

Wednesday of Oculi, the 19th Day of Lent  
March 10, 2010

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University Lutheran Chapel  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

✠ Jesu juva ✠

DEUM DE DEO

Isaiah 51:1-8; Psalm 2; Hebrews 1:1-6

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

**T**he author of Hebrews reminds us this night that the God through whom all things were created and by whom all things are upheld is Christ Jesus, the Divine Son of the Heavenly Father – “God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God,” is the way the Nicene Creed puts it. In the Apostles Creed we simply have the phrase “Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord...” Both creeds, of course, are confessing the same truth about Jesus, that He is eternally almighty God in the same way that the Father is God.

Some of the most successful heresies (if one can ever call heresy successful) have revolved around this very point. The Arians, who had one time outnumbered the orthodox Christians, taught that the Son was not eternally God, but was rather God the Father's very first creation, and so their creed, as it were, was “there was a time when He was not.” Others have taught that there is no divine nature in Christ, but that God imparted divinity to Him as a result of His faith and deeds. Others say that Jesus was nothing more than a man. And all of these false teachings about Christ continue in our own day in one form or another. But the Scriptures are clear and their clarity gives sight to us who would otherwise be blind concerning the nature of God. You see God is not how we happen to think He might be. He is how He says He is. Hence St. Paul in Romans (9:5) simply calls Jesus: “the eternally blessed God” “who is over all!”



And so God the Father is Father because He has a Son. And there was never a time when there was not a Son. He is eternally “Father”. And the Son is Son because He has a Father. And there was never a time when He did not have a Father, nor will there be a time when He does not. Father and Son are coeternally God along with the Holy Spirit. There is no Father without the Son and no Son without the Father.

And why, you might ask, does this matter? It matters first of all because to believe something else about God is to believe in a false god, to mold divinity in an image you could rationally understand and grasp. It would be nothing else than to try to force the Creator into the mold of the creature. But God is not like us by nature. He is eternal, uncreated, incorporeal, unchanging, etc. etc. The human mind can never fully grasp His divinity. It is a mystery of faith revealed only through the Holy Scriptures and seen in the person of Christ Himself.

Second, this matters because it is the Son of God, not the Father, who has always been humanity's mediator with the Godhead. The faith of the fathers in the Old Testament was a faith not just in the Father, but also in the Son, and primarily in the Son according to the Scriptures. It is the Son, after all, who spoke with Adam in the Garden. It is the Son who appeared to Abraham. It is the Son who came to Moses and sent him back into Egypt. It is the Son who led the people of Israel from Egypt into the promised land. Time and again, whenever God revealed Himself to the prophets or to His people, it was the Son whom they encountered and in whom they placed their trust.

And so Isaiah instructs us today: "Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, You who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, And to the hole of the pit from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you..." Look to the One in whom they trusted, to the Faith that they held. Look to the promises they received. Look to the Holy Seed that sprang from their union, who is Christ Jesus the eternal and divine Son of God made flesh for us. Of Abraham, Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad," and a few verses later: "before Abraham was, I AM." And so the Psalmist, David, tells us: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way when His wrath is kindled but a little."

But David does not end there does he. He adds one more line: "Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him." Blessed are you if you put your trust in the Son, for in the Son you will have found also the Father, and with them both the Holy Spirit. One can only have the Father if one has the Son, you see. But when you do have the Son, when you believe Christ Jesus and put your trust in Him, you are given every spiritual blessing God has promised. For the Son of God is the one who declares God's love to us, and performs God's love for us. He is the one, who according to Isaiah, comforts Zion and makes her waste places like Eden! He is the one who through His Word gives light to the people; whose righteousness and salvation have gone forth to us. And this righteousness and salvation, He says, will endure from generation to generation, for all times, into eternity.

In the antiphon to the Magnificat tonight we are reminded of Jesus words from Sunday's Gospel lesson: "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it." It is not enough to know about the man Jesus, who was born of Mary and nursed at her breasts. What we are called to do is to hear what the word of

the Scriptures teaches concerning Him, His person, His preaching, and His work. And so in Isaiah He says several times that we are to “listen” and to “look” Look to Him to be saved. Look to the examples of faith that have come before who looked to Him. Look at the sky and the earth and see that they will perish, but that Christ and His kingdom will endure. And listen. “Listen to Me,” He repeats over and over again. Listen, for this is your God who loves you and has come down to save you. Kiss the Son, so to speak, and in doing so, find the love of the Father. For indeed “Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.”

✠ Soli Deo gloria ✠

