

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

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[0:00] Well, good morning all. We're going to read from John 14 in a few moments. And the title of this morning's sermon is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And when I saw that, I thought, oh good, that's an easy one. And so I thought I'd look up. And if you look for books on the Trinity on Amazon, there are 11,468 titles.

So I bought them. And I read them. If you want them, they're in a big bookcase at our house. It's a massive, massive topic. And we'll see where we get to today. We'll have a break after about an hour.

John chapter 14 from verse 12. And I will do it.

If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever. The Spirit of Truth.

[1:45] The world cannot accept him, sorry, the world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

On that day, you will release, sorry, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me.

The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them. Then Judas, not Judas Iscariot, said, but Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?

Jesus replied, anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.

[3:07] These words you hear are not my own. They belong to the Father who sent me. So that's clear, isn't it?

Excuse me. That passage starts with, very truly I say to you.

And it's a funny one, this, isn't it? Why did Jesus say very truly? Because it's Jesus. It's not going to be telling lies. But he was wanting to try to talk to his disciples and emphasize, look, this is important.

This is important. And this is complex, but this is important for you to understand. And truly I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works I've been doing.

And then later on, there's the emphasis on loving Jesus. And then also obeying his commands.

[4:21] We'll come to that. Let's have some context, shall we? So Jesus is preparing his disciples for his departure from earth. Jesus knows that he's going to go back to heaven to be with his Father.

And Jesus knows that the Holy Spirit will come and be with us so we are not left alone and bereft. But as Jesus talks about his departure, it makes his disciples anxious.

And that's not surprising. Because for three years they've given up their job. They've given up their job as fishermen or tax collectors or whatever they were, medics and all sorts.

And they've followed Jesus. And they've waited for him as he has done his work of miracle. Done his work of healing.

Done his work of encouraging. Done his work of accepting the outcast. Done his work of saying, If you love me, you're welcome.

[5:34] And they've had three years of that. Of wandering around with him. Being on boats in storms and all sorts of stuff. And then Jesus says, I'm off soon.

They'll be anxious. But what does that mean, Jesus? Where did that leave me? Where did that leave us? As this group. Who from time to time fell out about who was more important. Who could sit next to Jesus in heaven. They knew the truth. But their leader. Their Jesus. Was leaving. And Jesus promises that his physical absence will lead to greater internal spiritual presence that empowers them.

And empowers us today. So Jesus had to go back to the Father. Jesus had to go back and be with the Father.

[6:51] And the Father would send the Holy Spirit. And then the Holy Spirit. Would be the one who dwells within them.

Within them. And within us. To do greater works. And share the gospel of Jesus Christ. So three themes.

Greater works and prayer. The promise of the Holy Spirit. And the indwelling presence. Now I'm not going to do a sermon on the Trinity. But I can't not talk about the Trinity.

Fiona, can you be our musical assistant for a moment? Can you play a note?

It's nice, isn't it? It's a Z. Z. Can you play another note? Please. That's a nice one as well, isn't it?

[7:53] That might be a Z as well. I don't know. And another note. It's a nice note, isn't it? Each of those are nice notes.

What were they? Middle C, G, and E. Huh? Sounds like my O-level results.

Each of them were nice notes. Play it together, please. Isn't that nice?

A lovely sound. Thank you. The Father, creator God, the source of all things. He sent Jesus to earth to save us from our sins.

The Son, Jesus. The Son, Jesus. Fully God and fully man. He shows the way to the Father. The Holy Spirit indwelling those who love Jesus.

[9:02] Empowering us to do the will of the Father. Father. Sorry for the typo. Each part of the Godhead, each person of the Godhead has a role.

And on their own, they are beautiful. But then combined together. And this is very incomplete, isn't it? But combined together, you have that beautiful chord.

That beautiful sound. And the sound of unity. Of completeness. There's no clashing in there. There weren't any notes there that sounded out of place.

Mostly because Fiona's a good musician. But for the illustration. They don't clash with each other. None of those notes fought for supremacy.

They combined to make something very special. And very beautiful. So when we think about the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

[10:13] Maybe think of a beautiful chord. It's an incomplete illustration. But it's one that I offer to you today. Let's move on. So verses 12 to 14 tell us that believers will do greater works because Jesus goes to the Father.

