

Text: John 3:1-17 (Holy Trinity Sunday)
Date: Sunday, June 11, 2006
Location: Zion Lutheran Church- North Battleford
Preacher: Rev. Sheldon Gattinger
sheldon.gattinger@gmail.com

Grace and Peace be unto you from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I would like to share a confession of mine with you this morning: Like many other pastors across our great country this morning, I stand here before you now with more than just a little terror in my heart.

The reason for this is quite simple- today is Trinity Sunday. Like many other preachers, I woke up this morning and knew that no matter what I preached today- no matter how much insight and eloquence that I could muster up- I would still leave here after today's sermon a failure. That is just the way it is.

Why? You ask? Well, because today is Trinity Sunday I am expected to preach about the loving attributes and divine composition of the Holy Trinity. While that might sound easy, there is one huge obstacle in the way of my success: no one really knows much about the Holy Trinity. The fact of the matter is that not once throughout the pages and pages of Holy Scripture is the term "Trinity" ever referred to.

Now don't mistake this scriptural omission for thinking that the Trinity doesn't exist. Perish that thought. Rather, when it comes to the Trinity, God has elected to keep some things to God's own self. After all, God doesn't have to share everything with us. Truth be known there are some things that we simply cannot know.

However, we do know that we without any reservation worship one God. And our God exists in 3 distinct parts: God the Father, Christ the Saviour, and the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier.

Considering the complexity of this relationship between God the Father, Christ the Saviour, and the Holy Spirit I have dug up a little skit to shed some light on this topic. Maybe the following skit will help...maybe it won't:

Parent (Dad)
Child (Son)

C: Dad, I got a question.

P: What is it, Son.

C: Well, today in Sunday School, we talked about God.

P: God, huh. Maybe you should talk to your mother.

C: Come on, Dad.

P: Okay, Son, what is your question?

C: Well, our teacher was trying to explain the Trinity, you know, God in three persons?

P: Son, I REALLY think this is a Mom question, don't you?

C: Dad....

P: All right, what is your question?

C: Well, I guess it is just confusing. I mean, I have never met a Trinity before.

P: What do you mean, Son.

C: Everyone I know is just one person, not three.

P: I see. And this worries you?

C: It's just confusing, Dad. I mean, who is this Trinity God supposed to be?

P: That is a good question, Son.

C: (PAUSE) Well...

P: Well, what?

C: Don't you have some wonderful parental insight to help me out, here?

P: Right, well, let me think. God is like H₂O, you know, Ice, liquid and steam, all H₂O,

but different make-ups...

C: So God is like water?

P: Well, not exactly. Oh, okay. Let's try this...your Mother, for instance... She is one person,

but she is a mother, a wife and a daughter...

C: So Mom is God?

P: Let's not go there, Son. Let me think....

C: What about the beauty of a flower, or the smile of a baby?

P: What? How is that like Trinity?

C: I don't know, but when I see something like that, I know that God must

have had a hand in it.

P: I would agree with you there, Son.

C: But, which one?

P: Which one what?

C: Which God is involved in something like that?

P: I am not following you here, Son.

C: Well, if God is three persons, which person makes the flowers bloom?

Which person breathes new life into a baby?

P: Now wait, remember we have a rule in this house. Mom answers all questions about babies, okay?

C: Not just babies, Dad, everything. Which person paints the colors of the sunset? Which person listens to me when no one else will? Which one?

P: Wow. These are good questions, Son.

C: Which one is it? And how do we know? And who decides? And do they ever argue with each other?

Do they live in the same place? Can you see them all, or just some of them?

How can you tell them apart? Are they identical? Is it just three, or could it be four, or five, or more?

P: (LONG PAUSE - staring at Child) Son, the Trinity is like an apple, it has a core, the meat of the apple and the skin...

C: Dad?

P: Or maybe, like a three-leafed clover?

C: You don't know do you?

P: Or a triangle?

C: I'll go ask Mom, or whoever she is!

P: Or three interlocking circles....? (*This skit was authored by C.Woodward...courtesy of T.Zingale)

There is no doubt about it. The concept of the Trinity can be a tough one to wrap our heads around. And the truth of the matter is, no matter how much we think about it, no matter how much we talk or argue about it, we will never really comprehend its depth or complexity.

When I think of the Trinity, I think of community. For me the Trinity with its three indivisible parts exists as a Holy Community. And to me, when I think about the Church- you and I gathered together right now in prayer and worship and service- that makes sense.

Just as God has bound us together in community by establishing this thing that we call "church", God also calls community home as God works within his three distinct-yet divinely connected- parts.

We begin our worship services under the words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." In other words, we begin our worship by invoking the name of our triune God.

And while we might not know just what the triune relationship means to God, we do know what it means to us: Our God loves us, our God liberates us, and our God continues to bless us.

I might not know exactly how God does it, but I sure am thankful he does.

Thanks be to God!

Amen