

## **Pastor Roy's Sermon from June 11, 2017 (The Holy Trinity)**

Children: Throughout time people have tried to understand and know God. Prophets thought about and tried hard to listen to God, to learn about God, to pray. To wonder what God would say if God were like a person and talked. Now, Christians often think about God as Trinity. We say God is family. Not just the parent who provides and makes rules. But also the child who follows the rules and loves the parent and is God here on earth. So God is family. We also think of God as wind/fire/breath. That's different from family. But isn't that a cool way of thinking of God? Trinity reminds us that everything that is important is God, and God is in everything that is important.

Creation, as was read in Genesis 1, is the first place we meet God. Yes, there is majesty in creation. Sunrise. Mighty storms. The power of things growing together. But we do not just see God in creation as mighty power. We see Trinity in all the relationships in creation. Nothing is on its own. None exists apart from the others.

Even stars are driven--by gravity, chemical reactions, producing radiation and light. A hill or mountain is shaped by rain--freezing and thawing, wind, plants, and ancient uprisings of ground, massive plates. Strawberry plants are influenced by rain, sunlight, slugs, the growth of other plants, and animals that lay on top of them. A baby grows as she receives milk, as she sleeps, plays, interacts with other people, explores, is outside, and is showered with lots of love. And as a baby grows, he or she gives back and participates in the mutual relationship of love.

We learn the nature of God as we watch Nature and as we contemplate family.

Often when we think of Trinity, we think of a being, or 3 beings, much like we are beings. The trouble with God as concrete and specific is that God then becomes an idol, something we control by one way or another. There is a no mystery, no depth, no reality to a God who is so specific.

The Christian doctrine of Trinity (three in one, one in three) is the mutual love and life of God which spills out in creation and is creation. Nothing exists except for mutual love and life. So in Trinity, family and raw elements are combined in mutual love and life. All are caught up in the divine web of mercy and peace.

Now, we have our favorites, but with God there are no favorites. We are tempted to think it's all about me. . .and my concerns. But all of the children of creation are God's children. No favorites. And all are safe in care of God. None is forgotten, none is rejected, none is "not good enough." Dogs, cats, blades of grass, worms, even those we call terrorists. The division, the slanted perspective is always our doing. Not God's. And yet, how quickly we make God concrete so that God will do our bidding and adjust God's self to my perspective and desires. Trinity invites us beyond such a small, convenient, irrelevant, powerless God.

As when we sit in nature, Trinity invites us to listen first, speak much later. The ancient icons of Trinity are all about God speaking with God's self with the eyes rather than with the mouth. How often would we do better in our relationships if we spoke with our eyes rather than our mouths?

We serve a listening God with whom we are invited to listen.

I believe based on what I have seen in the past 9 years that you are listening to God. You are participating in the dance of the Trinity. I believe that you leave traces of God and gospel wherever you go, and that the world is a better place for your having passed through.

The benefit of listening more, I believe, is for our sanity. Listening relieves us from the need to take the place of God. Listening frees us from our own garbage and opens us to the gifts of others. Listening allows us to participate freely in the Dance of Trinity.

The wind, fire, breath of Spirit invites us to participate in the family of God and do the very hard work of listening with a willingness to follow in love and unity.

As Jesus said, Go, make disciples, baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching obedience to my commands, and, Oh, Yes! I am with you. I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Thanks be to God!