

Worship services are being cancelled until further notice because of Covid-19. However, we will have worship services through the Internet Zoom platform every Sunday at 10:30 AM. The Zoom link for this service will be sent to you by email. The phone number for Zoom always remains the same but the Meeting ID and password number changes every week. If you need more information, please contact Mr. Vautour. See the bottom of the bulletin the contact information.

If you have friends or acquaintances who want to join in the worship service, please do not hesitate to share with them the Zoom links to join with us in the worship our great God.

The National GCI services will be at 1:00 p.m. each Sunday until the end of June 2020. Then they will cease as local congregations are to have their worship services through Zoom. The Zoom link for the national worship service will remain until the end of June.

**The next Bible Study will be on Thursday, June 25 at 7:30 p.m. We will continue our study in 1 John.**

For more information about special activities happening in GCI, please see the international website at [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org). On the left-hand upper side of the screen, you will see 3 short lines. You simply need to click on it. A drop down menu will appear. Click on **"PARTICIPATE"**.

**Please note that audio sermons are available and a PDF copy of sermons are available at [www.worshiphim.ca](http://www.worshiphim.ca) and video sermons are now available on YouTube – GRACE COMMUNION INTERNATIONAL-MONCTON (see link below)**

If you have a prayer requests, other events you would like to announce and/or praise to our great God you would like to share, **please try to contact Mr. Vautour by email, text or telephone no later than Saturday, in the morning.**

**For local prayer requests, please see <http://www.worshiphim.ca/> and click on **Members Only**. It is password protected for confidentiality reason. If you do not have the password, please contact Mr. Vautour.**

**Voice of the Martyrs (<https://www.vomcanada.com/ng-2020-06-04b.htm>).** Christians continue to be persecuted in many parts of the world. They need our prayers. You can receive a free publication through your email. If you are interested, please visit their website to subscribe.

**"1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior," (1Ti 2:1-3 ESV)**

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## CORPORATE PRAYERS (Gci.org June 10, 2020)



Mr. and Mrs Greg  
Williams – GCI president



In our monthly GCI Prayer Guide for June 2020, we begin with these thoughts – “Togetherness is a theme throughout Jesus’ teachings. Through corporate prayer, we draw closer to one another, reconciling differences, focusing on the same events and opportunities...” The US has once again been rocked by the horrific incident of excessive force by police that led to the tragic death of George Floyd and resulting in protests turned destructive in more than 30 US cities. The US is not the only nation where injustice and outrage are a cyclical pattern. It is emblematic of human history and human nature. It is

regrettable that we face this unrelenting pattern time and time again as humans treat fellow humans in unspeakable ways.

Considering the recent events, I am asking our church family to lament together for the tragic loss of George Floyd's life and the deep-felt pain by his family and the African-American community.

Please pray for our cities even as government officials make reasonable appeals and attempts to restore peace for safe assemblies. And may restored peace bring about meaningful dialogue to properly address grievances and bring about positive change. It is through these opportunities of corporate prayer that we as the GCI family draw closer together, and our hearts are broken for our broken world. I am proud that our fellowship is multi-racial, and we are empowered by the unifying Holy Spirit to display Christian brotherhood and sisterhood in ways that glorify Jesus. In our united prayers we seek reconciliation for our cities and citizens that can be accomplished only by the work of the Great Reconciler.

**“Lord may the hate and rage of our world be replaced by the love and goodwill that comes by the power of the Holy Spirit. And as we journey together through this fallen world, make us instruments of your peace. Amen.”**

Greg Williams, President Grace Communion International

P.S. As members of the National Association of Evangelicals we stand in solidarity of their statement:

*Recent events surrounding the wrongful deaths of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia, Breonna Taylor in Kentucky, and George Floyd in Minnesota illustrate severe racial injustices in the United States. The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) laments the recurring trauma experienced by African Americans. We condemn racism and the violent abuse of power, call for justice for victims and their families, and exhort churches to combat attitudes and systems that perpetuate racism. We are grateful for law enforcement officers who honorably serve and protect our communities and urge our members to uphold them in prayer. (NAE)*

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## How Do We Love Despite Increased Risk to Health? (Gci.org June 10, 2020)



By Charles Fleming  
GCI Board Member

Covid-19 has affected us all in some very drastic ways. One of the biggest challenges is the increased risk to our lives. For months to come, we may face the double risk of getting the disease and the risk of infecting others. This means we may have to live with difficult restrictions on our freedom for quite some time. Here are a few thoughts from the apostle Paul that are helpful as we struggle with a sense of loss of personal freedom.

