

The Glory of the Trinity and Marriage – *John 17:20-23, Gen 2:23-24, Mal 2:14-15*

- *Life in the Trinity #3*

Introduction – Life in the Trinity translates into life in the world for us, His image-bearers. And society begins with family. Therefore, the marriage relationship is a first place to look for the manifestation of where this Trinitarian life and thinking make a difference. The problems of egalitarianism, feminism, and other abuses of women stem from our sinfulness. But our ignorance of life in the Trinity, especially life in covenant, a relationship of love, and the bestowing and receiving of glory, only exacerbate our disobedience.

The Texts - *John 17:20-23* ... that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Genesis 2:23-24 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Malachi 2:14-15 the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youthshe is your companion and your wife by covenant. But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

Oneness Begetting Oneness (The John Passage) – There is a great connection and application of union in the marriage covenant. Jesus is of course praying for oneness among all believers, but marriage is an important and pivotal application. It is a primary application for cultures and therefore for churches – its application or lack thereof affects everyone. Even if you are not married, you will not find church (or society at large) to be a pleasant place if marriages are out of whack all around you. Mutual-indwelling must exist in the marriages in order for there to be mutual-indwelling in the body at large.

Jesus' Prayer – Jesus prays for our union with Him and with one another on the basis of the union which already exists between the Father and Son, a union from which the glory of the Holy Spirit proceeds. Christ is in us and the Father is in Christ, with the result that we are "made perfect in one."

Similar Language (John, Genesis, Malachi) - Notice the similarities of words, phrases, and purpose in these three passages. There is an emphasis on a unity which already exists and a unity which is to flow from. There is an emphasis on covenant, a relationship of love, of glory, of fruitfulness, and of purpose before God.

The Glory Which You Have Given Me, I Have Given to Them – Glory, like love, is something which cannot be understood without relationship. The Hebrew and Greek words for glory mean "heaviness," "significance," or "revealed and reflected nature." The thing about God-given glory is that it is always intertwined in coming and going, bequeathing and receiving, identifying and representing. The glory of the moon is a wonderful example. She sits in the night sky with a glory all hers, but we know that her glory is something she is receiving and reflecting from the sun.

Glory in the Trinity – Jesus is the brightness of the Father's glory (Heb 1:3). The Father bestows glory upon the Son, and the Son upon the Father (John 12:23, 28), the Son prays for this glory (John 17:1-5). He prays that in this glory, the Father Himself would be glorified. The Holy Spirit reflects His glory back up to the Son (John 16:13-14). In these passages on glory we see how the three Persons of the Godhead bestow, reflect, reveal, return, and magnify their glory upon One another.

Glory in the Marriage Union – In 1 Cor 11:7 Paul instructs a husband "not to cover his head (in liturgical worship), since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man." Both actions are exhibitions of glory, but each gender is required to bestow, receive, and give back that glory in distinct ways. Like the Trinity, the woman and the man are different persons but equal in glory, honor, and image-bearing. Paul had earlier made clear that "the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor 11:3). What is clear is that the kind of headship that husbands have over wives cannot be a headship that devalues or dehumanizes the wife – as long as we understand the nature and the relationship of the Trinity.

Working Out What God is Working In – If we are not working out what God is working in (a union, a relationship, a glory, our salvation) then our relationships, particularly our marriage relationships, will reflect a Unitarian, Allah-like god. Jesus prays for our union with Him and with one another, so God is working in us Trinitarian realities. Therefore this is not a message about working in us something – salvation (and our sanctification) is all by grace through faith. In other words, this is something which God is working in you. What are you to do? Believe. Stop fighting it; gladly embrace what God is doing. Instead of working anything "in" we are to "work out" our salvation based upon what God is already working in.

Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken – The Father indwells the Son and the Son the Father. We are to bring the world to faith in the same way. We know that the Son's head is the Father and we know that the wife's head is her husband. We know that glory is bestowed both between the Father and the Son. The Son does this with His Bride, the church as well. We know that a primary witness of this to the world is the marriage covenant, where the husband bestows glory and honor upon his wife as he lays his life down for her in love. We know that the wife shows forth that glory and gives it back to her husband in her submissive respect to him. There are specific and particular roles – but there is glory all around. It is never, ever done outside of what our Trinitarian God is already doing in and through us.

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