

TRINITY SUNDAY

June 7, 2020

“Be Still and Know That I Am God”

St. Matthew 28:16-20

Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 2155 N. Oakland Ave., Decatur Illinois
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Dear Friends in Christ,

In 1960 Joe Jones introduced a song entitled, "You Talk Too Much." Here are the lyrics:

You talk too much, you worry me to death,
You talk too much, you even worry my pet....

You talk about people that you don't know,
You talk about people wherever you go....

You talk about people that you've never seen,
You talk about people, you can make me scream.
You just talk, you talk too much.

Again, that was from 1960. It fits better with 2020. I don't want to *talk* about it but this is a horribly troubled and vicious world! This is Trinity Sunday, and I wonder if His words will, as we would say in the old days, "click"; these words:

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD (Ps 46:10)

Some Doubted.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted." (vv. 16-17).

Isn't that astounding? The eleven remaining, original disciples witnessed our Lord's suffering, death and resurrection. They worshiped Him, but **some doubted**. It's no different than the fact that there are "disciples" today who will question the truth and clarity of Scripture.

II. God Is...

"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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...'" (v.18).

Jesus is God. All authority is His. Recall this moment that took place around 1500 years before Christ entered this world in the flesh:

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers...has sent me to you.' This is my name forever..." (Ex. 3:13-15a).

Connect that Scripture with these words of Jesus to the Jewish authorities who were questioning Him: "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, **I am**.'" (Jn. 8:58.). Abraham was long before Moses. Jesus said *I AM* "before Abraham was." And with that, the leaders attempted to stone Him to death. Why? Because He said He is The LORD. God!

Consider the moment when Peter confronted the man, Ananias, who had made a vow to God and then broke it. Peter said to him, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to man but to God." (Acts 5:3-4). The Holy Spirit is God.

Recall Jesus' Baptism. We're told:

"And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God (The Holy Spirit) descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven (The Father) said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Matt. 3:16-17).

This text and Jesus' commission to the church to make disciples by "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," clearly demonstrate The Three Persons of the Trinity. And all the Scriptures that have been cited impress upon us what we confess from the Athanasian Creed:

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord; and yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord.... there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits (Three persons. One God).

With that in front of us, I ask you, as carefully as possible, to listen to the following verses from the Book of Isaiah, the 45th chapter; excerpts from verses 5-22:

"I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other (vv. 5-6)... For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!); I am the Lord, and there is no other (v.18)... And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me (v.21b)... Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. (v. 22).

This is what we confess. There is only one God, the Triune God. And we must put these words of Jesus with what we confess: "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him." (Jn. 5:22-23). How is it that so many, many who claim to be Christian can conclude we should honor the gods of other religions, or that we cannot say that Christ is the only Way unto eternal life? We're talking about the One who says, "whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."

III. Go therefore...

And so, Jesus says:

"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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (vv. 19-20).

This is our assignment, dear brothers and sisters. It hasn't changed one bit. God help us and have mercy on us as the world grows darker and darker with corruption and violence. As Jesus said: “And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.” (Matt. 24:12). Everything will worsen! But Jesus followed that with two very important goals for us. First, “But the one who endures to the end will be saved.” (v. 13). Endure doesn't imply anything but clearly indicates that the walk with Christ will have what we call hard to very hard moments. Second, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (v. 14). Let's remember: The gospel will be proclaimed as a testimony - not the thought that the church will win the world. Then follows the end. It would seem that we are not far away from that last moment. Maybe today!

And we are to be about the business of making disciples. Each of us. And we are given two ways to make disciples. First, by “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” that is, in the name of the Triune God. Second, “teaching them to observe all - not selective parts - but “all that” Jesus has commanded. As Scriptures say: “...the gospel is the power of God for salvation.” (Rom. 1:16). And God says through Jeremiah: “...let him who has my word speak my word faithfully....Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? (Jer. 23:28-29).

Concerning the first disciples and us, Jesus prayed:

“I have given them your word....I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth...

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe (that's us) in me through their word...”. (Jn. 17:14-16,20).

This is Trinity Sunday. This is the day we consider the love of the Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - Who, in Christ, has done all things necessary to win forgiveness and everlasting life for us. In the meantime, He promises, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (v. 20b).

And so, in the midst of the trials of life - the hard to very hard moments, the dying and death - He comforts us with: **Be still and know that I am God.** God help us. Amen.

Pastor William K. Abbott