

God Has Spoken

Hebrews

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Bible Text: Hebrews 1:1; John 17:2-3
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Please take your Bibles and turn with me to the book of Hebrews. That's on page 1,001 in your church Bible. Hebrews 1. Last week we had a kind of general introduction to the book and this morning we begin our exposition of the book by reading the first verse and a half of this chapter.

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

O God, we pray that you would open our eyes and ears to see and understand your truth. Give us your Holy Spirit and anoint us with the Holy One that we may understand all things. In Jesus' name. Amen.

So holding your Bible in your hand this morning, do you understand what you're reading? If someone were to look over your shoulder and to ask you, "What kind of book are you reading?" would you be able to answer the question? Well, I'm going to answer it for you so that you know if someone ever does ask you. You would, perhaps, want to answer the question along two lines of thought. You might want to say, first of all, "What I'm holding in my hands is apostolic Scripture." This book of Hebrews is apostolic Scripture because these New Testament books presuppose the work of the Holy Spirit who is described by Jesus as the Spirit of truth. He is the one that Jesus promised to his disciples, the apostles in the Upper Room when no one else but they were there, and said that when the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth comes, he would do for them three things: he would remind them of things that Jesus had said and taught; he would supplement that by teaching them or leading them into all truth; and he would show them things to come. And it was that anointing of the Holy Spirit to the apostles that has given us the New Testament Scripture as we know it.

They were the circle of the apostles and Hebrews belongs, as I tried to demonstrate last week, belongs to the circle of the apostles. Those people were the ear-witnesses and eye-witnesses to Jesus. They were, like the ministers in our church, they were ministers of the Gospel, but unlike the ministers today, they were magisterial ministers of the Gospel. That is to say that their ministry has a quality and a height to it that no other ministry comes near. Their words are in the Bible and all the rest of us minister out of the Bible.

We interpret their words. Their words are magisterial, our words are ministerial to our lives based on what they have said.

So Scripture is what? It is the product of the Spirit's work, revealing the word of God to the people of God, to the prophets and the apostles. It is the product of the Spirit's work. It is also the instrument in the Spirit's hand to teach and transform us human beings by the power of God himself. So we can describe what we're holding in our hands as apostolic Scripture.

We could also describe it more specifically, the way the apostle who writes this describes it in chapter 13, verse 22. He says it is a "word of exhortation." That is because it's addressed to Christian people who find themselves at sea spiritually, and who are susceptible, as he says in chapter 2, verse 1, susceptible to drifting away in their faith, drifting away from the message of salvation that they have received and have believed because, as he will show in the book, their lives manifested a clear disconnect between two foundational realities and themselves. Those foundational realities are these: first of all, a final and full and surpassing revelation on the one hand, and a full and sufficient redemption on the other. And it is the words "final and surpassing" in relation to the revelation, and "full and sufficient" in relation to redemption, that they were somehow not quite grasping or understanding.

Now, I'm not going to say anymore about that today. We're going to be picking those themes up as we pick our way through the book. But I will say this in comment: what this book teaches is that in terms of revelation, God has spoken in his Son clearly, fully, definitively and finally, so-much-so that we have come to taste the goodness of the word of God and we have felt through the word of God the powers of the age to come. We felt the powers of the age to come by seeing things that no one else has seen, by grasping things that no one else has grasped, by believing things that no one else believes.

And then secondly, not only has God spoken in his Son, God has acted in his Son, once and for all, a full and sufficient sacrifice for our sins so that there is no more to be added, no more to be done, no more to be accomplished. We have a full and final salvation through faith in Jesus' name.

Now, no wonder in light of that, that the writer chooses to open this work not by telling us anything about himself, not even by telling us a story to get our attention so that we listen to the rest of what he has to say, and by the way, this was a very long sermon, longer even than the one you're going to endure this morning, which is why we are to pay heed to what he does.

How does he begin? Well, I want you to notice as he begins this great exordium which goes on from verse 1 to verse 4 and is the introduction to the book, he gives us a series of contrasts that we'll, again, develop another time. But just in passing, the contrasts or comparisons move from the minor to the major, from the old to the new, from the light to the weighty, from the lesser to the greater, and all with the intention of magnifying the excellence of the Son of God. The whole exordium rests and culminates in the middle of

verse 2 with the words "en huios" in Greek, "in Son." That is the punchline. That is the purpose of the exordium right at the very beginning of the book. Our eyes will, as we shall see not today but in the days to come, focus on that Son. As John Calvin says: the point of it is to commend the doctrine of Christ. He is at the heart of the matter.

