

ILCW Year-C Scripture Lessons for  Festival of The Trinity

Proverbs 8:22-31 NIV

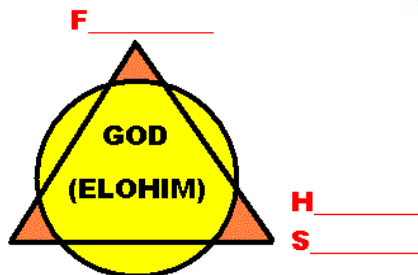
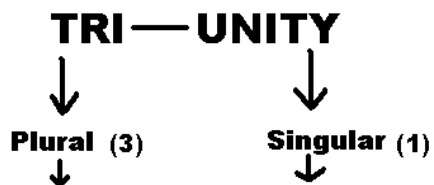
OLD TESTAMENT

Romans 5:1-5

EPISTLE

John 16:12-15

GOSPEL




ATHANASIAN CREED (*Continued...*)

26. Whoever will be saved, is compelled thus to think of the Holy Trinity.
27. Furthermore, it is necessary for everlasting salvation that one also believe faithfully the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
28. For the right Faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;
29. God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; And Man, of the substance of His mother, born into the world.
30. Perfect God and perfect Man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting.
31. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood.
32. Who, although He is God and Man, yet He is not two, but One Christ.
33. One, not by changing of the Godhead into Flesh, but by taking the Manhood into God.
34. One indeed, not by confusion of substance, but by one-ness of Person.
35. For just as the rational soul and flesh is one Man, so God and Man is One Christ.
- ALL: 36. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into Hell, rose again the third day from the dead.
37. He ascended into Heaven, He is seated on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
38. At whose coming all will rise again with their bodies, and will give an account of their own works.
39. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
40. This is the (Christian) faith; whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this, cannot be saved. Amen.  $\Delta$  (Congregation may be seated for next hymn.)

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL, USA

The Feast of the Holy Trinity  $\dagger$  Our Triune God

May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013  9:30 am



Woodcut illustration from a 1695 Bible – The Holy Trinity (Matthew 6). God is depicted in the clouds with cherubs at feet. The halo is rendered as a triangle, symbolizing the Trinity. It illustrates the First Petition from the Lord's Prayer.

Courtesy of the Digital Image Archive, Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University  
<http://www.pitts.emory.edu/DIA/detail.cfm?ID=3098>

# OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Synod

6920 N. Socrum Loop Road—in north Lakeland, Florida

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PHONE (863) 859-3400— [www.osllakeland.com](http://www.osllakeland.com)

BIBLE CLASS 8:30 AM    WORSHIP 9:30 AM    FELLOWSHIP 10:30 AM

Pastor Andrew Burmeister (863) 430-5859

Organist: Janice Thomas (813) 650-9198

## May 26, 2013 Trinity Sunday(C) “Triune God”

**WELCOME to Our Savior!** We are happy to have you worship with us today. If you are visiting us for the first time, we ask that that you please fill out a visitor card found in the pew cardholder and place it in the offering plate. If you are seeking a church home, our pastor would be glad to share information about our church with you and discuss membership at your convenience. Come and worship with us again! Thank you.

### ORDER OF SERVICE *(See insert.)*

PLEASE NOTE: The service folder insert has been written so that it may be used more than once. If you prefer to use the hymnal, see **page 5**. Please leave the service folder insert with an usher or on table after the service. Thank you. May the Lord bless your worship!

Service		
Opening Hymn	246 (4v)	Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty
Hymn of Day	38 (5v)	The Lord My God Be Praised
Sermon	John 3:1-15(16)	<b>“Blessed Be the Holy Trinity”</b>
Offering Hymn	441; vv1-2	We Give Thee But Thine Own
Sending Hymn	252 (3v)	We All Believe in One True God
Closing Hymn	54 (3v)	Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

### PROPERs for TRINITY SUNDAY=(START OF) ORDINARY TIME ☺ MAY 30

**INTROIT:** Blessed be the Holy Trinity and the undivided Unity. Let us give glory to Him because He has shown His mercy to us. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your Name in all the earth!  
...from **Psalm 8**

**COLLECT:** Almighty God, by Your grace alone we are called into Your Kingdom, to confess the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the true Unity, we beseech You, that You would keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities; for You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live, and reigns, one true God, now and forever.  
**C:** ♪ A - - -men.

