

Sunday, June 16, 2019

Genesis 1:1-5

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

John 15:26-27, 16:12-15

The Spirit of Truth

Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman are leaders of the Justice League and probably more easily identified by the fans of DC Comics as they are they are the Trinity of justice at least in the Comic world. These three superheroes are identified not only by their special capabilities and gifts, but by their own form of justice. Superman is the clear cut follower of the law and seeker of truth, justice and the American way. With Batman's anti-hero focus his actions lead to the point where the end justifies the means. And with Wonder Woman there is freedom for all with a liberal interpretation or meaning of the law. DC comics' trinity is not quite the same as the Trinity we are focusing today yet in some aspects each of these characters relate to God but are not God at all because they are human superheroes created by people. And why are they so popular, because people today are searching for someone to emulate, to look up to and even to wonder about. These fictional characters were devised in the minds of their creators to help build up countries around the world after World War II and have become more popular through the decades since. However, DC's Trinity heroes are not whom we are talking about today, but God who is more credible than any of the superheroes alone or even in a collective.

Last week Shelley shared the story of the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and after the people heard the good news in their language and over 3000 people became a part of the church. The Spirit led the new believers to seek answers to their questions about God and Jesus and Peter and the disciples' mission was begun in an earnest way. They told their stories about Jesus and the Spirit of God, the counsellor guided them and helped them to reach out to people where they were. This was the beginning of the early church and as more questions about the relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Son, as well as the fulfillment of God's Spirit moving amongst them, the doctrine of faith known as the Trinity came to be discussed and accepted. God in Three Persons- blessed Trinity. But unlike the three superheroes- God is three in 1.

On this Trinity Sunday we try to discern and discover who God is using metaphors, similes and even business practises or ideas of things that come in threes. But as we will realize again- God is still and will not be fully understood in our life time but hopefully we will grow in

our knowledge of God a little bit each day. This is so that we might sing with gusto and faith—God in Three Persons—blessed trinity!

Nowhere in the Bible will you see this word- trinity. But the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (Latin: Trinitas, lit. 'triad', from Latin: trinus "threefold") holds that God is one God, but three coeternal consubstantial persons or hypostases—the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit—as "one God in three Divine Persons". And these three persons existed from the beginning. Genesis 1:1 states, "the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind or the spirit of God swept over the face of the waters." God's Spirit was present at the time of creation and if we continue to read in this traditional oral history, God says, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle and over all the wind animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. (Gen 1:26-27). Just who is the us and our in this passage? God in three persons.

Yet it is not until much later in world history do we read about the person of Jesus coming to live a human life. Isaiah prophesied his coming over 400 years prior to his birth and those who studied the Hebrew scriptures knew this and were prepared for a messiah to come, but not in the way that he did come. Isaiah wrote: "For a child has been born for us, a son give to us; authority rests upon his shoulders and he is named, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, everlasting father, Prince of Peace. (Is9:6) And it is Jesus who spoke of the relationship of God the Father and himself—The Father and I are one. (John 10:30) So how do we take this knowledge of God being three persons and have faith?

Jesus knew that his earthly life was not going to be long. He knew his purpose was to live, to die and rise again. He knew that he was the One who came to earth so that people all people would be forgiven of sin. He alone did this for all people—all people who lived generations in the past, all currently living today and those yet to be born. Jesus is the Son of God who lived to die to rise again. And in his coming he also taught the disciples who he was is and will be—the Son of God the father and He are one. For if we recall the moment of his baptism—Jesus rises up out of the water is standing there when the voice of God speaks and the spirit of God in the form of a dove is present—The Trinity is seen and heard. God says this is my beloved son, whom I love, listen to him!

As we read the verses from John 15 and 16, Jesus is emphasizing the Advocate/ the Counselor, the Spirit which would come after he ascends to heaven. This Spirit is the spirit of truth who comes from God and will testify on his behalf. Jesus is teaching his disciples about who he is and they are not sure. After all they saw him as a human being, a friend who was filled with wisdom and wonder. But when he started telling them about his leaving and that the Spirit would come to them, they were not sure. The Spirit of God was with them—in the person of Jesus but had not yet entered or dwelt within them. He told them that “the Spirit of Truth would come, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears and he will declare the things that are to come. He will glorify Jesus and will take what is Jesus and declare it again. All that the Father has belongs to Jesus and this is the same with the Spirit of Truth. They are one.

Jesus speaks of the Spirit of Truth with his disciples because he wants them to understand that the Spirit would always be with them if they believed. This is vital to our understanding of salvation- knowing Christ’s death and resurrection enables us to believe that when our life on earth is ended we will be with God for all of eternity. The Spirit’s role is further explained in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians (2:10) where God has revealed that Jesus, the Spirit and He are One. “For the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.” This enables us to think that the Spirit is God and so when we read that “the Spirit is truth,” this is no surprise. Since the Spirit is truth, He is our absolute authority in every area.

If we believe, that God is the Trinity- Father, Son and Spirit and that the Father- is all knowing and creator; Jesus is the Son who was, is and will be and that the Spirit is truth: we should consider that we have the Truth, within us (1 Cor 6:19) But we must reveal this truth in action, and word because Jesus.

For the disciples and for us—the Spirit of God is with us; the Spirit is truth and if we fully believe we need to receive the Spirit that the disciples received that Pentecost day. For from that day on, the Spirit was in them. We too are called together and as Jesus’ disciples, as God’s children in faith and as people searching for something more for us—the Spirit is truth and will fill us with truth- if we call the Spirit to come into our lives.

The DC Trinity Comic Characters wanted justice but as mere human superheroes they could and will never receive what we can receive through God—For God is Spirit, Christ and Creator all in one- the Trinity by which we have faith and know that we will live forever!

Let us pray.

Holy God 3 in 1 creator Christ and Spirit, we call upon you to come to us in this moment. Fill us and dwell within us always. Show us your way to live and love as we grow in grace and understanding through Jesus' teachings. We ask these things and more in this time of silence as we experience your Spirit's presence within us as individuals and as a church family. SILENCE. Thank you God. In Jesus' name we pray as your Spirit moves us. Amen.