And the whole structure of this exordium, these first four verses, is to contrast the past and these last days, the fact that God spoke and has now spoken. He spoke to the fathers, he has now spoken to us. He spoke by the prophets, he has now spoken by one who is his Son. But I want this morning to show you to draw your attention to one word. Our sermon is about one word. It is a word which is mentioned and passed over by everyone of my 20th and 21st century commentators. Not by John Owen, not by Thomas Aquinas, but by modern commentators and it's the word, the first verb, "God." God. For this God is constantly before the author of this book, 68 times in this letter. And without apology or introduction, he confronts us with the reality of God.

Now, he is going to move on from there. He is going to describe the actions of God as they relate to us. That's the bit we want to get to. We want to get to the bit where God does something for us. When God is available to us or God is serving us with salvation or whatever it may be, but we cannot rush there until we have paused to adore and wonder at the reality of who God is himself.

Earlier this summer, back in June, I wrote one very long blog post that was divided into two and was put out there and which caused some reaction. The last I counted, 250 blogs or comments or posts followed that particular post and it was about the Trinity and you just can Google it for yourself and find out what it was all about. But one of the things I learned from that great Trinitarian debate of 2016 is, that evangelical people cannot agree about who God is. Now, that is not to say that the churches cannot agree. In fact, it is the most agreed about thing in all of Christian history and if you look up the statements of faith of the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Christian Reformed churches, Presbyterian churches, even Reformed Baptist churches, you will find that there is unanimity and harmony and agreement about who God is. We have the great creeds of our faith, we have the great confessions of our church, and they are all united in what we believe about God, but apparently evangelicals are not agreed on who God is and it's very vital, isn't it? Because if I happen to be worshiping the wrong God or I say things about God that are not true of God, what am I doing? Well, I'm committing blasphemy. I'm committing idolatry. And I'm committing heresy. So it's a very serious business.

If eternal life is contingent on knowing God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, the knowing God bit is as vital as me knowing the Jesus Christ bit. In fact, the big questions that were resolved by the church in its earliest days over the first 300 years of the church's existence, were the questions of God and this is the reason: the resurrection of Jesus raised the specter of this man, Jesus, sharing in the nature of God. Did he or did he not? And the big questions that drove the debate in the early church were these: was Jesus qualified and equipped to be our Savior or not? And is Jesus worthy of my worship as God or not?

Well, the writer is going to talk much about Jesus in the flesh, but now he's going to talk, first of all, he introduces us right in the beginning, "God." God spoke to our fathers. God has spoken to us. And the whole flow rests between those two crucial points in the text: theos, huios, God, Son. God is the author, the speaker, whose message has come through the fathers and in the Son. And the subject is what? It is the subject of revelation, self-revelation, self-communication. God is talking to us about himself, communicating himself. And here's the interesting thing: when you look at the Bible and you listen to the message of the Bible, you discover that obviously God the Father is in the business of communicating, self-communicating to us. That's what the writer is saying here: God spoke, God has spoken.

God the Father speaks but the Bible also teaches that God the Son reveals things to us, reveals God to us. In the Old Testament for example, this is one example among many that I could cite to you this morning but you don't have the time. But in Exodus 3 we have this figure, this mysterious figure in the Old Testament called the Angel of the Lord. It becomes apparent that although he's called the Angel of the Lord, he is not an angel like the angels are angels. He is the Lord's messenger. In fact, he is called again and again and again in the Old Testament, the Lord himself. He speaks not only for God, he speaks as God to Abraham and to Jacob and others, and Moses. And it's the Angel of the Lord that appears in Exodus 3 to Moses in the flame of fire out of the midst of the bush, and as Moses looked, "behold," it says, "the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed," and from the burning bush the Lord spoke to Moses.

And the New Testament would teach us that, that one who was speaking was none other than the Son of God in his pre-Incarnate state speaking as God to Moses. You find this same thing in Isaiah. Isaiah goes into the temple, you remember, he sees the Lord high and lifted up and exalted, filling the temple with his glory. He hears the seraphim singing praise to him, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the whole earth is full of your glory!" Then he heard God speak to him out of the holiness of his temple. And John in his Gospel says Isaiah reported what God had said on the day he saw Jesus' glory and spoke of him.

