

“Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves” (Jn 14:10-11). It is difficult for Phillip to understand that Jesus is one with the Father.

And it would be even more difficult if Jesus went one step further and brought in the Holy Spirit trying to explain the mystery of the Trinity and how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God. The story goes that Saint Augustine saw a little boy digging a hole in the sand, and then running to the ocean, filling up his hands with the seawater, running back to the hole and emptying the water into the hole. Augustine watched as the child went back and forth several times. Finally, he said to the boy, “What are you doing?” The boy answered, “Trying to fill that hole with the ocean.” And Augustine said, “You’ll never fit the ocean in that hole.” And the boy said, “Neither will you be able to fit the Trinity into your mind.”

For now, let us stick with the matter at hand, trying to understand the Gospel of John and the profound connection between the Son and the Father. Jesus became human to help all of humanity better understand who God is. “Jesus declares, ‘Whoever has seen me has seen the Father’ (Jn 14:9). All of Jesus’ words and works serve to lead people to believe and see the relationship between the Father and the Son revealed in them.”<sup>i</sup>

Our reading today, is from the larger farewell discourse of Jesus who is trying to prepare the disciples for his death and resurrection. Jesus is explaining to them now so that when he does pass, they will have a solid foundation for helping to build the church. Jesus is strengthening the disciples so that they will be able to build a church from the living stones of the first Christians.

As modern-day disciples, that mission falls to us. We are called to speak the words of Jesus. We are called to act like Christ. Through our baptism and life of faith, God dwells in us. Let us call to mind the words of John the Baptist. “He must increase; I must decrease” (Jn 3:30). If we consciously try to let God be the one in charge of our lives, then it is natural that others will come to know and love God because they learn about him through us. In the words of Saint Teresa of Avila: “Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

We are imperfect and even as we try our best, we may miss the mark. In the words of Augustine, “You’ll never fit the ocean in that hole.” Nevertheless, God asks us to try. The only Gospel that some people will encounter is not within the pages of the bible, but in the encounter with a Christian. Ask God for help to reflect his love, so that others may see God in you. “Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these” (Jn 14:12).

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<sup>i</sup> Martin, Francis; Wright, William M. IV. **The Gospel of John**. Pg. 246.