

20200602 Trinity Sunday

The Book of Leviticus, seen as obscure perhaps by many, speaks powerfully to us of the engine of our relationship with God; a relationship which is designed by God Himself to be real and happening moment-by-moment.

This is a truth which many of us find very hard to fathom: in what way am I in any sort of relationship with the God who made the Universe? Why should he bother? What about when things go wrong, when I go and do wrong?

One of the most impressive - and yes I mean impressive -things I notice and you perhaps don't, is the way people enter church: we enter and greet each other, often genuinely very joyfully and then find our seat. Once we are seated we frequently then greet God in some way. Of course I don't know what is going on at that moment for each person individually, however I can see the seriousness with which many people go about doing this. From this I take it that many people in our congregations, know that they do have some sort of connection to God.

Today I want to assure everyone, that God's love for each one of us, is not something remote, far away, at some sort of divine's arm's length; God's presence with us, which is His love, does not only arrive like some cosmic coach and horses, when we are being "good" or when things are going well, but is also there and is accessible, when things are going less well in all sorts of ways.

It is so very important for us to understand this, at this time when we are more frequently under some sort of stress; perhaps we are not sharing our home with another; perhaps we do not see others as often as we would like; perhaps even when sharing a house, things have not been going that well with unusual tensions.

And then we are obviously going to be upset, and caught-up in the distress and then we ask where are you God in all of that? And we might speak to others but we are not quite sure we are being understood.

It is at this precise point and like many of us I can speak from experience, it is at this precise moment, that we should be speaking with God and be instructing ourselves, that he is loving us. And I say instructing ourselves, because as things get more desperate, we really do need to order our thinking. When we have a 'downer' we need to shout at ourselves that things are not only still OK with me and God, but that he wants to be with us and hear from us.

Why all of this and why all of this now? Far, far too often the Trinity is taken as a "nice to have"; it is often spoken of as a 'doctrine' which hardly makes it more readily accepted. When you hunt through scripture, what you tend to find is that whenever anything beautiful or wonderful or creative, takes place that Father, Son and Spirit are mentioned as being active. We think of Creation and of the announcement of Mary's conception, of Christ's Baptism, of the Resurrection and there are others.

In the Trinity we have separate Persons who have decided to love each other, defer to each other, to create those made in their image. Just take a moment to consider these truths: the God who made the Universe has a desire to spend time with each one of us, on account of what Jesus achieved. That, with the greatest of respect to those in the early church who fought for and died for our understandings of God, is not a 'doctrine' and is not a 'nice to have': it is truly life itself.

Because Creation follows after the God who created it, we continue to see that it is community, it is in our coming together, which creates and makes opportunities for great relationships between ourselves and between ourselves and God.

Have we ever wondered why it is that we find love lovely or beauty beautiful or excitement exciting or things of value valued? We are as humans so very much more than what can be measured. I always remember being told when I first started computer programming, that being a good programmer technically was minor, what really made the difference was being able to get-on with people.

It took me a while to understand that, but I now know it is only too true. Similarly all the things we "do" as church are fine, but what really makes the difference is how we reflect Him, is how we become like our Creator; and we do that in the way we grow our relationship with Him and how we grow in our relationships with each other.

In our own community we grow together not necessarily - I hope this won't sound disrespectful - as 'nice' people, but as those who can see and respect God's Spirit in each other. We are each very much individuals, often very different from each other, but have decided to be together, to worship together, to work together, in our dispersed Christian community. In doing this, we are even if in a small degree, reflecting the Triune God who Created each one of us.

I started-out talking about Leviticus. I did so because it describes God's eternal wish to be speaking to each one of us. Yet the place where we do that is in community, within what we call the Kingdom of God. As we start to think about coming out of lockdown, and with that to consider the large numbers of people who will be emerging from different forms of isolation, we are the community that has kept together-ness right at the forefront of our thinking throughout this present crisis.

Each one of us will have endured isolation slightly differently, but God has never ever been isolated in His continuing love of us, no matter the difficulties we have been or may yet go through. Please could I encourage you, as we celebrate this Trinity Sunday, to appreciate just how close you and I are to God all the time. This closeness is a reflection of Father, Son and Holy Spirit ever living and ever loving each other, creating our ability to love and serve and respect one another, every day.