

Relationship Within the Trinity

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[0 : 00] Well, we continue our study from the book, *Delighting in the Trinity*, by Michael Reeves. Last week, I tried to open a treasure box of knowing God as the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and tried to do this by helping us see God the Father in that eternal loving relationship with God the Son.

And really to help us move more in that direction of thinking of God in his Trinitarian relationships. Maybe not something we think of normally as we move through the day, but I hope that from our time last week looking at this subject, we saw the importance of how this relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it has existed from eternity past, and it's something that they truly enjoy.

And before he was creator, before he was ruler over anything that came after creation, he was existing there in his relationship with the Son, the Spirit, the triune God, being totally satisfied in that relationship.

And that's one of the quotes from Michael Reeves' book. Before he ever created, before he ever ruled the world, before anything else, this God was a Father loving his Son.

And so they were totally satisfied in that relationship. They needed nothing beyond themselves for that total satisfaction.

[1 : 48] God content in and of himself from eternity past through eternity future. And in his prayer to the Father, we saw the satisfaction of Jesus in that relationship with the Father as he spoke of what it was like prior to creation, before the foundation of the world, the glory that he had with the Father.

He enjoyed that and wanted his people, those who are his followers, disciples of Christ, to also share in that and to see that and experience that same satisfaction.

John 17, 24, Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me.

Why? Because you loved me before the foundation of the world. So there was no greater possession, really, that Jesus could share with those who were his co-heirs, his friends, than that glorious relationship.

The Son, as we saw last week, is the radiance of the Father's own being. As long as the Father has existed, and as I already said, from eternity, God the Son, from eternity, existed as the radiance of his glory.

[3 : 19] You can't have one without the other. With the Father there, the Son is there, radiating the glory of the Father. And so that relationship we continue to explore this morning as we consider how God the Holy Spirit is also part of that relationship and how we can see that in the scriptures and the manifestation of that satisfaction within the Trinity and how the Holy Spirit reveals that to us.

We usually have the saying, and you've probably all heard the saying, two's company, but three's a crowd. It's not true in relation to the Holy Spirit. And the Trinity, God being three in one, certainly has no conflict of persons in those relationships, but totally satisfied and in harmony in their exercise of love as they carry out their purpose as God.

Just as God the Father and God the Son love one another, so God the Spirit is also active in this loving, satisfying relationship.

Because he is known in the scriptures, as we're going to see first here, he is the spirit of love. In Matthew 3, 16 and 17, as soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.

At that moment, heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, this is my Son whom I love.

[4 : 56] With him I am well pleased. Here, as it says in our book, here the Father declares his love for the Son and his pleasure in him, in Jesus Christ, and he does so as the Spirit of God rests on

Jesus.

This is the way the Father makes his love known, in this case to the Son, through giving of his Holy Spirit. And so we're seeing this relationship now, the outworking of the relationship that has been taking place throughout all eternity past.

We're being able to see that manifested, in this case, at the baptism of Jesus. We're familiar with expressing love in our actions toward others.

In fact, last week in our small group, one lady complimented another on the dress she wore in the morning, that Sunday morning, and in response this other lady said, well, my husband gave it to me.

Well, that response cast a whole different understanding of the possession of the dress. I mean, ladies, you understand what I'm talking about here, right? You go out and buy a dress for yourself.

[6 : 10] Well, it's nice, and you can enjoy that dress. But when your husband gets you a dress, well, when you pull that off the rack, well, it's a little different. You have a little different understanding of that dress.

And because it was a manifestation of the love of your husband to you. And as you select that dress, it wasn't one you purchased yourself.

Again, a manifestation of the husband's love for his wife. And so the Holy Spirit was the love of God the Father manifested to the Son.

Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And he heard that voice from heaven that said, this is my Son whom I love.

With him I am well pleased. So not only was there the visual manifestation of the Spirit descending like a dove upon Jesus, but that verbal expression as well.

[7 : 18] So men, husbands, we can take that as a lesson, can't we? And have that double-barreled expression of love for our wives, that visual manifestation, but also that verbal expression as well.

