

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY – TRINITY SUNDAY

“Strive for perfection; listen to my appeals; agree with one another; live in peace.”

SERMON

“O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world! Your praise reaches up to the heavens; it is sung by children and babies.”

This psalm is an unsurpassed example of what a hymn should be, celebrating as it does the glory and grace of God. The adoration of the psalmist is seen in the first couple of lines of the Psalm. It is passionate, enthusiastic and it is intimate because it is not just an awesome God who is tucked away from his creation but it is praise to a God who loves and cares for all of his creation and especially for us his children. The God whose glory fills the earth is *our* Lord. Have you taken time out to actually look into the vast, starry sky at night to marvel at God’s creation? It may be cloudy or not very clear to us living in towns and cities but when you get out into the countryside away from man made light, it is then we truly see the wonders of the cosmos and when we do maybe we will feel very small in that moment – yet in that moment we also realise that we are a masterpiece of God’s creation, we are made in His image! So, with the troubles of the world around us at this time, take a moment, pause and give praise to our Heavenly Father for His excellence and thank Him for crowning you with glory and honour.

This means we are to sing our praises to Him for He has singled each one of us out to receive His glory and honour on us. He has placed His favour and excellence upon our heads for we are His children and He loves us. Of course we cannot see this crown but He has marked us as His very own, we may not see it with our physical eyes our robe or righteousness or the crown of God’s favour but they exist in the spiritual realm. Sadly even though the Bible teaches us that we have been crowned with

Go's favour and excellence when we believe and accept Christ Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we far too often do not act as though we are, just look at how we treat our fellow man and woman to see how true that is. For many of us who profess belief one reason why we do not tap into God's blessings is that we feel that we do not deserve them and this causes us to stumble. Yet the Bible is clear God's blessings can be ours if we believe, but too many of us have not been taught this and therefore have been unable to activate His blessings in their lives. This ends us causing us to stumble about allowing whatever nonsense to come at us from the devil and his cronies, telling us we are useless, and will not achieve anything and other falsehoods all to stop us claiming what is rightfully ours. So let us resist the devil at his onset and believe. Why? The Psalmist tells us clearly "*You have put all things under his feet.*" This means that we do not allow our problems or the troubles of the world to have control or dominion over us or intimidate us, because if we will receive by faith the blessing of glory and honour with which the Lord our God has crowned us, not only will our faces shine forth with the glory of the Lord, but we will enjoy respect, esteem, favour and a good reputation all because we walk with the Lord.

The Psalm reminds us that God's praises should be sung today and everyday of our lives, but today is Trinity Sunday when we celebrate and consider the Triune aspect of God. It can be confusing, and it can be misleading, but God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit lies at the heart of everything. Trinity Sunday is one of the few festivals in the Christian Year that celebrates a reality and doctrine rather than an event or person. On Trinity Sunday we remember and honour God as: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Trinity is a fascinating, but controversial, doctrine or group of teachings of the Church. The Trinity is a 'mystery'. By 'mystery' the Church does not mean a riddle, but rather that the Trinity is a reality above our human comprehension, beyond our

grasp and yet knowable through worship, symbol, and faith. We can see an example of that in today's Bible readings.

"When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places – what is man, that you think of him; mere man, that you care for him?" When we look up towards the heavens and see the majesty of the universe above us, we are left wondering at the awesomeness of God's creation and are left feeling very small and insignificant in comparison. As we consider the greatness of God as we observe His creation all around us here on earth, we must remember that we are a masterpiece of God's creation, made in His very image! So, take a moment and praise God for His excellence and thank Him for crowning us with glory and honour. Yes, we as human beings can look with wonder at the universe and all of God's creation and ask what our place in all of this is. Why are we set apart from all other creatures to have such honour placed on us by God? Only a loving Heavenly Father would allow us to ask these questions and allow us to converse with him through prayer. To speak to him directly in what ever aspect we are comfortable with, albeit the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit. No wonder the Psalmist finishes *"O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world!"*

"Yet you made him inferior only to yourself; you crowned him with glory and honour. You appointed him ruler over everything you made; you placed him over all creation." This reminds us of God giving us glory and honour here on earth, but we still have far to go to achieve that, again all we have to do is to look at the trouble in America as a clear example of how far we have gone from the teachings of God, we even had President Trump making a cheap show of holding up a Bible, a book which he obviously does not follow. But all of this reminds us clearly that we are frail human beings, who are prone to sin and it is only through the gift of the Son that we find that mans destiny will be fulfilled. Man is limited and it is only through the love of God and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit through the death and resurrection of the Jesus Christ the Son of the living God that we

will achieve salvation. Jesus Christ the Son, our Lord and Saviour is the one who is already *'crowned with glory and honour'* and it is in the coming of Christ as the Son of God, where we find that He is both the representative man and the one whom man's appointed destiny will be fully realized.