So God the Son is a revealing God. God the Holy Spirit is a revealing God. In Acts 28, the writer says, "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet." So when it comes to revelation, the Father reveals, the Son reveals, the Holy Spirit reveals. Or listen to this summary about revelation in 1 Peter 1:11, "Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories." In other words, it is the witness of Scripture that revelation is the joint activity of the Father, the Son and the Spirit.

God reveals himself and it is the witness of Scripture that the Father is God. "God so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten Son." We know that the Son is God. John reports in chapter 5 of his Gospel, "This was why the Jews were seeking all the

more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God." Or as John says at the beginning of his Gospel, "No one has ever seen God. The only God who is at the Father's side has made him known." Jesus is God. And the Holy Spirit is God. In 1 Corinthians 12 we read about the same God who empowers and the same Spirit who empowers. The empowering Spirit is the empowering God in the parallels of that passage. The Spirit is God because only the Spirit knows the deep things of God. Listen to this language from 1 Corinthians 2 as he's talking about what God has revealed to us, what God has revealed to us through the Spirit and he explains why. He says this, "the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one," knows or, "comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God." In other words, the Holy Spirit is God fully because he can fathom the mind of God. He is the Spirit of God. He knows the purposes of God. He comprehends them and he reveals them to us.

And we say the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit of God is God. We're not saying the Father has some of God, the Son has some of God, and the Spirit has some of God. Read Colossians and you will read the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ in bodily form. Wherever the Father is, the fullness of Godhead is there. Wherever the Son is, the fullness of Godhead is there. Wherever the Spirit is, the fullness of Godhead is there. None of those persons, the Father cannot operate without the Son and the Spirit. The Son cannot operate without the Father and the Spirit. The Spirit cannot operate without the Father and the Son. For God, as we will see, is one being and acts as one.

Now the reality is, of course, that this doctrine of God just like my commentators, is something we assume and take for granted that we know, so I thought this morning we would spend a moment to look at the use of this word "God," and to think together about three aspects of God. First of all, his ineffability; secondly, his simplicity; and thirdly, his triunity.

Let's think, first of all, about his ineffability and I know that you know the definition of "ineffable," look it up in your phone and you'll find it is to be "without description; beyond description." Ineffability. Back in the fourth century, there was a man called Unonimus. This character said that God does not know anything more of his essence than we do and Unonimus was of the view that we could reason from what we saw around us back into the being of God. Strangely enough, this is going on in evangelicalism as well, reasoning from things we see and projecting them back into the being of God and to say we can understand what God is like in himself. In fact, people were writing in to me and saying, "Are you saying that we cannot know what God is like in himself?" And I was writing back to them and saying, "Precisely." Because this is what the Bible teaches.

One of the verses we gave to a new member this morning was, "The peace of God does," what? "It passes understanding." The peace of God passes understanding. There's a brilliant sermon on that verse, talking about all we know about the peace of God that Dr. Boice preached. Read it. It's fantastic. I preached it when I was 22 and they thought it was a great sermon. But everything involved in the peace of God isn't in that sermon nor

could it be in anybody's sermon because, as Dr. Boice says in the sermon, the peace of God ultimately passes understanding.

In Matthew 11, Jesus says, "No one knows the Father except the Son." Now eternal life is us getting to know God and yet Jesus says no one knows the Father except the Son. Only God the Son knows God the Father in an absolute sense.

Or you take 1 Corinthians 2, the part we just read there, that the Holy Spirit is able to tell us what's on the mind of God because he knows the mind of God, he knows the depths of God, because only God knows himself. Only God knows himself.

This Creator/creature distinction lies at the very heart of our knowledge of God and when God made the world, he made the world out of nothing. That's the first thing that's said in the Bible, the word "to create" is the word "out of nothing." There was nothing transferred into what God made. Completely new. Completely different. Outside of himself. He didn't import parts of himself because he doesn't have parts of himself to import. He made something exterior to himself when he made the world.