**GRADUAL:** Blessed are You, O Lord, You behold the deep, and You dwell between the cherubim. Blessed are You, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven, and greatly to be praised forever. Alleluia! Alleluia! Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, and greatly to be praised and glorified forever. Alleluia!  
... from **Psalm 136**

**SCRIPTURE LESSONS:** *(printed on the outside back page of bulletin)*

- O.T.: **Numbers 6:22-27** The Trinitarian (Aaronic) Benediction.  
 Epistle: **Romans 5:1-5** We are justified through faith in Jesus Christ.  
 Gospel: **John 16:12-15** Jesus: “I have *much* more to say to you...”

### PRAYER REQUESTS:

Madeline Beck Richard Birkenmeier Jonathan Jumper (grandson of Elaine Jones) Tyler Kirby (nephew of Andrea Sawyer) George Wendt (brother of Steve Wendt)	Patty & Buster Brewbaker (past member) Dan Elwing Jeanette Kubly Mariah Sawyer Ann Wentz
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Today on **Trinity Sunday** we use this special Creed:

**ATHANASIAN CREED** *(Confession of Faith)* We say in turns, responsively:

*Pastor:* 1. Whosoever will be saved, shall, above all else it hold the (Christian) faith.

**Congregation:** 2. Which Faith, except it be kept whole & undefiled, without doubt, one will perish eternally.

3. And the Christian Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.

**Congregation:** 4. Neither confusing the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.

5. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.

6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all One, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.

7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.

8. The Father Uncreated, the Son Uncreated, and the Holy Spirit Uncreated.

9. The Father Infinite, the Son Infinite, and the Holy Spirit Infinite.

10. The Father Eternal, the Son Eternal, and the Holy Spirit Eternal.

11. And yet they are not three eternals, but One Eternal.

12. Just as there are not three uncreated, nor three infinities, but One Uncreated, and One Infinite.

13. Likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son is Almighty, and the Holy Spirit is Almighty.

14. And yet they are not three almighties, but One Almighty.

15. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.

16. And yet they are not three gods, but One God.

17. Likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord.

18. And yet there are not three lords, but One Lord.

19. For, as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord, — So are we forbidden by the Christian faith to say there be three gods or three lords. Δ

**MEN:** 20. The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten.

**WOMEN:** 21. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten.

**M:** 22. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

**W:** 23. So there is One Father, **not** three fathers; one Son, **not** three sons; One Holy Spirit, **not** three holy spirits.

24. And in this Trinity none is before or after another, none greater or less than another;

25. But all three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal. So that in all things, as said before, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.  
(26. 27... continues next page ☞ )

**TRINITY-SUN John 3:1-16** "(BLESSED BE THE HOLY) **PARADOX!**"05.26.13

**PARADOX.** That's the theme for this Sunday of the Holy Trinity. **Paradox.**

**Dictionary definition:** A seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true. **Example:** "And the (universal) faith is this, that we worship one God in three Persons, and three Persons in one God, neither confusing the Persons nor dividing the Substance." Got it?

QUOTE: "The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, the Holy Spirit incomprehensible, the whole thing incomprehensible." And that's good, right, and proper. Any god who fits comprehensively inside your head **isn't big enough to be your God anyway.**

**The Christian faith is built on paradox:** God is Three and He is One - a tri-unity. (There are **other** paradoxes) Jesus is God and Man - **two** natures, yet **one** Person. The Scriptures are God's Word and man's word. As a believer, you are both **sinner and saint** at the same time.