Now this is really important because what happens here is that sometimes we risk misunderstanding it. We are not going to do greater works because we are greater than Jesus. We are not going to do greater than Jesus or got more power than Jesus. That's just not true. And those who argue that that's true. And those who argue that that's true are misunderstanding who Jesus is.

What it means is that we will have more geographical reach and more multiplication of the gospel through the church of Christ.

Christ. Not superior miracles. Not superior miracles. The miracles of God. The miracles of Jesus are the miracles.

[11:29] But because it's not just Jesus doing it. Because each of us have the Holy Spirit within us. We are empowered to do great things.

And together we will do greater things. The passage I read from 1 Corinthians earlier about the body being one body. Us.

Held together in unity by Jesus Christ. Together we can do great things. And all the churches throughout the world can do great things.

Because we're not limited to one person at one time. And prayer is the engine room of these works. These greater works don't happen because we've got some sort of formula. Or some sort of dust, magic dust that we sprinkle. Or a button that we press.

[12:33] It's because we live a life of prayer. And that's enormously challenging for each of us. Enormously challenging as we think about how do I spend my prayer life?

And how do I grow my prayer life? And all of these things are really things to take away and ponder. But prayer is the engine room.

And then there's something very important in verses 13 and 14. Asking things in my name. Asking things in the name of Jesus isn't just some sort of talisman.

Or some sort of magic formula. Abracadabra. Oh, it's done. We must not and cannot try and use these verses to say it says here anything I ask for will be done.

Anything I ask for in the name of Jesus in his will according to his plan will be done. So sometimes we will ask for things and they're not done.

[13:59] They're not answered in the way that we wanted them to. And that's hard sometimes. Lord, we prayed about this.

And yet it's not turned out the way we wanted it to. That's not because you're bad. It's because whenever we pray we have to do so submitting to the holy will of God.

To the perfect knowledge and perfect will of God. And so as we pray we pray in the name of Jesus. We pray because God loves us.

But we surrender to his perfect will. And we surrender to his perfect knowledge of who we are and what the situation is.

And that's complicated. And I confess that there are times when I need to stop helping God understand the situation.

[15:09] Alright? I know God that you're almighty and brilliant but I'm not sure you've picked up the subtleties of this one. Not a great place to go.

I need to allow God to be God. It's not a magic formula. And the whole purpose here is for God's glory.

In the name of Jesus to the glory of God. So we are empowered for greater works. We're empowered for greater works according to almighty God.

Next slide please. We're equipped by the Holy Spirit. I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to help you.

I mean we're equipped by the Holy Spirit. Love for Jesus isn't just a feeling.

[16:17] love for Jesus is feeling in love with him.

And that's a really complicated one and we'll come to that another day I'm sure. But we have to be people who love Jesus. we have to be people who surrender ourselves to Jesus.

But a demonstration of that love is actively keeping his commands. Which commands should I keep Andy?

Well Jesus answered that didn't he with the rich young man. you know the Ten Commandments the Ten Commandments by the way is not eight out of ten pass rate.

Okay? You can't pick the two that you think you'll fail. But the commands of Jesus love God and love other people as you love yourself.

[17:34] All the rest hang on the hoops. And they're really challenging. and so we need to be actively and daily and together and as individuals be people who take seriously the commands of Jesus.

And not do theological acrobatics to explain away our poor behaviour. And then Jesus promises the advocate the paraclete the helper the comforter the counsellor the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says when I go the Holy Spirit will come and dwell within you. And then we read in the early chapters of Acts how the Holy Spirit came and settled on the disciples and on the followers of Jesus.

and there's that wonderful first Pentecost when tongues of fire settled on each person's head.

And I've said this before but it bears repeating. In Scripture it is clear there was a tongue of fire for each person. Nobody missed out.

[18:58] There's one each. It wasn't shared because we haven't got enough books. One each. the Holy Spirit dwells within you if you love Jesus and have surrendered your life to Him.

Whoever you are wherever you're at you love Jesus the helper the comforter the counsellor the paraclete is within you.

