

## Triad of Divine Influences

Harmony M.B.C., August 24, 2008 (Morning)

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**2Cor 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen.

This pronouncement in closing by Paul seems to express a wish for something that is a truism under all circumstances for the believer. At first glance, it seems that the apostle is wishing for the Corinthian believers (and by extension, since the word of God is for all His people, for us as well) that the elements of the Trinity be present with them. It is essential that the unmerited favor of Christ toward us continue to wrap us in a shroud of divine protection, spiritual discernment, sensitivity to holy conduct, etc. It is also essential that the love of God abide with us so that we are always conscious that He is there in the power of His love, that He has sworn in His love to preserve us, to guide us, to empower us, to provide all things through Christ that make up our Christian inheritance. Just as essential is the continual witness of the Holy Ghost in us as He communicates to us the proof of our inheritance, the power of His presence to help us in understanding and acting out the mind of Christ, and the will of God concerning our lives, generally. But these things are a reality in believers lives because Jesus died and rose that we might receive the inheritance that guarantees them. In His finished work, He perfected forever them that are sanctified (Heb. 10:14), and we may consider the “completed” part of the meaning of “perfected” to be a reference to making everything available for our eternal well being. So, Christ’s grace, God’s love, and the Holy Ghost’s communion is always available for us. But, the apostle is writing about another aspect of this glorious triad of divine manifestation that he mentions by way of a blessing. It is that aspect I want us to look at this morning. As we look at this idea, may the Holy Spirit enrich each of our lives with the understanding we need to see the glory of it, and to pursue the goal of it.

To introduce the idea behind this text verse, I want to point toward a famous saying of Christ’s, which set the stage for all future evangelism that would be conducted by the people of God. Too often, His statement is understood to be only an address to the apostles. This is a sad shortfall in understanding. It should always be looked upon as belonging to every church member throughout this age. He said (Acts 1:8) **“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”** I want us to focus on the word “witnesses.” Have you ever thought about being a witness? Have you ever thought about what it requires to be a witness? Here are some requirements that make the most effective witnesses:

- Have personal experience about the matter to be witnessed about
- Be able to provide the most detail relevant to what you are witnessing about

With these characteristics of a good witness in mind, let’s now place ourselves 20 centuries away from the object and event we are witnessing about and try to describe how we will convey the details of the object and event to the world. When we figure that one out, we have untied the Gordian knot; we have unlocked the treasure room of the world’s richest king. The secret solution is found in our text. If we will see it, in these words are the keys to being the superlative witness of Jesus Christ.

I will move on to our message after one last illustration to bring home to you the meaning I believe the Lord would have us to glean from the phrase “be with you all.”

Like every human being going about business on this planet, I have an appearance that you, as other human beings expect to encounter when you meet me. You look at me and see a typical human frame. On that frame the first thing that meets your eyes, excepting my clothes of course, is human skin. That skin is with me everywhere I go. I don’t leave home without it! Now, as you think of our text and the phrase “...be with you all,” think of that illustration as we look at the rich truths in three parts.

### I. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ...be with you all.”

- Have we thought much about what “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ” is?
  - John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) **full of grace** and truth.
- Examination of all that this fullness of grace is will be impossible, but we can look at some aspects of it so that we can understand what should be “with” us.
  - He had the grace of focus (“I must be about my Father’s business.” Luke 2:49; “**Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.**” John 12:27)
  - He had the grace of dedication (John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, **My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.**”)
  - He had the graces of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom (I put these together because they, within themselves, represent a “triad” that rounds out into one great grace)
  - He had the grace of perseverance (John 17:4 “**I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.**”)
  - He had the grace of submission to the will of God (“nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt” Mark 14:36)
  - He had the grace of total trust in the Father (Luk 23:46 “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, **‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:’** and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”)
  - He had the grace of obedience
- So many more that time would fail us to review them

### II. “...The love of God...be with you all.”

- To illustrate the love of God, I want to use one phrase from John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that **He gave...**” I don’t want to play down what it was that He gave, and I intend by this way of presenting this scriptural statement to actually magnify what it was that He gave...but we need to stop here and rest for just a moment and contemplate the great, magnanimous truth of this phrase, because it is at the heart of the meaning of the magnitude and direction of God’s love.
  - God had no need to give anything to this sin cursed earth
  - It had gone beyond the holiness, long-suffering, and forbearance of an omnipotent God in its rebellion against Him
  - This world had nothing to offer God that He could not get somewhere else
- These things describe many of the reasons why God did not need to give, and they are also reasons why He should have been provoked NOT to give.
- Now, back to our thought: “The love of God...be with you all.”

- If you were challenged to witness to the world what the love of God looked like, what men saw, felt, or had revealed to them about His love, how would you do it?
  - You would give in the same way God gave
  - You would give despite the fact that you had no need to give
  - You would give though all those you were giving to were far beyond caring anything about you or your principles

### III. “...the communion of the Holy Ghost...be with you all.”

- The Holy Spirit is innocuous in His interaction in your life
  - The most detrimental thing a Christian can do is intrude into the lives of fellow believers with input or behavior that jars their sense of Christian propriety. Some people consider it their duty to buttonhole other Christians when they discover a flaw, a weakness, a shortcoming in them.
  - The presence of Holy Ghost-like communion with a Christian can be felt by fellow believers and seen in their conduct in how they seek to assist them without intruding; without exhibiting spiritual rudeness, spiritual unthoughtfulness; but rather that they show and make felt a true spiritual sympathy.
- The Holy Spirit is the premier helper of our infirmities and shortcomings (Rom 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:...”)
  - Fellow believers who by their attitude or conduct, toward other believers tear down, criticize, and belittle because of infirmities or shortcomings are a detriment to the family of God, and a deterrent to church growth and the encouragement of saints.
  - The presence of Holy Ghost-like communion with fellow believers manifests itself as behavior and words that build up the saints; manifests itself as a tender heart toward those that do not necessarily meet the standard
- The Holy Spirit is the ultimate guide in our efforts to know and understand God, and to discover God’s will for our lives (guides us into all truth; John 16:13; 1Cor 2:10 “But God hath **revealed them** (the things God has prepared for us) unto us **by his Spirit**: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”)
  - The presence of Holy Ghost-like communion with the family of God and the church of God reveals itself in believers as a willingness to teach others by example and humble words what God is saying to us and where God is leading us in our lives
    - Opens and expands our understanding of scripture
      - Enables our responsiveness to God
      - Points us in the right direction
      - Knocks obstacles out of our path
      - Puts obstacles in the way as we go down a wrong path

Conclusion: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost are characteristics of the 3 persons of God. They are irrefutable proofs of the presence of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. When those proofs manifest themselves in us as we live and act on this earth, they are the strongest witnesses we can have as to the existence, power, and presence of the God we preach and teach. May these characteristics of our Lord be with each one of us in all places. Amen.