

## "Three in One" - Week 78

Trinity Sunday is one of those occasions when a good few preachers are not sorry if they happen to be unavailable that day! For the task of trying to explain the Trinity, God as "Three in One", is not exactly easy at the best of times, let alone to a congregation who have probably heard it all before and still remain smilingly confused.

The first thing to realise about "the Trinity" is that this is no mere human idea, cooked up by some clever theologians centuries ago when they had nothing else to do. The Trinity is simply the way God is, simply the way that He has shown Himself to be.

There are hints of Trinity from the start of God's Word. When we read in Genesis 1.1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth", the Hebrew word used for "God" is "Elohim" - which is plural: even here, in the first verse of the Holy Bible, we are shown there is one God (singular), who has also something of the plural within His nature. This plurality occurs again in Genesis 1.26 - "Let us make man in our image ....".

Then in Genesis 1.2 we are told - "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters ....". "Spirit" here is the translation of the Hebrew word "ruach", with the sense of breath, wind, spirit, activity and power.

In Genesis 2.4 we have the first mention in Scripture of "Jahweh", anglicised as "Jehovah", "Lord". This name is far and away the most common word used as referring to God, in what is for us now the Old Testament, and many think of "Jahweh" as referring primarily to Jesus, God the Son, within the Trinity. Where "Elohim" emphasises the completeness, the enormity and the sheer grandeur of Almighty God as Creator, and "Ruach" speaks of His particular creative energy and power, "Jahweh" shows us His more personal, approachable, involved-with-us part of His nature.

So when the time of the incarnation came - the arrival of the Messiah, the Son of God, in our midst - the Jews already had some understanding that there was rather more to God than being merely "God"!

Jesus spoke constantly of God as being His Father, and that He and the Father were "One". Before His death and resurrection He spoke of the impending gift of the Holy Spirit, "another Comforter", who would soon be given to His disciples by the Father and the Son. Sure enough, this gift was duly made.

So when all is said and done, we do well to accept that the Trinity is indeed "just the way God is". The various Creeds of the Christian Faith spell out the Trinity as clearly as human minds can manage; they are a record, drawn wholly from Scripture, of our best efforts to describe what God has shown Himself to be. The highest Creed of all in terms of the Trinity is the Athanasian Creed, which you can find in the Book of Common Prayer under the heading "At Morning Prayer". This is guaranteed to get your own "little grey cells", as Hercule Poirot calls them, working very hard indeed!

Yes, the Trinity is beyond us - a sure sign in itself that it is no mere human concoction. But above all, the Trinity is blessing, a tremendous blessing - for it is no more and no less than Almighty God showing us all who He is and how He operates.

There is no justification at all for a casual approach to the Trinity, along the lines of "I don't really get it so I don't really bother" - an approach which sadly is all too common these days. Of course we don't "get it"! But we are to accept it, with heart-deep gratitude.

We are to bow before God the Father, coming to Him only and always through faith in God the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our worship, our hymns and songs, our prayers, our very discipleship, all blossom, and are kept on the right scriptural track, as we acknowledge the one true God as Trinity, truly the "Three in One".

We praise Him indeed for who He is: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

© 2014 Faithful Sheep Ministries - [www.fsmins.org](http://www.fsmins.org)