

“Our Grand, Mysterious Triune God”

Proverbs 8:1-4 & 22-31, Psalm 8, Romans 5:1-5, John 16: 12-15

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Joyful, loving, gracious Trinity Sunday! A celebration of our Triune God, three distinct persons, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, who glorify and love each other so perfectly that they are, and always will be, united into one God. A celebration of a holy, mysterious and grand three in one God way beyond all words, experiences or dreams yet personable, tangible and a friend.

Elizabeth Johnson wrote. “If the great, unknowable mystery of God is pictured as the glowing sun, and God incarnate as a ray of that same light streaming to the earth (Christ the sunbeam), then Spirit is the point of light that actually arrives and affects the earth with warmth and energy. And it is the entire one light.

Again, the transcendent God is like an upwelling spring of water, and a river that flows outward from this source, and the irrigation channel where the water meets and moistens the earth (Spirit). And it is all the one water.

Yet again, the triune God is like a plant with its root, shoot, and fruit: deep, invisible root, green stem reaching into the world, and flower that opens to spread beauty and fragrance and to fill the earth with its fruit and seed (Spirit). And it is all the one living plant.”

In an attempt to grasp the grand, mystery of God we often look to the cosmos. God the Creator who filled the world with diverse variety, precise detail, unfathomable enormity, minuscule features, beauty, wonder and delights. God the Redeemer who will perfect every imperfection, redeem and glorify way beyond our grandest imagination. God the sustainer who will exponentially enhance us and everything for eternity. The psalmist often sings of God’s handiwork, presence and glory all around us. God is everywhere in a distant star and in our heart, in a black hole and in our wonder, in the sunrise and in our joy. All of it drawn together by God’s love inviting us to love so we can enter into the joy of creating, the renewal of redeeming and the peace of sustaining.

The psalmist sings. **Psalm 8 “O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of**

the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

God has created all. There is no end to the cosmos. God is before and after time and in every millisecond, still God is infinitely bigger than all of that. Yet, God is mindful of each of us. God crowns us with glory. God desires to reside in our hearts. God dances for joy over every instant we love, laugh or create beauty.

Susanna Metz wrote. "It's mind-blowing to catch on that, while God does not need us or the world, God wants us. The Trinity, who creates, loves, empowers, and comforts because God wants to, encircles us and weaves Godself among the threads of our lives and the places of our lives, strengthening and binding us all, with the world itself—all of us, together from one end of the world to another. Perhaps, Trinity Sunday could be a day when we consider that the unity that exists among the Trinity should also exist among all people and the world. We should care for our environment as the Trinity cares for it. Care, one manifestation of love, leads us to enjoy what we belong to. And how do we enjoy this life of ours? We allow ourselves to be threaded together into the tapestry of creation. We dance, we paint, we write, we throw ourselves open to serving others and letting them serve us. We also must never forget that the joy we find in our creativeness is grounded in prayer. Thomas Keating reminds us that our best dance with the Trinity exists only when we acknowledge the Presence of God within us and our earthly companions. Without God, nothing can exist. How or why?—we can't really understand, but it's enough to enjoy the mystery. What more do we need than to know that faith is often shrouded in mystery while we're still on this earth. But even in mystery, our belief pushes us onto the dance floor to partner with the blinding beauty of Love and Unity—to dance with God... The Trinity is complete and embracing love. There is love within the Trinity that binds God together. That Love reaches out to gather into Godself each and every one of us."

In an attempt to grasp the grand, mystery of God sometimes we ponder wisdom. Proverbs explains how God created all wisdom at the beginning, to guide us, inspire us and delight in us. **Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31** **"Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice? On the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand; beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries out: "To you, O people, I call, and my cry is to all that live. The LORD created me at the beginning of God's work, the first of God's acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth--when God had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil. When God established the heavens, I was there, when God drew a circle on the face of the deep, when God made firm the skies above, when God established the fountains of the deep, when God assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress**

God's command, when God marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside God, like a master worker; and I was daily God's delight, rejoicing before God always, rejoicing in God's inhabited world and delighting in the human race. Wisdom rejoices in guiding us. The playful exuberance of the proverb gives us a glimpse of our fun God, delighting in loving us, calling us to feast with God at banquet, inviting us to play with God as children, welcoming us into abundant life.

