

## Trinity

What is your very best moment in life?

My guess is, if you really sit with that question, that the very best moment of your life is when you felt completely loved by someone, completely accepted for who and what you are, completely embraced.

For most of us those moments are few and far between.

For some, they are experienced more often, and for others, perhaps never.

But that sense of being accepted, wanted, needed, I'm pretty sure we can all agree – it is the most profound gift we can ever receive.

And if you haven't experienced it yet, don't worry, it's coming, usually at a time you least expect.

The boy was 13 and his parents' marriage was falling apart.

This boy was deep and sensitive, and the messy marriage was killing him inside, and so he acted out, getting in some trouble, and his dad finds out.

Fearing his dad's wrath, the boy pounds his cell phone on his head, till the screen shatters, just as the dad walks into the house.

The boy stands in terror waiting for what's coming, but the dad doesn't yell, scold or hit, no, he grabs the boy, and holds him tight, as the boy dissolves into tears, sobbing his sorries, holding tight to his father.

And something shifts in the boy that day, something that allows him to cope with the inevitable divorce, something that helps him steer through the trials and temptations of adolescence.

What's all of this have to do with the Trinity you ask?

Well, the answer is: everything!

Most of us, if we ever think of the Trinity at all, think of it as some kind of Rubik's cube, an unsolvable puzzle, or something as head scratching as a Buddhist koan: like, "what is the sound of one hand clapping?"

That's because we've always been taught that the Trinity is how God relates to God, and what can we possibly know about that?

But what if, in fact, the Trinity is not just how God relates to God, but how God relates to everything, and how everything relates to God?

What if the Trinity is the sum and substance of all that is, and more?

What if the Trinity is the very model for how human life was always intended to be lived?

There is a very famous icon, a religious drawing of the Trinity, and you have it as the cover on our service bulletin today.

If you look carefully, you'll see all three faces are the same, and they are very ambiguous about whether they are male or female, which makes sense since if God creates us in God's image, male and female, then God contains all aspects of gender, yes, the entire rainbow!

The figure on the left represents the Father, clothed in the gold of royalty, sanctity and holiness.

The middle figure represents Jesus.

He wears blue, the color of creation, sea and sky, and he holds up two fingers, representing his union of the divine and creation.

And to the right, the Holy Spirit wears green, which signifies how light creates life: just as plants transform light, through photosynthesis, into life.

There are three, alike but different, in love with one another, flowing into one another, and yet, look at the fingers of the Holy Spirit.

They point down, and if you look carefully you will see a small rectangle where there once was placed a mirror.

Meaning, that the love and union and joy of the three produces a fourth — you and me and all of creation — everything that may be reflected in a mirror is joined at this table of unending, ever-flowing, love!

As one fellow puts it:

“The stunning truth is that this triune God, in amazing and lavish love, decides to open the circle and share this life with others.

This is the one, eternal reason for the creation of the world and of human life.

There is no other God, no second plan, no hidden agenda for human beings.

Before the creation of the world, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit set their love upon us, bringing us along to share and know and experience the Trinitarian life itself.

To this end the cosmos comes into being, and the human race is given“ the most amazing gift of all, that the divine becomes human so that humans may become divine. Kruger, *The Shack Revisited*, 62 (paraphrased).

Or as Meister Eckhart so eloquently puts it:

“Do you want to know what goes on in the core of the Trinity?

I will tell you.

In the core of the Trinity, the Father laughs and gives birth to the Son.

The Son laughs back at the Father and gives birth to the Spirit.

The whole Trinity laughs and gives birth to us.”

Think of a water wheel as water flows from one bucket to the next, always moving forward: this is the Trinity, except it's not water that powers it, motivates it, defines it — it's love!

It is love and life that creates the universe, not the other way around!

And if that is true, what does that say about how we are meant to live?

What does that say about how we are to be church?

What does that say about riches and poverty, male dominance, gender differences and "us first" nationalism?

In other words, if the nature of God is loving, self-giving, self-sacrificing, good humored relationship among diverse equals, and if we are made in the image and likeness of this relationship-crazy God, what this fact unmistakably calls for is a complete revolution in how we think, act and organize ourselves!

And it gives the lie to those who question whether all of humanity exists in a fallen state, but for the grace of God to save us.

The evidence of our fallen state is our drive to dominate one another.

Our skewed beliefs that one race is superior to others, the false myth that men should dominate women, a myth that infects just about every culture on earth — indeed, every law, custom or practice that rejects love based upon equal, self-giving, self-sacrificing, good humored relationship — is the undeniable evidence of our fallen state.

And into that state, this Triune God becomes one of us, shows us in the life of Jesus what it is to love and laugh and let go, and then, through the gift of Pentecost, breathes the breath of the Holy Spirit into all of our nostrils, so that with love and laughter and letting go — we too can enter into the magnificent eternal dance of this Triune God who holds all things together!

We can at last open our eyes to the truth that "in God's household, the male does not rule, that God rules together with us, in solidarity with the poor, the slave, the sinner.

That male and female are equal partners in God's household.

That Jew and Greek, slave and free, circumcised and uncircumcised, gay, straight, trans and non-binary, that people of all colors and creeds and conditions – belong equally to God's rule!

And finally coming to see that any road taken other than this one, is nothing more than idolatry." C.M. LaCunga, *God For Us*, 394, paraphrased.

The Trinity is the essential truth of our faith.

Without it, we have an old man in the sky issuing orders, making judgments, elevating the few over the many; something we love to mimic in our own social arrangements: in every country, in every household.

But the Trinity reveals what Jesus reveals: "that love and communion among persons is the truth of existence, the meaning of our salvation, the path to overcoming sin, and the only authentic way to give praise to God." *Id.* at 400, paraphrased.

+amen

