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It's been wonderful to worship and fellowship with you today, on this Lord's day, This evening, we are going to turn to god's word again. In corinthians, but this time second corinthians chapter 13, And the text that i'm going to read to you this evening, i trust will be well familiar.

Hopefully, well, loved also. And as we meditate on god's word together tonight, we behold a glimpse of his triune glory and appropriately end the lord's day with his blessing and shining face upon us. Let's stand for a moment to hear the word of god. I know this is a short scripture reading.

But i'm going to read verses 11 down through 14. Here. Now, the word of the lord. Finally, brethren farewell Become complete. Be of good comfort. B of one mind. Live in peace. And the god of love and peace. Will be with you. Great one another with a holy kiss, all the saints, great.

You The grace of the lord jesus christ. And the love of god. And the communion of the holy spirit, be with you all. Amen. Well, let's pray. Blessed god, we ask that you would enlighten our minds and renew our wills stirring up our affection to things above where our savior is seated.

Grant us your spirit once more, Pull us onward and upward after christ. The author and pioneer of our faith. Lord, we prayed for the forgiveness of our sins. We rejoice in your cleansing power, not only forgiving us but changing and transforming us from the inside out. Lord, grant us your blessing.

And grant us your spirit that we may better understand and lay hold of your blessing in your word. And we ask it all in the savior's name. Amen. You may be seated.

Some of somebody asked me yesterday, what drew you initially to your interest in the trinity? There are a lot of ways to answer that question. But i think all roads in my own experience lead back to john owen. In some way, shape or form. Oh, and pointed out in many places and on many occasions in his work.

That the greatest blessing we have as christians now in the time, in which we live, Is to know, god is triune. In other words, as we have, read our Bibles as we look back over the ages and see the expectation of all the saints, through all the ages. They were looking and longing for the coming of the lord jesus christ.

Kings and righteous men have desired to see and hear the things. Would you see in here? Jesus said that to his disciples, i say it to you. We are truly blessed, indeed. And the greatest blessing of all is knowing our great triune god and having his presence. Among us.

Now, there's a sense in which i can fast. I feel like i just need to pray and say, amen. And walk away. Here is the blessing of god. But what does it actually mean that? God, pronounces his blessing upon us? That he gives us his name and puts his name upon us, two bless us.

Was I think about this, I perhaps some most aware of the fact that my life, my wife is a blessing to me. She's a blessing to me right now. She's not with me right now. But you know how it is? We shape each other's lives. We influence one another for good or ill.

But under Jesus Christ, a godly spouse is often the greatest blessing that we could receive. Her presence is better and a greater blessing than her absence though. She's still a blessing now. And so it is with the blessing of God. God, not only blesses us. With his promises. He blesses us.

With his presence. And so, the simple point that I want us to look at tonight from the end of Second Corinthians, is that the triune God himself? Is the highest blessing of his people? And we can look at this in a few different ways. One, we can look at the presence of God in his blessing.

Second, we can look at the grace of God, through the Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, coming from the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. So as we look at this, text draw a circle around the whole thing, and let's call that presence. God is with us.

God, blesses us, because he is the God who is among us and dwells with us. But then under that, as we think about the triune God, as the great blessing, the great presence of God among us is the triune God. We should think of the grace of God, the love of God and the fellowship of God.

So I want us to look at each of these themes in turn, but the first is this big issue of the presence of God. I mentioned this morning, the difficulties of the church in Corinth. And perhaps the daunting task of pastoring, a people with all of the hosts of problems that the Corinthians had. And yet, when we search our hearts, we realize the root of those.

Some problems is still with us. Ultimately our tendency to gaze at self rather than Christ here in this second epistle to the Corinthians. I imagine. It must have been Paul's greatest joy. In spite of all the problems of the church, to end with a benediction. To end with these words in particular, in other words, whatever else is going on in the church, whatever problems you face is individuals and your families among one another.

There is something that is presently true. That is always true. And that Paul can always proclaim. Regardless of the setting to the church. And that is the benediction of God. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the communion of the Spirit be with you. You may have noticed in the text as well.

He also tells them to be of good comfort to be of one mind to live in peace, and as they do these things, as they live out the Christian life and live in peace with God. Notice, he says, The Lord. The God of love and peace will be with you.

Now, the big issue of benediction or blessing, is God's presence, not just God's words. Let me say something about that. In just a moment. But as Paul is exhorting, the Corinthians to press onward, to repent of their sins to follow the Lord, because the God of love and peace is actually with him.

And the triune God is present among them. We need to think about what a benediction actually is. A lot of people don't know. I asked my children, this question. Periodically, just to make sure they still get it. What's the difference between a benediction and a doxology? Well, now they get it.