Paul reminds us that in Christ we are called to be free and goes on to

describe what that freedom is like. It is not primarily a freedom to simply pursue our own comfort or happiness. It is a freedom to humbly and lovingly serve others.

**Gal. 5:13–14 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.**

Paul makes it clear that love for the neighbor often means we give up cherished rights. He explains that God's love helps us properly limit the exercise of our right to certain freedoms by asking ourselves, *Will the exercise of my rights be beneficial to my neighbor?*

**“I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive. No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.**

**Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God..... For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. (1 Cor. 10:23-24, 32-33)**

The pandemic is giving us many opportunities to apply these principles. Take the wearing of masks as an example. Health authorities tell us that while we get some personal protection from wearing them, the primary beneficiaries are other people. The masks cut down

on how many droplets we spread abroad when we speak, cough, or sneeze. So, according to health experts, wearing masks is more about our neighbor than ourselves. Wearing a mask even when we might prefer not to is the kind of situation the apostle Paul was referring to when he wrote: **“No one should seek their own good, but the good of others” (v. 24).**

We can apply these principles to other areas – honoring social distancing guidelines; dealing with the temptation to hoard food – to name a couple. Paul reminds us that we Christians have one overriding debt – the debt to share the love of God that has been spread abroad in our hearts.

**Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments...are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Rom. 13:8-10)**

By doing this we can bring glory to God. And people to God. The sociologist Rodney Stark’s research led him to conclude that one of the main reasons Christianity spread so rapidly in the Roman Empire during the first few centuries was the fact that Christians excelled in putting the needs of their fellow citizens ahead of some of their own needs during the epidemics that ravaged parts of the empire from time to time. It’s now our turn to heed these inspiring words of the Apostle Peter:

**My divinely loved friends, since you are resident aliens and foreigners in this world, I appeal to you to divorce yourselves from the evil desires that wage war within you. Live honorable lives as you mix with unbelievers, even though they accuse you of being evildoers. for they will see your beautiful works and have a reason to glorify God in the day he visits us. (1 Peter 2:11-12, Passion Translation)**

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*By [Ted Johnston - June 10, 2020](#)*

This post continues a series presenting "The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit," an essay by Dr. Gary Deddo, President of Grace Communion Seminary. For other parts, click or copy <http://thesurprisinggodblog.gci.org/2020/05/holy-spirit-part-1.html>.

Last time, we noted that every act of God, whether in creation, redemption or bringing about the perfection of creation itself, is done together as one God. But how then are we to understand those places in Scripture that ascribe certain acts of God to one of the divine Persons? Take, for example, the Incarnation. The Father and the Spirit are never said to be incarnate, as is the Son. Note also that the Spirit seems to descend on Pentecost and indwell the believing church in a way distinct from the Son and the Father. The explanation in these two and similar examples is that all three of the divine Persons are involved together in all the acts of God, but often in different (distinct, unique) ways.

#### **How are the divine Persons distinct?**

Scripture leads us to understand that each of the divine Persons contributes to the unified act of God from their own, particular “angle.” We could say that one “takes the lead” in certain actions: the Father in Creation, the Son in atonement, the Spirit in perfecting creation. But we can only say that if we aren’t thinking of the three Persons as acting separately, or as being out of phase with the others. The three Persons always act in a conjoint way. Theologians call this the doctrine of appropriation. An act can be appropriated to the Person of the Trinity who takes the lead, as long as the other two are not regarded as having nothing to do with it, but are co-involved, each in their own way.

We should not think that the contribution to an act of God by one of the Persons is what constitutes their being as a distinct Person in the Trinity. For example, it is an error to think that being the Creator is what makes the Father different in Person from the Son, or that being Incarnate is what makes the Son different in Person from the Father. The Father is the Father, the Son is the Son, and the Spirit is the Spirit, whether or not they perform any actions external to their own triune being. The three Persons are distinguished by their internal relationships, not by their external actions. The being of God is not dependent upon God’s relationship to that which is external to God.

So, as long as we don’t leave the Son and the Spirit behind, we can say the Father leads in creation. We can also say the Son leads in our redemption. But if we think the Father is absent or has a different view, attitude, purpose or intention for the Cross than does the Son, then we’ve split the Trinity apart, placed them at odds with one another! Even in Jesus’ earthly life, we need to remember that he only does what he sees the Father doing. He only says what the Father is saying. They’re saying things together. They’re doing things together. They’re never separate because they’re one in being.

