

Trinity Sunday June 3, 2007

You have probably heard about the little girl who was painting a picture. Her mother asks what are you drawing a picture of honey? I'm drawing a picture of God. Sweetheart no one knows what God looks like. They will when I finish my picture.

That is what the trinity is all about. The trinity is a way to try and paint a picture of God. Of course when you are finished and you understand everything about the trinity. If you ever could, you still wouldn't have anymore of a definitive picture of God than that little girl. Yet we want to know God, we strive to know God more and more.

One of my favorite books right now is Velvet Elvis. The title is deceiving. The book is not about Elvis although he does start it out talking about Elvis but only to help make his point. Just like I am about to.

Rob Bell the pastor of Mars Hill church and the author of Velvet Elvis tell of the portrait he has of the King in his basement. For those of you too young, he is not talking about LaBrone James, King James of Basketball fame. He is talking about the King of Rockin Roll, Elvis Presley. So he has this velvet picture of Elvis. He says it's a nice picture. But it's not the only picture of Elvis. It's not like all of the artist of the world are going to look at that picture and say. "Well there it is. That captures it all." "Nothing else to say, nothing else to see." It's a nice picture but it wasn't the first and it won't be the last. There is the young Elvis. The jump suit Elvis The heavy Elvis

Elvis died in 1977 and people are still making pictures of him. People will be making portraits of Elvis for a long time. And that's just Elvis. I know he's the King. But he is only the King of Rockin Roll. He's not the king of the jungle, not the king of the sea, not the king of the universe and not the king of me.

The trinity attempts to paint a portrait of God, the God of the bible, the God of our experience the God we worship. It paints a picture of the God who created everything and without him not one thing was created.

The trinity paints a picture of this God coming to the earth in human form in order that we might be in relationship with him. As Paul writes to the. **(Philippians 2:6-8) who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, 8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-- even death on a cross.**

The trinity paints a picture of the Spirit, the invisible force that can only be seen in the rear view window. We can't predict which direction it is going to go in. It can only be seen in the work that it does, like giving faith and understanding.. Luke writes in. **(Acts 2:17) 'God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Then in.(Acts 4:31) When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.**

You won't find the word trinity in the bible. It is a gift of the Church, a gift from the people of God, our brother's and sisters of the faith. The saints of old gave us this gift to help us to **begin** to understand the mysteries of God. **Begin** to understand is the key.

When I teach the Apostle's Creed. I am constantly breaking it down, breaking it down to a simplified concept. Something like God created everything, God came as Jesus to save us from sin. God comes as the spirit to give us faith, teach us and keep us going. Creator, Savior, Teacher / leader.

I do that so that they have something they can understand to hold on to. Something I can hold on to. But it's hard because there is so much more. So much more to say, so much more to explore. One picture doesn't do it. Three pictures don't really do it. So we need to keep painting keep searching.

We strive to understand God more, ourselves more, the world more. It helps us to have a deeper and more meaningful relationship with God. The trinity has always been known as mysterious. That's probably as it should be because God is mysterious. Ironically I heard this old jewish story that helps us better understand the trinity and God.

All their lives the two young brothers had lived in the city behind great stone walls and never saw field nor meadow. But one day they decided to pay a visit to the country.

As they went walking along the road they saw a farmer at his plowing. They watched him and were puzzled. "What on earth is he doing that for!" they wondered. "He turns up the earth and leaves deep furrows in it. Why should someone take a smooth piece of land covered with nice green grass and dig it up?"

Later they watched the farmer sowing grains of wheat along the furrows. "That man must be crazy!" they exclaimed. "He takes good wheat and throws it into the dirt." "I don't like the country!" said one in disgust. "Only crazy people live here." So he returned to the city.

His brother who remained in the country saw a change take place only several weeks later. The plowed field began to sprout tender green shoots, even more beautiful and fresher than before. This discovery excited him very much. So he wrote to his brother in the city to come at once and see for himself the wonderful change.

His brother came and was delighted with what he saw. As time passed they watched the sproutings grow into golden heads of wheat. Now they both understood the purpose of the farmer's work.

When the wheat became ripe the farmer brought his scythe and began to cut it down. At this the impatient one of the two brothers exclaimed: "The farmer is crazy! He's insane! How hard he worked all these months to produce this lovely wheat, and now with his own hands he is cutting it down! I'm disgusted with such an idiot and I'm going back to the city!"

His brother, the patient one, held his peace and remained in the country. He watched the farmer gather the wheat into his granary. He saw him skillfully separate the grain from the chaff. He was filled with wonder when he found that the farmer had harvested a hundred-fold of the seed that he had sowed. Then he understood that there was logic in everything that the farmer had done.

The moral of the story: Mortals see only the beginning of any of God's works. Therefore they cannot understand the nature and the end of creation. The student once said to the teacher I understand all this stuff about God. The teacher said, I remember when I thought that.

Strive to learn more but don't fear because you might not know enough about God and your faith there is a tv commercial I saw recently that is helpful. It shows this scruffy guy in a t-shirt and shorts in his back yard. He is probably not a rocket scientist. The narrator says, Bob will now explain how his new air conditioner works. Bob just stands there dumbfounded. The narrator then says, Well I guess he really doesn't have to.

We are called to understand God more but our trust is not in our ability to understand but in the God who sent Jesus Christ to die for us. **God bless you have a great week.**