

The Trinity for Our Troubles

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[0:00] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's pray. Amen.

Amen. Be seated. Let's open our Bibles to 2 Corinthians chapter 13. This is the law of the Lord that is perfect and revives the soul.

[3 : 54] It's the statutes of the Lord that are trustworthy and make wise the simple. 2 Corinthians 13. This will be my third visit to you.

Finally, chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing
chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing
chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing Live in peace.

And the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints send their greetings. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Come and preach, Pastor Jason. Well, in the world you will have trouble, Jesus said.

[6 : 30] And I like that, and I don't like that. I like that because the Bible's honest. In the world you are going to have trouble.

That matches my experience. Jesus is not some sort of pie-in-the-sky, snake-oil salesman. And when I'm looking into something, into doing something, or into buying something, or into going somewhere, I want to hear all the problems people have had.

If I'm booking a vacation at a hotel, I do read those one-star reviews. Because I want to know. And then I want to consider.

And I want to think. I want to hear the dangers. I want to hear the arguments why I shouldn't do something. Tell me the worst. If there are no problems, then I think you're probably lying to me.

Because Jesus said, in the world, you're going to have trouble. And so I like that. But then again, I don't like that. I don't like that for the very same reason that you don't like it.

[7 : 40] Because I don't like the heartache. And the headache. I don't like the trouble. I was made for a garden.

And instead, I'm getting the thorns and the thistles. And I'm getting the hurt. And the crop is right there. But you can't get to the crop without getting poked by the thorns.

And so I don't like it. And so I say, come Lord Jesus and take me back. Or take me forward to the next garden.

Well, we live in a fallen world. But there's good news. God speaks to us in a fallen world. And I want you to think about it.

Did Adam and Eve have a single, while they were in the garden, have a single verse of the Bible written to them? No.

[8 : 42] Every verse that has ever been inscripturated into the Bible is written after the fall and before the second coming.

in this period of fallenness, of hurts. And every verse is written to help us to understand how to live in, how to live while you're here, and how to get out of this world, this fallen world.

We've had several interns. And one thing I always do is tell them when they're preaching to look for the FCF, which is the fallen, condition, focus.

So when you're looking at a passage and when you're looking to preach it or in a special, and when you're looking to read it, you want to ask the question, what little bit, what aspect, what part of the fallen condition is this verse, is this passage addressing?

because the Bible doesn't address anything outside of the fallen condition. It doesn't address anything before the Garden of Eden.

[10 : 00] Yes, it talks about it, but you know how brief that is. The point is not to tell us, tell Adam and Eve how to live in that world. It was just to say that's where we used to be.

So the FCF, and so what part of the fallen condition is this verse addressing? Is it ourselves? Is it our world? Is it other people? Is it troubles, trials, dangers, sins, difficulties?

What is it addressing and how is it addressing it? What trouble is God helping us to face? And the more specific you can be, the better your preaching is going to be, the better your understanding of the Word of God is going to be, the more helpful and practical it's going to be because we don't live in a pie in the sky.

We don't live in sort of sacred theology land where it's all straightforward and clean cut. We live in the dirt and we live in the frustration and we live in the hair falling out and in the heartbreak and it's to us down here that God speaks.

It's to us down here that God reveals what He's like, who He is. Not up here, not in some sort of light theological place.

[11 : 27] but in grief and trouble and difficulty and sin and me sinning and feeling the guilt of that and me being sinned against me living in this world.

That's where God tells us what He's like. The supreme, the supreme revelation of what God was like didn't happen in a beautiful seminary classroom.

It didn't happen in a wonderfully intelligent theologian writing a wonderful theology book. It happened at a cross where there was death and dirt and blood and that's where God tells us what He's like.

Proverbs 18.10, the name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run to it and are safe. So where do we as the righteous where do we find comfort? Where do we find hope?

Where do we find peace in this world and in safety? Well, it's in the name of the Lord. It's in who He is in His characteristics in His attributes and so in our troubles we run to Him and so tonight I want to begin a series a new series of sermons and it's sort of two topics put together.

[12 : 53] It's the attributes of God and our troubles. It's the attributes of God and our problems and how those two things fit together because God shows what He's like in the midst of the difficulties in the midst of the problems.

