

To God Be Glory Forever.

Text: Rom 11:36

1) Of Him

Suggested Hymns:

2) Through Him

140, 441, 136, 793, 437

3) To Him

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Romans 11:36, ³⁶ *For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Today we are celebrating the Festival of the Holy Trinity. Our thoughts rise in worship to the incomprehensible Deity, and our tongues unite in singing, *“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.”*¹

The festival cycle of the Christian church year is coming to its close with this festival today. Again the glad festivals of the church year have passed by and cheered our hearts.

Joyful Christmas with its everlasting Gospel of the love of God manifested in the birth of the Christ Child. Jubilant Easter with its message of the open grave, and of life and immortality. Pentecost with the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit for the ingathering of the communion of the saints out of all nations.

All of these glad festivals have again revived and strengthened our Christian faith and increased our Christian hope as we are passing along life’s way toward our home in heaven.

And today we attempt to raise our thoughts to the great Author of all these great deeds done for our salvation. We say, we attempt to do this, for it remains the truth that our mortal minds are incapable of scanning the great God over all.

Raising our minds in thanksgiving to the Triune God and stammering our thanks for His wonderful works for our salvation, we are moved to join in the words of the Apostle in the Epistle of the day, Romans 11:33, ³³ *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!

God's plan of Salvation is a mystery in the sense that we would never have been able to plan or devise anything like it. And even after God in His infinite wisdom devised it, we would never have been able to figure it out if He had not graciously revealed it to us.

And even after He revealed it to us, we would never have been able to believe and receive it had He not sent His Holy Spirit into our hearts to work that faith. God's ways far transcend our puny human capabilities.

Our minds reel the moment we attempt to conceive of the inscrutable and infinite majesty of God.

Yes, we are weak vessels, and let us realise it again; we finite beings cannot encompass the Infinite. All we can do is to ponder upon, to contemplate His wonderful works for our salvation and to join in wonder and in gratitude in the stammering of His praises, just as the Apostle does in our text, saying ***For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.*** May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. Of Him

Our text says, ***“Of Him ... are all things.”*** The Apostle, in mind, as it were, looks back to the beginning of all things. He sees the first fruits of creation coming into being. He sees the original material coming forth out of nothing. He sees the heavens and the earth taking form, light and darkness assuming bounds. He sees the trees, bushes, herbs, the grass, the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, and yes, the creation of Adam and Eve, and seeing them all, He breaks forth in the declaration: All this is of God!

God is the Origin of all things, and they come forth from His creative hand, perfectly good. To God be glory forever!

This is, indeed, a lofty, a sublime theme. How the human heart swells when man contemplates his own outstanding works and tells of his own accomplishment in the so-called arts and sciences, in business, in peace, and even in war! Some of his works he even calls ***“the wonders of the world!”*** How proud he is of them!

And there is something to this also. Man, the crown of creation, under God, has accomplished much. And it is proper and right that man finds joy and pleasure in every real accomplishment of his, as long as He keeps within the bounds which recognise man's debt to, and his utter dependence upon God.

However, what is all that man has accomplished compared with what God has done and still does! The heavens are God's handiwork and declare His glory; the sun, moon, and stars are His creatures, and the earth is His workmanship and the fullness thereof.

It is God who provides summer and winter, who gives to all their food in due season. God has made us, and not we ourselves. Oh, how manifold are His works and His ways past finding out!

May we on this Festival of the Holy Trinity again be reminded of the Triune God, the Creator of the universe, and join in the song of praise of our text, "*Of Him ... are all things, to whom be glory forever!*"

2. Through Him

Our text furthermore says: "*Through Him ... are all things.*" Scanning the whole creation, the Apostle calls to mind that God is not only the Author of all things, but also the great Workmaster, *who works all in all.*²

So the Apostle declares by the Holy Spirit also that it is God "*who works all things according to the counsel of His will,*"³ and "*it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*"⁴

Yes, God is the eternal, preserving, and ever-working God. He keeps all things by His almighty power. If God withdrew but for one moment, all His creation would of necessity pass away.

This is true concerning all creation. The Apostle, however, includes something special in this text. This text forms the conclusion of a special treatise concerning God's wonderful providence over His chosen people.

In the preceding chapters the Apostle had pointed to the fact that it is God *who justifies the ungodly,*⁵ that by means of the sacrificial death of Christ a perfect righteousness before God had been wrought. God therefore imputes this righteousness to those who, although they themselves are all as an unclean thing,

and their own righteousnesses are as filthy rags, put their trust in Christ. Such people by faith take hold of Jesus Christ as their divine Substitute.

The Apostle had furthermore proclaimed that God had chosen to Himself a people whom He calls, sanctifies, and keeps with Jesus Christ in the true faith. He had shown how God miraculously had preserved to Himself a remnant among His former chosen people, the Jews, and declared that God would do so also unto the end of time.

And then the Apostle breaks forth in the Epistle for this festive day: ***“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!”*** and declares in our text ***“Through Him ... are all things, to whom be glory forever.”***

Yes, through Him we also are Christians. In this, that we have come to Christian faith, and are disciples of Christ, we are God’s workmanship. It is God who has called us and who keeps us in the Christian faith. God has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, to Christ, the Light of the world and His life and immortality.

Immortal means that you have a beginning but no end. When God created you He breathed into you the breath of life. You have a soul that will live forever. On the Last Day the body will be reunited with the soul. Those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour will be with Him in heaven forever, but those who do not will be in hell forever.

When we consider all this, the fact that God continually works in all His creation, and especially in His Christians; when we consider His longsuffering patience, His abundant goodness and mercy, which is renewed every morning, then our hearts are moved in admiration and in thankfulness, and we join hearts and souls in the words of our text, ***“Through Him ... are all things to whom be glory forever!”***

3. To Him Are All Things

Our text finally says: ***“To Him are all things.”*** The Apostle contemplated the fact that God has created all things good, yes, that He has created man in His own image. Therefore, all things, and especially man, find their real happiness in and with God.

Man's own experience continually teaches him that nothing in this world, nothing outside of God can really satisfy the yearnings of his mind and soul. Only the look toward God secures for man satisfactory progress, real joy, and happiness.

Looking away from God always leads away from the things that are necessary to man's peace. Under the deception of sin, man may for a season lull himself into a slumber, but it will always prove in the end to be the slumber of death.

Under the spell of the ruler of this world, namely the devil, man may at times dream that he is finding his welfare elsewhere, but it is all a deception, and bitter is the awakening, and full of despair is the disillusionment.

God alone is our Salvation, in Him alone is our peace and rest. "*Nearer, my God to Thee, Nearer to Thee*" is the Christian hymn. So also here we join again in the song of our text: God, the Triune God, ***To Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.***

In this way let us celebrate today the Festival of the Holy Trinity. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, these three are one. The Holy Writer thus reveals our God to us, and so we adore Him, the Inscrutable, the Incomprehensible One.

We cannot grasp His infinite Being, but we can contemplate and grasp in faith His wonderful deeds done for the salvation of men. Thanks be to God for having revealed to us His Being, and thanks above all because He has graciously made Himself known to us as our Creator, our Saviour, and our Comforter.

May He abide with us and graciously lead us out of this land of faith into the land where we shall see Him, ***For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.***

Let us conclude with the words of the hymnist,⁶

To God be the glory, great things He has done!
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life-gate that all may go in!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear His voice!

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

Let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,

And give Him the glory, great things He has done! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Isa. 6:3

² 1 Cor. 12:6

³ Eph. 1:11

⁴ Phil. 2:13

⁵ Romans 4:5

⁶ Hymn 793