

Trinity Sunday 2016
Working with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit



Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

We were thinking about the Trinity, and how we might be invited to work alongside Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What might that mean for us?

I recorded my talk and it is on www.ChadTalks.org if you want to listen to it.

I spoke in previous years about the Trinity being a relationship - three Persons dancing around each other, as the Greek translates in the Early Fathers, such is their closeness and intimacy. In order to develop that theme further I thought we would consider the work of each Person in the Trinity, and how we are invited to participate.

We are invited to work with the Father...

Genesis 1 tells the story of God the Creator. Read verses 1 to 5. The Spirit is there too, moving over the chaos of the waters awaiting the creative spark to bring order. The next couple of chapters tell how God did this, but read chapter 2 verses 15 to 20. A wonderful Garden was not sufficient to satisfy God - instead He needs mankind and gives them a purpose (verses 15 and 19 in particular). How might we describe the original work for which we were made?

Now, none of us are used by God in that original sense of tending his Garden, but on Sunday I used Isaiah 2:1-4 as an example of the continuation of this work. Read those verses. How is God's work in bringing order to creation to continue? I also spoke about how bringing order out of chaos in our various settings can give us a sense of "job satisfaction". How does this apply in the various types of "work" that members of the group undertake?

Sadly, though, as the story progresses we read of sin entering the world and the work of cultivating, bringing order and blessing suddenly get a whole lot harder. Read Genesis 3:17-24. That probably is a more accurate description of most of our experiences of working housework, the allotment, the office or school etc.

What is the main activity we are part of which we might think of as working alongside the Creator God to bring order, fruitfulness and blessing? How does it satisfy you, and what are the areas where it feels like a heavy burden? Make a note and share them together.

Working alongside the Creator.	What I do is...
How it is satisfying...	Where it is a burden...

We are invited to work with the Son...

Jesus spoke a lot about the Kingdom of God. I recently heard Bishop Graham Tomlin describe this as not just doing the right thing, but doing it in the right way. (You could argue that the Pharisees were "doing the right thing", but somehow they were way off the mark). So Jesus had a clear idea

of his job description (read Luke 4:18-19), quoting the prophet Isaiah to emphasise the continuity from the Old Testament.

Jesus usually starts his parables by saying “The Kingdom of God is like...”. Is there a parable of the Kingdom which perhaps challenges you to do the right thing in the right way based on what you wrote above?

The key Parable for me to remember in my work is... because...

We are invited to work with the Spirit...

Jesus saw being anointed by the Spirit as crucial, even for Him (see the Luke 4 reading above). I mentioned a couple of ways on Sunday in which we might work along with the Spirit. For example, inviting Him to come before we begin something, pausing to listen if there’s a prompting in the form of a word or a picture, or sometimes it is just a strong sense of God’s presence (or absence). Perhaps in the group people could share examples from their own experiences of how this has worked for them. Make a note of one or two shared ideas to remember...

I need to remember to... ...so that I am working with the Spirit.
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This work is often hard, but it isn’t meant to be the sort which grinds us down (read Matthew 11:29-30). How can we learn to pray for what we are called to do in order to participate in the Trinity’s work?

My prayer

Read Romans 5:1-5. How might we see our character’s developing as we join in the work of God like this? In what ways does this lead us to hope? Share and pray for each other.

My hope is that...
