



Last Sunday we looked at the Four Gospels and at the various ways that the Four Evangelists went about telling the Story of Jesus. As with each of these “high-altitude flyovers,” we’re just skimming the surface of the text while trying to get a sense of the overall trajectory of Scripture.

My goal is to help you (and me with you—some of these excursions are new for me, too) get a sense for “the scarlet thread” that runs through the Bible, so that your daily and weekly study of smaller portions of

Scripture will be seen in the frame of what the whole Story is about. And if you’re interested in reviewing the material at a more leisurely pace, remember that what you see and hear on Sunday mornings is posted online each week at www.dcstancil.com, together with about twice as many PowerPoint slides as are used in the service itself.

For Christians, of course, the whole Story is about Jesus, literally “from cover to cover.” At the same time, there remain many questions to which we have only partial answers, at best. While serious study will usually result in a sense of the direction, at least, in which the answers lie, more study is required than most people are willing to invest, so for many folk, large numbers of conundrums remain.

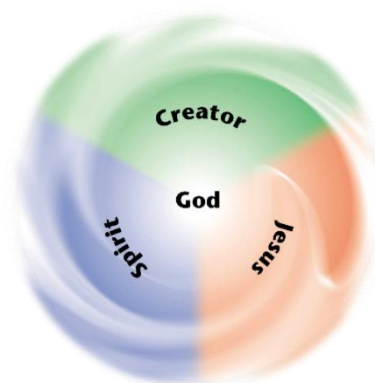


As the years go by, I am more and more convinced of the truth of 1 Corinthians 2:14 as it relates to understanding the biblical Story of grace and redemption: *the person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.* Like glorious stained-glass windows, for those “on the inside,” the wonders of God’s self-revelation are radiant on nearly every page of the Bible; but for those without the inner Witness & Guide of the Spirit, things are not nearly so clear.

In several venues lately, I’ve talked a little bit about The Trinity. Each time I’ve made the point that the Christian understanding of The Trinity developed over time as Christians tried to make sense of their experience. Long familiar with “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” first-century believers became persuaded that Jesus of Nazareth was somehow that same God, just as He said He was. And then, on Pentecost, the Father sent the Spirit just as Jesus had promised, and those believers became persuaded through their own personal experience that the Spirit was somehow that same God, as well.

The point here is that personal encounters with God preceded and informed efforts to understand those encounters, and it is so with our understanding of Scripture today as well. There are many perplexing questions of faith about which I suspect we’ll remain unclear until we reach the Heavenly City. *The place to begin the journey is by getting clear in your mind and experience **who Jesus is**, and then work everything else out from that point.*

When God began our story in Genesis 1:1, Father, Son, and Spirit already were Three-in-One-and-One-in-Three. I can’t explain that very well, though I have certainly encountered all Three



pretty regularly along the journey. One of the best efforts I've found to gather biblical metaphors for God is the song, *He IS*, sung by the father-son duo Jeffrey and Aaron Benward:

In Genesis, He's the Breath of Life,
In Exodus, the Passover Lamb.
In Leviticus, He's our High Priest,
In Numbers, the Fire by Night.
In Deuteronomy, He's Moses' Voice,

In Joshua, He's Salvation's Choice.
In Judges, He's Law Giver,
In Ruth, Kinsman-Redeemer.
In Samuel, Our Trusted Prophet,
In Kings and Chronicles, Our Sovereign.

In Ezra, True and Faithful Scribe,
In Nehemiah, Rebuilder of Broken Walls and Lives.
In Esther, He's Mordecai's Courage.
In Job, He's Timeless Redeemer.

In Psalms, He's Our Morning Song.
In Proverbs, He's Wisdom's Cry,
In Ecclesiastes, Our Time and Season;
In the Song of Songs, He's The Lover's Dream.

He is [in the Past], **He Is** [in the Present], **HE IS** [Our Risen Lord & Coming King]!

In Isaiah, He's Prince of Peace,
In Jeremiah, The Weeping Prophet.
In Lamentations, The Cry for Israel,
In Ezekiel, He's the Call from Sin;

In Daniel, He's the Stranger in the Fire.
In Hosea, He's Forever Faithful,
In Joel, He's the Spirit's Power.
In Amos, He's the Arms That Carry Us,
In Obadiah, He's the Lord our Savior.

In Jonah, He's The Great Missionary,
In Micah, The Promise of Our Peace.
In Nahum, He's Our Strength and Shield,
In Habakkuk and Zephaniah, He's A Call to Revival.

In Haggai, He Restores a Lost Heritage;
In Zechariah, He's Our Fountain.
In Malachi, He's the Son of Righteousness with Healing in His Wings.

He is, He Is, HE IS!

In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, He's God and Man, Messiah.
In Acts, He's Fire from Heaven.
In Romans, He's the Grace of God,
In Corinthians, He's the Power of Love.

In Galatians, He's Freedom from the Curse of Sin.
In Ephesians, He's Our Glorious Treasure,
In Philippians, The Servant's Heart.
In Colossians, He's the Glorious Trinity,
In Thessalonians, Our Coming King!

In Timothy, Titus, and Philemon He's Our Faithful Pastor,
In Hebrews, The Everlasting Covenant.
In James, He's The One Who Heals the Sick.
In Peter, He's Our Shepherd;
In John and Jude, He's the Lover Coming for His Bride.
In Revelation, He's King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

He is, He Is, HE IS!

The Prince of Peace,
The Son of Man,
The Lamb of God,
The great I AM!

He's the Alpha and Omega,
Our God and our Savior,
He is Jesus Christ the Lord.
And when time is no more,
He is, He Is, HE IS!¹

Amen, and Amen!

Dave

Postscripts:

1. PLEASE complete the attached Children's Ministry Survey for our Strategic Team and bring it with you on Sunday.
2. Jill and I will be away for the next two Sundays, visiting Nathan and his family in Portland, Oregon. Pastor Ron Mallow will be our preacher this Sunday, and Pastor Andrea Taylor will be our preacher on August 11. Please don't miss these special opportunities for worship!
3. The PowerPoint background on Sunday will be a picture of the Oregon coast . . . so you can think of us, even as we're thinking of you . . . with love.
4. I'm not going to do a *Laptop* next week. I'm going to be on vacation!

¹ Lyrics by Jeffrey Benward and Jeff Silvey, © Star Song, 1994.

<http://www.cmo.com/cmo/cmo/starsong/aj/aj.htm>; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron_Jeffrey