



Trinity Sunday

31st May 2026



Where do you stand when you pray?

Main Point

Prayer is our participation in the life of the Trinity—drawn by the Spirit into the Son’s relationship with the Father. Rather than reaching up to a distant God, we are invited to pray from within this living communion, where God’s own love shapes our desires and our words.

Intro |

Do you remember the days of landline phones—when conversations weren’t private if someone else in the house was a little bit curious? I have to confess, as a child, I once picked up the phone in the living room while my dad was at work and my mum was talking to him... and I listened in. I don’t remember a single word they said—but I do remember the excitement of hearing a conversation that felt just a little bit beyond my reach.

Well ... that thrill is a feeling I want us to hold onto this morning as we step into the magnitude and magnificence of the Trinity on Trinity Sunday. This morning, I’d like us to see that the Trinity is not just something we believe about God... Rather, it is something we are invited to step into in the heart of God.

I spoke about the Alpha Conference last week. Each afternoon, there were forums and workshops open to participants. I chose to attend one entitled “Nurturing the Prayer Life of the Christian Leader.” In a room overflowing with about 300 people, I found myself sitting on the floor in the top rafters, peering through a grated barrier—hardly an ideal seat. But as I listened, it became obvious: this wasn’t just a workshop for leaders; it was for every Christian.

What I initially thought would be a workshop about the importance of prayer ended up completely reframing **why** I pray, **where** I pray from, **how** I pray, and **what** I pray.

I’d like to share these four shifts with you this morning. And before you ask ... it has everything to do with our Trinitarian God. I’d like to use a passage from Scripture that we read a few weeks

ago. That is, when Jesus allowed the disciples to eavesdrop on his prayer to His Father, shortly before His crucifixion. By listening in on his conversation with his Father, I think Jesus intentionally gave us the opportunity to hear several powerful truths that have the capacity to utterly transform our prayer life.

Point 1. WHY We Pray — We Are Invited Into a Relationship

Let's go right back to the beginning. Before the world was created, before there were stars or atoms, before anything existed at all—God was. And this eternal, always-existing, all-powerful God was not a solitary being. For this God, our God, was and is in relationship.

From all eternity, God the Father has loved God the Son, and God the Son has loved God the Father. Jesus gave us a glimpse of this in His prayer, "Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." (John 17:5)

Before creation, there was shared glory. There was closeness. There was love. And John echoes this at the very beginning of his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word (who was Jesus) ... and the Word (or Jesus) was with God." That word *with* doesn't just mean proximity—it speaks of relationship. Face-to-face. Life shared together.

So at the centre of the universe is not a force, not an idea, not a distant power—but a relationship of love. The Father loving the Son, and the Son loving the Father, and the Holy Spirit is the living bond of that love. Now here's where it becomes deeply personal. When God created humanity, He did not create us to stand outside that relationship. Rather, He created us, in His image, to share in it. Now, without going through the entire story of the Bible: humanity chose to step out of that relationship, tried to go at it on their own, and it took Jesus to enter into the world to bring us back into that relationship.

And that's at the heart of what Jesus came to do. Look at what Jesus prayed, "that they may be *in* us... that they may be one as we are one." (John 17:21, 22) Do you hear that? Not just near God. Not just following God. But **in Him**.

Which means Jesus doesn't simply call us to follow Him. He has opened the way for us – and invited us - to step right, smack bang in the middle of the loving relationship between Him and his Father.

If ever there was a prayer that we benefit from having answered, it is Jesus' prayer, when he says, "I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them." (v26)

When we begin to grasp the depth of that invitation to abide in this great loving relationship, everything about prayer changes. No longer do we envision prayer as something we do from earth, looking up to God way above us in heaven. No longer do we doubt that the words of our prayers float above our heads, but dissipate before they hit the ceiling. No longer do we commune with our heavenly Father out of some short of duty or obligation. Rather, we are transported into a new place, a spiritual place, where we abide or live as participants in a relationship we've already been welcomed into.

Point 2 | WHERE We Pray From — From Within the Trinity

Before moving on, let me share a story. A young woman grew up believing she had been abandoned. She saw the cold, hard facts on the adoption papers and knew her biological parents had rejected her. All her life, she carried this quiet question: "Was I ever really wanted?" One day, while going through some old belongings, she found a bundle of letters tied together. She opened one. It was from a man to his wife, written just after the birth of a child. He wrote about the moment he first saw the baby—how overwhelmed he was with love. He wrote about his wife—how proud he was, how deeply he loved her. And then he wrote about their child: "How will we ever be worthy of this little life? How can we give her all the love she deserves?" She read letter after letter—each one filled with love, longing, joy.

Finally, she asked, "Who wrote these?" And when the answer finally came, it made her gasp. The letters were written by her parents... before they adopted her. In that moment, everything changed. She had lived as if she was unwanted. But the truth was—she had been chosen, longed for and loved all along.