That is why Paul encourages people of faith to *"Strive for perfection; listen to my appeals; agree with one another; live in peace."* It is through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit that we will be able to do all of this and more. We need to open ourselves up to His power. We need to speak to Him in prayer and be willing to listen if we are to achieve anything in God's service.

What then are we to do? Well we do not ignore God, we do not ignore his Son Jesus, and we do not ignore the Holy Spirit, for they are all the same. Again, we are encouraged *"Greet one another with a brotherly kiss."* This is the traditional greeting in the Middle Eastern countries; it is the equivalent of the hearty handshake in our own society. It is a token of mutual trust and affection. For Christians it must be holy, for all greetings should be purely and sincerely exchanged in Christ and we can only do that if we truly mean it, there is no room for falsehood. It must be a warm genuine welcome in the name of Jesus.

In his letter to the Corinthian church and to us the modern-day reader Paul finishes his instruction by giving us a Trinitarian blessing. This benediction is Trinitarian in form and for many in the church it has formed part of Christian worship. It also serves to remind us that the mystery of the Holy Trinity is known to be true not through rational or philosophical explanation but through Christian experience, whereby the believer knows firsthand the grace, the love, and the fellowship that freely flows from the three Persons or Aspects of the one Lord God.

And so we finish by returning to Galilee, we find Jesus is with His disciples before He ascends to heaven, it is here that the

Christian mission truly starts in a meeting with the risen Christ, here He has achieved Glory, and here He has attained His full power as Heavenly King of all. The prophecies have reached their fulfilment in and through Jesus Christ and it is on that authority that Jesus now sends out His disciples to spread the Gospel message of hope, of love and of life. The disciples are told to baptize and teach, they were not to call for a superficial response to Christ but were to ask for a total commitment to the new community of faith, symbolised by baptism, where we join the family of Christ and to live a good life governed by the Lord's teachings. Yet what is comforting in all the aspects of the Trinity is that we are not alone, our God is with us always to the end of the age, because His name Emmanuel 'God is with us' rings true.

"I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age." Many of us wonder about our purpose in life. Well the Bible is clear each one of us has been called by God to teach others about Who He is and what it means to follow Him. God gave you and me the authority to do so and has promised to not leave you or me on our own, but to be with each one of us always. So, ask God to show you where He wants you to go – to someone in your place of work, in your town, perhaps even in your family – so that you can help others to follow Him too. Let us live by example and show others what it truly means to be a follower of Christ! Let us all live-in peace and the God of love and peace will be with you.

PRAYER

Our Father who is in heaven hear our prayer today. The world is falling apart around us, people are out protesting in the streets about mans mistreatment of man. People are out and about in our communities ignoring government advice, help us Lord we pray to be wise and peaceful. Let us listen to your voice instead of the trouble makers and anarchists. We desire your peace, we need your peace in our hearts and in our lives, come Lord Jesus come

we pray, send us your Holy Spirit to calm the troubled waters of our fearful hearts, bring us your peace we pray.

Bless and keep all those who are mourning today, for all those who are worried and anxious about loved ones, grant them your peace, surround them all with your love and comfort. Help them and us to lean on your strength and help us to pray for those around us. Forgive us our foolish ways, our unthoughtful and hurtful words and thoughts, forgive us our impatience and ignoring your teachings. Help us instead Lord to listen to your Word, to hear your Holy Spirit speaking in our hearts, for the Bible teaches us that Your Words are written on and in our hearts, so help us hear them now so that we can bring peace and calm the storm of protest and fear.

Lord Jesus we pray in your holy name for the governments in the world and especially in America and in Britain to listen to the people, to hear their fears and worries and act wisely. Give them wisdom we pray, so that they can help instead of hinder, just as we pray that we as Christians can help those around us through our prayers. Guide our prayers we pray, guide our words and actions so that we can be a blessing in your name and be bringers of peace.
Amen.