Charles Spurgeon was just 20 years old and the date was January 7th. That's today's date January 7th, right? It was 1855 and he got up and he started his morning sermon like this.

It has been said by someone that the proper study of mankind is man. And as I read this I just so wish I was Charles Spurgeon because he can really talk. I will not oppose the idea but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God's elect is God and the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead, the highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy which can ever engage the attention of a child of God.

Is that you? Godhead is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings and the existence of the great God that he calls Father.

And he goes on to talk about how studying God expands the mind and we need that and I need that because if you're anything like me my heart and my mind have a certain gravity that pushes it down and makes it smaller.

[14 : 33] my concerns and my love and my thoughts become smaller. I can become like the Grinch with a heart two sizes too small.

Well Spurgeon goes on and he says that the study of God expands our heart but it also humbles that too. So it doesn't expand it upward in pride it expands it but it also humbles it.

But then this is the part I wanted to hone in on and while humbling and expanding this subject is consolatory it's comforting it's comforting there is in contemplating Christ a balm for every wound in musing on the Father there is a quietness for every grief and in the influence of the Holy Ghost a balsam for every sore would you lose your sorrow would you drown your cares then go plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea be lost in his immensity and you will come forth as from a couch of rest refreshed and invigorated I know nothing which can so comfort the soul so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief so speak to the winds of trial as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead thinking about who God is his name his nature his doings what he's like

Stephen Charnock old Puritan said we should never think of the excellencies the good things the great things the wonderful excellencies of divine nature without gathering the honey they present Stephen Charnock said we can't think about God it's not good for us to think about just who God is without gathering the honey that that presents and so this series is going to be I'm hoping it's going to be a honey gathering series and not a dry theological series the Bible is going to be our honey beehive and we're going to go in and we're going to get honey out of it Brad Hambrick a pastor in North Carolina wrote our battle from and against sin and suffering is first and foremost a battle toward and for God when we're battling against sin and suffering the first direction that we should be going is toward and for

God and so that's what we're going to do we want to go further up further in pressing on to know Christ and so tonight we're going to begin with the very last verse of 2nd Corinthians chapter 13 the very last verse of 2nd Corinthians may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the spirit be with you all and here is the very simple lesson for this evening it is this we have a trinity for all of our troubles we have a trinity for all of our troubles so what does this verse teach us well it teaches us that God exists in three persons and he is for us God exists in three persons and he is for us and I don't want to go into a detailed defense of going through the whole scriptures of the defense of the trinity tonight but I think if we're going to study

[18 : 27] God and our problems we have to at least start with this foundational truth that God is that our God is triune he is one and he is three he's the three that is one he's not three gods we're not tri theists three God believers the Bible everywhere and it's sort of the whole air of the scriptures believes and teaches that there is only one God that's the only conception that the Bible has there's only one God everything else there's God and then there is everything else there is the creator and then there are all the creatures there's only one creator on Wednesday night this past Wednesday night we saw that Peter teaches us that when we are suffering that we should commit ourselves to whom to who our faithful creator not faithful creators but faithful creator in the

Bible there is just one creator but who created well the Bible shows us that the father created and John says that without the son without the word nothing was made that has been made and in Genesis 1 you have a picture of the Holy Spirit hovering over the waters bringing forth creation out of chaos and so who is our creator well God the father God the son and God the Holy Spirit but yet there is only one creator now I could show the very same thing about salvation he's called God our savior God our father saves us God the son saves us the Holy Spirit saves us there's not three saviors there's only one savior and so the God of the Bible is not a God that any man could have ever come up with on his own because it defies our human rationality it defies what we would think is possible it's a mystery

God at the same time that he is one is three and at the same time that he is three He is one three persons and one God head three persons equal in power and glory equal in divinity and yet one God Paul himself the author of 2nd Corinthians believed in only one God 1st Thessalonians says that everywhere everyone's saying how the Thessalonians they tell of how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God and in 1st Corinthians he calls the idols so called gods whatever else they're posing to be whatever else they are they're just so called gods in some cases these gods were powerful demonic supernatural not of this earth demons and yet he just says but in the end of it they're just creatures they're just so called gods they're just creatures pretending imposing as gods no