And in many ways, that is what Jesus reveals to us. Over and over again, throughout the Gospels, Jesus urges us to call God 'our Father' (Matthew 6:9, Mark 14:36, John 20:17, Galatians 3:26, 1 John 3:1, Ephesians 3:14-15, 1 Corinthians 8:6) And Paul described how God became our Father, writing, "*So you have not received a Spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."*" (Romans 8:15 New Living Translation).

So, how does this impact our prayer life? It means we are not praying to some vague, impersonal force. We are not crying out to God from a distance. We are not trying to get into God's presence. We are not trying to get God to listen to us. We are already on the **inside**.

That's why Jesus says, we are to "abide" or "make our home" in Him (John 15:4). When we find our home in Jesus Christ, knowing that Jesus Christ is in perfect relationship with the Father ... it opens our eyes to see that we are right in the middle of the love the Father shares with His Son, Jesus.

Point 3 | HOW We Pray — By Participating With Jesus Through the Spirit

If that's where we are, then how do we pray? Well if we were look through a telescope into heaven, we don't need to question what Jesus might be doing ... Paul told us. He said that Jesus "*is at the right hand of God ... interceding for us*" (Romans 8:34). Interceding means prayer that stands in the gap between two people. Jesus is praying to the Father, and we are right in the middle of His prayers.

So, let's allow this relationship to reshape how we think about prayer. Do we dare grasp that prayer is not something we initiate. Rather, it is something we join in with. When we pray, we step into an ongoing conversation between the Father and the Son. And it's the Holy Spirit who leads us in that.

So instead of starting our prayer time with a long list detailing our own needs and wants, we could begin with a question: "Jesus, how are you praying right now?" "Who is on your heart at the moment?" "About this situation, Holy Spirit, how shall I pray about that?"

And this leads us to something deeper, even more challenging: Are we allowing the Holy Spirit to break our hearts over the issues and problems that break the Father's heart?

Because often, we are all vulnerable to this, we come to prayer with our own concerns—and we are invited to bring them – but by the time we've reached the end of our list, we've moved on to the To-Do list of the day. However, the Spirit wants to shape us. To align us. So that prayer becomes less about presenting our agenda and more about participating in God's heart.

Then, we don't just read prayers written by someone else. We don't just rattle off the same prayers day after day. Rather, we pause and linger, with listening ears. We are open to hearing the Spirit calling us to participate in the conversation between the Father and the Son.

How do we do that? By listening to the voice of the Spirit. Remember what Jesus told us, the Holy Spirit *"will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own, but will tell you what he has heard. ... He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me."* (John 16:13, 14) So, next time we close our eyes in prayer, let us wait for the Holy Spirit to share with us what is already being discussed between the Father and the Son.

Point 4 | WHAT We Pray — The Heart of the Father

Finally, Jesus spent much of his ministry not only inviting us into prayer but also showing us what we are to pray for. He teaches us to begin with "Father." (Luke 11) He lets us hear His own praying to the Father (John 17). And what does Jesus pray?

That we would know the Father. That we would not have a distorted view of Him. That we would be holy and pure. That all who believe in His message would be one. That we would be with Him where He is. Jesus shares His prayers so that His desires become our desires.

Let me finish with this.

A woman once shared how she had been praying for her son for years—with anxiety and frustration. "Lord, fix this. Change that." But one day, she began asking a different question: "Holy Spirit, how are you praying for my son?" At first, nothing seemed to happen. But slowly, something shifted. Her frustration became compassion. Her anxiety became trust. Her urgency became peace. The situation didn't immediately change—But she did. Because she was no longer praying alone. She was praying with Jesus, by the Spirit, within the love of the Father.

Application

So this week, perhaps the invitation is simple. Remember:

- **Why** you pray — you are invited into a relationship
- **Where** you pray from — you are already inside this trinitarian relationship
- **How** you pray — by joining Jesus through the Spirit
- **What** you pray — the heart of the Father

Before you begin, pause and ask: "Father, what are you doing here?" "Jesus, how are you interceding?" "Holy Spirit, lead me." Because prayer is not something we do for God. It is the life of the Trinity...and we are invited to live within it.

So this Trinity Sunday, may we not just believe in the Trinity—but learn to pray from within it. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Father,

Thank you that we are not outsiders, but your children—welcomed into the love you have always shared with your Son.

Jesus, thank you that you invite us into your relationship with the Father, and that even now you are interceding for us. Teach us to pray with you, not just to you. Holy Spirit, soften our hearts and shape our prayers. Break our hearts for what breaks the Father's, and align our desires with His.

Help us to live this week aware that we are held within the life of the Trinity—not striving, but belonging, not performing, but participating.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflection Questions

1. Do I tend to approach God as a distant authority, or as a loving Father who has already welcomed me in through His Son Jesus?
2. What might change in my prayer life if I truly believed I am praying from within God's family, not trying to gain entry?
3. Where might I be holding a distorted view of the Father that is affecting how I pray?
4. Am I allowing the Holy Spirit to shape my prayers—breaking my heart for what breaks the Father's?
5. This week, how can I intentionally pause and ask, "Jesus, how are you praying into this situation?"