

Sermon from June 7th, 2020

I Am There

Today is Trinity Sunday. Almost every week as part of worship, we confess through the words of the Apostles' Creed that we believe God is Trinity. That is, God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Where do we get this idea?

Well, the Bible itself never uses the word Trinity. Jesus, however, names the Trinity. In our Gospel reading today from Matthew, the Lord tells us, tells the church, to baptize people in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Last September 29th, I was able to do this for our first grandchild, our granddaughter, Addison Dawn Kruckenberg. I had the distinct privilege of baptizing her in the name of the Trinity, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In doing this, I believe with all my heart, that this Trinity, this God, our Lord, was present with us. Yet, more importantly, he was present with Addison. Yes, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, entered Addison's life that day, and will never leave her.

I think this is the importance of Trinity. Sure, God is great and powerful, after all, he is the Father, who made the universe, who made us; and he is the Son (Jesus), who saves us from sin, evil, and death, through his own death and resurrection.

Yet, this God is Holy Spirit too. He is small and gentle enough, to be with Addison, to even live inside this cute, little girl. The same is true for every one of us today. This great and powerful Trinity God is also small and gentle enough to live inside us.

Jesus makes this promise in the Gospel today. He says to the disciples gathered then, and he says to us who worship him this morning, that we will never be alone. He says – Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Is it too hard to believe this people of God? Is it sometimes simply too difficult to see with our eyes of faith, that God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is with us through all the ups and downs, and the joys and sorrows of our lives?

Do we see this Trinity God with us today? Wherever we are right now? Present as we struggle through a coronavirus pandemic? Present as we struggle with racial issues in our own country. And, present as we go through our own personal challenges?

Quite a few years ago, I was turning off the lights here at church on a Sunday after worship. A young couple who were in a time of transition came back into the church and asked to speak with me. We went into my office to meet and pray.

They told me they had not slept at all Saturday night. They were just told they had to move to Bismarck for the husband's work. It was not a move they really wanted, because they were settled in Grand Forks, and had family close by.

They said they almost did not come to church because they were so tired. But they were glad they did. We sang *Born Cry* that morning, a song which reminded them that at every point in their lives, God would be present with them, even in Bismarck.

The wife said that while I was preaching about the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit, she suddenly felt that hand on her, as if to reassure her that everything would be ok. She said she believed this feeling was indeed God, the Holy Spirit.

They told me they came back to tell me they had experienced in worship the presence of God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with them, alongside them, and even in them. They thought I would like to know this. I was so glad they did.

It's impossible to manage when we will be reassured like this of God's presence. Perhaps in a time of great tragedy, even loss of life, God will be obviously present with people in their hour of need. Or perhaps sometimes we will wonder where he is.

Even now, I know a married couple struggling to hold their marriage together. A college student who is battling with depression. A ULC member who is worried about cancer. A family who is worried their mom might not survive June.

It's in such situations that I see the true importance of this Trinity God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and not only because he is great and powerful, but also because he is small and gentle and caring enough to enter our broken lives and help us.

In fact, I proclaim to you this Trinity God does enter our lives to be with us, to encourage us, to comfort us, to guide us, to grant us the grace and courage necessary for our lives, and necessary for us to be the people of God in this world.

It just so happens that this Trinity God is also great and powerful too, and we should not forget that either. That when this God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, enters Addison, and enters each one of us, he brings his power with him.

That power of God will also help you in times of trouble. It will help you break through your challenges in life, and it will also help you do great things in your life. Certainly, it helps people of God, the church, to bring the Gospel to the world.

On this Trinity Sunday, if we focus on the bigness of God, if we focus on the mystery of God, let us also focus on his closeness. I will be with you always is what Jesus said in today's Gospel. I'll be there is what God say's in Borning Cry

I am there with you is what God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, hopes you will believe. God hopes that today you aware of his closeness, that you are aware of his power, that you are aware his hand is upon you to lead you and guide you.

This is also true in this time of coronavirus pandemic and racial issues in our nation. God is big enough to defeat the coronavirus, and close enough to get inside our hearts and change us, so that racial issues are exiled to something of the past.

Ultimately, this means whatever you or your family faces this week, and in the weeks to come, you do so with the presence and the power of God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to help you, and to give you the courage to carry on with your life.

Yes, you will be ok! Amen.