

Dear Fellow Worshipers of the Triune God,

It was confirmation day at the church in Thiensville, just down the hill from the Seminary campus. For some reason, the daughter of Dr Billy Graham, had enrolled her son in the congregation's school. On that day, Billy Graham and his wife attended the confirmation service. Some people were wowed by his presence. One of my classmates shook his hand. Then he went away telling his buddies, "I'm never going to wash this hand again."

If you come into contact with a famous person, and get to shake their hand, you might respond the same way. That person might be a movie star, or a professional athlete, or a famous author. To be in their presence can be a moving experience.

Today, and every day, you and I are in the presence of our Almighty God. No, we don't see him, or get to shake hands with him, but he is there, with us at all times. On this Trinity Sunday, let's never forget this marvelous truth:

**WE LIVE IN THE PRESENCE OF OUR LORD**

I. As we do, we want to recognize the vast difference between ourselves and our God.

Isaiah was privileged to see a vision of the Lord God. He tells us, "**I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne.**" The throne is the position of power for any king. From that throne a king rules over his nation. Our God does the same, only in greater measure. The Lord God is ruling over the whole world, over all things, for the sake of his people, the believers. He is ruling with almighty power. He is exalted over us.

He is surrounded by angels. "**Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.**" These angels understood their relationship with Almighty God. In his presence, they cover their faces and their feet. This is a sign of humility before their Maker. To show their respect for him, they sing a song of praise. "**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.**" The true God is three times holy, perfect in all he does. He is far beyond the angels, and his created human beings.

Three times holy also reminds us of the uniqueness of our God. He is Triune, three persons, yet only one God. This truth is beyond our comprehension. In a Bible class, a man said to me, "I don't understand this Triune God thing." My answer: "I don't either, but I believe it because that's how God reveals himself to us."

The Lord God is filling the whole earth with his glory. Look at creation. Even in its imperfect state, it is still glorious. The Lord has given us a beautiful world to enjoy and care for. That is why we want to be like these angels. Praising him for his glory and his greatness. He is so far beyond us in holiness and in glory.

In contrast to the Lord God Almighty, we sinners are lowly beings. Isaiah expresses that for all of us. In the presence of God he cries out, "**Woe is me. I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips.**" When we compare ourselves with the Trinity, we have to say the same. Every day our sins convict us. We are not holy. We are sinners.

Keep that truth in mind. It seems that some people want to drag God down to their level. They want God to think like them and even act like them. I believe there are people who want God to excuse their sinful behavior. They want him to be like a kindly grandfather who overlooks the misbehavior of his grandchildren.

How sad if people think this way. Look again with Isaiah. See the exalted Lord God. See his greatness and his glory. We should not expect him to come to our level. He would betray himself if he did that. We should be rising to his level.

But that's not going to happen this side of heaven. Yet, in his mercy, God has cleansed us of guilt and sin. We see that in what Isaiah experienced. **“One of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal. He touched my mouth and said, ‘See, your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.’”**

Of course, that's not how it happens with us. Instead of an angel touching us with a live coal, we see Jesus on a cross outside Jerusalem. We see the Son of God suffering for our sins, dying for us. Then we see an empty tomb. We see the Son of God, our Savior, rising in victory to cleanse us from our sins, and to remove our guilt. That picture not only gives us a sigh of relief, it also causes us to shout with joy, **“I am forgiven, I am saved.”**

II. With that joyful shout, we are empowered to serve our Savior and to thank our God every day. Therefore, recognize what an opportunity we have as forgiven sinners.

God's call is simple and straightforward. **“Whom shall I send and who will go for us?”** The 'us' reminds us that God is triune. And all three persons of the Trinity are active in your life on earth. All three persons are leading, guiding and inspiring believers. Look how inspired Isaiah was. His immediate response was, **“Here am I, send me.”** Isaiah was called to be a prophet for the Lord.

We are all called to be disciples of Christ our Savior. What does that mean? It means we are learners. God teaches us through the Bible. It means we are followers. The Lord God is our guide in life. It means we have a desire to serve the one who saves us. We serve in whatever way we can. Some will lead. Some will teach. Some will actively witness for Christ. Some will pray fervently for their brothers and sisters in the faith. And there is so much else we do, when, like Isaiah, say, **“Here am I. Send me.”**

Will you answer that call of God? Isaiah was eager to do so. His willingness to serve replaced his unworthy feelings about himself. He was moved to serve by the mercy of God who had forgiven him and taken away his guilt. As a prophet of the Lord, Isaiah spoke words of promise. In the very next chapter he proclaims, **“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call his name Immanuel.”** Isaiah spoke many other passages about the suffering and resurrection of our Savior. He took the opportunity God gave him, even in the face of opposition.

How about you and me? Remember who you are. You are forgiven sinners through Jesus Christ. Your guilt has been removed. Will we be faithful disciples of our Lord God? Will you and I learn about all that God is and has done for us? Or will you neglect the study of the Word and the worship of our Lord? Will you gladly represent the Lord here on earth with your words and your behavior? Or will we hide our faith in Christ and prefer to blend in with our sinful society? Will you serve him, using the gifts he has given you? Or will we dodge any opportunity to serve our Lord and Savior?

Remember who you are, a forgiven child of the Triune God. Remember where you are, we live in the presence of our Lord. May you all recognize the opportunity we have - to glorify our God like the angels do, and to serve him with whatever gifts he has given us. My friends, we have an amazing God. May we love him, honor him, worship him, and serve him every day of our lives. Amen.