#### **The work of the Son**

It is proper to say the Son takes the lead and that only the Son is incarnate. So, we can affirm that the Son physically suffers on the cross and not the Father or Spirit. Not being incarnate in our humanity, they cannot physically suffer and die. But, if we think the Father is absent or the Spirit has gone on vacation and isn’t around when Jesus is on the Cross, then we’ve strayed way off the theological path. The Spirit and the Father are present with Jesus, each in their own non-incarnate way. So, Jesus says, **“Father into your hands, I commend my Spirit.” In the book of Hebrews we read, “how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to worship the living God (Heb. 9:14).** They’re all acting together in Christ’s redeeming work. Yes, we can say one leads. But don’t let them fall apart just because one is leading.

### **The work of the Spirit**

We can say that the Spirit perfects. However, we must also say that he perfects human beings with the perfection accomplished by Christ. The Spirit shares with us the holiness and the sanctification of Jesus, himself, in our humanity. He doesn't give us a spiritualized or divine perfection, a non-bodily, inhuman existence. But rather the Spirit joins us to Christ's glorified human body, mind and soul. The Spirit makes us to share in Jesus' self-sanctification. The work of the Spirit is not separate from the work of the Son, but the Spirit does lead in dwelling in us now.

### **Beware the error of tritheism**

Though we can talk about the Spirit leading, we must not think of the Spirit branching off, saying, "Father and Son, you've done a good job over there, but now I've got to go do something over here that you don't have anything to do with. It's my turn to do my own thing." That's a mistake. That could only happen if God wasn't one in being and was three beings—tritheism! We don't want to go there. We can distinguish between the various contributions the Father, the Son and the Spirit make by the way they take their lead, but we don't want to separate them or place them in any kind of opposition or in tension with each other. And we don't want to say that their differing contributions to what they accomplish together are what make them distinct in Person from all eternity.

As so we distinguish but we don't separate. The Divine Persons are one in being and distinct in Person, both in their internal and eternal being and in terms of what they do in creation, redemption, and consummation.

### **Beware projecting on God**

Why do we get tripped up in this? I think there are a number of reasons, but one is that we tend to think of God in ways we think of ourselves. We start with ourselves, then try to get to our understanding of God. Think of how we usually distinguish ourselves from each other. How do I know I'm not you and you're not me? I note that you have a different body. You're over there, and I'm over here. You do this, but I do that. You live there, but I live here. You think that's funny, but I don't. I want X, but you want Y. We're different in all these ways, and that's how we know we are distinct persons.

So we can project this perspective on God, and think that's how the Father, Son and Spirit are distinguished. The Father is over here, the Spirit's over there. The Father wants A, and the Son wants B. They each have different jobs to do. We try to distinguish them from each other in the same way we distinguish ourselves. The problem is, God is not a creature like we are. So, you can't just take the idea of how we distinguish ourselves and apply that reasoning to God. Thinking that way would only work if God was a creature. But he is not.

### **Names and relations**

The essential way we have been given to distinguish between the divine Persons is by means of their different names: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These names reveal a difference of their Persons. That is also why we believe there are three, not four or two Persons in the Godhead. The names we are given in Scripture are revelatory of real differences in God. They are not just arbitrary words, concepts, ideas, or conventional labels. So we address God in worship, in prayer, by means of these three names. And in doing so, we follow Jesus' example and instruction. He uses these names in his relationship to the Father and the Spirit, and directs us to do so as well. So he instructs us: **"Pray like this: Our Father in heaven..."**

Notice that divine names represent unique relationships. The Father has a different relationship with the Son than the Son has with the Father. And the Spirit has a different relationship to the Father than does the Son. The names identify and reveal to us unique relationships. Following biblical teaching, we can also find distinct designations for the different relationships.

Corresponding to the Father is the relationship of begetting to the Son. Begetting is the special term used to describe more particularly how the Son comes from the Father. The Father begets the Son. Begetting indicates a certain kind of relationship. For instance, in the early church they recognized that begetting is different from making. What is made is of a different kind of thing than the maker. But what is begotten is of the identical kind of being. So we say that the Son is begotten, indicating a unique kind of relationship to the Father. The Son doesn't beget the Father and the Father isn't begotten by the Son. They each have a different relationship with each other and that difference of relationship, which is internal and eternal to God, is what makes them personally distinct from one another. The Father begets (is not begotten of the Son). The Son is begotten (does not beget the Father).

