

## Trinity Sunday 2020

In the church's year, Trinity Sunday, celebrated since 1334, is where we remember who God is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the heart of what it means to be Christian. The church's teaching is not an explanation of God but rather a way of describing God – as far as we can on this human level. It is a day about God for God's own sake and a day to set our hearts and mind on him...

We can start our reflection with a paragraph from Tom Wright who says this:

*Trinity is the day when we stand back from the extraordinary sequence of events that we've been celebrating for the previous five months—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost—and when we rub the sleep from our eyes and discover what the word 'God' might actually mean -, a god who comes to us like a blind beggar with wounds in his hands, a god who comes to us in wind and fire, in bread and wine, in flesh and blood: a god who says to us, 'You did not choose me; I chose you.'*

*You see, the doctrine of the Trinity, properly understood, is as much a way of saying 'we don't know' as of saying 'we do know.' ...The doctrine of the Trinity is, if you like, a signpost pointing ahead into the dark, saying: 'Trust me; follow me; my love will keep you safe.' [and that...]*

*The doctrine of the Trinity affirms ... that the true God must always transcend our grasp of him, even our most intelligent grasp of him.*

(Tom Wright's, [For All God's Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church](#) (1997, SPCK).)

There is some simple analogies out there that make the task a little easier – for example – if you have an orange – you have the peel – the juice – and the flesh – they are all different parts – but they are still part of the one orange....

Of course, God isn't an orange. God is God – all power – all knowing – all present. God is Emmanuel – God with us.

Indeed, when the Babylonian exile comes to an end Isaiah reminds them of the power and purpose of God – a strong and mighty deliverer – Creator of the universe and of humankind, where even the smallest and weakest count. This is a God who carried the lambs – and I wonder if that is bringing to your mind the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who seeks out the lost sheep and lays down his life for his sheep.

In Paul's letter he is appealing to his beloved Corinth Church to 'put things in order' – to sort our broken relationships and factions – and he prays that the grace and love of the Trinity would be with the Corinthians – the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit....

And in that same grace – the disciples are commanded by Jesus to pass on everything he has taught them – this is the Great Commission - God the Father sent his Son on a mission and mission accomplished, the Son now passes the task on to his disciples who will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to go to all nations – the world – where everyone will be included.

These readings tell us of reconciliation in creation – making all things new – new creation, new disciples who will be empowered from the very character of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit...

As we can see Imagery is the best we can do – God is above explanation – a profound mystery but while we cannot pin God down to a description we can bow down and worship God the Father who showed his love for us in Jesus and who continues to do so through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

And finally this picture on the wall here is an icon prayed by a Russian Monk Andrew Rublev in 15<sup>th</sup> century – called the icon of the Trinity.

All three people have halos around their head – the glow of God and the colours of their robes are significant in understanding who they are: Blue is God's colour – they are all wearing it and they all have the same circle, the same "halo" of God around their head. But then one person has green – the colour of spring of growing – the colour of the Holy Spirit -

There is one in brown – the earthy colour who represents Jesus who came and trod the earth alongside us. And the one in the Gold robe is representing God the Father – the beauty of God the creator.

The early church expression for the Trinity was perichoresis which means ‘dancing around’ and the ever moving and interweaving of Father – Son – and Holy Ghost.

At the centre of them all is a table holding the bread and cup of communion – the persons are in communion around the table – and as you can see, there is one more place – a place kept open for us – we are being invited to enter into the circle of love and to sit at God’s table. We can become a part of that movement from the Father toward the Son and the movement of both Son and Spirit toward the Father. So are we joined and held together in the love of the Triune God.

Trinity Sunday : Malcolm Guite

In the Beginning, not in time or space,  
But in the quick before both space and time,  
In Life, in Love, in co-inherent Grace,  
In three in one and one in three, in rhyme,  
In music, in the whole creation story,  
In His own image, His imagination,  
The Triune Poet makes us for His glory,  
And makes us each the other’s inspiration.  
He calls us out of darkness, chaos, chance,  
To improvise a music of our own,  
To sing the chord that calls us to the dance,  
Three notes resounding from a single tone,  
To sing the End in whom we all begin;  
Our God beyond, beside us and within.