

Holy Trinity Sunday

Text: John 8:48-59

Title: “The Glory of the Father”

Preached by Vicar Larson on May 30, 2010

Today we celebrate the Holy Trinity. Trinity Sunday we call it. We think about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. One God, three persons. We may think of catechism class or Sunday school and picture a neat diagram about the trinity. In the shape of triangle. We may remember the Father taking one corner – the Son another corner of the triangle – and the Holy Spirit with the third.

Propositionally the triangle is correct. We have triangles on our reredos on the side of our altar here. It is a helpful symbol of the Trinity to be sure. But on Trinity Sunday we know there is a bigger reality – that cannot be contained in this symbol.

To truly celebrate this day we must be sure that God is more than a diagram and more than a symbol. He is more than a subject for theologians to talk about. To truly rejoice we must know and see who God is and what He is for us. We must know His work and His mission. We must know His very heart. We must know him personally. We must see where His glory is to be found.

In today’s Gospel reading Jesus says “It is my Father who glorifies me.”

In the sending of the Son the Father’s heart is turned toward us and revealed. Here we know God as more than a symbol but as a person. Here we know God as He is – in his glorification. The Father’s desire is to give us and share his dearest treasure. The father’s will is Jesus and all that he is. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

If we wish to know the deepest mysteries of the Holy Trinity, we should hear the Words of the Father. For the Father spoke to the disciples directly, saying “Listen to him – listen to my Son – He speaks for me.” When God speaks He speaks Jesus. And when Jesus speaks it is God himself who speaks.

If we may have an image of the Trinity let me please draw your attention to the painting in your bulletin. It is a painting by a Spanish painter by the name of Jusepe de Ribera. In his painting, the Father is seated in heaven with a flowing red robe. And he holds his crucified Son – Christ’s arms are resting and hanging over

his Father's knees calling to mind the cross. The crucified one lies within the Father.

If we wish to catch a real glimpse of glory, let us see it here. In the crucified Son the Father's heart is turned toward us and revealed. Here is the glorification of God. The Father's desire is to give us and share his dearest treasure. To share himself in a Son who joyfully gives. The Father's will in our lives is Jesus and all that he is.

John later records that before Jesus breathed his last breath and gave up his spirit. He looked up to heaven and prayed to the Father. **"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you...I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began"** (Jn. 17:1-5).

The glory that Jesus speaks of is His crucifixion – His suffering and death – and rising for the forgiveness of the world.

The glorified son is the crucified Son. That glory is given and shed for you. As you look at Jusepe Ribera's painting consider this...

Here the son is presented by the Father – lifted up by angels. His hands and feet are drawn out to you – lifted by angels up for you. For you in every way. God lives to give to you. Lives to present you to himself as one robed with glory from on high. Dressed up with all the righteousness of Christ.

And who is the Father looking at? In Ribera's painting it is the Father himself. He looks at you for whom the son is given. He sees you baptized and blessed with the glory of His Son.

The Father holds one hand on His son's head, while a dove hovers above, showering light from its wings. And this is the work of the dove – this is the work of the Holy Spirit – to shine light upon the work of the Son. To show the love of the Father.

Today, on Trinity Sunday, we rest with the one who rested in the grave for us. And we rise with the glorified Son. Like Christ, the Father now holds us tenderly in His care and he will never let us go.

The Holy Spirit hovers over our households and God sends His angels to protect us and give us rest.

The Father sees that Christ is your possession and looks at you tenderly – loving you – as a true Father loves his true children. The Son has covered your sins with his glory. As the light pours into our St. Paul this morning, the Father only sees prodigal sons and daughters – returning home to him!

And He gives us Christ and all that He has. His glory. His death and resurrection. His righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. To believe in God is to believe in Jesus as God. This is to know God as He is. Among us. As man - as God – as Father – as Son. And you calls you His beloved.

This is the glory of the Father. This is the glory of the Son...given for you.