

Sunday 6th June 2004,
Trinity Sunday
Rob Lamerton

Readings:

- Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
- Psalm 8
- Romans 5:1-5
- John 16:12-15

Today is the anniversary of D Day. --- the day British and US forces launched the attack to liberate France from the occupation of German Forces under Adolf Hitler's regime.

[*John Cunliffe --- I can verify that --- I was there.]

Amid the tragedy of so many lives lost and the various acts of heroism there are so many stories. Over the last few days I have heard "interviews with" a US soldier who was so sure he would be shot that he prepared himself for it. There was also an interview with a man from the German army of the time, appalled at the number of dead. The events of D Day began a process which changed the course of the 2nd World War and shaped Europe and the Middle East with the eventual formation of the state of Israel. It is a continuing sadness to me that the oppression of the Jews by the Nazi regime has now turned around to become the oppression of the Palestinians ---and war continues.

As I thought about this, I had occasion earlier this week to conduct a funeral where the reading was that from

Ecclesiastes 3:1-3, 8.

*"For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;*

and in verse eight,
*a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

I feel sure the author is not saying that war and hatred are **right** --- rather he is saying "this is how it is with humanity." He also goes on to say that God has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find what God has done from beginning to end --- (other translations say that God has put a sense of eternity in their minds....

He also says that God has done this that we might stand in **awe** before God.

Trinity Sunday is about that --- that we stand in awe before God and recognize that as much as we may try, we come back to the mystery of God; and our words are inadequate, even our poor attempts to describe God fail.

Using the Prayer Book:

p487 The Creed of Saint Athanasius

"Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith...

and the Catholick Faith is this; that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity;

Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate,

and yet there are not three eternal: but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated,; but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

So likewise the Father is Almighty, [the Son Almighty: and the Holy Ghost Almighty....]

Now aren't you relieved that we don't say that week after week! Its probably good for elocution

It shows the difficulties that we have to describe God who is one and yet made known in three very special ways.

p12 The Apostle's Creed

Looks at the trinity

God the Father has two lines

Jesus has seven or eight lines, because they were concerned to make k

And the Spirit has four or five lines.

and on p123 The Nicene Creed which we read usually on Sunday

The only way we can talk about **one God** manifest in three ways is by recalling the church's **experience**.

the experience:

1. of God in creation
2. the experience:
of God in communicating God's Word, --- the person Jesus.
3. of God breathing the breath of life and the fire of life into us. (and thanks to Chris for his words on that last week at [30May2004_CC.html](#))

In his letter to the Romans, Paul seems to have an understanding of this about thirty years after Jesus' death and resurrection.... God is an accepted fact but we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and through Christ, God restores us to relationship

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the

Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

So as well as God communicating a redemptive message in Jesus, God also sustains and fills us with love through the Holy Spirit. So this was the experience of the church.

To speak of God as creator **only** omits any idea of a God who communicates --- whose word is spoken in humanity --- and whose spirit is present to inspire and enable.

To talk of God **only** as redeemer present in human form, to speak to us, omits that sense of God over and above and beyond creation and omits the idea of God present to enliven to breathe inspiration into us.

To refer to God **only** as spirit ever present within is to emphasize personal inspiration without the idea of God creating and communicating.

So you see, each adds to the picture to express what is our experience of God as Creator, as Redeeming Word and enlivening spirit. (like the three legged stool. if you take one leg away, the stool falls over.)

Love only exists **BETWEEN** the lover and the loved. The image of a triune God is one of perpetual love.

The creator loving the son, loving the spirit, loving the creator, so there is this kind of binding love. The movement of that love in the midst of God is that which unifies --- so to me there is no contradiction between God's Trinity and God's Unity.

In the first reading from Proverbs today, the divine Wisdom is feminine and is active in God's being made known

--- God goes forth in **revealing** God's nature and **action**.

In the reading from Romans, God is the source of our Redemption, but it is through Christ that we experience God's redemptive action performed in and through the Holy Spirit, poured into our hearts that we experience redemptive action.

The gospel revelation that Jesus brings us is from the father and it is the work and function of the spirit to make the revelation meaningful to each new generation. The

Holy Spirit does not convey new things but constantly updates our understanding of the Christ.

But what is our response to this?

1. Reverence for God in Creation to be careful stewards of what God gives
2. God in all of humanity reverence for God in all of humanity
3. and the spirit? at work in us? a reverence for God within, a reverence for our own selves as the vehicles of God's spirit active in the world.

So we have a reverence for **creation**, for God in **humanity** and God in **ourselves**.

Today we worship the divine mystery of God and celebrate that God goes forth in creating, as redeeming communicating word and as gracious, sustaining Breath and fire of spirit.

In the name of God, Amen