

Sermon. Trinity for Today 's Born Again Christian!

I will begin, this Trinity Sunday by Confessing; *I don't understand the Trinity!* But I have a question to ask. *Does any one understand the Trinity?*

What is wrong with admitting that you just do not know and you can't fully explain things. But, the world today doesn't like that and never has because now science wants us to explain everything. Karl Marx once said that Religion was the "Opium of the suffering masses"; It was at the heart of a heartless World. Well, let me substitute science, as the so called dominant paradigm of today, for religion. In recent months We have all heard how our government's response to Covid19 must be led by science. Science has all the answers, Science can heal us, science can save us!

But can it? Can it really save us and is not science cold and rational in it's very being? Surly Science is the new opiate of the masses'?

Where is the room for mystery and what is wrong with not knowing, or not being able to explain, in a way secular society, dominated by science, demands? How many of us can personally testify to the truth that our faith has made a real difference in our lives and the lives of many we encounter. But Science is not about the personal is it?

Rather than excepting and rejoicing that we were created in God's image, many want God to be created and recreated time and time again in a scientific image of perfection; an image that often informs our own self-image. When We accept just a purely scientific explanation, then We can explain God away and thus render God as harmless superstition, just as Marxism tried to do, and failed!

In God We live and move and have our being. God wants you to build your confidence in him. Believers call this "faith." I now know a number of you quite well now and I know just how much your faith means to you and how it helps you get through the stresses, hurts, frustrations, of this crazy mixed up world, in which we currently live.

It seems to me that over the past few years that things are even more messed up.

As ever this week we have been bombarded with bad news, mostly dominated by Coronavirus and how many have died, in this region, country and world. We can become fatigued by the statistics, numbed to the personal cost of death and disease. Our minds can easily close down, resisting the assault of so much negative news and we can feel powerless and helpless, without hope. Do you feel like that now?

Our prayers can seem so futile at such times, like stones in our mouths. Words can seem trivial and clumsy. How can we react, frame anything worth saying, even pray in such situations.

I confess, that I don't always know all the answers and at times I really struggle with prayer and trying to find the questions, but I have found that in that struggle God works though me and God achieves miracles.

The Kingdom of God is Spiritual and to enter it and to fully see it, we must be born of God's Spirit. As John's Gospel tells us, in Chapter 16; "when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth..." being *born again* involves surrendering. That involves us being willing to be pushed out of the darkness, and into the glorious light of God but what happens after that? Are we just born again, and then "poof" that's it?

I love the way St Paul answers that question in Ephesians Chapter 2:

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”

You see, we get it wrong when we think that we are born again only to assure that someday - when we die - we will go to heaven. Sure, that’s part of it... but if that were all of it, we would be working with pretty selfish motives. We are born again; in order to be light shining in the darkness!!! We are born again; so that we can do the good things God planned for us. We are born again; to be God’s masterpiece. Isn’t that amazing and isn’t that a mystery?

In our mixed up lives, with all the pressures and stresses we live with, isn’t there any room for ambiguity? For Uncertainty? For the challenge of the new? Let us dare to think new thoughts, dream new dreams. Let us try to heal a weary world, with our unique love and show that the darkness at the heart of our communities and society is fragile and fickle; It can be swept away by such a shining beacon of hope.

As Paul said in his letter to the Church in Corinth, *We only know imperfectly*. How can God be one and yet Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Doesn’t that make 3? Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that God is 3, but in Mark’s gospel we do here that God is One.

Faith is not always about certainty, it is about continually searching for the uncertain. that is what John Wesley taught about in his Doctrine of Christian Perfection. The intangible element of God’s mystery is and should be beyond us but the faith we need to search for it is a daily struggle as we press forward to that perfection we know, in Jesus.

John Wesley wrote, in the late Eighteenth Century, *Faith is the pressing necessity of the age*. How true that still is, in a world in crisis because of a virus, isn’t it? Wesley went on to preach, *by grace are ye saved through faith*.

Alleluia! Amen.

Rev’d Andrew Longshaw