The Apostle Paul believes we catch a glimpse of our grand, mysterious God through grace, peace and hope in the midst of sin, struggle and crisis. **Romans 5:1-5** **“Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”**

God is grace. I believe grace is the most misunderstood concept. Often we are told we have value because of what we do. Grace says each of us is a valuable, masterpiece because we are God's beloved children. Often we are told if we don't earn it, buy it, deserve it, acquire it, by our own effort then it is not worth having. Grace says the greatest wonders of the cosmos, the grandest beauty, the deepest joy, the most extravagant resurrections, invigorating loves, enduring peace and every blessing is all a free gift. All we need to do is receive the gift.

The Apostle Paul explains we obtain access to all of this grace, peace, justification, hope and the glory of God through Jesus who offers it all to us as a gift. Certainly, there are seasons to be humble, yet Paul says there are also seasons to boast of all God is doing, to boast of all the goodness God put within us, to boast about all God does through us, to boast about ourselves, to boast about others, giving all praise, honor and glory to God. For all we are and do is all grace, a free gift of God. Our boasting, leads to gratitude, our gratitude to joy and our joy to love.

The Apostle Paul believes that when we receive God's gracious gifts we are able to have hope in the midst of suffering. We are able to boast in suffering because grace has filled us with big hopes. Forgiveness from the suffering of sin, renewed relationships from the suffering of discord, vibrant health from the suffering of illness, light from the suffering of darkness, cheerfulness from the suffering of depression, rest from the suffering of too much work, work from the suffering of too much rest, confidence from the suffering of doubt, freedom from the suffering of guilt, exuberant reunion in heaven after the suffering of grief laden death, clarity to hear God's positive voice in your thoughts from the suffering of negative thoughts, success after the suffering of failure, freedom from the suffering of addiction, love from the suffering of hate, confidence from the suffering of fear, simple pleasures from the suffering of materialism, corporation from the

suffering of fighting, even Jesus' eternal glorious resurrection life from the suffering of death is just the beginning, a mere glimpse, a foretaste, of the infinity grandeur resurrections that God has planned for us that God will give us at just the right moment. The Apostle Paul invites us to accept big hope, being certain, that God will right every wrong, heal every suffering, wipe away every tear, fulfill every promise. As we go deeper and deeper into relationship with the Trinity, deeper into love, we perceive that God is giving us all we truly need, God is nurturing us into a good beloved person that will love, rejoice and create beauty for eternity with God.

After three years with the disciples, before his passion and resurrection Jesus said. **John 16:12-15 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, the Holy Spirit will guide you into all the truth; for the Spirit will not speak on her own, but will speak whatever he hears, and she will declare to you the things that are to come. The Holy Spirit will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that the Holy Spirit will take what is mine and declare it to you.**

After three years Jesus still has many things to say. All the healings, forgiveness of sin, welcoming people back into community, calming of nature, feeding thousands, teachings, conversations, mentoring and all those perception expanding parables gave the disciples just the most minute glimpse into the magnificent grandeur of God. God is good, pure, holy mystery beyond our grandest, hopeful dream.

Jesus knows on earth our perceptions get all twisted and we sense only snippets of the truth. Who do you say that I am? Jesus asked Peter, knowing that the disciples were creating a Savior in their own image, to carry out their wishes. What is truth? Jesus asked Pilate reframing this ruler's assumptions about the law, guilt, justice and identity. Sadly to often instead of dreaming about the grandeur of God, being in awe imagining the glory, amazed in wonder, envisioning the delights that God has for us in our eternal future we try to put God in a box. Instead of marveling in the grand mystery of God we limit God by fashioning God to be similar to us, believing God would vote the way we vote, have the same morals and delight in one style of worship, our style. Perhaps even favor one religion over another. Instead of marveling in the grand mystery of God we limit God by transferring to God our views of righteous laws, justice, stewardship and the way one should live. Jesus knows our desire to see what we want to see and promises the Holy Spirit to expand our perception and lead us on a journey of enlightenment of more and more truth.

After three years of revealing God. Jesus, fully human, knows all of our senses are way to feeble to perceive anything more than a mere snippet of a few facets of God. Jesus, fully God, is bursting with delight knowing that we have eternity to experience more and more of the grand mystery of God. May all of us delight in discovering more and more of our grand, mysterious Triune God. Amen