

“Communion with the Triune God”  
(1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. John wrote to the church to encourage them in their spiritual warfare.
  - a. It’s not easy to be a Christian, but there is something that makes it all worthwhile: we have communion with God.
  - b. We have a relationship with Him in which *He gives Himself* to us, and *He receives what we have to give Him* through Jesus Christ.
2. This communion is *precious* – it’s more than we could ever deserve, the price was more than we could ever pay.
  - a. Our sins made an infinite separation between us and God – making communion impossible for us. The only thing we could justly have a share in was God’s wrath for our sins.
  - b. But He bridged that gap and granted us this communion through Jesus Christ.

B. Preview.

1. This morning, let’s continue to explore this wonderful truth that our communion is not just with Jesus Christ – though that would be infinitely precious by itself – but with all three persons of the Godhead.
2. We’ll see:
  - a. First, that we have communion with the whole Godhead.
  - b. Second, that the grace that gives us this communion comes from all three Persons.
  - c. And finally, that each of the three Persons receives from us what that grace produces in our lives – our faith, love and obedience.

II. Sermon.

A. First, let’s consider that we have communion with *the whole* Godhead – with all three persons.

1. Our text shows us that each person of the Godhead is involved in *communicating* spiritual gifts *to us*.
  - a. Paul tells us in verse four there are many different gifts, but the *Spirit* bestows and empowers each one of them: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.”
  - b. He tells us in verse five there are many different ways these gifts can be used, but the same *Lord Jesus Christ* who directs their use: “There are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.”
  - c. And he tells us in verse six there are many different effects these gifts can have, but they are all have the results that the *Father* intends: “There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all *persons*.”

- d. We receive these gifts from *each divine person*; and so we have communion with each: the Lord shares these gifts with us to equip us to serve Him.
2. Paul tells us that our communion with God comes from the three persons of the Godhead, “For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father” (Eph. 2:18).
    - a. We have access *to the Father* – He *receives* us and our faith, love and service.
    - b. Our access is *through Jesus Christ* – His mediation is what *allows us to approach* the Father and makes us and our service acceptable.
    - c. And our access is *in one Spirit* – the Spirit is *the spiritual bond* that unites us to Christ and fills us with His holy love, and so makes us and our worship acceptable.
    - d. Our communion with God is through *the three persons*.
- B. Second, let’s consider that *the saving and sanctifying grace* we need to have this communion with God is given to us *through all three persons* of the Godhead.
1. We have passages that show us that the whole Godhead is collectively involved, such as Revelation 1:4-5, where John writes, “John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood” (Rev. 1:4-5).
    - a. John prays that the churches would receive grace and peace, “from Him who is and who was and who is to come” or the Father.
    - b. He prays they would receive these things from the “seven Spirits who are before His throne” – which represents the Spirit in His fullness of blessing and holiness.
    - c. And that they would receive them from “Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.”
    - d. The saving and sanctifying grace, which brings peace with God, comes from each member of the Trinity.
  2. We also see passages that distinguish each person as the source of these blessings.
    - a. One quick way to see this is that each is said *to teach* with an *effectual instruction* that includes not only the truth we need to draw near to God, but also the grace that gives us the ability to do so.
      - (i) The Father is said to teach in this way: Jesus said, “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ *Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me*” (John 6:45). The Father teaches, we hear, we learn, and through this efficacious teaching we are brought into union with Christ and communion with God.
      - (ii) The Son teaches us with a teaching that raises us to spiritual life: “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear

the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live” (John 5:25). His teaching is life-giving – it carries with it the ability to raise the dead, to open blind eyes and change a stony heart.

(iii) And the Spirit teaches with life-giving teaching: “As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him” (1 John 2:27). He not only teaches us to abide in Christ, He gives us the ability to do this.

b. The grace that gives us communion with God comes from each person of the Godhead.

(i) The Father determined to give us this grace (John 5:21).

(ii) The Son purchased this grace for us (Phil. 2:8-11).

(iii) And the Spirit works this grace in us (Rom. 8:2).

C. Finally, each of the three Persons receives from us what their grace produces – our faith, love, obedience and all other godly fruits. This is what we share with them – this is how we have communion with them: we give back the love He first gave us.

1. This is how we have communion with the Father.

a. When the Father speaks, and we believe Him and *trust* Him, He receives that faith and is pleased with it: “If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son” (1 John 5:9).

b. When we *love* Him and turn from loving the world, He receives that love (1 John 2:15).

c. When we *pray* to the Father with a gracious heart, as Paul did, He receives our prayers: He writes, “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man” (Eph. 3:14-16).

d. And when we *worship* Him in love, He receives that worship: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him” (Eph. 1:3-4).

2. This is how we have communion with the Son.

a. When we *trust* Him, as He tells us we should, He receives and is pleased with that *faith*.

(i) We are to believe in Him as we believe in the Father, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14:1).

(ii) We must believe in Him, if we are to be saved, “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24).

- b. When we *give Him the honor* that is His, He receives that honor: This is why the Father made Him judge – that all may honor Him, “For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” (John 5:22-23).
  - c. When we *love* Him, He receives that love: Paul pronounces a blessing on all who will, “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible *love*” (Eph. 6:24).
  - d. And when we *worship* Him, as John worshiped Him, He receives that worship: “To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood – and He has made us *to be* a kingdom, priests to His God and Father -- to Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:5-6).
3. Finally, this is how we have communion with the Spirit.
- a. The Spirit testified regarding Christ, but the Jews didn’t believe Him, “You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did” (Acts 7:51). But when we *receive His testimony*, He receives that faith.
  - b. When we *pray* to Him, such as Paul in the apostolic benediction, He receives and answers that prayer: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14).
  - c. When we *worship* Him, as He is worshiped every time one of His people is baptized into the name of the Triune God, He receives that worship: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19).
  - d. When the grace in our souls expresses itself in faith, love, worship and obedience towards the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, they are pleased with these sacrifices and receive these gracious acts. They receive them because they spring from the grace they give: the Father planned it, the Son accomplished it, the Spirit gave it.
  - e. Do you have this communion this morning? Then nurture it through continued acts of love, faith, worship and obedience.
  - f. Do you not have this communion this morning? Then you must come to the Father through faith in the Son: there’s no other way than to trust in Jesus Christ. Amen.