Paul Paul lived the Bible lives and breathes Isaiah 44 which says this is what the Lord says Israel's king and redeemer the Lord almighty I am the first I am the last apart from me there is no other God there's only one God that was his world there was only one God and at one point in Paul's life that meant there was no room at all for Jesus that was the great thing that Jesus was doing that was so offensive he was blaspheming and making himself equal to God and all of these so called these Christians were blaspheming as well calling Jesus the Savior well that was his world there's only one God but Christ on that road to Damascus burst into his world now here he is the

Christ and he is no mere man he's he's not just the son of David with a sword in his fist ready to rule the nation no this Messiah is God in the flesh we read it last week Revelation 22 Jesus says I am the Alpha and the Omega the first and the last the beginning and the end he's saying Isaiah 44 that's me and John and John he says before Abraham was I am you're not dealing with someone with just this timeline of history I am I saw Abraham come on the scene I saw Abraham leave the scene and I have been ever the same I am

[24 : 03] Jesus says I am the God of Isaiah 44 and Paul from the road to Damascus on that was Paul's world it's a triune world and he wrote and he preached and he lived and he thought of God as one existing in three persons where the one doesn't contradict the three and the three do not contradict the one but God is a trinity God is not three parts of a whole or the persons are not three parts of a whole so God is not divided into three parts and those three parts together like a pie make one no it's something more profound than that the the three is the one the one is the three and where the one is the three are and it's not God existing now as father and now sometime later now he's existing as son and now sometime later existing as the

Holy Spirit that's called modalism and it's still taught in some Pentecostal churches but the three as one always existing together as one and where each one fills and encompasses the others and so to see Jesus is to see God to be baptized in the name of the father is also to be baptized in the name of the son and the Holy Spirit to lie to the Holy Spirit in Acts 5 was to lie to God to listen to Jesus was to listen to the Father to be born again in Christ was to be born by the Holy is also called the Spirit of God and so when he Paul came time to bless the Corinthians he gives them a

Trinitarian blessing because that's how he thinks and so he says may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now Paul taught and assumed!

the Trinity and that's where I want to pause for a minute and just to say and just to ask and to think for a minute are you when you think of God do you think of him Trinitarianly as a Trinitarian God so where it's not just a puzzle up here where it's not just oh yeah I know that and I mean however you I don't know how you end up doing that but but where you pray to a Trinitarian God and you worship a Trinitarian God and you live with a Trinitarian God now Paul taught and he assumed the Trinity but in this passage in 2nd Corinthians 13 I want you to notice where that doctrine touches us and comes in contact with our lives and 2nd Corinthians 13 that great doctrine of the

Trinity comes in contact with us it's revealed so to speak he talks about it in the context of our need there's a Trinity for our trouble in our need and so Paul says may the glorious triune God be with you all the Trinity was not a dry doctrinal thing to Paul it was that the Trinity was the source of his blessing and his help the Trinity is our God and our God is there for us and he is with us he isn't there with us in our strength he isn't there with us in our righteousness and in our power he's there in us for us in our need and so who needs grace but someone sinful someone needy and who needs love except the broken hearted and who needs fellowship except for the lonely and the oppressed the overcome the overwhelmed and that's us

[28 : 35] I'm sinful I'm not a sinner that's not my identity anymore but I do sin the temptations are real and I sometimes succumb to them and I fall to that power well is there any help for me where where can I go is there where is forgiveness where is pity pity to the guilty pity to the sinful well Paul says there it is it's the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and so how do I have what's my relationship with like like with Jesus how do I have communion how do I have fellowship what's my relationship with him like well I have communion with him and grace I live on his grace his

Jesus gracious heart is my hope because I can so be I can be like that Canaanite woman remember I'm just like a dog down at the table that's how I feel and I don't deserve anything I know that and yet how do I find him I find him gracious to me or I'm like blind Bartimaeus I can't do anything for myself but here I am at Jesus feet and how do I find Jesus Jesus says those wonderful words what can I do for you and Bartimaeus asked for the impossible I want to see Lord and there I am too I ask for the impossible I need help I need forgiveness I need new life and what does Jesus do he does it and that's how my relationship with Jesus and that's how your relationship with Jesus the son of God works I have needs he has grace a couple weeks ago

