

# Holy Trinity, the Eternal Family

by Michael Flowers

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*The Holy Trinity is the nature of God as one divine essence in three divine persons, and it is the foundation of our faith and mission.*

**Duration:** 17:36

**Scripture:** Ephesians 3:14

**Topics:** "Trinity"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the Holy Trinity - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The preacher explains that Jesus revealed the nature of God as a communion of infinite love within the Holy Trinity. The sermon highlights the belief in Jesus Christ as the only Son of God, who came down from heaven, was crucified, rose again, and ascended into heaven. The preacher also emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit as the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the mission of the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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## Transcript

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart and all of our hearts be pleasing to Thee, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen. Trinity Sunday is a contemplation of the inner life of God as a communion of love, one divine essence, one divine being, one divine life, revealed as three divine persons in eternal relationship as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Now, it's through the life and teachings of Jesus at his baptism, at the Annunciation where the Holy Spirit conceived Jesus in the womb of Mary, there's many places where we began to see the Trinity at work. And it's through his life and teachings that the early Christians came to understand the nature of God as three distinct persons or expressions of the one divine life, mutually indwelling, co-inhering and relating as a divine family, a divine family whose name is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We might not think of the name of God being Trinitarian, but Jesus said, baptize them in the name, singular.

God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit. Jesus confers this name on the mission of the church, as I mentioned, to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, immersing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Christians are those who, through faith, have been immersed by water and of spirit into this divine life, into this communion of infinite love, as we say in the Eucharistic prayer, Holy and Gracious Father, in your infinite love.

So it's been an immersion into a communion of infinite love, eternal love, shared within the inner life of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, a holy family of one God, one divinity of three persons. The whole mission of Jesus was to reveal the one true God as Father. To show us the Father.

And to call the nations to worship the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Paul describes him. The Father is the God and Father of the Son. The Lord Jesus Christ.

Though the Lord Jesus Christ shares the same divinity with the Father. The fatherhood of God has nothing to do with the misconstrued attack on the theological language of the Bible as patriarchy. Patriarchy has gotten a really, really bad name, and it's used to describe the gendered terms even for God in the Bible.

We would have to argue with Jesus himself to change that wording, even though it's being done throughout much of the church. It's not our idea. So there are those who seek to wipe out the gendered language of the Bible and so doing make a grave theological error.

It's misunderstanding the whole foundation from eternity into time and space. Ultimately, we are in relations with God as Father because he is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This father has a son, and this is why he is a father, right? This father has a family, and that's why he is a father.

Father is his name. And it's not symbolic. But spiritually, one who generates life, life eternal.

The son is eternally begotten of the father. Fathers beget mother's birth. The son is eternally begotten of the father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God of one being essence with the father of the same divinity.

You could say it's one divinity with three persons, Jesus, the son of the father. And our great high priest now participates with us in praying the prayer he gave us. Conferring on us a fully adopted status as Abba's children, praying our father.

He is our father because he is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing this right in the introduction, just those thoughts alone, how could we confer patriarchy on the words of Jesus? Patriarchy in a negative, derogative way of looking at it, that is. Family and fatherhood is not a human invention or a cultural development alone.

No, we do not read anthropomorphic ideas back into God, but we read theopromorphic truth into us. We're not projecting onto God human characteristics. God gives us the divine characteristics because we are made in his image and likeness.

See how we twist this and turn it around very, very easily. The earthly family is being deconstructed by none other than the father of lies. There's another father in contention with the father.

He's called the father of lies by Jesus himself. The father of lies, Satan himself knows full well where family is derived. He used to be in that family and he chose to leave and to lead all of us out of the father's family.

You have an enemy. And we have one who has overcome that enemy. The son of the father in whom we dwell.

We're in the son and the son is in us by his spirit because of his redemptive work. Therefore, family comes from God. Family comes from God.

Our father, who created human beings, male and female, to be united together in communion with the divine family, the Holy Trinity. You don't get this on the news. That's why we need to teach theology, right? This is why Paul prays Ephesians 3:14 and following.

For this reason, I bow my knees before the almighty one, the supreme being. No, I bow my knees before the father, not just any old father, but the father. Perfected in love who cast out all fears.

