

## Trinity Sunday

The Jews - so that includes Jesus and his disciples - were very strictly monotheistic, mono meaning one, theos meaning God. So they believe there is only one God. And first commandment of the famous 10 says - the lord your God is the only lord, you shall have no other Gods before me. Which was fine for 2000 years until Jesus came along. And Jesus said and did things that normally were reserved for God. Today we heard about Jesus forgiving someone. I guess we don't think that's such a big deal, but the Jews had this idea that sickness was caused by sin, so this man was paralysed because he'd sinned - or broken God's law. And if you've broken God's law, then clearly only God can let you off, or forgive you. But Jesus forgave the man, and proved that he'd forgiven him and taken away the sin, by taking away the sickness and healing him.

So if Jesus was God, but there is only one God, then what's going on?

And that's something that the disciples struggled with, and the early church struggled with for about 200 years, until the Trinity was gradually more understood.

But I'm not sure whether that sorted it. When I was growing up it seemed people made like more of a maths problem or engineering - how can  $3 = 1$ , or how can you fit all this stuff into this tiny jar?

They say it's too complicated, too mysterious, beyond understanding. So let's not talk about it.

Then they try to make it too simple - they said - look here's a plant with 3 leaves - one plant, 3 leaves. Or here's a window with 3 bits - one light coming through it all but slightly different colours. As if that made it ok, or helped me know God better.

So when it's so difficult to understand - why bother with the Trinity at all? - Jesus never talks about it, he never says - here's what you need to know folks - love your neighbours and love your enemies, the rich will find it hard to get into heaven, oh, and there's this thing called the trinity which will blow your mind!!

But what about another approach, I mean do we have to "understand" it?

You don't have to understand something to enjoy it.

I have no idea really how a phone works, and little idea about how a TV works - I guess someone does, and I could learn, but it doesn't stop me enjoying it.

And that's what it is with the Trinity

Because I love the Trinity

We've been on this great journey Christmas and Epiphany, through Lent to Easter. Then the Ascension and Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit, and now we kind of put it all together before having a long summer and then waiting for it all to start again.

So this is the Trinity.

The Father - creator, the one I think of when I think of nature and the wonders of the world. I am staggered by it all - from the bees - and tiny microbes, to the grandeur of the universe - galaxies and milky ways. Somehow the Father holds it all together -

Job 38 - *"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?*

*Tell me, if you understand.*

*Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!*

*Who stretched a measuring line across it?*

*On what were its footings set,*

*or who laid its cornerstone—*

*while the morning stars sang together*

*and all the angels[a] shouted for joy?*

And then the Son - the human face of God - I'm staggered that God would become human for me. He would leave his throne, and come to the muck of earth. That he would suffer pain, loss,

human emotions. And yet the wisdom he taught, and the kindness and compassion. The way he deals with questions or people with issues - he's just incredible - he gives answers that affirm and yet challenge - and it is beautiful. And that he should do all that, and then die for me. It is hard to take it in.

And the Spirit - the breath of God. The presence of God here on Earth. Jesus has gone back up to be with his Father, and so it's the spirit that lives on earth. The spirit that takes our prayers to God. The spirit who nudges us and prompts us to do things, the spirit who lets us know that God loves us. The spirit who gives us power from on high to do the things God asks us to do.

I love the Trinity because it means these 3 separate persons are God. The doctrine goes that you need all 3 persons to have God, you can't have God if you just have Jesus. You need 11 people to make up a football team, so you need these 3 to make up God. And you can't have more, or less. Yet, all of God dwells in all of the 3 persons, so if you have Jesus, you have the father and the spirit.

I love that there is no hierarchy or leader, but they work together - they are a team, a family. They are 3 people who love each other and would do anything for each other, they would die for each other. Their love spills over into all creation.

If only the world was more like the Trinity - with respect for each other, listening for each other. If only the church was more like the Trinity - not one person in charge or some people seeming to have better gifts or personality than another - each one is valued. And we do it together. And our love was so strong that it overflowed into the world around us.

Our world was created out of the dynamic love of the Trinity - they needed somewhere for their abundant love to go - needed something to love - so they made us. And this world was redeemed by the Trinity - the rescue plan, the offering of the Son - who will go? Here I am send me. And the father raising him to life again. And the world is sustained by the Trinity - the story is not over, the threads are still being woven together - there will be justice, there will be judgement, there will be an ending which will show what it has all been for, an ending that will make sense of the suffering.

This is the Trinity - dancing and whirling round - 3 persons, incorporating human and divine, incorporating heaven and earth, radiating love and drawing everyone in who wants to join the dance.

Shamrocks and trefoil windows are fine as reminders or shorthand - but the point is - you can't understand God - although you can get an awful lot out of loving God with all our minds - but we are made to enjoy him. And let's be proud of our trinitarian faith - we don't just believe in Jesus - we don't just believe in a God in the sky, we don't just believe in the supernatural - we believe that there are 3 persons who together make up what God is like.

So when you pray, when you think about God - think about which one of the Trinity you are speaking to or connecting with, and that the other 2 are right there, listening in and joining in as well. Truly we are never alone. Our God is amazing.