**May 26th 2024 Trinity Sunday**

**Text: Matthew 28:18-20** 0723

**Theme: Into All the World.**

May the grace of God the Father ever flow ceaselessly to you all, may the redemption of God the Son grant peace and comfort to your heart, and may God the Holy Ghost grant His Word unto you all that we may be evermore kept in Him. Amen. Dear Trinitarian Christians: Today we are blessed with the opportunity to remember and recognize who the true God is, and what He has done for us. Now I know that Trinity Sunday does not hold the cultural appeal that Easter does, and to an even greater extent, that Christmas does. There is no gift giving today, no family traditions, no bog meals, no celebrations, but that does not mean that today is any less important a day than the rest. You see, by nature mankind at large knows the existence of a God, who rules over all things. This is seen clearly by creation itself. Just as when we see a towering skyscraper and assume that it had a designer and builder, so too, when we look at the world, the universe, our own bodies, any serious and thoughtful person will conclude that there must have been a designer and builder at their origin. We hear: *“For every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God.” (Heb. 3:4)* So-called science would have us believe something else, that a series of accidents and coincidences led to all life that we see, and the order that we observe. Yet the ideas brought forward by the theory of evolution are nothing more than fabricated tales, told by those who wish to deceive the masses of people, and turn their attention from their Maker to something else. The second natural knowledge of God is found within us. It is our own conscience. When guilt overtakes us because of something we have done, that is testimony that someone greater than us is holding us accountable, though we are not aware of who that is exactly. Yet it is evidence, testimony that there is a God who is angry and wrathful over our misdeeds. Paul says: *“For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.” (Rom. 2:14-15)*

Now these to knowledges of God do not tell any man who God is, nor does it reveal to them anything concerning His attributes, nor of His person. All it can do is point to the fact that God exists. For this reason it is necessary that God reveal Himself unto mankind, and He did so by giving us His Bible. The word Bible means book, literally God’s book. God wrote the Scripture in order to reveal Himself unto sinful man. And what He revealed is wondrous and glorious. It revealed to us, not a God of wrath, who sought to destroy us, nor a God who demands certain works of merit, not a God who demands sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice, but rather He revealed Himself as the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He revealed Himself to be three persons in one God. And each person is revealed in their special work toward sinful man. The eternal Father giving life unto all things in His creation, and after His creatures rebelled against Him, sending His own Son to rescue them. The eternal Son willingly subjecting Himself to His own Law to keep it perfectly in our place, and offering Himself upon the accursed tree of the cross to pay the penalty that we owe. The eternal Spirit, who comes unto us through those same Scriptures, awakening faith and life within our hearts, and keeping us in that faith unto everlasting life. This is what we see today, and though the few short words which have introduced this are insufficient, they do, however weakly, direct our attention to the true God of heaven and earth. There is no god beside or above Him, and all so-called gods are nothing but an invention and fable of man. Today then, having our hearts prepared to receive a most blessed teaching, our text points directly at you and me. It tells us to go into all the world with this very revelation. Our text for this Trinity Sunday is found in the twenty eighth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew beginning at verse eighteen.

**Quote text here.**

Let us pray, O gracious and almighty Lord God, Thou who art Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, today we come before Thee being reminded of Thy person and work. Instill in our hearts the former joy of Thy revealed Word unto us. Awaken in our hearts a new found passion for Thy revelation, lest we become weary in hearing it, and desire something new and foreign to Thee, Thy Law, Thy Word. Help us, O Lord, to make disciples of all nations by following Thy two step command. Help us to baptize all nations in Thy name and to give unto them all the blessings of Thy name. Keep us from thinking of baptism, though, like a magic formula, which when applied, need not be accompanied by Thy Word, by Christian living, or growth in grace. Rather, help us to baptize and teach all things whatsoever Thou hast commanded, not watering down Thy Word, nor adding to it, but faithfully clinging to Thy pure Word as Thou hast given it unto us to the salvation of our souls. Grant, O God, that we be faithful stewards of Thy revealed Word, not weak kneed and feeble compromisers, but frim and steadfast soldiers for Thee and Thy Word unto all nations. Grant these things, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

Guided then by the Spirit of God let us learn to go into all the world:

1. **Baptizing.** We read verses eighteen and nineteen of our text: **read verses here.** Our text takes place following the resurrection of Jesus, and shortly before His ascension into heaven. As we know and remember, the ascension of Christ marks the open witness of His established rule over all things, as He declares to the Christian Church in our text. Now it is interesting how our text opens. Jesus declares His own power, as the glorified Savior of the world, the King of kings and Lord of lords. And this is affirmed by Paul: *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:9-11)* Now this teaching makes sense to us, who have the revealed Scriptures, for seeing as how Jesus was resurrected, thereby sealing our justification, we can easily understand that He has been made ruler over all things also according to His human nature. What does not make sense upon a simple reading is why based upon Christ’s power does He then command us to carry out the great commission. How does Jesus having all power mean that we are to go and teach all nations? Well the key is in understanding that we are Christians, meaning disciples of Christ our Savior. Being so, we then are given the power of the Word. Think of it as a commission to carry forth the treasure which has been given us to everyone else who does not yet have it. When we see it from this angle it does indeed follow. This is why the command is based on the power given to Christ, for therein is our salvation and that on which the Church is built: on the work of Jesus Christ. Now the KJV translates this passage from the original Greek saying: **“Go ye, therefore, and TEACH all nations.” (Emphasis added)** However the literal translation would be to “make disciples of all nations, by baptizing them.” Now when we see this we begin to understand the importance and significance of Baptism in the life of a Christian, and further to the upbuilding of the Church. Disciples are made by baptism. Now it apparent to us that faith is granted by the Spirit through the Word, and so a person can be a believer without baptism, for we see it all the time. However, God the Spirit also works through Baptism by the power of the Word, and so Baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the Christian faith. It is God’s will that infants be baptized and brought into the Christian faith, and this is obvious from the words ‘all nations.’ They are thereby initiated into the Christian faith. The power of Baptism is told to us plainly by Peter: *“Whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 3:21)* Now Baptism is not a sacrament, or a sacred act of God, because the water holds some secret power accessed only by clergy or other such nonsense. Rather, it has power because, as Luther says, ‘it is comprehended in God’s command and connected with God’s Word.’ The power of God was placed in the revealed Word of God, and that power if lent to Baptism, and gives it converting power, by pronouncing the name of the Triune God over the baptized person. This name, not names, gives reference to all the gracious works of God in our behalf, and therefore teaches to the baptized person the entire plan of salvation, which work is taken hold of by the enlightening of the Holy Spirit in the Word, and the person becomes a Christian.

Now all the forgoing is a wonderful work of God for sinful souls, particularly for little infants, whereby His grace is given unto them. However, Baptism is not a magical formula, so that the person receiving it need nothing else than that baptism. This is the reason that Jesus does not stop at verse nineteen of our text, but continues on, telling His Christians to go into all the world, and make disciples of all nations, by baptizing them, and:

1. **Teaching.** We read verse twenty of our text: **read verse here.** As said baptism is a means of grace, it sparks faith in a heart, it plants the seed of faith, and causes it to sprout and begin to grow. Faith, though, is like a living plant, which needs nourishment and care for it to grow and thrive, and if deprived of nourishment will inevitably wither and die. Faith then must be fed and cared, nurtured to continue to grow. Thus, Jesus commands His Church not only to baptize, and make disciples, but to encourage continued discipleship by teaching those who have been baptized. The Word disciple, used by the Spirit in our text, supports the idea of continued teaching throughout the Christian’s life. And this because the a disciple is one who follows, sits at the feet of His teacher, and learns concerning their teaching and way of life. In this case we are the disciples of Christ, and therefore, being a disciple would suggest that baptism is not the end of the Christian life, but the beginning, the beginning of a life time of sitting at Jesus’ feet to learn of His doctrine and His way of life, or His conduct. We, dear Christians, are disciples of Christ, and therefore it is necessary that we continue learning and growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to impart this same thing to others.

Now it is apparent that the disciple cannot just teach whatever he pleases, but only the doctrine which His Master has taught. That is a very important point, for Jesus does not tell us to simply teach but to teach what HE has commanded. We are Christians, and therefore teach the doctrine of Christ. Paul says: *“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.” (Rom. 16:17)* Now further Jesus also commands us not just to teach His doctrine, but to teach ALL THINGS. Thus we are not just to teach the parts of God’s Word that are uncontroversial, that speak nothing of sin, damnation, or the blood-covering of Christ. We are not to soften the teachings that society says should not be taught. Rather we are to teach ‘all the counsel of God.’ Teaching all His counsel means to teach it all, and to teach it to its fullest extent, showing the entire wrath of the Law, and the entire sweetness of the Gospel.

Now, our text is what has been termed as the Great Commission. This is simply God’s command to go into all the world and share with them the treasure we have been given by the grace of God. In fact, the Church is built by making disciples by baptizing and teaching. Each one of us has come to faith in this way, and not one has become a Christian in another way. Some of us were baptized into the faith as infants, some were brought to faith by the witness of another Christian, but in every case, we were brought to faith by the Great Commission, receiving the blessing of the Triune God. We, dear Christians, are the most privileged people in the world, not according to money, or status, or power, but because we have received the riches of God’s grace through the means of grace. Let us be quick to impart this to others, and be ambassadors for Christ with our mouths, our hands, our conduct. Let us rejoice in this Trinity Sunday, remembering just Who our God is, and what things He has worked for each and every one of us. May God grant us the joy of our salvation in great measure, that we may ever boldly praise and worship Him forevermore. Amen.