I think. But a benediction Is god speaking to us? A doxology is us speaking to god. A benediction, is god speaking. Good things. Well, to us. A doxology is us giving him praise with our words. And you see the difference here? A lot of times we get confused, have you ever heard for example, in a church a benediction at the end of the service beginning with now to him, Doxology.

Appropriate. Good worthy in and of itself. But what are we missing if we lose this idea of benediction It's important, isn't it for god to have the last word? You know, i'm minister in the opc and, and our orders of worship are all compatible and different Presbyterian churches, but a little bit different here in there.

I don't know what your your custom is, but in a way in the OPC we begin and end with the benediction, We begin with grace to you and peace from god. Our father in the lord jesus christ, we end with things like the grace of the lord jesus christ, the love of god, the fellowship of the holy spirit, be with you all whether we use those exact words or not every single time, we gather in public worship god, greets us, and god sends us off.

God calls us by his word. We long to enter into his presence. And god is effectively saying come near me. My child, i dwell with you. I dwell among you and i am your god. There is something very appropriate. About the benediction in public worship of benediction to a church.

This is not a prayer. This is a proclamation. This is not something where we close our eyes and bow. Our heads. It is something where we lift up our heads and lift up our hearts, and with faith receive what god is giving to us. So, you see what i mean, why?

This must be a joy for paul the pastor to have this as the last word. When god blesses us. He doesn't simply wish us well, and send us on our way. The chief blessing of god is that he will be our god. We will be his people. He'd wells among us.

Some of you recognize. That that is the summary of what? Where the bible calls the covenant. God's agreement with his people, god's condescension to us his promise to us his blessing upon us and notice what paul is doing. He's saying when the church of jesus christ is gathered together, god's covenant presence comes to its own.

Do we recognize? The need for god's presence among his people. It's a beautiful thing, even tonight when we close the lord's day, we walk away from worship, not with our prayers. But with god, pronouncing his word God blessing. His people. So let us lay hold of god's covenant presence, god's blessing.

By the way i've mentioned baptism and we're getting to the trinity here, the father of the son, and the spirit very quickly. But in baptism, Remember what i mentioned children before god is placing his name on you just like you're born into a family and you have a last name that identifies you with that family.

The name you bear is father, son and holy spirit. There's something like that here, isn't there? Just like the levites in numbers, chapter 6, they bless the people, the lord bless you and keep you the lord, make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the lord lift his countenance, upon you and give you peace and what is god say?

So i will put my name on them. And i will bless them. And so, when you hear the benediction, receive it with faith, rest on the promises of god, look to the presence of god delight in god's proclamation to you. How then does god bless us? I said at the outset, the primary blessing we have in baptism in this.

Benediction is the triune god himself. His presence is saving power. We'll notice what we have. It's actually quite simple, isn't it? The grace of a lord jesus christ, the love of god, and the fellowship or communion of the holy spirit. Be with you all. Amen. Normally what i'm about to say, i would mention in connection to ephesians chapter 2, A purposely held some of those things back, just for now.

If somebody came to you, And named. Each person of the trinity, the father, the son, and the holy spirit. What would be the first word that comes to mind with each? Somebody says father or let's start where texts starts. Jesus, the son. What is the first thing that comes to mind?

Some might say love. The love of christ that passes knowledge, which we've seen Jesus loves me this. I know for the bible tells me so And that's true, isn't it? And yet, Paul reserves. Love for a moment and there's a reason for this. He actually begins with grace. If you think of the lord jesus christ and one thing comes to your mind that dominates, your thoughts and pulls your, your heart in one single direction.

It should be the grace of the lord jesus christ. Why is paul beginning here? Because as it were, when he's blessing us with the triune god or the name of the triune god, it's as though he's inviting us into a rich treasure chamber, and we come in, we look around, we see the jewels, we see its beauty but as we gaze around it, all the riches with which god blesses us namely himself, there is a great crown jewel at the center.

And it is so radiant that everything else surrounding it as it were becomes only the appropriate setting and that great centerpiece that crown jewel that died, him of beauty is the lord jesus christ. We saw this this morning, didn't we? But, why grace? Because ultimately, he's reminding us. That apart from the undeserved.

Kindness of god, the love of god, the condescension of god, We have no access to god at all. You know, what's interesting? We've been seeing the order of father, son, and spirit and and by the spirit through the sun, coming back to the father, over and over, and over again.

Why begin with christ here? Probably because it's as though, paul is saying this is where god begins with you. Without the lord jesus christ. The word grace. Would fall on deaf ears. The word grace would have no meaning. We need the grace of the lord jesus christ. To bring us to god.

So, here's the only mediator between god and man. But raising the second point. If god promises his blessing, his benediction, his presence with us. And we begin with the grace of the lord jesus christ. Why the love of god? Is that really the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of god the father love?

I'm not asking you the question here and dialoguing back and forth at this time. But, What do you think? Just think to yourselves. The common answer is if somebody says god the father, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Often i think the answer is wrath. And let me explain what.

