

THE HOLY TRINITY

“The Glory Due His Name”

Our Redeemer Dallas 2020

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name.” These words come to us from the appointed psalm for today, the 29th psalm (verses 1 and 2). In layman’s terms,

Give God the Credit Where Credit Is Due.

Now, you’d think this’d be a no-brainer. God’s done a *lot* of stuff. He is the Creator of heaven and earth. He is our Lord, who has redeemed us, purchased and won us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, with His perfect life, death, resurrection, and ascension. He is the Lord and Giver of life, who has called us by the Gospel, enlightened us with His gifts, sanctified and kept us in the true faith, just as He does the *whole* Christian church on earth, in which He daily and richly forgives all our sins and the sins of all believers, and on the Last Day He will raise us and all the dead and give eternal life to us and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

And the credit to God is most certainly due. For these works are by no means anonymous, but in Scripture God has revealed Himself to us as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. “In the beginning, *God* created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). “You shall call His name Jesus, for *He* will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the *Holy Spirit*” (1 Cor. 12:3). We *know* where we came from, we *know* who’s redeemed us, and we *know* that faith is the gift of God, because He in His Word has *told* us. “Where were *you* when I laid the foundation of the earth?” He answers Job from the whirlwind (38:4). “Truly *no* man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life,” He sings in the Psalms (49:7). “You were *dead* in your trespasses and sins...But God...made us alive,” He inspired the apostle Paul to write (Eph. 2:1, 4). He alone can and has done these things, and He’s *told* us, He’s told us who He is and what He’s done, so that we may proclaim *Him* among all peoples, as it says in the prophet Isaiah (12:4):

Give thanks to the Lord,
call upon His name,
make known his deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that His name is exalted.

Therefore, David writes in Psalm 29, “Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name.”

But how *can* we, when we're so busy

Seeking Glory for Ourselves?

In last week's Old Testament lesson from Genesis 11, we read about some of Noah's descendants who found a plain in the land Shinar and settled there. And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth" (verse 4). They did *not* ascribe to the Lord glory and strength, but rather they sought to claim that glory and strength for *themselves*. God's the one who had brought Noah and his family, eight souls in all, safely through water, which means they were *supposed* to fear and love Him so that they called upon *His* name in praise, not reject it in some foolhardy attempt to make *theirs* praiseworthy.

But that is the temptation, isn't it? We ought to ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name, but there's a part of us that wants some of that glory for ourselves, not because we don't think God deserves it, but because we think we *need* it. If God's ever going to accept us, we think, then we need to show Him, and the world, that we've earned it, that we're good people, who care about the issues. We need to bolster our reputations, post on social media, do whatever we need to do to make a name for ourselves, a name people notice, praise and adore, and then maybe, just maybe, we'll have peace.

But when we do that, we're actually setting ourselves *against* God. We're stealing His thunder, saying, "Look at me! Ascribe to *me* glory and strength. Ascribe to *me* the glory due *my* name." Not even Jesus did that (John 8:54). But, as it says in Isaiah 42,

I am the Lord; that is My name;
My glory I give to no other.

There is only one who is worthy of all praise, and that is the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, our Savior, and our Advocate. We are worthy of nothing. We deserve nothing. We are famously failed and gloriously goners. Like Isaiah in today's Old Testament lesson, we cower before the holy presence of God and say, "Woe is me! For I am not just a person of unclean lips, but of unclean hands and thoughts, as well" (Isaiah 6:5).

But, "Blessed be the Holy Trinity and the undivided Unity. Let us give glory to him because

He Has Shown His Mercy to Us."

It's not just that He's all-powerful. It's not just that He stepped up to do what no one else could. It's that the Lord our God is gracious and merciful. He is giving and kind, compassionate. He wants the glory due His name, because He wants *you*. "For God so

loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him” (John 3:16-17). He certainly *could* have condemned us. But then, who would there be to give Him the glory due His name? What would He even be famous for?

But as it stands, He has redeemed us. He has taken our nothing and given us everything, including the grace to acknowledge His glory. We couldn’t do that without Him, for as Christ says, “apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). But by the confession of a true faith, a faith which He has given us, we acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity. We ascribe to the Lord glory and strength, saying, “Whoever desires to be saved must above all hold the catholic faith...And the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.” In other words, we give God the credit where credit is due, confessing Him as the one true God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who has accomplished our salvation, joining us together in the one holy Christian and apostolic Church (that’s what word “catholic” means, by the way; we’re not talking about *Roman* Catholics, but the fact that wherever the church is found, it is the *same* church¹). We give Him the glory due His name, proclaiming that “whoever desires to be saved must think thus about the Trinity.” For there is salvation in no one else (Acts 4:12). And even when it says that “those who have done good will go into eternal life,” we recognize that that good was only able to be done because of *faith*, for “without faith it is impossible to please him” (Heb. 11:6).

So, as the book of Psalms ends, “Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!” (150:2). Praise God from whom all blessings flow; / Praise Him, all creatures here below; / Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host: / Praise Father, Son, and Holy Glory” (LSB 805). To Him be glory forever (Rom. 11:36).

Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo gloria

¹ R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Apostles’ Creed*, 159.