

Pentecost Study 2 BPUC

The Trinity – Experiencing the Mystery. 2 Cor 13:11-14 (NLT edited)

¹¹ Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Be united and live in peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹² Greet each other with a holy kiss. ¹³ All of God's people here (holy ones) send you their greetings.

¹⁴ May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Q.1. Thinking through all of Paul's letters, what is his most common way of addressing the Christians he is writing to? What does that address imply about those people with respect to God and each other?

Q.2. Paul begins his final words with 5 commands v.11. What might Paul mean by:

- i. Be joyful
- ii. Grow in maturity
- iii. Encourage each other
- iv. Be united
- v. Live in peace

Q.3. God is described as a 'God of love and peace' v.11c. From the Bible:

- i. Briefly describe 'God's love'
- ii. Briefly describe 'God's peace'

Q.4. What does the word 'holy' mean, and how does Paul use it in vv.12, 13 & 14?

Q.5. What might the purpose of v.13 be?

Q.6. Was Paul trying to be trinitarian in v.14?

Q.7. What other verses or passages in the Bible are trinitarian?

Q.8. 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ' v.14a What is 'grace'? see John 1:14-17, 2 Cor 8:9; Eph 2:8-10, 2 Tim 1:9-10.

Q.9. How can people 'live by grace'? See Romans 12:3, 6; 2 Cor 8:7-9, 12:8-10

Q.10. What is 'love'? How does God show love? See John 3:16, 1 John 3:1; 4:7-12

Q.11. What is 'fellowship'? How does the 'fellowship of Holy Spirit' work?

Application

Q.12. As you read vv.11-14 what word or phrase strikes you the most?

Q.13. Greet each other with a holy kiss v.12. How might we translate this into today's coronavirus world?

Q.14. Rate yourself against 'living by grace', 'loving your neighbour' and 'having fellowship with others'?

Q.15. How would you describe the Trinity to an interested sceptic?

Q.16. How in Scripture would you show the Holy Spirit is God?

2 Corinthians 13:11-14 (my suggested answers)

NB. Please answer the questions yourself. We all have different ways of answering; God may give you greater insights than mine. Put 'John thinks' ... before each answer.

Q.1. Paul's common way of addressing Christians is as 'brothers and sisters'. This implies family-status with God as 'our Father' and intimacy of interactions between each other as siblings together in the one family.

Q.2. * Joy is a key word that should describe Christians (due to our place in God's family as those saved by Jesus and touched by his Spirit – joy is a fruit/virtue. * Growing to maturity in Christ should be a believers great goal (toward a heart/mind that is Christ-like). * Encouragement is a church-virtue that uses words/deeds to build up others in their faith and love. * Unity is a huge virtue and disunity is a very poor witness (God is one – we should be one, in family and church life). * Live in peace (shalom= wholeness & well-being & harmony) with God and others.

Q.3. God's love is 'creative' Genesis 1, it is 'redemptive' Exodus 3ff, it is sacrificial John 3:16 and empowering Eph 5:1-2. God's peace is 'his shalom', his setting up whole, healthy, peaceful relationships and circumstances. Sin is the opposite to shalom/peace

Q.4. The word 'holy' means 'set-apart', 'special', 'unique' (pure). Thus we are to greet each other is a special, Christian way v.12, we are 'holy people' = 'set-apart by God and for God' v.13, The Spirit is holy = set-apart, unique and special.

Q.5. Paul want the Corinthians to see themselves as part of a larger family of Christians – who are known by Paul and through him, known by each other.

Q.6. Paul was trinitarian but this verse is probable not chosen for that but to help meet the needs of the Corinthians. They needed reassurance about Jesus' amazing grace given for them; God the Father's self-giving love to sustain them and the warm fellowship of the Holy Spirit to include and comfort them.

Q.7. Matt 28:20; John 15:26; 16:7-11; Eph 4:30-5:2

Q.8. Grace is 'an undeserved kindness or favour' do without strings attached. Jesus gave his life as a gift of 'grace'.

Q.9. Grace is a way of life full of self-giving actions and kindness toward others.

Q.10. Love is like grace – a selfless, generous lifestyle with the best for others in mind. Love is warm-sacrifice

Q.11. 'Fellowship' is about 'common-sharing' and 'being united with each-other in a mission or activity (e.g. Holy Communion)'.

Q.12. 'The God of love and peace' v.11

Q.13. 'Greet each other with a special hand signal or wave'

Q.14. For you to answer

Q.15. As in the Nicene creed – One God, three persons, one God-head of Father, Son and Holy Spirit – to be experienced through his love, grace and fellowship.

Q.16. Paul says not to 'grieve the Holy Spirit' Eph 4:30 and Peter tells Ananias not to 'lie to the Holy Spirit because that would be lying to God' Acts 5:3. Matt 28:20