I mean, lest you think about on a limb here? Do we sometimes think of christ's intercession in this way? The father. Can't wait to pour out his wrath on us. But thankfully, the sun is interceding. And if the son ever stopped interceding for us, the father would get us.

He'd reach us, his hands would be upon us and maybe we wouldn't quite put that starkly but sometimes we act as though the fathers, the unapproachable one, the father's. The one that

the distant the father's, the one that represents majesty. Wrath, awe, holiness. Jesus, gentle and mild, Jesus meek and lowly Jesus.

The one who's the friend of sinners. The one who brings us to God. And sometimes, do we think of the Father and the Son and the relationship together as some sort of cosmic wrestling match. And what I mean is here is one divine person who can't wait to get his hands on us to strangle us.

But here is his equal. Here is his match, another divine person who has equal power and glory, who can hold him back just barely. But we're thankful that this is the case I mentioned on the opening night. That sometimes we teach our children to pray. Dear, Jesus. When dear Jesus taught us to pray our Father, Why do we do so?

Is this idea in the background, perhaps? Hey John Owen said in the 17th century, many Christians have hard thoughts of the Father. I think that's true. Now, what does he mean by hard thoughts of the Father? Well, exactly. Like I said, the Father being somehow distant, but as we're thinking about the Trinity, remember All three persons are united.

We talked about it this morning. There is a single divine will. Salvation comes from the Father, through his Son, Jesus Christ, bringing to us all grace and truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit who drives it home. The Son is not persuading. The Father to love. Sinners. The Son saves.

Sinners, because the Father loves them.

By the way. A lot of problems and how we understand salvation can be Trinitarian problems. Did Jesus die for everybody equally with? No, no distinctions whatsoever. No exceptions. Every human being. Beware. Are we thinking of the Trinity as the Father, chose some, the Spirit changes? Some and the Son says, no, I want them all.

I'm going to die for them all. Too bad. You're out. Voted two to one. Be blasphemy, wouldn't it? The Son saves those, whom the Father chose, the Spirit saves those, whom the Father chose, but see the stress that I'm putting here. The Father, the Father, the Father, the Father think about it.

You know, the verses it's at your fingertips. Who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. It has to be the Father. God is love. But I deserve the wrath and curse of God. I have sinned against God. I deserve the judgment of God. How can I know that God is love?

And that a sinner such as I can know the love of God.

God, demonstrated his love. And then he gave his Son for us. And Paul says, if he didn't spare his Son for you, how much more with him, will he not freely bless you with all things? If he's given you the greatest thing? Would you doubt him in the lesser things?

Well, he give you his Son to save your soul and not give you your daily bread. And provide you with a job. And care for your family. And bless you. In your day-to-day tasks. You see the Bible is screaming. Look to the love of the Father. But again, let's combine the parts.

God, blesses us, God, blesses us by putting his name upon us and being present among us. We receive the grace of a Lord Jesus Christ because that is where God begins with us. But the grace of the Gospel begins with the love of the Father. So we think of the love of God, we should be endeared to the Father.

And by the way, never divide the persons of the trinity because here's what the practical question comes up. How do i know the father loves me? I don't mean, you know how does he prove it? I already said that he gave us his son, he showed his love, he put on display But how do i know me personally that i belong to the father?

How do i know that he's chosen me that i that i'm one of his

By holding the trinity together. You can only see. The father's love for you. Reflected in jesus's face. And when you look into the face of jesus christ like a mirror, you see the love of the father reflected back to don't separate the trinity, don't try to gaze into your election.

Am i chosen? Am i not without gazing into the face of christ? Don't look to the love of the father, without laying hold of the grace of the sun. And vice versa. Don't lay hold of the sun and have hard thoughts of the father. But as the father loved his people, as he sent his son to die for his people.

Lay hold, dear friends. Of the grace of the lord. Jesus christ of the gracious, lord, jesus christ. That you may know. The love of god. By the way, did you notice something else we often quote this? Don't we as, as the grace of the lord jesus christ, the love of the father, the fellowship of the spirit be with you, all.

That's true. But what is it actually say? There's a slight difference. The grace of the lord jesus christ, the love of God. Why? Well hopefully you're getting a pattern. Now, after hearing this several times in several different ways, the father represents the majesty of the whole trinity It's not that he is god and the son and the spirit are not god.

But here is the one who's the first person in order, he is the one representing the majesty of the entire trinity. And so the bible reminds us over and over again. Preeminently in john 17 in jesus's prayer. This is eternal life. That they may know you. The only true god.

And jesus christ. In new sin, reverse the order. That they may know. The well, jesus christ, whom you've sent the grace of the lord jesus christ. And that they may know you. The only true god, the father representing a majesty of the trinity. You need to know the right god in the right way.