And then just a little bit of language another the allos in the Greek means another of exactly the same type as Jesus.

And that just emphasizes the unity of the Trinity Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not just an add-on you know third child a bit of a oh yeah alright oh that's not kind is it?

He is the same he is of equal importance he is of equal stature of equal role that makes up the Godhead.

[20 : 12] the world can't accept the spirit of truth but they can't see him because he only lives in believers.

I had a friend of mine I was out with a friend of mine having a chat and he said can I ask you a question about God and he does this from time to time and I said yeah of course you can and he asked me a question about why do bad things happen essentially why do bad things happen when God's almighty and what have you and however hard I tried to explain and however much we went around the houses on it he didn't get it and ultimately he didn't get it and in the end I said my friend you only get this when you accept it you can't understand some of this stuff because it doesn't make sense to those who are not believers and I think he felt quite sad about that really and I felt sad about it I'll keep going but verse 18 then says you won't be left as orphans you won't be left alone and in those days in the days that

Jesus was taught to his disciples being an orphan was a really difficult place because it meant that you had no family and therefore no livelihood no way where to live no one who would look after you no one who would see you right in your old age you're just on your own and that's what the disciples were feeling Jesus if you go we're just on our own what on earth do we do how can we cope with this and Jesus says no no you'll be not left as orphans you will not be left alone you have the Holy Spirit within you we never ever spiritually abandoned God never ever walks away from you you can walk as far away as you like from

God but he will never ever walk away from you because that's who God is and that's who God loves you you it's a great comfort that a great comfort when you feel a bit abandoned or a bit alone turn to God he's there and he's there with you and then we see this as we're obedient and these verses are not easy to interpret they go around in circles a bit Judas not Judas Iscariot another Judas and that's important isn't it that John was pointing out that it wasn't the man that betrayed

Jesus another Judas said why are you revealing yourself to us but not to the world why don't you just show everybody why don't you just tell everybody who you are and make everybody get it and that's because we're called to be people of obedience to the gospel of Christ and obedience to the word of Jesus spiritual intimacy closeness with God is reserved for those who obey God and he makes his home with those who love him isn't it a nice image that by the way that God makes his home with you certainly for me I find home a really safe place that's the point of home

[24 : 46] Fiona's very good at making home a safe place and it's a place where God is and that image of saying God is making his home with you God is a homemaker for you and him together whoever you are wherever you are as long as you obey as long as you are part of the family of God as long as you love Jesus and then I suppose conversely a lack of obedience reveals a lack of genuine love for Christ Christ when I worked in children's homes quite a lot

I would have to chastise a child for doing something stupid or something illegal normally illegal rather than stupid or both oh sorry Andy sorry Andy yeah I know I'm sorry I punched you on the nose stole a car did whatever and my response after a while bored them silly but I used to use it well okay be sorry be sorry as well as sorry do sorry as well as be sorry let me see it a lack of obedience demonstrates a lack of real love for Christ so this is really challenging this is really challenging because for each of us here there will be times when we're not obedient I'm not saying that because I know everything about all of you I'm saying that's what the human condition is speaking about me personally there are times when I'm not obedient to what God asks me to do because I'm lazy or because

I'm scared or because I don't want to or because it will be too difficult or whatever and that's why we have to confess and when we confess we are cleansed from all unrighteousness through the blood of Jesus so what happens here is that we are given the spirit Jesus died for our sins God is enthroned in heaven and our response has to be one of lifestyle Christianity of day by day working towards that wonderful time when we will be with him but all the time on earth seeking to be obedient to his call to pray according to his will and pray according to his desire and his perfect plan for our lives

I will do whatever you ask in my name says Jesus as long as you ask it in my name so just as we just spend a few moments in music and worship oh they're small aren't they sorry when we pray

how do we pray in God's will that's getting to know God for you as an individual do we view the Holy Spirit as our personal comforter and guide only you could answer that is our relationship with God based on obedience or just transaction again for you to think about perhaps you'd like to come up and just allow God to speak to you as we are led by the music team and allow God to show you places where maybe obedience we need to do a bit more of or maybe understand a bit better our relationship with God bless you to to to to to to to!