Now, ladies, you didn't know a study of the Trinity could be so great, right? And have some practical application. But this is what we're seeing in that relationship with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And we can understand something of that because being made in the image of God, we're made relationally, and especially knowing the love of God and being able to manifest that visually to one another in our marriage relationships and also verbally, it becomes much more meaningful.

Although, again, when we try and bring some understanding of God from our human relationships, we're always going to come up short because it goes so much further beyond what we're experiencing.

But we can know something of it. And we're thankful for the awareness that God has really given us as believers that we can know God to this next level.

[8 : 44] I mean, unsaved people, they can understand something of love, certainly, and manifesting it verbally and visually. But still, without God, there's a big element that they're missing out on that we can enjoy more fully.

Even as the wife receives that address from her husband, and she rejoices in that and so thankful for that, her heart can be turned toward God as well.

Father, you know, if my husband can give me a gift like this and my heart is thrilled by it, how much more should my heart be so thrilled with the opportunity of knowing you and understanding more of the fullness of what you've gifted to me, who is so undeserving in this relationship that I have with you.

And so we're growing in our understanding of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, revealing to humanity at this point, at the baptism of Jesus, what has existed from eternity past, this loving relationship.

And I think that's what really I'm trying to accomplish in these two weeks that I have in this chapter. Seeing God in this way, not individually, they are distinct persons, but united as one in the Trinity in this loving, eternal relationship as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

[10 : 13] And God being unique in that. No other God, there is no other God, but no other God that is proclaimed has this uniqueness about it.

I mean, that's what's true about the word unique. So we don't just see this expression of giving love through the Holy Spirit in his relationship with the Son, but also in his relationship with those who are his sons by faith in Jesus Christ.

Here we again, beginning to see this, drawing this even closer to us in our understanding of God. It's the Holy Spirit's presence coming to us and dwelling within us is God's expression of love to us. He's showing and saying, I love you and want you to enter into this loving relationship I have with God the Son and the Spirit, and so I give you the Spirit of love.

We see this harmony in the relationship. Father loves the Son. The Son loves the Father. They love one another through the Spirit of love, that Holy Spirit of love.

[11 : 29] What all people long for in these kind of relationships while we're in this world, I made reference to this last week, and we all long for those kind of relationships and we struggle and become anxious and full of anxiety and when they don't exist, you know, somebody breaks up with us or a friendship is strained and broken up and we're just cut to the heart and we struggle with that and so we long for what has been existing in God, in the Trinity, from eternity past.

And what we long for is there in God as the triune God and rejoice that we can begin to experience that even now in our still somewhat broken situation as human beings that we can enter into this kind of relationship with this kind of God and then also certainly with one another.

what we can know, we can know the God of love, Father and Son, through the Spirit of love. And as I've been saying, we can do this together and that makes it even more special because we do it as a church family.

I mean, you wouldn't love me the way you do without the Spirit of love that God has granted you and me.

You know, I've got my faults, etc. And it's going to take that love that God has poured out into your heart through pouring out His Holy Spirit for you to put up with me and to persevere in loving me.

[13 : 25] and we do that with one another as you do that in your homes and families with one another. And so we're seeing the importance of worshipping a God like this that again enables us to enter into that kind of relationship with Him but then also with one another as a church family and then also as families, biological families.

So He's called the Spirit of love but also called the Spirit of sonship. We see the Holy Spirit not only in the manifestation of the Father's love for the Son, in that case at the baptism of Jesus, but also the Son's love for the Father as Jesus calls unto Him and says in Mark 14, 36, Abba, Father, He said, everything is possible for you.

Take this cup from me, yet not what I will but what you will. The term, we've heard this, you've been in church a long time, it's that term, Abba, is a term of endearment used by young children to their fathers.

So just in the use of the term we see this love of Jesus Christ for the Father but enter the Holy Spirit's involvement in even Jesus saying that to the Father through these other two verses that I can share.

Romans 8, 15, For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear but you receive the spirit of sonship and by Him we cry Abba, Father.

[14 : 58] That's how we cry Abba, Father, unto the Father because we have the Spirit of God, Father Jesus Christ dwelling within us and it's by that spirit of sonship we even want to and that we long to cry unto the Father.

that's what Jesus was doing there through the Spirit of God in the Son of God crying out to God the Father Abba, Father.