I quoted in the Sunday school hour Samuel Rutherford and he said it seems like all I have is sin all I have is death and all I have is all of this and all of that I find in him righteousness and I find in him life and I find in him resurrection and I find in him power it's like all I can do is add problems but there he is an answer to all of my problems and so that's how my relationship with Jesus works it's it's a gracious one I'm needy and he has riches to give well what's my relationship with God the father how do I relate to him what's my life like with him and Paul says love love God the father loves me if you're a Christian you could say that right now

God the father loves me he loves me so Paul says may the love of God be with you all and you need to see that in constructing this verse and saying this he's not just throwing words out there randomly no we relate especially to Jesus Christ with grace and we relate all of God's grace comes to us in Christ through his son but we relate especially to the father with love because out of the fullness of the father's heart that's out of the great love that he has that's what started all of this out of the overflow of his loving heart he sent his son but that sending forth of his son didn't exhaust his love for you let me repeat that God sending forth his son didn't exhaust his love

God didn't exhaust his love for you at the cross he demonstrated he demonstrates his love for you at the cross he shows it it's the ultimate and final great expression of this is what God's love is like but it did not end his love for you at this very moment the same love that sent Jesus and saw him crucified that same love is in his heart as big as ever and for you that's what Paul is saying he's an ocean of love still and he loves me right now and he loves you right now if you're a child of God he has love for you and need how great the love the father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God you only understand the sweetness of that when you compare it to what you were he loves us because we're his children and he loves us because we're his creatures we saw that this morning and he loves us because we're image bearers and he loves us because he paid a great price for us love and out of the greatness of his heart he loves us and he loves us because we're needy we always want to turn it upside down and think that God will love us when we don't have needs but the

[34 : 18] Bible everywhere shows a picture of God loving needy people sinful people and so Adam and Eve they sin and right away they get a promise of a savior it's not like God says now we're going to wait a hundred years and then we'll give them some good news right away I have a promise for you and he puts new clothes on them well God in justice and in wrath wipes mankind off the earth in a great flood but when that's done he says you know I can't do this again I am not going to do this again and again and he hangs up his bow in the sky I am putting down that weapon and after every rain you can see it somewhere the rain has stopped why has the rain stopped and not just kept going again because God has hung up his bow and

God says in love I am going to be patient love I am going to show mercy and we can go on and on Israel's long history and sometimes it can be so difficult to read those some of the longer prophets because it is sin and judgment but yet shot through the whole thing and the reason it's so long is because God has so much patience and so much love for these sinners and so in Hosea he says how can I give you up Ephraim how can I hand you over Israel my heart is changed within me and all my compassion is aroused that's our father's heart that's your God's heart for you that's his heart then and it's his heart now so what is your relationship with with the first person of the Trinity it's love love for you in your sin and in your need and it's not that we loved him but that he first loved us so here's the

Trinity and what do you have in the Trinity you have a son of grace a father of love and then the Holy Spirit and Paul says we relate especially to him the blessing that is ours in Christ especially with him is fellowship it's partnership it's that wonderful New Testament word koinonia and there's not a lot of Greek words that you should know but that is one of them because that is one of the most precious ones koinonia it means fellowship a shared life partnership and it's what we have with the Holy Spirit they say in business that the only ship that won't sail is a partnership and they say that because when you put two sinful people together and then put money at the center of that relationship it's hard to make that work it's really easy for sin and selfishness and greed and fear and worry and all the rest to explode that situation but this is a different kind of partnership because one of the partners is one of the persons of the

Trinity one of the partners in this relationship is the Holy Spirit and there's no sin and there's only pure love where he is and where he is there's love and joy and peace and patience he works those things in us but he works those things in us he's able to work those things in us because he is those things he's a patient Holy Spirit and we're in a relationship with him aren't you glad that he's!

patient with you and he's loving and he's kind and he's compassionate and all of the rest but the Holy Spirit comes and he binds himself to us and he's pure love he's perfect love expressed and so brothers and sisters you live with him you live with him you have grace in Jesus you have love in the father and you have the sweet shared life with the Holy Spirit bless him for coming and living in our hearts but come he does and he takes us where we are and he lives in us and he lives with us and he shares all of our troubles shares all of our trials he shares all of our joys and he's the perfect friend and you never go through anything without him and so dear

[39 : 24] Christian this is he he he