St. Augustine said, "The finite cannot understand the infinite." You run through the Bible, what these early Christians were doing was they were running through the Bible and they saw a wealth of material that they had to get their heads around in order to say anything true about God. What does he say? "My ways are not your ways. My thoughts are not your thoughts," says the Lord. Numbers 23, "God is not man." He's not like us. Psalm 50, God complains to his people Israel, "You thought that I was altogether like you." That was his accusation. Romans 11, great passage, a passage we love in this church, "O the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments. How inscrutable are his ways." When we confess God's ineffability, we confess that God exceeds, eludes and escapes all of our statements about him.

You know, there are a number of Psalms, we started the worship service today with Psalm 145 and it's among a number of Psalms that get us going in singing the praises of God for his greatness, and yet some of those Psalms that talk about God's greatness and tell us to praise it, also push us in the opposite direction. I began by quoting that Psalm, "Praise the Lord. Praise him for his greatness." And then it ends, where I ended was with those words, "his greatness is unsearchable." When you've said all you have to say, it's still unsearchable. Ten billion years from today when we're still praising God for what we're discovering of him, it will still be unsearchable.

Or you take Psalm 106, it says, "give thanks to the LORD," and then it goes on to say, "Who can utter the mighty deeds of God, or declare all his praises?" Praise the Lord, but you won't be able to do it. You'll never be able to get everything you can praise God for. It's above you. He's ineffable.

Or Psalm 40 that talks about a new song in our mouth and tells us to sing that new song, a song of praise to God. And then after it's told you to do that, it then talks about the

unsingability of that song. Is it being contradictory? This is what it says, listen, "You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you! I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told." They are more than can be told. And if you break that down, what he says here in that Psalm 40 is this: God's deeds and God's thoughts are unfathomable. They are unsearchable. They are unutterable, you can't repeat them. They are incomparable, you cannot compare. They are innumerable, more than can be numbered. They are inexpressible, more than can be told. They are inexplicable, they cannot be explained.

All of God's actions including even those things most characteristic about him and those interventions that he makes in our lives and in history and Christ and so on, those are his ways with the created order. Those are things we can look at and get our heads around to some degree, at least. But when it comes to God in himself, we cannot grasp him. Do you remember Job was once taken in hand by God and God showed him the vastness of the cosmos, God showed him what he had done in making the cosmos? And Job as he sees the majesty and the mystery and immensity of God, in the end is forced to say, "Behold, these are but the outskirts of his ways."

How small a whisper we hear of him. Think about it, think of the enormity of space, the sheer enormity of space that goes on and on and on and on. The light years it takes for the Starship Enterprise to go from A to B within that place. Think of it and think that that was created by God only as an analogy for his eternity and his immensity. Nothing, it's a pinprick to the immense universe of God. It blows us away. We're stumped by it. Maybe we feel like Job, "I need to put my hand over my mouth and say nothing."

Now, of course, God did not leave it there. He did not stay silent. He did reach out to us but how did he do that? In the fullness of time, the Father sent the Son, the Son took on our humanity, and in our humanity spoke to us as a fellow creature, demonstrated in his creaturely life something, something of the inner working of God. A true something, a faithful something but not the fullness of God. All the fullness of God was present in that bodily life of Jesus. We see what God is like in a creaturely form. We see the lengths to which God would go for us, how he loved us to the end and demonstrated the fullness of his love towards us in that creaturely form. Why did he do that? Because as creatures we cannot comprehend the Creator. As finite people, we cannot comprehend the infinite God. We cannot and so he stoops to us. He stoops to our weakness, mighty as he is. The ineffability of God.

Secondly, the simplicity of God. We notice, we've already noticed that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are each described by the name "God"; they are each described also by the name "Lord," the great "I am." They are self-existent. We'll see on another occasion how it is that the Father has life in himself and the Son has life in himself and the Father has granted the Son to have life in himself.

As the church read the Bible, as the church put together all that the Bible says about God, the church came to the conclusion that there are not three Gods but there is only one God. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one." And that meant that however we understand

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, these are not three dissimilar or three similar essences, but there is only one essence, one God, one ousia, which is the word for a being. You as an individual sitting in this room, you are yourself an ousia. You are a living being. God is not three ousias, he is one being. One being.