And also Galatians 4, 6 we see this because you are His sons God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts the Spirit who calls out Abba, Father.

So it's by the Spirit of Christ that Jesus Christ by the Spirit the Holy Spirit that Spirit of Christ that Jesus called out Abba, Father.

And in His greatest hour of trial Jesus by His union as God with the Holy Spirit of Sonship used this term of endearment and cried out Abba, Father.

[16 : 06] No spirit of competition within the Trinity each one exercising the actions and the words that display this loving unity that has existed in the triune God from eternity past.

And this is again another reason why we can delight in the Trinity. You know when there's so many that speak against the Trinity and don't believe in the Trinity we can delight in it that there is the Trinity there.

It's what gives us this joy and love in our relationships again with God and with each other. In those verses we see that it's by that same spirit of Sonship that we also cry out Abba, Father.

God the Father through the work of God the Son and the Holy Spirit brings us into relationship that they enjoy and we too as sons and children of God can call on God even as Jesus did calling out to him Abba, Father because again the spirit of Sonship dwells within us by faith in Jesus Christ. It was a natural response for Jesus to call upon the Father in his greatest hour of trial using that term and so because again the spirit of Sonship dwells within us we too will have that yearning to call upon God the Father in our times of trial.

[17 : 46] I mean you go through times of trial and other times as well and you sense that now by faith in Jesus Christ and with his Holy Spirit dwelling within us that spirit of Sonship there's that inclination now that you didn't have before the inclination to cry out to your Father I mean it's a natural inclination for a child biological child to cry out to their Father for help in time of need Daddy and so with again that spirit of Sonship dwelling within us we have that inclination now to go to him to cry out to him Abba Father I mean that's a delighting in who God is because we too now are enjoying what they have enjoyed throughout all eternity because he has been a triune God throughout all eternity we're entering in now into the glories of that relationship and we can delight in that because he's a triune God so let that be our natural response to call on him in our difficult times and beyond that certainly we do that when we're enjoying great riches and blessing

Father thank you so much for this gift and children do that as well we saw that yesterday as a gift Reese received a gift from his parents and graduation and he was excited he was drawn to his parents to give them thanks it wasn't his hour of trial he had that for 12 years going through school but it was time of rejoicing and so at the same time he cries out in delight to his parents and so we cry out in delight to our Father through the spirit of sonship so spirit of love spirit of sonship but also I could call him the Holy Spirit of praise because through the Holy Spirit Jesus joyfully praises the Father Luke 10 21 at that time Jesus full of joy through the Holy Spirit said I praise you Father Lord of heaven and earth because you've hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children yes

Father for this was good was your good pleasure so joyful praise is a manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit Jesus knows how praiseworthy the Father is and through that Holy Spirit offers joyful praise to the Father I mean here's the Trinity again we see them in this situation and through God's revelation to us otherwise we would not know anything about it here's the Trinity celebrating together as they carry out their mission and hear the report of in this case the disciples as they took the gospel to others the Holy Spirit just seeing his plan being worked out through those who are his followers rejoicing together Jesus through the Holy Spirit being full of joy through the Holy Spirit because they're rejoicing in one another and what's being accomplished through them as God three and one Jesus offering praise to the Father so we give thanks that we can see that in the scriptures and so we too can really contemplate even now and you can as you go from here through your week how praiseworthy God is that he is this triune God even if we never received any good from him being the triune God he's still worthy of praise for who he is as God three in one but by faith in Jesus Christ he has graciously given us as sinners the opportunity to enter into and know and experience fellowship with him this fellowship that they were enjoying together and still are enjoying together he's invited us and brought us in that we can enjoy this and begin to know him and now through the joy of the

