

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

It is St. John, not Moses, who writes “In the beginning... was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” St. John uses the same Words as Moses, “In the beginning”, Words that denote the eternal Nature of God. Moses uses the Hebrew word for God, John expands on that and identifies the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Word, as present and active in Moses’ description of the creative work of God and His Spirit.

Solomon teaches by the Spirit that the Word, who he calls the Wisdom of God, is the Person through whom all things are made, the same assertion that St. John makes in his first chapter: “...all things were made through Him”.

The same Evangelist, the Beloved Apostle, writes to the Church of the blessed Unity of the Holy Trinity: “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” But that Blessed, Holy Unity does not remain only in heaven. For St. John continues “there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.”

So the blessed Unity of the Holy Trinity is extended to the Holy Church on earth, as she is joined to her God by the work of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, who brings the Words and Work of the Second Person to His Holy Bride, which is the will of the Father, the First Person of the Holy Trinity.

Faith ponders the unsearchable Mystery of the Holy Trinity, and joins the Holy Seraphim in their cry of praise and adoration: “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth...” But again in the praise of those created, sinless spirit beings we learn that the Unity and Holiness does not remain in heaven: “the whole earth is full of His glory.” So the heavenly Triune God says to earth-bound Isaiah “Whom shall *I* send, and who will go for *Us*?”

And the Incarnate Lord speaks of the same Trinity when He teaches Nicodemus “*We* speak of what *We* know, and testify what *We* have seen.” He speaks of the Divine “*We*”, the Three Coequal Persons in One God. But of the infinite our finite minds are not capable. The Lord says “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?”

So we find ourselves in quite a quandry. We confess a God we cannot fully understand, One God in Three Persons and Three Persons in One God. That’s what saving faith confesses. Faith believes and confesses great Mysteries that no mere man can fathom. For human math, for human reason, it is impossible.

Saint Paul gives us the Word to express our inability to understand coupled with our steadfast faith in the Truth: “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” And yet it is true, and we believe, teach and confess the Holy Trinity.

His Wisdom, the Wisdom of which the Apostle writes, is the Second Person of the Trinity. His knowledge is made ours by the work of the Third Person of the Trinity, who works to give us the

mind of Christ. For as Paul writes "... the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For 'who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?' But we have the mind of Christ." And that is the work of the Holy Trinity, His great love poured out upon us.

According to our flesh we find ourselves with faithful Mary, who at the Words of the Archangel responded, "How can these things be?" The blessed Unity of the Holy Trinity is the Unity that God desires we have with Him in Christ, that we be One with Him. But that Unity is shattered. God was faithful. Our fallenness is the problem. Sin is the problem. It is the sin in which you were born, and every sin you have committed since. For sin separates from God. Sin fractures the blessed unity God would have with you.

And that separation is the source of confusion. Fallen men cannot know or believe in the One True God aright. So there are denominations and factions and divisions and heresies and false religions. Among those who would be called Christian there is little unity. Even among those who would be called Lutheran there are sharp disagreements. The visible church is certainly not one.

So fall on your knees with Isaiah. For Isaiah felt the sinfulness that you feel. In the presence of the Holy God he confessed what you must confess: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips..." Nicodemus felt it to. Hearing the clear Words of Christ, he remained hopelessly confused by them.

But thanks be to God, that while His being surpasses our understanding, how much more His mercy. And that mercy is shown to you, that love is shown to you, in that the One Holy God would love sinners, and that He would send His Son to die for your sins. And that Son, lifted up like the serpent on the pole, that Son, crucified, risen and ascended, sent His Spirit, the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son, to bring to you the reconciling Work of God the Son.

God brings you into Communion with Himself not by touching your lips with a burning coal from the heavenly altar, but by new birth, birth from above, as the Lord Himself taught Nicodemus, birth by water and the Spirit. In that miraculous birth, you do not enter a second time into your mother's womb to be born, but you enter the Womb of the Church, the Mother of the Faithful: the Baptismal Font. You emerge a new creature, a child of God.

There the shed Blood of Christ removes your sins, as the Holy Spirit brings you the grace and forgiveness Christ earned, by the will of the Father. Christ took on Flesh to be your Brother, to redeem you, body and soul. Forgiven, restored, you are One with Him as His Holy Church, One with the One who is One with the Father and the Spirit. So it is that faith confesses "Oh the depths of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

In His unsearchable wisdom and ways, the Son the Father sent places His Body with Bread and His Blood with wine. The Spirit who works and sustains faith in you sanctifies you, that you receive the Holy Sacrament of the Altar worthily, placing you into Communion with Christ,

Communion with His Holy Church, and Communion with God. You eat and drink, and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is purged, as not a seraphim, but as the Called and Ordained Steward of the Mysteries of God takes the Body and Blood of Christ from this altar, and touches your mouth with it. You eat and drink according to the Lord's Institution, and you receive the eternal benefits Christ won for you – communion with the Triune God, forgiveness of your sins, a place in His Kingdom now, and a place forever in heaven.

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be the glory, now and forever.

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