And the names that are given to God, the titles that are used to describe God, sum up who he is. In Exodus 34, God identifies him partly by reciting some of his perfections, as a kind of exposition of what the word "Lord" means. The word "Lord" meaning the great "I am" word, the great word that was unspeakable by the Jews, Yahweh Jehovah. And he unfolds those perfections. Here he is, "I am a God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." That's the way I am in myself. What does that look like when I'm dealing with you? It looks like this, "keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty." That second lot are not a second lot of attributes of God, they are the outworking in our lives of the essential characteristics of who God is and what God does, flows out of who God is because God is not a composite being, he is a simple being. He's not made up of parts. Our confession of faith says that. He is a simple being. One being.

Now, this is a problem, you see, when in the summer we were talking about evangelicals who have taken the doctrine or the idea, they've noticed in human society the tendency to develop patriarchal modes of expression between men and women and they took that and they projected it into the inner being of God and they said the Father has authority, the Son is subordinate to the Father, and the Holy Spirit is the product of their relationship. Now, this is the way it's put in the systematic theology of one of the writers. He says the Father in the Godhead corresponds to the husband in a home. The Son corresponds to the role of a wife in the home. And the Holy Spirit corresponds to the fruit of their union. It's bonkers. It's a Hebrew word. Bonkers. It's also unbiblical. We do not get to project into God anything that God hasn't revealed to us.

So whenever the Bible talks about the monarchy, that is, the monarchia, the rule of God, the Lord reigns, it can be talking about the Father, but it can also be talking about the Son. "Your throne, O God," is referring to the Son, "is forever and ever." Within the Godhead in order for there to be one who had authority telling another what to do, to which the other is subordinate, is to make a fundamental, fundamental error theologically because it does this: it creates two minds and two wills, and suddenly God is made up of bits, parts; he is no longer a simple being.

Back in 1690, a man named William Sherlock wrote a book and John Locke, the philosopher, wrote off the back of Sherlock in his book, not Sherlock Holmes, this guy, William Sherlock. He was an Anglican bishop, priest, back in 1690, a long time ago. But he wrote about the Godhead consisting of three minds, each with a distinct self-consciousness. Now, that's the kind of thing that always happens when people try to find new ways of explaining God that shift out of, if you like, the orthodox Christian view of God.

Martin Luther addressed this in the Heidelberg Disputation. He identifies two kinds of theologians: a theologian of glory and a theologian of the cross. He says about the theologian of glory that the theologian of glory relies on human reason to arrive at reasonable conclusions about God. They argue from the visible into the invisible. They argue from things that we can perceive and see and they project that back into the being of God. What they say, however, is this, this quality or virtue of whatever it is they find in humanity, they think it good to project that back into God only with this caveat: in God this is more eminently to be found. In other words, whatever this virtue is, in God it's on steroids. Okay? Yet the scriptural theologian, the theologian of the cross, knows that reason would never have come up with the cross. I mean, the whole argument of 1 Corinthians 1 is just that, it is that by reason we would never have made our way to the idea that God would send his Son into the world to die on a cross for us. That would never have entered our heads. The world in its wisdom knew not God. The theologian of the cross starts and speaks according to God's own self-communication in Christ which means God's own self-revelation, and that sets the terms of the discussion.

Well, what are the terms of the discussion? It is that all the Godhead, that within the Godhead paternity, that is the fatherhood of God, has to do with the Son. You can see that in Hebrews 1. God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, within these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. Were there no Son, there would be no Father. In other words, the relationship within the Godhead is a relationship. It is because there is a Son that there is a Father. And there has always been a Father and there has always been a Son and there is no spatial or temporal gap between them. God did not become a Father the way Gavin became a father last week or so, two weeks ago, or however it was. He became one. He wasn't one. Last time, he wasn't one yet and his wife was there, but last night there was Gavin and he's now a dad and there was Julie holding the baby in her arms. It was a remarkable thing. Now you see it, now you don't. God did not become a father that way. God has always been the Father of the Son. Always eternally. From all eternity.

The Father has life in himself. He gives the Son to have life in himself. There is a principle in the Godhead, yes, the Father is the principle but it's principle as Aquinas and Augustine go on to show that does not mean priority or superiority. No, no, that cannot be. By definition it cannot be. You're either God or you're not God. And to be God means you have the monarchy, you have the authority, and there can be no submission within the Godhead because they are not bits. I had to argue this out with two theologians in the summer verbally one-to-one on the phone. You know we're talking about one being here, one being, and you're talking as if there are multiple beings. There is one being who thinks and acts as one in everything that he does. That's what the Bible teaches.