For this reason, I bow my knees before the father from whom get this verse 15, Ephesians 3:15, from whom every family in heaven. And on earth is named, it comes from God. This is not a human cultural institution.

God gave us the idea of family because it is first generated in him eternally. It's a beautiful thing to think, isn't it, that according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power. Here's the Trinitarian thing going on, bowing his knees before the father, strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being so that Christ, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

That you being rooted and grounded in love and God is love, it's being rooted and grounded in Christ, being rooted and grounded in love, ontological love, not the kind of love that we strive to develop, but it's love, perfected love, unconditional love, eternal. Rooted and grounded in God, who is love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ. Oh, St. Aidan's, that we may know the love of Christ.

That surpasses knowledge. That you may be filled with all the fullness of God. You see, the juxtaposition that you may know the love of Christ and filled with all the fullness.

Paul is just saying one thing, but he's breaking it down, filled with God, filled with love, strengthened by his spirit, it's all one operation of the father and the son and the Holy Spirit. Now, historically, since the second century by Tullian, this has come to be known and described as the Holy Trinity. He was the first to actually use the word and as today's Eucharistic preface, for with your co-eternal son and Holy Spirit, you are one God, one Lord in Trinity of persons and in unity of being.

And we celebrate the one and equal glory of you, oh, father and the son and of the Holy Spirit. So today, I pray that we would not think about this mystery as merely a philosophical construct, something for people to ponder who have too much time on their hands. This is not the way we receive the teaching of the Holy Trinity.

We pray the truth of the Holy Trinity. We receive the life through the spirit of the Holy Trinity. We are immersed through baptism into that life of the Holy Trinity.

It's way, way beyond a philosophical construct, something that Jesus reveals to the church. We should receive it as two things, at least as an affirmation of faith as expressed throughout the scriptures and in the creeds and as a call to mission. The creeds call us to affirm this faith, we believe in one God, the father almighty, he's father, he's not just the almighty, he's father almighty.

If you're not praying to a force, you're praying to something so incomprehensibly loving that you can't get your head around it, but he's more than a force. And he can be forceful, he can be forceful, but he's not the force, he's the source. There you go.

He's the father almighty, he's the maker of heaven and earth. We believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary and so forth. So right there in the beginning of the Nicene Creed, before they actually address the Holy Spirit at the end, the Trinity is right there in the beginning, conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was conceived in the womb of the Virgin by the very Holy Spirit himself. It's a Trinitarian work because the father sent the son and the spirit conceived of the divine logos in the womb of Mary and he became man. Amen.

The name of the Holy Trinity is a call to mission, not just any mission, but to the mission of God, God's mission in the world. As part of his apostolic people, we are sending today Anita in Georgia off to Zambia and we're sending Lisa next week off to Uganda. And then within a month, we'll be receiving missionaries, Trevor and John of Connect Africa, and they will be preaching and sharing and spending a good week or so with us.

And so. This is what the Holy Trinity does, the Holy Trinity is in the work of completing the mission and Jesus gives us that mission first by being immersed into the life of the Holy Trinity in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit. Go do it.

So let's never forget that Christ revealed the nature of God and what we've come to call the Holy Trinity and calls us to his continued mission in the world, first by immersing us into the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, the divine family, a communion of infinite love and thinking about today's readings. May we be like that humble bush. We're kind of like that humble bush, we need the flame, we need the eternal flame to come upon us that doesn't consume us somewhat like the incarnation.

The very life of God came into the womb of Mary and it didn't consume her. She became a bush of flame with the life of God. May we, too, become a bush of flame set aflame by God's burning love, his burning fire of love, that living presence of God who dwells in us, the spirit of adoption, who cries Abba father in the name of the father and the son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen. Let's stand together and we will affirm our faith in this Trinitarian life. We believe in one God, the father, the almighty maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only son of God, eternally begotten of the father, God from God, light from life, true God from true God, begotten, not made of one being with the father. Through him, all things were made for us and for our salvation. He came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit.

He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary and was made man for our sake. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried on the third day.

He rose again in accordance with the scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life who proceeds from the father and the son with the father and the son. He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Seated for the prayers of the people this morning.

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