

# Trinity XXV

1 John 3: 1-8 & Matthew 24: 23-31

November 17, 2024

Last week, we were saying that our natural tendency to the things that happen to us is to turn to man for help. We want validation, we run to our fellow men to find a support system. But how much do we think they can do? How far do we expect them to go in solving our problems, the real issues we face in our lives, and the biggest of all is sin? Nobody can help us with the problem of sin. Only Jesus can do that. On this last Sunday in our long Trinity season, the Church invites us to reflect on the great work done by God through Jesus **to forgive** our sins and **reconcile** us to Himself.

In today's Epistle, St John marveled at how God reconciled us to Himself. God did it out of love: "Beloved, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3: 1). What John is saying is that we are not just called "children," but WE ARE children of God. We don't self-identify as children of God, but we are truly children of God. This theme reminds us of what we see in John 1: 12: "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." God's children are those who both receive Jesus as Lord and believe in His name as the risen Messiah.

I don't know about you, but I see that as a privilege and an honor to be called by God child. I don't deserve it. It is a blessing, and I need to thank God for it. Thousands of years ago, King David marveled at the great value God had set on us, human beings: "What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor" (Psalm 8: 4-5).

God placed such a high value on us that it cost Him dearly to buy our redemption. And did it through the Precious Blood of his Son, Jesus Christ (1 Pe 1: 18-19).

Today's readings give us an idea of how God accomplished our salvation.

In the Collect, we read: "O God whose Son was manifested." In the Epistle of John, we see that: "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested." So, the first thing that God did to show us his Great Love or to redeem us, was **to manifest, to reveal his Son**.

**Another** way to understand our redemption (collect/epistle) is that the Son of God came to "**destroy the works of the devil**." That's why in the Gospel, he is encouraging us to focus only on Him, not to follow the false prophets. They cannot help us solve the problem of sin.

Sin is a product of the works of the devil. When we give room to the devil in our life, he comes in and sows his seeds in us and that leads us to cut ties with our creator. So, the redemptive work

of Jesus here is to reconnect man to his creator by becoming “the propitiation for our sin” (1 John 2:2). This is the ultimate mark of love that only God can express. So amazing that John marveled: “What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!”

### **Lessons**

**1** If God places such a high value on us, we should also place a high value on representing Him in our daily lives. We can faithfully represent God if we stay connected to Him. And the best way of doing this is to read his word and to receive Him at the communion rail. We are part of the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Each time we come to the communion rail; God fulfills in us the prayer of Jesus Christ in John 17: 21-23.

**2** When you know that God places a high value on you, you must also place a high value on the people He has brought into your lives. Bring them before the Lord in prayer. Ask Him to show you how each is more priceless than the costliest golden item in the universe. As we are getting ready to start a new church year, in a couple of weeks, I challenge all of us to go out and win at least one soul for Jesus before Advent 2025, meaning before the end of the new church year we are about to begin.

May the Lord help us in this effort!

### **Prayer**

**DIRECT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**