When we use this word "person" and apply it to God, we remind ourselves even as we use the word that everything God is, he is in a distinctively divine way, and that to be divine means to be radically distinct from the whole order of creatures; to be unique; not of the same kind as creatures. God is not of the same kind as angels or of the same kind as humans. He contains within himself all the perfections of all the things he is in all the ways he acts.

You see, we can know that God is but we cannot fathom what God is or find words to express that in its fullness. Our words that we use just leave us ignorant. "You're saying, you're talking a lot of words there and, you know, I don't get them." That's the point. That's the point.

Trinitarian theologians and they publish these great poems that they write that are so expensive the ordinary person can't buy them, and I'm going to tell you, Trinitarian theologians, they are the most worshipful theologians. They can't help it. They are constantly having to say to themselves, "This is what we know. This is the boundary of what we know. We can't go beyond this. We can say this much, the Bible allows us to go that far, but we cannot go beyond this. We cannot speculate beyond this." Why are they like that? Why are they so eager not to speculate while other people in other disciplines, even within the church, feel free to speculate wherever they go? It is because they know God, and they know what's been revealed about God, and they know the seriousness of speculating about the being of God beyond what has been revealed. They pause there and they pause to worship there.

But if we think of God only at the functional level, what he does in relation to us, we may very well go off with the idea that coming to church and worshiping is just about getting the next set of rules that I can use that Liam gives me for this week's work in the world. What can I do for Monday and Monday morning? What can I take away with me from church that I can do tomorrow and through the week at work wherever I am? Well, I could tell you, you can just read the Bible anywhere and you'll find something to do, okay? Do it for yourself. But here this morning, here this morning, you see, I want you to get the sense is that when we come, we are thinking of a God that is beyond our mind, beyond our comprehension. He's awesome. That word "awesome" is used all the time. I use it all the time and I really mean awesome when I use it, but when it comes to God, you've got to put it in a different category of awesomeness. Understand? It's the very nature of who he is.

So we ask the question: is there any way to know anything about God as he is in himself? And the answer to that is: only by analogy. We were made in the image of God so we can say about each other we are like God, but we cannot say God is like us. I'll repeat that. We are like God, but we cannot say God is like us. For someone to say God is like humans, only more perfect, is a kind of idealizing projection of human perfections into infinity. Or even to say God is like us but more of the same, or the same in a different way. No, God is altogether different. We read those passages earlier. He is altogether different and at the heart of the Triune Godhead there is one being, one being in three persons. Three relations. Three relations. Not three minds. Not three wills. Not three substances. Not three people. Not three centers of consciousness. Not three levels of authority. Not three sets of attributes. Not three operations or three actions. That would be tri-theism. But one God who in the mystery of his inner life, exists as one being, acts as one being. All of the Godhead was active in Christ. All of the Godhead is active in the Father. All of the Godhead is active in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Do you see? It blows our minds.

Three subsisting relationships with one essence. That's the classic definition of who God is and in the language of the Athanasian Creed, nothing in this Trinity, nothing in this Trinity is – I've lost that page number. Where am I at? 13, 14, where's 14? Here we go. Nothing in this Trinity is before or after. Nothing is greater or smaller. In their entirety, the three persons are co-eternal and co-equal with each other. One God, three persons, in perfect unity, acting as one for the salvation of the world. And if you have learned this morning that God is different from us, that he is greater than us, and that we cannot really get our heads around him, and that even the words that I've spoken which are the words the church uses to describe him, even those words fail ultimately to capture, how would we capture God? How could we capture him? There is a place for us to be silent and to pause and to wonder and to worship and to wait upon him.

Let's pray.

Great God of wonders, all thy ways are matchless, God-like and divine. Though we cannot fathom your ways in yourself, we can, as we've reminded ourselves, see your ways with us and in Christ as you have now communicated in creaturely fashion to us. Thank you for doing that and thank you that through Christ we have access to you because we have been united to him, joined to him. We thank you that we can come to know you as creatures, not as you are in yourself, but we can know you as creatures according to a creaturely fashion, and what we know of you as creatures is true, is reliable, is solid, is mind-blowing, is uplifting. Lord, will you transform us, we pray, by your Spirit day by day? We pray in Jesus' strong name. Amen.