happened for two reasons.

One, it shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is with us, that He is on our side, and that He loves us.

Secondly, it gives us a first hand look of what the mind of God is really all about.

When people ask what God is like, we point to the person of Jesus Christ. Look, God Himself is incomprehensible.

But in Jesus Christ, this incomprehensible God makes Himself knowable as we get a glimpse of His glory.

That's what God is like. That's the God we say we believe in when we say we believe in Jesus Christ.

Finally, we affirm a belief in the Holy Spirit. Who is the Holy Spirit? Let's see In the Nicene Creed we say:

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.*

The Modern Affirmation, words it like this: *"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ and find strength and help in time of need."*

Put it yet another way. The Holy Spirit is the infinite become intimate. It is the Beyond that is within.

It's the realization of the presence of the Living God and a intimacy with God. That's what the Holy Spirit brings to our lives.

And herein lies a danger. We must be careful lest we identify the work of the Holy Spirit with our own deep feelings and impulses.

Whether it's the capital punishment of heretics as was done in the middle ages or the moving of pedophile priest from church to church today.

The church has sanctioned some horrible behavior under the guise of “It seems good to us and to the Holy Spirit.”

We will be speaking more of the Holy Spirit as the season of Pentecost progresses. I would simply like to close with this thought on the Holy Trinity.

It perhaps might help us to understand this doctrine better if we word it this way.

*God the Father who is for us, God the Son who is with us, and God the Holy Spirit who is within us.*

Look, we cannot begin to fathom the incomprehensible mysteries of God, but that does not mean that we cannot know God, and accept His mysteries.

Amen

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.