



PENTECOST SERMON

THE HOLY TRINITY

June 7 2020

Sermon Text: Matthew 28:16-20

'The Fatherhood of God & The Brotherhood of Man'

One night, a father was tucking in his six-year-old son. The father asked him, "Son, when does Daddy love you the most? When you've been fighting with your sister, and getting into a lot of trouble? Or when you've been helping Mommy, and have been nice to everyone?"

The son thought for a moment, then said, "Both times!"

"Right," said the father. "And do you know why?"

"Because you're my Dad. You love me, no matter what."

That's how God, our true Father loves us: no matter what.

St. John was inspired by the Holy Spirit to express it like this: "He who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20).

And what's the best way to love both brothers and fathers? To lead them to Christ. Our Lord gave the words of His great commission as our way to show loving care to the people around us: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (v. 19-20), Jesus told His eleven disciples before being parted from them at His Ascension.

We in the Church are busy with this loving work: baptizing and teaching the Word of the Lord. We want others to become disciples, followers of Christ. Why? We know God as our true Father. We love other people as brothers.

Who wouldn't? How about some of those eleven disciples? While they knelt

down before the flesh and blood, risen Lord there on the Mount of Olives, some doubted. With Jesus standing right before them, some did not believe He was God in the flesh, the Conqueror of death, the living Saviour with all authority in heaven and on earth.

What keeps us from carrying out the Great Commission? Doubt. What keeps us from going and making disciples of the people around us? Doubt. Why don't we lead others to Baptism? Why do many who are baptized reject that blessing and no longer worship the Lord and observe His teaching? Doubt. Sadly, we lack love for the lost people around us. We doubt that God has made them our real brothers. Sadly, we do not look to God as our true Father. Without the fatherhood of God, there is no brotherhood of man. Repent of these doubts. Your loving Father wants to forgive you.

For this much is true: all people are brothers; and God is our true Father. How? In Jesus Christ.

Jesus makes us brothers. The Second Person of the Trinity came to earth to become our Brother, our Immanuel, God with us. Born of Mary in Bethlehem, Christ Jesus turned the hearts of those who hate each other back together in brotherly love. The price He paid to reconcile the people of the world as brothers was nothing short of His precious, holy blood, poured out at the cross of Calvary. The brotherhood of man is founded on the death and resurrection of Christ.

Because Jesus is our Brother, we call God our true Father. Christ forgives our sins that make us prodigal outcasts, and fugitives from the family of God. The gate to heaven is unlocked by Christ's authority: by the One who went to the death and the grave and came back alive and victorious. By the authority of the One who reigns in heaven and on earth, the portal to eternal life stands open to all His baptized believers. In Jesus, we have a loving Father who stands with His welcoming arms wide open. The fatherhood of God is founded on the death and resurrection of Christ.

The Holy Spirit teaches us to believe this. He overcomes all our doubts with the truth. We become disciples by the Spirit's work and power. Baptism in the name of God is effective. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit stand behind this word and water. "To be baptized in God's name is to be baptized not by men, but by God Himself," writes Martin Luther in the Large Catechism. "Therefore, although it is performed by human hands, it is still truly God's own work" (LC IV:10). We

cherish our Baptisms. Through this sacrament, we know the fatherhood of God; we see all people as our brothers. The Holy Spirit also draws us to the Father through the body and blood of His Son at the altar. Through this sacrament, we know the fatherhood of God; we see all people as our brothers. We also keep the true teachings of Christ as drawn from the Bible in pure hearts by the work of the Holy Spirit. We guard Scripture's teaching like a treasure: a treasure we are not afraid to give away to others. Loving others, we bring them to Christ: as baptized believers.

Again, hear God's Word from St. John, "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers" (I John 3:14). Sadly, the Church is often not treated well by the world: not like part of a brotherhood. But don't let that stop you from loving others. Since God is your true Father, all people are true brothers in Christ. The great commission is in Christ's capable hands. All authority in heaven and on earth is in the hands of our Lord. He promises never to leave you. He will be with you always, to the end of the age (v. 20). Amen.