The unique names and relationships identify who the divine Persons are. They are who they are in relationship with each other. Without the relationships with each other, they would not be who they are. And they are not interchangeable. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father. Being the begetter and being the begotten one are different and not reversible. There is a direction to the relationships that can't be reversed. You can't say the Son begets the Father. The Son has always been the begotten Son. The Father has always begotten the Son. The Son is eternally the Son, and the Father, eternally Father. That's why we can say they are the divine Persons of Father and Son.

But the words/names don't themselves explain everything. They represent what we have to go on and explain, namely, what they do and don't mean as far as we can tell. In the case of the Father and Son, we have to rule out, or "think away" as Athanasius said, some aspects of the meaning of the words begotten or begetting as used of human creatures. Among creatures these words include the idea of a time sequence. But when it comes to God, the aspect of time does not apply. God is eternal and so, then, are the Divine Persons. So the Father generates the Son from all eternity.

Time sequence doesn't apply to God. There never was a time when the Son was not. The Son was always the begotten Son of the Father, which is simply to say the Son is eternally the Son and the Father is eternally the Father, begetting the Son. The discipline of theology is to discern where and how words used to refer to God must be used differently from how they are used of creatures. This would be impossible if we did not have biblical revelation to lead us.

### **The Holy Spirit proceeds (spirates)**

Now what about the Holy Spirit? There has always been the Spirit who has eternal relationships with the Father and the Son. We use a special word to talk about those relationships, a word given in the New Testament; we say the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and, or through, the Son (**John 15:26**). Another word has also been used down through the ages to indicate that unique relationship, "**spirates**." These words indicate unique and non-interchangeable relationship. The name and relationship indicate who the Spirit is. The Spirit would not be the Spirit without spirating from the Father and the Son. And the Father and Son wouldn't be Father and Son without the Spirit proceeding. The relationship of the Spirit is essential to who the Spirit is and so to who the Triune God is.

We likely want to ask, "So how does that work? How does a procession work in God?" We don't actually know. We can't say exactly how it is different from begetting or being begotten. Along with the name, Holy Spirit, the word procession indicates that there is a unique kind of relationship of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, one that is different from the relationship of the Son to the Father. It indicates that the Spirit is from the Father and/through, the Son in such a way that the Son and Father do not proceed from the Spirit and are not the Spirit. With this unique relationship, the Spirit is not interchangeable with the other Persons. And it means that the Holy Spirit has always been the Holy Spirit. We affirm in this way that God has always been a Trinity. There never was a time when God was not Triune.

### **Conclusion: triune relations**

The three divine Persons eternally exist in absolutely unique relationships and that is what is essential to their being distinct Persons. That's it. They have unique relations. Each has a different relationship with the other two. We don't know how to explain all that, what that means, but we use unique words because there are unique relations. And that's also why we address them according to their unique names that correspond with the relations. The Father is the Father, not the Son. The Son is the Son, not the Father. The Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son. We have unique names to indicate the unique persons and they have unique relationships and they're not interchangeable.

When God through Jesus says, to address him as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we're being told something. The triune name identifies who God is, which God we're speaking of, and even what kind of god that God is. God is the Triune God. That's the only God that is or has ever been. God is Father, Son and Spirit. The Father is the Father. The Son is the Son. The Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit. Don't separate them -- they are one in being. But don't collapse them into one Person with no relationships -- they are distinct in Person.

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**Offerings:** you can send your offering directly to the following address: **Grace Communion International- Canada, Suite 203A, 2121 Airport Dr., Saskatoon, SK 7S1 6W5**. If you prefer, you can also call **1-306-653-2705**. Thank you for your continued generous giving to God by giving to this part of God's church, his body.

**From Mr. Bill Hall – GCI Canadian Director** *"Our office here in Saskatoon will remain open during regular business hours. I'm self isolating for a couple of weeks, but Kathleen will be available. We will continue to process the donations we receive in Saskatoon. Members are urged to mail them directly to our office for the time-being. They can also donate via phone using a credit card, or via Canada Helps using the donate button on our website [www.gcicanada.ca](http://www.gcicanada.ca) We are waving the provision that all donations given via Canada Helps go toward national expenses for the time being. We will credit all donations received via Canada Helps to a member's local congregation, if we can identify where they attend."*

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**GCI principle website and Moncton Websites**—a) [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org) , b) [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca) , c) [www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton](https://www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton) ; d) <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqKazyWhmKMDZy69vJcFfPg>

For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website.

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