

Trinity Sunday 2020

The scenes from US cities over this past week or so in our news reminds us once again of the fragility of the societies in which we live, including our own. And how much work is yet to be done in relationships between people of different colour and culture. Generational change moves at a glacial pace - the Israelites at the Exodus continued to perpetuate the sins of their forebears, despite the promises. Their sins – an unwillingness to true worship – remember the Golden Calf, are those of today, an unwillingness to demonstrate true worth.

Put things in order says Paul writing to the Corinthians. He may of course be referring to more ordinary mundane, things of the new church, it is difficult to tell. But if the Corinthians are known for anything it is division and he goes on to give them a litany of things to do: listen to my appeal he writes, agree with one another, live in peace, and then that wonderful closing statement - The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. Put things in order.

There is a school of thought that says you can't really speak about God, you can only really say what God is not. But I think the doctrine of the Trinity that we celebrate today gives the means by which we can wax lyrical about God! Indeed the great joy of Christian faith in our tradition is that we can speak about God confidently. So where do you begin when someone wants to know about God?

Put things in order says Paul. I believe you must begin with the life of Jesus, the one on whose lips was found the word Abba, Father. When his disciples asked him 'Lord teach us to pray' they were recognising that in Jesus was an intimacy with God that was completely novel in Jewish devotion. Those around Jesus realised that this relationship was unique and they wanted a part of it. The disciples realised that any appeal to God in prayer was possible because of their relation to Jesus. God was to Jesus what he was not to anyone else.

Ok, let's take a leap in our scriptures and think about the words of Paul to the Galatians: *God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying 'Abba Father.'* Suddenly through the Spirit of the risen and ascended Jesus we too are drawn into that same relationship with God, that same intimacy. So what is that Spirit; what is it that creates that unity, that enables Jesus to call God Abba, Father and which in turn is bestowed on us? Paul tells us to get things in order: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is fellowship; 'ship' denotes a state a being. To be in fellowship means a profound unity something which changes our very being. It means that whatever we are, whatever race, gender, colour, class we share this one

Spirit which binds us to God, the Trinity then is not a conundrum to be solved but an ethic to be lived out in order – the grace of Christ, showing the love of God through which the spirit is bestowed which binds us as one. Matthew told us today: go and bind people together in the name of the Trinity.

How do we most profoundly express our fellowship then? We are first and foremost bound together as a worshipping community. This is what we are called to be - a community that gives true worth. We do that because of our Trinitarian faith. Because that is what the Trinity is – a perfect community of worship. Who but God can truly worship – hence the Son who reflects back true worth to the Father he calls Abba, and whose Spirit invites us to do the same, to give true worth.

True Worship - there's that *ship* suffix again, worship changes us, it binds us together, and calls to a Trinitarian faith and ethic in which we give true worth to God and to each other.

Can we speak of God, yes we can. We speak of God Theologically as the Holy Trinity, but the words we use are Doxological - words of glory, of worship because that is what the Trinity is. So we speak of God every time we sing or pray together, and that worship spills out into our ethic. We speak of God when we live the Trinitarian life of community, when we give each other true worth. What we see happening in our world all too often is what we in the Church rather unfashionably call sin – which is unwillingness to worship.

Today we celebrate God the Holy Trinity the perfect community of worship into which we are called. A perpetual community of worship is how God *is* God – as Jesus prays in the Spirit those wonderful words in John's gospel 'Father glorify your Son, so that the Son may glorify you.' Worship is the way we speak of the Trinitarian God and the way in which this God is then revealed in our lives. Amen.