

Sermon Trinity Sunday 7 June 2020- 2 Corinthians 13: 11-end. Matthew 28:16-20

Lord God, help us enter into the mystery and wonder of your love, shown as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen
"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", - you can see why we have this reading set for Trinity Sunday can't you!

All 4 Gospel writers emphasise different aspects of Jesus (which actually makes it all the more plausible that Jesus existed and gives a more rounded view of him) and Matthew is particularly keen on Jesus as a teacher, a Rabbi – well versed in the Scriptures – he often quotes the Old Testament, Matthew gives us the Sermon on the Mount and a version of the Lord's prayer; his Gospel appears to be carefully structured as the 5 discourses of Jesus with a beginning and an end piece. This passage is the end piece and a very powerful one at that:

Verses 18-end are a supreme, clear message from Jesus to his disciples at that time and to us today,

- what a role model he is:..... restating **his** authority (therefore do not believe others/the world's values which try to entice you away) because his authority is not man-made, it comes from God. But at the same time in these verses, Jesus shows his immense love, encouragement and empathy – *"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"*

We have had Ascension and Pentecost, but now with Matthew's ending to his Gospel we step back again to Easter Day - look how it says 11 disciples went to Galilee (therefore before they had chosen a replacement for Judas Iscariot) – and remember that the risen Jesus when he appeared to the women at the tomb told them to go and tell his disciples to go to Galilee to meet him.

The disciples' immediate reaction to seeing the risen Jesus is to worship him...but some doubted. Fair enough really to be a bit sceptical when you think about it- their friend, the hoped for Messiah to rid them of Roman rule, their inspiration, had been crucified, buried and now according to some women come back to life.

This phrase "*they worshiped but some doubted*" got me thinking:

- Do you have moments of doubt when you worship God? I certainly do.
- And I hope you do too because I think it shows we are actively engaging with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit- there is so much to get our heads around isn't there?
- The snippets of Bible readings we listen to each time and the prayers that another person writes which raises issues and places and people we may not have thought of
- Through worship we focus our energy on being together in our Trinitarian God's presence – seeking to be transformed in some way that leads us to going out into the world with the power of the Holy Spirit, either energised or comforted or challenged by our encounter with God through Jesus's life, death and resurrection being once again brought into the forefront of our minds.
- It will be a unique experience for each of us, depending on our circumstances on that day, on how we seek Jesus to walk alongside us: to comfort and empower us/ open our hearts to God's unconditional love, let us deepen our relationship with God through Christ and the Holy Spirit
- During lockdown it has been impossible for us to receive holy communion or a physical blessing- a unique and powerful connection for Christians to feel bound up in the Trinity: God's love being poured on us through our focus on Jesus's sacrifice for us which opens up the gateway to heaven through the Holy Spirit being alive in us and guiding our lives.
- However in our worship at Baldock and Bygrave we do recite the Creed (which we will do today as well just after this sermon) which gives us a chance to enter into that close relationship with our 3 in 1 God. I asked specifically today if we could use the longer Nicene creed (which we usually use in church) because I would like us to look at how its words can help us be drawn deeper into our relationship with God as we are through Holy Communion, How we can be transformed individually as we ponder the powerful story of One God in 3 persons and transformed as a community by saying the words in unison, together as one body, the body of Christ.
- I also think our worship together on Zoom helps us engage with God together because we can see each other, we share a noisy chaotic uplifting peace together and we feel included in a way that

watching a live stream by people leading worship can never achieve- Zoom worship gives us a greater reflection of real life: lively as well as at times quiet and thoughtful but never clinical or without emotion - just like our all embracing, loving 3 in 1 God!

We start the Creed by acknowledging God the Father is the creator of all things – we may often forget how important that is – that we are so interconnected with the whole of creation because God put it in balance at the beginning, and by our self-centred human activity we are in serious danger of knocking it out of balance for ever unless we make a huge effort to prevent this

Then we have the section that concentrates on Jesus – look how long that section is- it is what makes us different from other religions (the Jews and Muslims also share a belief in God as creator of the world), makes us Christians when we accept and trust in Jesus as Son of God.

Each line is significant in the story of how God sent us Jesus to be the saviour of the world and of humankind but do you find huge things that make you hesitate or doubt?

Sometimes I find different things are more difficult on different days,

But the final person of the Trinity the Holy Spirit brings us the hope and energy to dispel our doubts: “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord , the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son” – the spirit of God , the Father who breathed life into creation and the Son who showed us the complete workings of the spirit of God through his human form on earth – gives us life and draws us to give glory to God through our lives.

- Sometimes we may feel the rush of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit – “Black lives matter “ , “Why shouldn’t MPs who are shielding or caring for family with Corona virus, or at greater risk of contracting the virus because they are from BAME backgrounds be allowed to continue to debate and vote virtually in the House of Commons?” Jesus stood up for the marginalised....
- Some of us will be grieving - either for a recent death or for one longer ago which still burns a hole in our lives, especially at anniversaries. Through worship and coming close to Jesus, we can, through the Holy Spirit in our prayers find his peace, his figurative arm around our shoulder, his gentle wiping away of our tears as he cuts away little by little the barbed wire that seems to wrap around us – I am reminded of the image of to the horse in the film Warhorse- where the soldiers painstakingly cut the barbed wire from the horse on the frontline and lead him to freedom, to heal slowly and painfully.
- And a lot of us will be anxious, at our wits end, exhausted and wondering how we will cope financially or mentally in the changed world that COVID19 has forced upon us and our society
- But we have to have the courage to trust Jesus, to let him take our burdens , to believe he really **will** be with us always as he promised, and He **can** transform our lives
- Worshipping together enfolds us in God’s unconditional love and strengthens us in ways far greater than we probably realise.....and brings us hope.

So, at the end of the week following Pentecost, the birth of the Church, will you embrace God as Trinity

- God the Father , maker of all creation of which you are a part
- God the Son , Jesus Christ , your personal Saviour , who took our sins upon himself and died an innocent man , to bring us the free gift of grace , of forgiveness and a transformed, new life
- And God the Holy Spirit- the passion, the emotion, the life spring poured into our hearts by God enabling us to act for his kingdom, his justice, his peace and through his love?

Or will you continue to come to church on Sundays and keep the Trinity in separate boxes and away from your daily life, perhaps the biggest separate box of all?

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore Amen

Katrina Nice, 7.6.20

