

Sermon for June 15th, 2014

Holy Trinity Sunday, Matthew 28:16-20

BLESSINGS TO YOU AND PEACE FROM GOD THE FATHER, OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

This week we celebrate the sacred mystery of the Holy Trinity. If you may have thought the concept of Pentecost last week was a **bit confusing** and **out there** just think of what the idea of the Holy Trinity means to people who are not yet Christians **and** for some of us who **are** Christians.

Martin Luther said of the Trinity, *“It is not something which we must understand, to try to comprehend the Trinity endangers your sanity.”* If that is true—if it endangers our sanity, **why then** do we celebrate Holy Trinity Sunday? What is all of this **God in 3 persons** talk? **How** can this be? Father, Son, and Holy Spirit **all in one**? I do not know about you but when I was in school I learned that **1+1+1=3 not 1**. So **how does** the trinity work anyway and **why** do we even need a Trinity Sunday? After all, it is **not** like we are celebrating the birth or the death of Jesus like we do at **Christmas and Easter**.

There is not a lot of fanfare today. Maybe that is because this **concept** (or in church language—**doctrine**) of the Holy Trinity is rather confusing, hard for us to understand and wrap our heads around, it can make us crazy as Luther said, and is

something we **really**, for the most part, do not know how to talk about or make sense of.

Let's start off by looking at our first reading for today. As we talked about in the children's sermon this morning this reading is the creation story. Scripture says that God created the universe and everything in it in **7 days**. Did you notice in verse 26 where it says, "*Then God said, 'Let US make humankind in OUR image, according to OUR likeness....'*" US/OUR just **who is** this US and OUR that God talking about there way back when everything was first created?

Then, in our reading from Matthew for today we heard Jesus giving His disciples what has become known as the "**Great Commission**." He told his disciples to "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*"

Here is a thought—if there were no trinity—would we **only** be baptizing people in the name of the Father? Besides sounding awkward that would **deny** the work and person of Jesus and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. Baptizing in God's name only would **not** be a complete picture of **who** God is. We would be baptized into the fullness of a loving, grace filled, and powerful but **detached** God. **That** would not work.

How about if we baptized people in the name of Jesus only? That would **miss** the person of not only "*God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and*

earth” which is the part of God that is bigger than what we can see or understand BUT we would also **miss out** on the Holy Spirit which is the ongoing presence of God with us today.

And, if we said only, “*I baptize you in the name of the Holy Spirit.*” **What** is missing there? We would be missing the awesome creativity of **God the Father** and the redemptive work of **Jesus Christ**, God’s one and only Son, the Word made flesh.

Folks, whether we understand it or not, we are baptized into the **WHOLE** being of God. Through God’s ongoing presence in the world we **are not** and **cannot** be disconnected from God the creator, from God who came to earth in human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, or from the very presence of that **same** God who is present in the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, among us, and outside of us.

For us who believe and may feel isolated, alone, deserted, depressed, grieving, hopeless, anxious, wounded, ashamed or tired the knowledge of the Holy Trinity can be a **tremendous** gift.

Jesus did **not** send these 11 disciples out into the world to perform the **sacrament** of baptism to merely get everyone wet because that alone was not going to do it. The disciples were sent with “*all the authority of the triune God to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and they were to teach people to*

obey everything that Jesus had commanded them.” (This was the **first time** the disciples would be out teaching in Jesus’ name—**before this** Jesus was the only one doing the teaching.) And they were to **not forget** that Jesus was with them *‘always to the end of the age’*.

That must have been a **daunting task** for these men because **as** the scripture said, “... *some doubted.*” There they were, in Galilee—back in Gentile territory where they **first** met Jesus, being given **all** the authority that Jesus himself had been given to go out and take on the world to make disciples of **all** nations.

All this time, they had been with Jesus, watching him, learning from him, and now it was **their turn** to go out. Ok, some **doubted**, maybe they would make mistakes, maybe they would have questions who doesn’t when they begin something new? Nonetheless, Jesus **sent them all** without distinction—just as **we** as disciples are sent out in the same manner.

Discipleship is a lifelong learning process. Being a disciple of Jesus Christ and being immersed into the totality of **who God is** goes hand in hand. In addition to this, we cannot do any of this without the work of the **Holy Spirit** who is dependent upon **who and what Jesus was and is**. **Therein** lies the power. The power is **in** the Trinity, in the **fullness** of God, to whom we are attached as Jesus’ disciples.

So here we are back to the original question: **Why do we celebrate Holy Trinity Sunday?** Maybe because this Sunday **needs** to be more than another Sunday on the **liturgical** calendar for the Trinity is one of **God's sacred mysteries** with which we have been presented. It offers us the **entire being** of God in a relationship with humanity. A relationship that we **do not** deserve but one we can **celebrate** having. It is a day to **celebrate** the Three in One to whom we belong, in life and in death, through the **gift** of our baptisms. It is a day for we disciples to give thanks and praise to **God** the Father, **God** the Son, and the **God** the **Holy Spirit** as they are with us always, to the end of the age loving and caring for us **more** than we could ever know.

In closing, here is a poem about the Trinity I came across in my readings,

“The Trinity is God who is high and beyond understanding,

human, suffering, and fallible like us,

within us, and yet closer to us than our breathing.

Almost unbelievably forgiving,

constantly making little surprises and springing them upon us when we least

expect,

brooding over the bent world,

always loving, loving until the end, until all is complete.”

Here is to the **sacred mystery**. All thanks be to God. **AMEN**