Holy Spirit that dwells within us we too can offer a praise as sons of God we can express this joyful praise to the father and son because the spirit of joy dwells within us as God's children by faith in Jesus Christ and he longs to manifest his fruit through us just as he did there with Jesus Christ as Jesus Christ witnessed that through his union with God the Holy Spirit the joy of the Holy Spirit was there in seeing what was transpiring and through Jesus offered praise to the father and so here we are again as God's children being sons of God being indwelt by the Holy Spirit the spirit of joy as we see God working in the lives of people and seeing his purposes being carried out and accomplished in the lives of the other people our hearts are going to yearn to offer up to him praise father thank you for whatever the situation is is that we're in that's generating this praise and joy within us we offer up that praise and we need to be quick to offer up that praise so that our children and our homes can hear oh there's something more going on here than just us having a good time you know that

[23 : 48] I can experience this good time because of something beyond myself it's God's involvement here and mom and dad recognize that and I'm praising God for what he's doing in our lives as a family and me as one of my children in this family that's what I mean we loose lips on

praising God and we're casting before our children those visions of the glory of God and that what's magnificent about God that they wouldn't be seen normally without our voices speaking and praising him as Jesus did that numerous times as we see right here in this situation so let's be quick to offer praise to God so that those beyond us can enter into the glory of what's happening and also enter into praising God as well we do that at our meal times don't we when we thank

God our children helping our children understand God is praiseworthy even for the things that we have to eat well what about during the day as we're sitting walking laying down as says in Deuteronomy are they still hearing us offer up praise to God and in all those other situations of life we can do that because God is a triune God and we need to praise him for it so the Holy Spirit of praise and love and sonship!

writes just as the Spirit after Jesus' baptism would send him out into the lifeless wilderness so in Genesis 1 the Spirit appears as the power by which God's word goes out into the lifeless world so we ask the question who created the universe in the world and we say God did God the Father Psalm 148 1 through 6 the psalmist calls on all that occupies the heavens above the angels the heavenly hosts the sun moon and stars etc praise the name of the Lord for he commanded and they were created God the Son John 1 1 through 3 in the beginning was the word the word was with God and the word was God through him all things were made God the Holy Spirit Psalm 33 6 and 7 by the word of the!

Lord were the! made many times in the Hebrew word for spirit is often translated breath in the Old Testament so there we see the triune God bringing a life into a lifeless world now Mark Akins is going to elaborate on that more next week in his lessons but we just bring that up maybe as way of introduction Mark to your classes the next couple weeks we see the triune God bringing life into this lifeless world and we can delight in the trinity as the life giving God because we enjoy so much of his creation certainly in what he's made even on a hot and humid day but there are many times that we can rejoice and thank God for who he is and what he created but not only was he the one who brought life into the world and humanity brings life into those who are dead in trespasses and sins of which all of us were 1

Peter 1 2 in describing God's chosen ones Peter writes who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood so certainly we delight in God the Father God the Son God the Holy!

[27 : 50] Spirit for life giving God from all eternity and the one who brought us spiritual life through Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit and God the Father in fact in his book Michael Reeves tells how Christian theologians have happily and unabashedly spoken of the fellowship of the Trinity and that's what was transpiring in planning and working out this plan of salvation before the foundation of the world and even working it out and carrying it out in our day each one of us and each one of our lives who are here by faith in Jesus Christ we rejoice in that fellowship of the Trinity in fact in closing out this lesson excuse me do it a little differently than I normally do from in reading a lot of quotes sometimes you come across this information and

I couldn't say it any better than this person good so why would I even try and so I'll read a lot of information here and just closing it out and just focusing a little bit here on that fellowship of the Trinity that Michael Reeves had just briefly mentioned in this chapter and uses this lengthy quote just as kind of a review of where we've been this past couple weeks but then also in seeing this fellowship of the Trinity he says before creation before all things the father was loving and begetting the son for eternity that was what the father was doing he did not become the father at some point rather his very identity is to be the one who begets the son the father would not be the father without his son whom he loves through the spirit God three in one the father is who he is by virtue of his relationship with the son and the son would not be the son without his father he has his very being from the father and by the spirit of sonship

Jesus called out Abba father and so we see that the father son and spirit while distinct persons are absolutely inseparable from each other the father loving and giving life to his son in the fellowship of the spirit God our God is unique none like him and in that we truly do delight and as each week goes by in this lesson I trust more and more will unfold to us in regard to the trinity and will grow in appreciation of who he is as triune God so we can rejoice in the trinity and consider still some of the practical value of this trinity and this is where I close off I mention in reading five reasons why the doctrine of the trinity is a deep well of practical value and these are presented by

