

I don't like going to the restaurant drive thru. They talk so fast. "Welcome to McDonalds, may I take your order" comes out sounding like a foreign language. Then I say, "I'm sorry, what did you say?" And I always need more time and I figure they're getting impatient while I look over the menu. Then when I give my order I feel like I have to talk real slow. It feels kind of foolish, but if I don't there'll be no communication taking place.

Communication coming from God has the potential to get even more garbled. Unlike the drive thru where eventually you see the person talking to you through the box, we never see God. He sees us. Every foolish and disobedient thing we do he sees. He knows it all and we know hardly anything of him. What does he look like? What does he sound like? Where does he live? What do his days look like? Most of all, what's this three in one God business all about?

Always the first Sunday after Pentecost is called Holy Trinity Sunday. That's today. Trinity because today we get to study a bit more about our three in one God. We'll never explain it perfectly. But in the first lesson it's more about communication. That comes right from the Lord God. **"The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them.'"** We want to hear clearly from our three in one God. And we do...

God communicates in blessing us

Clear protection

Clear salvation

Clear confidence

We've been watching it on TV for the last week. Every day more stories of heroism and close calls. The images are terrible. Home after home for blocks destroyed completely by the tornado. Decades of people's belongings picked up and thrown everywhere. We feel for those people because we know it could have been us. That could easily be your kitchen table broken into pieces. Your car upside down in the neighbors' living room. Your precious antiques broken with no hope of salvage. Your possessions pushed into piles waiting for the trash.

Confirmation students learn that all of our possessions come from God. **"God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all that I need to keep my body and life."** Martin Luther summarized how the Lord blesses us. Further Luther says, **"and by defending me against all danger and guarding and protecting me from all evil."** God communicates in blessing us with all that we have and clear protection. So why would he allow all that to be taken away? Did God stop blessing the people of Moore? Will God stop blessing me someday?

Clear protection from God doesn't mean zero worries and no tornadoes. Clear protection means being brought through the tests of faith that God sends. God was behind those tornadoes of Sunday and Monday. God was behind your loss of job, loss of spouse, or loss of life. It's not punishment. God tests. And through the testing God communicates in blessing you with clear protection. **"The Lord bless you and keep you."** Not every tornado will be kept away. Every loss isn't promised never to hurt. That's not God's communication to us. But still today he offers clear protection in pure fatherly goodness and mercy.

The clear protection God provides will get you all the way to the end. Clear protection for your soul for eternity. The richest blessing the Lord communicates to you is clear protection in Christ Jesus. While it's often invisible, it is free and it is faithful. Freely and faithfully God goes on protecting our souls through the work of Jesus to get us all the way to heaven. He communicates in blessing us with clear protection.

Airport pickups can be done two ways. One is curbside at baggage claim. You wait in the car. Your pickup exits with their suitcase. The trunk opens, they put their bags inside, get in, and the car pulls away. Not very personal. The other option is meeting inside. You stand at the exit of security looking down the hallway, waiting and watching for your arrival to come around the corner. And when they do a smile crosses your face. You move closer waiting for them to cross the threshold so you can throw your arms around them in a hug. This is personal. It communicates that you're glad they're home.

Our trip away from God sadly would be permanent because of our sins. Our sinful nature didn't want any relationship with God in the first place. We wanted out from under his rules. Our sins separated us from him. Likely lonely travelers we would be content in our sins to walk away from God and face whatever comes in this world by ourselves. We've convinced our sinful selves we can handle it. Unfortunately what would come is death and hell.

In spite of our being lost and condemned in sins, in spite of our sins of this morning and yesterday, God chose the inside airport pickup. He can't wait to see you. He anxiously looks around the corner just waiting to see your face. And when he does his face lights up in a smile. He rushes forward and throws his arms around you in a giant God bear hug. God's bear hug and God's smile show on his face the attitude of his heart. God's heart wants to see you saved from your sins. The basis for you being saved from your sins is grace. The very essence of grace is Christ Jesus.

Jesus is the smile of God towards every sinner of this world. You and I see the smile of God in Jesus because everything has been set right again between us and him. Nothing in you made that grace come out. Jesus alone is the blessing of the Lord. He is the grace of God. **“The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.”** The Lord is gracious to you in Christ. With his precious blood Jesus purchased us from sin, death, and Satan’s power. He did this so we would belong to him. He did this so that we are his, in grace. That’s clear salvation as a blessing communicated from God.

Monday afternoon in Moore it seemed like they were cast back to the stone ages, you know, before cell phone service. Most problematic was that the rest of the city still had cell phone service. People inside Moore tried to call out, but nothing got through. Text messages were slow. Those outside Moore tried calling or texting into Moore with very little success. Without matching communication methods, all communication quickly broke down. No one had any confidence that messages were getting through.

Sinners speak a different language from God. They speak the language of war. Disobedience and anger fly in the face of God and he must look away. He looks down and away saddened by what he sees sinners doing. Sinners become his enemies. Even if he tried to speak our language we wouldn’t listen. Luther said, **“I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him.”** The communication methods were different. In this enemy relationship there could be no confidence and no peace.

God has every reason to leave us in this position. But instead he stoops to our level and uses words. He communicates through his Word a blessing to us that gives us clear confidence. **“The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”** Instead of turning away, God is turned towards you. God the Holy Spirit calls to you, gives you the gospel message of Christ, and leads your heart to trust that message. Once a rebel child now you’ve been brought to full faith and trust in Jesus.

That miracle of conversion happened in your heart. Through the Word of God in the Bible God spoke to you and blessed you with an incredible gift, clear confidence that it’s all true. Whether you’re living or dying, suffering, slipping, or backsliding God has called you into a right relationship with him through Jesus. He has enlightened you to know his gifts and to see his forgiveness of sins. He has kept you strong in that faith to this day and he will into the future.

Hopefully someday someone will develop a better drive thru window that will allow smooth communication. Until then I’ll stick to going inside. Thankfully because of God, communication with him is always clear. He may not have given us everything we want to know about him, but he’s given us what we need. We know this three in one God has communicated in blessings to us. He has graced us with the blessing of clear protection for eternal life. He has blessed us with clear salvation in Christ Jesus. He has given us the blessing of knowing clearly and confidently that his grace to us is true. This communication is the threefold blessing of a three in one God.