

Trinity Sunday 2022

Quite a few years ago now, we were several days into Vacation Bible School. It was almost time for the opening assembly to begin when a young boy came asking if he could lead the prayers at the end of the service.

He could not have been more than eight or nine, but as he was bright and earnest child, I said, yes.

He did a marvelous job. He came and stood in the center of the chancel and said in a loud and commanding voice:

“In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, let us pray” and went on from there.

Needless to say, I was very impressed, and I think everyone else was as well.

If you think about it, his opening acclamation lies at the very center of Christian life and worship.

We enter the family of God by being baptized in the name of the Trinity.

We pray -- at least usually -- in a Trinitarian fashion . . . we pray *to* the Father, *through* the Son, and *in* the power of the Holy Spirit.

We sing hymns and doxologies about and directed to the Trinity.

We are sent out into the world Sunday by Sunday “in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

And each year on the first Sunday after Whitsunday, we have a special day in the church year devoted to this doctrine.

You can't get away from it!

Why is the doctrine of the Trinity so important? Why not just worship ‘God’ – the Force -- and leave it at that? Why get involved with what some would see as ‘mumbo-jumbo’ about God being One and Three?

I think my answer would be: **No other paradigm of God fits the revelation we have been given.**

Anything less than a Trinitarian God would be incomplete and likely a god of our own imagination.

True, the word 'Trinity' is not found in the Bible, but what it represents is. This doctrine is the culmination of everything God has chosen to reveal to us humans about Himself.

These revelations are found throughout the pages of scripture.

For example, at the burning bush, God reveals Himself to Moses as the self-existent One, the One who is free like the wind, the great I AM.

What God revealed to Moses was further confirmed and reinforced some 700 years later to the prophet Isaiah when he went up to the Temple to pray in the year King Uzziah died.

This vision is recorded in today's Old Testament reading. From it we learn:

God is majestic, full of awe and wonder, and, yes, in some sense fearful.

God is holy, separate from sinners, which caused Isaiah to cry out: "Woe is me."

God is merciful. He takes away Isaiah's sin, thus making it possible for him to be in His presence.

God is gracious. He looks beyond what we are to what by grace we may become. That is what He did with Isaiah. He commissioned him a prophet.

God is omniscient. That is, all-knowing. If we had continued our reading of Isaiah 6, we would have discovered that Isaiah was to deliver God's message, but the people to whom he was sent would in fact not receive it. But, he was to go just the same. God knew in advance their response.

God is directive. By which I mean: He calls and directs humans to be His agents, to be workers together with Him.

The divine call that came to Isaiah continues to go forth:

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”

Isaiah’s response to this call must be our response . . . if we are to know the fullness of God’s blessing in our lives: **“Here am I, Lord, send me.”**

Let me pause here to ask: **What is God calling you to do?**

We all have a calling from the Lord. The task to which we are being directed may not be in the limelight. It may in the eyes of men be small and insignificant. Nevertheless, it belongs to us uniquely and is important to God.

Our job is to listen and respond. To do His will, that is peace. ///

God’s revelation of Himself to Isaiah, as impressive as it was, was incomplete. The Almighty had still more to disclose about Himself.

This further disclosure had to wait to the coming of Jesus, the One who puts a human face on the invisible God as no one in all history.

“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,” Jesus would go on to tell Phillip in John 14:9.

But, there is more still. The same Jesus who is God come in the flesh promised, prior to His death, resurrection and ascension, Someone like Himself, a Comforter or Strengthener. This One came on the Day of Pentecost.

There is your three: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, not three Gods, but three divine Persons of the same substance, power and eternity.

If the Trinity . . . the doctrine . . . did not exist, it would have to be invented to make makes sense of all the facts presented in scripture and in Jesus.

Over the years, people have come up with a number of ways to illustrate and explain the Trinity: the three-leaf clover being one, and the egg with shell, white and yoke being another.

Such devices may be helpful in introducing the concept of the Trinity to children. Even so, they must be used with great caution. Why?

Because no illustration is fully capable of capturing the majesty and being of the living God.

If, “the *love of God* is broader than the measure of man’s mind” – as says one of our hymns -- how much more, the *nature of God*.

Yet, as we have already seen, there is much we can know about this three-Person God.

Indeed, everything we need to know at the present time has been revealed to us.

What we are called to do first and foremost is not to understand a formula, but to put our whole trust in Him and let Him have His way in our lives.

A few months ago, I was over near Young Harris and visited the studio of a glassblower. You could sit in a balcony and watch him go about his work. It was quite impressive.

He started out with a lump of molten matter, but as he turned and stretch it in the fire, various colours appeared and the object he had in mind began to take shape.

Eventually, after much labour, out of the fire came a vase of indescribable beauty.

The three-Person God can do the same in your life and my life . . . if we will let him.

He can turn something ordinary into something extraordinary . . . scares into stars, if you want to use the language of a popular television preacher of the last century, the Rev. Dr. Shuller.

The English poet-preacher John Donne turned the thought of the God who transforms into verse when he wrote:

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and
 seek to mend;
That I may rise and stand, /// o'erthrow me,
 and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn, and

make me new.

May these words be our prayer as we go from this place on Trinity Sunday:

Batter *my* heart, indeed every part of me, three-person God, and make something useful and beautiful in your service out of this lump of clay.