Jared Gilcher an individual graduated from the master seminary and lead pastor at Christ Community Bible Church in Arlington Texas and I am reading these because much of what he said in these five points points back to what we have taken a look at last weekend this morning so number one the eternal relationship of the trinity informs us that God is the happiest most joyful person in the universe God has been infinitely happy because within the context of the trinity he has been eternally enjoying loving and rejoicing!

in himself the fountain of our joy as believers is the joy that has always abounded within the trinity! number two the trinity reminds believers that salvation was eternally intentional our salvation was not a last minute roll of the dice or some mad scramble for the saving of sinners no despite our undeserving!

[32 : 41] and rebellious hearts we were the subjects of an eternal! salvific conversation between the persons of the trinity! in that conversation began long before God ever uttered light into existence three the trinity helps shape the way we think about salvation our salvation is not merely a commodity that we receive as a reward for faith in Christ rather the essence of salvation is being granted access for all of eternity into the mutual exhilaration each person of the trinity has in one another as believers we will be forever caught in the cross fire of trinitarian love and affection that was excellent I could never write something like that but he's expressing something that is abounding about God that we'll be able to enjoy enjoy now but more in its fullness when we are with him eternally there was a thought that

I had as I read that that now escapes me oh yeah I'm making that about God and who he is our eternity I mentioned many times when I was growing up salvation was just about going to heaven this beautiful place streets of gold etc etc going to be beautiful place but it's all about entering in the fullness of that relationship with God I can't remember who said this or wrote this Carol you might remember who wrote it maybe it was some of Piper's writings I don't know but he was describing would we be just as satisfied in heaven with if all there was was just the streets of gold and all the great wonderful things that the American dream is all made up and that we're working toward but if Jesus wasn't there would it still be the glorious place to us well

I would trust not you know because what makes heaven heaven in the eternal state is the presence of Jesus Christ God the Father Son and Holy Spirit that's what it's all about and that's what we celebrate in number four the truth about the Trinity explodes the childish notion that God created man because he was somehow lonely bored or disheartened by a world without man's affections as if God needed anything from us that he did not already possess in himself the truth is that God was supremely satisfied in the fellowship of the Trinity long before our existence it's not all about us we must never forget that God did not create the universe because of what he lacked but rather he was so filled with joy that his joy overflowed into his creation and number five the ultimate foundation for our confidence that the great commission will be completed is the

Trinity we tend to forget that the most prominent text on missions is in fact Trinitarian in Matthew 28 18 through 20 Jesus commands!

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit the work of each person of the Trinity in the plan of redemption is our guarantee that every name written before the foundation of the world in the Lamb's book of life will be saved through the proclamation of the gospel so the secret to a thriving soul is not to avoid thinking deeply about God but at an even more intimate level to understand the character of God we must have eyes to see that at the root of our stubborn sins is a view of God that just doesn't go high enough that isn't beautiful enough in short it isn't trinitarian enough so let's make it our prayer God grow me in my understanding in my love for who you are in reality that

[37 : 10] I might be enthralled appreciate be enthralled more of who you are and properly project to a needy world that God is there and is a God of splendor and a God that they can know through Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit let's close in prayer father even to call upon you as father it's humbling as we've contemplated some of these truths here of who you are and what you've done to even make that possible for us and not just us but many others who are yet to believe in you and that's our prayer that we as your people would project to a needy world our children grandchildren our neighbors family members others who have not yet understood in fullness who you are that we would project before them something of the glory and magnificence of

God in particular as father son and Holy! Spirit! Father in order to do that in our actions and in our words you are worthy to be praised through us as your sons in this world and so help us to proclaim

the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ and the power and joy of the Holy Spirit as we are even here today in the songs that we're going to sing as Pastor Jason's present your word help us listen to your word is coming from this God of glory and to receive it with meekness and thankfulness and to be ready to take that word to others and proclaim the glory of God who is worthy to be worshipped by all people we ask this in Jesus name Amen