

May 31, 2026  
Holy Trinity Sunday

“Knowing God”

Matthew 28:16-20

There is an acronym I use to teach young folks a simple way to pray: ACTS A-C-T-S. The C is for confession of sins. The T is for Thanksgiving, for forgiveness and everything else. The S is for supplication; asking the Lord for what you desire He give you. But the A that starts everything off is A; adoration. Adoration is speaking to God about what He is, how good, wonderful, gracious and powerful He is.

The tough thing about adoration is that it automatically forces you to try and get your mind around God. Holy Trinity Sunday is a great day for showing how futile that is. I mean, we confessed that whole long Athanasian Creed and do any of us understand the nature of the Eternal Triune God any better than when we started? Sometimes I think that creed leaves us even more confused!

We try to ponder God according to His work of creation as the Bible very often does. But while that goes a long way, you still know it doesn't go big enough. For God the creation is as simple as speaking it into existence! Sometimes I try to summon a picture of God when I pray but it never quite flies. I mean, you have to go bigger than the universe and we can't even fathom the enormity of that! And the universe is nothing compared to God! You do your best trying to ponder the nature and person of God, and really you just end up knowing that you're nothing compared to Him, and He is so far beyond you that He really shouldn't consider you at all.

When you look at some of the mythology of the pagans, it's kind of comical to see how they tried to get their minds around God—by trying to make Him more like us. The gods of the Nordic, Greek, Egyptian and any number of other mythos turn God into many gods in community vying for power, squabbling amongst each other and doing all manner of nasty things, having many human failings just like people do. They all made God into something smaller that they could better understand, yet in doing so moved away from the one true holy God of creation and into debased idolatry. Even the nation of Isreal, to whom Yahweh had revealed Himself time and again through wonders and prophet, couldn't resist this move.

The wonderful irony is that while mankind could not rightly know God by its attempts to make God less God and more like man, God made Himself known to man by joining with humanity in our flesh, yet never becoming less than true God.

*“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”*

In Christ we are enabled to know God. Maybe not fully and with complete understanding of all things divine, but intimately. Christ is our brother in the flesh, and boy do we know the flesh with its temptations and suffering, injustice and cruelty. And we know death. We know the fear it brings. And of course we know sin like an unshakable infection.

In Jesus we are made to see all of these familiar evils foisted upon the innocent Christ, true man, true God. When we in faith see Christ crucified, wearing all our failings under God's just wrath in our place, we know God. We know He is love, grace and mercy. We know He is Savior. Because we know this of Him, we also know He is Lord and that is a wonderful, wonderful thing. And it is enough.

I don't want to minimize the importance of the Holy Trinity aspect of God. History has shown that as soon as one leaves the reservation on that, it's a quick run into heresy. The person of Christ gets minimized and becomes, well, not really Lord, not like the Father. Or the Holy Spirit gets muddled and the role of faith gets minimized and somehow turned into human works leading to salvation. It is

important to know that, yeah, God is way beyond us and He is the driver of all things, especially our salvation. This awesome and baffling God does grace in ways we can never fathom, and that also is a very, very good thing.

But praise be to God that in Christ, we have been enabled to draw close to God, a God who can empathize with our weaknesses and frailties, and more than that, has already healed us of them and restored us to a right relationship with the Father. This unfathomable Triune God who is so far above and beyond us, has shown an intimate regard for you in Christ Jesus the Son.

I know we'd all like to better understand the ways and workings of God. We all really desire to know the mind of God, especially when life throws some evil affliction at us or victimizes us with injustice or offense. We want to comprehend the details of God's plan unfolding in our lives and when we don't, well, we might even question His motivation.

Um, I'm all about pondering God, especially those things He says of Himself in His Word. But what He has made perfectly clear in Christ is that His motivation is love, His desire is your redemption unto life everlasting and His plan playing out in this broken world is for you to live beyond it. The life, death and resurrection of Christ is the plan, and it's not just for Jesus.

Jesus rather succinctly laid out the intention of God to the disciples just before He ascended to the Father: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

God wants all to know of the salvation we have in Christ. God wants all to be baptized into Christ's death to sin and resurrection to eternal life. God wants us to be disciples, followers of Christ through this world of trials and death into the life Christ now lives in His human flesh forever. God wants all to know Jesus is Lord, and the Lord is with us through all of it until this world or we in it pass away.

Yes, God is unfathomable in His three-persons-yet-one-God divinity, and that's truly fine. I can't understand God's endless love. I can't understand how freely He gives forgiveness to the rebellious and guilty. I can't understand how water and Word washes me, a continual sinner holy day after day after day. I can't understand how a flawed human being can proclaim the forgiveness of sins yet it stands as effective as if God made the statement Himself. I can't understand that simple bread and wine is God in the flesh for me to eat and drink unto salvation. I don't understand it, but by the power of God the Holy Spirit, I get it. I get it by faith for my eternal good.

Yet God in Christ Jesus is not unfathomable. We understand Jesus. He came. He became one of us. He lived a perfect and righteous life. He died a death that atones for all our sin. He rose in victory. He now gifts His righteousness to sinners. He is with us now. He is coming back to gather us into perfect life forever. Again, by faith, this makes perfect sense to us because in Christ we see that God is love.

People of God, be awestruck and confounded by the unknowable God so far above and beyond you, His lowly creation brought into being by His power for His purposes. This is simply the way it is and it is wonderful.

People of God, be awestruck and understanding of what this God has done for you in Christ, that He came down to you to draw near, join with you and redeem you by His life, death and resurrection. You know how and why He has done this for you, and it is wonderful.

Let God be God, you be His, know what you know of Him and trust Him in what you don't. That's life in Christ, and it is your salvation.

Amen.