That's the bottom line, isn't it? Do we know the right god? Do we know the god, and father of the lord jesus christ. Do we know god and father through the lord jesus christ. There is no other path. There is no other way. But this god is putting his name upon you.

This god is promising his presence and blessing among you. The love of god. Lastly. The fellowship. Of the holy spirit. We've seen this, haven't we? In ephesians chapter 2, i mentioned to you. If you get nothing outside of this weekend, i think one of the main things we ought to wait, walk away with is to know what to look for.

I've mostly been looking at paul. I've looked a little bit at the gospels and john in particular, and what each of these authors says about the triune god, but everything we're talking about is in peter And it's in jude, and it's in john's epistles, and it's in revelation. And it's in isaiah 42 through 53.

Among a lot of other passages if you learn what to look for. Then that is the greatest blessing that we can get i think from this time together. But notice what do we expect here? The fellowship of the holy spirit, doesn't this remind us of Ephesians 2 18? That through him through jesus christ by one spirit.

We come to the father. This spirit is the bond of fellowship between us and god. And between us and one another. Do we not love one another, in the holy spirit? Do we not bear the fruits of the spirit? And show the character of christ among one another. And is this not wide the work of the holy spirit is never simply about us as individuals individually.

We need to be born of the spirit individually, we need to know god for ourselves. And i i tried to stress that carefully and heavily this morning And yet, at the same time, The spirit immediately puts us into a community. Into a church. Now, i could say, you know, here you are after A few days of spending, so much time together thinking about god's word, praying singing, all the things we've been doing.

You value the church on some level, i trust that you do. But aren't you glad? That we aren't called to live the christian life alone. It's a blessing, isn't it? And we're glad at least that it's not me on my island with my bible. We thank the lord that we have each other.

And what paul is reminding this divided, Distressed. Troubled. Corinthian church of Is that the fellowship of the holy spirit is with you all?

Get a hold of yourselves, perhaps. But remember who you are. You are the temple of the holy spirit. God does dwell among you, god does work through you, you are better off together. And i think it's what he's really getting at here. Remember the importance of the fellowship of the holy spirit.

Christian fellowship is in the holy spirit. The holy spirit. Brings you into fellowship with your god. The holy spirit meets you in fellowship with one another. I always remember the illustration of the puritan, david clarkson. I mentioned Owen before this was his associate pastor. And Clarkson talks about the blessings of the spirit and public worship.

And his illustration is that live. Coals is burning coals. Are likely to go out. If they're by themselves. But when you put them together, They fan into a flame. I want to build a beautiful illustration of what the lord does and the fellowship of the holy spirit among ourselves.

As we gather together in the lord's day is not god among us. Is in jesus here as he's promised to be present with us to the end of the age. Is he not a manual god with us? And is he not good to his word? Does he not come to us in the presence and power of the spirit in the preaching of the word as we lift up our praises to god?

And does he not put the love of the father on display? Behold? The blessing of the triune god. The beauty of these words. Is that they're easy to remember? The grace of the lord jesus christ. The love of god, the fellowship of the holy spirit. Be with you all now and forever.

Amen. Do you notice as we close our time together this weekend? That you could say. In many respects, the christian life begins and ends with the blessing of the triune god. First thing that happens to you. Whether you're born into a believing family or you profess your faith in jesus christ is baptism.

The triune god puts his name upon you saying, i must be your father, jesus must be your savior, the spirit must be in your heart. And the last thing that happens in our worship, on the lord's day is god says I am with you. I will bless you specifically.

The grace of the lord jesus christ, the love of god, the fellowship of the spirit be with you all. I don't know any more than you do when the lord jesus christ will return. I can say, i hope it's on the lord say Would it be a blessing? To go from his presence.

Departing with his blessing upon us. Only to see him face to face. But your friends, every time you hear the benediction, God is proclaiming his presence. And the blessing of his triune name among you. Whether it's this benediction. The one we use this morning from number six. Or others in the scripture.

This is your god. This is his blessing. So, let us look. To the grace of lord, jesus christ, the love of god, the fellowship of the spirit. Let us trust in the presence of a lord to be among us and to work in us. Well, let us close with the word of prayer.

Blessed and everlasting god. We thank you for your goodness. We thank you for your kindness. We thank you for your promises which are yai. And amen in christ. And lord, we pray that you would bless the time that we have spent together this week. Above what we can ask or think.

We pray that your grace would abound in us and to us. And that you would work through us. Teach us to see your triune glory. Throughout every part of your word, permeate, our prayers, our worship, our fellowship and everything, we do. And jesus name we pray. Amen.

Well, dear friends. I don't know what your practice is, but in light of what i've just said, i think it's appropriate to say The grace of the lord jesus christ, the love of god, and the fellowship of the holy spirit, be with you all. Amen.