There is danger lurking in these **paradoxical waters.** The danger is that we turn God into a concept, a mathematical abstraction, something we can tuck safely in a book or a theory or a picture in our minds. A safe God that you bring out for those "special occasions" when you need a little dose of Deity. A tame God on a leash for those times when we need a little religion to help us through our troubles.

Holy Trinity Sunday is a feast **without a narrative. There's NO story.** The best we have is Jesus telling the disciples to baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost - there are rich historic narratives for these days. But the text behind Holy Trinity Sunday **is a doctrine** not a narrative, a summary of the mystery of the God who made the heavens and the earth, the God who revealed Himself to Moses in a burning bush, the God who led Israel out of captivity into freedom; the God made Himself concretely known and knowable in the incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ, the God who blows His Spirit-breath through His Church and raises the dead to life.

Holy Trinity is about a **living (and loving) relationship**, communion **within** God and **us with** God. The Father begets His Son; the Spirit proceeds from Father and Son. **God is never alone, even when He IS alone.** Together as One the undivided holy Trinity creates, redeems, makes holy. Each divine Person doing His personal thing, yet always as One. And you, being baptized "in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" enter into the Tri-une love and life of God. The Father is **your** Father. Jesus the Son is **your** Brother. The Spirit is **your** Comforter, Guide and Friend. You are a **member of God's family**; you live in tri-une communion with God - with the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.

(READ **John 3:1-16**) There was a man named **Nicodemus**, a rabbi, a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin. He was about to encounter a **Divine Paradox in the flesh.** Jesus - the Son of God. "**Rabbi, we know you are a**

*teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.*"

Don't you get just a wee bit suspicious when someone starts a conversation that way? As the praise heaps up, you're waiting for the "**BUT**" that comes at the end of the clause. "*You did a really great job with the report last week and corporate couldn't be more thrilled **BUT...***" "*Pastor, I really like your sermons and your Bible classes are always interesting **BUT...***" Jesus preempts Nicodemus with (an Amen) and a(nother) paradox: "*Amen. No one can see the Kingdom of God unless he's born again.*"

The **born must be reborn?!** - Again, another paradox. Nicodemus has a brain-sprain. "*Wait a minute. How can an old man be born again? What's he supposed to do? Enter his mother's womb a second time?*" (In logic they call that an **argumentum ad absurdum.** Argue to the point of absurdity.)

But Jesus says, "*I tell you the truth. Let me put it another way. No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he's born of water and Spirit.*" As if that made things any clearer. Unless you are a new creation, created by water and Spirit, you can't enter the Kingdom.

There **is** another birth, a new birth from above. The old creation is shot dead. **Flesh gives birth to flesh.** That's your birth from below, what makes you a **child of Adam.** That's the birth that gives birth to a sinner. You know all about that one. You don't need anyone to teach you about that. But that one doesn't get you an entry ticket into the kingdom of God. Quite the opposite. Not that God isn't involved in **that** birth. Every birth is the result of God's Word - "Be fruitful and multiply." But that makes children of Adam, not children of God. Your first birth delivers you to death; your second birth brings you to Life.

"*You must be born again,*" Jesus says. **Born from above.** A spiritual birth through water and the Spirit. **Do you hear Baptism-talk** in that? I sure hope so. It's like **the wind**, Jesus says. You hear it, but you can't see it. You see it's effects - the leaves rustling through the trees, but you can't get a hold of it. That's how it is with the Spirit and with everyone born of the Spirit. You must **hear** it and **believe** it because you can't see it.

Of course, that leaves Nicodemus more confused than ever. "*How can this be?*" The (rabbi,) teacher of Israel is stumped. The problem is not that Nicodemus isn't a sharp tack. He's plenty smart. He's a rabbi, after all, a Pharisee, a member of the ruling council. He's no dummy. **The problem** goes back to **his first sentence.** He doesn't yet see Jesus for who Jesus actually is. He sees Jesus as a holy man, a teacher come from God, a miracle worker. (Sorry, Nick) "**Close but no cigar.**" Nicodemus **doesn't yet grasp the paradox** - this man standing before him **is God in the flesh**, the second Person of the **undivided Holy Trinity**, God of God, Light of light, true God of true God, eternally begotten of the Father.

Nicodemus is staring at **the Word made flesh**, the One who would be **lifted up for the life of the world**. He is the Son, sent in love to save the world by His dying and rising. Nicodemus has no way of knowing or believing that...**yet**. Somewhere, somehow the Spirit-wind of God blew on Nicodemus, the water, Word and Spirit had their way with him. - Because Nicodemus was already a believer the day Jesus died. Secretly yes, but a believer. He trusted that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. He along with Joseph of Arimathea arranged to bury Jesus.




In a way, you and I have an **advantage** over old Rabbi Nicodemus. He was standing on the **threshold between the old and the new**, between the prophesy and its fulfillment. He saw the signs, but the pieces of the puzzle weren't yet in place. That's why John mentions that he came to Jesus **at night**. **He was still in the dark**, so to speak. The light of Easter had not yet dawned. The Spirit had not yet enlightened him. We live entirely in the new. Christ has come. Christ has died. Christ has risen from the dead. Christ now reigns. What was a riddle to Nicodemus is perfectly clear to us: To be born again from above by water and Spirit is to be baptized into Jesus: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come."

"The Spirit blows like the wind wherever He pleases." You can't **bottle the Spirit up, put him into a box**, label and categorize Him. You can **only enjoy the refreshing, heavenly breeze**. The Spirit has blown on you in His good time and place, as it pleased Him. And it pleases Him that you believe the Word He brings to your ears, that you trust that Jesus' death and life are your life and salvation, that on account of Jesus you can say, "Our Father."

**CONCLUSION** Yes, God's **tri-unity** is an **incomprehensible Paradox**. That's true. Even the **Athanasian Creed** can't contain it, though it gives it a good (college) try. You and I would **and could** never have **invented** such a God. But on the other hand, remember, gods we invent are **not** the True God. They are useless idols; gods that sit on the mantle pieces of our lives so we can be spiritual without believing anything. The Lord's ways **are not our ways**; His thoughts **are not our thoughts**. He's not the sort of God we would invent for our selves. And for that we are grateful.

You **don't have to understand** someone to be in **relationship**. Most of us are in relationship with people we don't begin to understand. How much more is that true with (us and) God. You don't have to understand the mystery of the undivided Holy Trinity; only confess and praise Him. "*Blessed be the Holy Trinity and the undivided Unity. Let's give glory to Him because He showed mercy to us.*" **Amen. SDG**

*Now, the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting.* **Amen. SDG**

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL, USA  
Trinity Sunday  **SERMON: PARADOX of Triune God**  
May 26<sup>th</sup> 2013  9:30 am



**Gospel (Sermon Text)**

**John 3:1-15** Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, ... 15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. **16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."**



**APPLICATION/ALTERNATE CONCLUSION:** There is a **little gesture** lost to many Lutherans. It is probably not understood by those who continue its practice. This gesture is also a confession of faith in the Holy Trinity. It is a confession of faith in baptismal rebirth. Many Lutherans gave it up thinking it is Roman Catholic. As a Catholic enters God's house s/he dips their fingers in water and makes the **sign of the Cross**. He does so "**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**". S/He remembers the Holy Trinity. She also remembers that she was baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The water reminds her that she is born again of water and the Spirit. And with or without water, she remembers that the **Triune God** gloried Himself when **God's Son was tortured on a Cross** to earn that new life for all people. With or without water, the sign of the Cross overflows with meaning.

That isn't (or *shouldn't* be) exclusive to Roman Catholics. It sounds pretty **Christian**, doesn't it? Try it. When you pray Dr. Luther's morning and evening prayer each day, do what he says: Make the sign of the Cross and say, "**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**" Remember your God. Remember your Baptism. Remember when you were born again of water and the Spirit. **Amen. Soli Deo Gloria**