

Dear Friends,

It was good to see many of you again at the Zoom service on Sunday. You will realise that we have been unable to celebrate communion for many weeks now. So at our next section Zoom service on 14<sup>th</sup> June we plan to share in a love-feast. The love-feast is an old Methodist tradition that has largely fallen out of use but would seem to be something we could share in together over Zoom. I shall be explaining more about the history and significance of the love-feast in my next letter.

This Sunday is Trinity Sunday, the day when we remember the mystery of the Trinity. The Trinity really is one of the most difficult parts of the Christian faith to understand. God is three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We do not have three gods, there is only one God and He cannot be divided. The Trinity defies our arithmetic, we can't understand how God can be both three and one at the same time. In our arithmetic one cannot equal three. It isn't easy to understand and it's impossible to prove.

The Trinity is the way in which the church tries to express our experience of God. In all this we need to acknowledge the element of mystery. There is something deeply mysterious about God. God is a mystery in the truest sense of that word. A mystery is something that lies beyond human understanding and intelligence. That is true of God. We cannot see God. We cannot touch God. There is a deep mystery about God, He is beyond what our minds can take in.

God is always present with us, He never leaves us, but He is present with us in a way that is mysterious and elusive. We can't see Him beside us, we can't prove that He's there, we just know that He is. We may sometimes wish that we could prove that God is with us, but we cannot. We may wish we could understand why God allows things to happen the way they do, but we cannot. There is this mystery about God that is beyond what our minds can understand.

How do we know anything about God? There is one conviction that is central to all the New Testament writers. The clearest idea of God can be seen in Jesus. The life and death of Jesus give us an insight into God. We still have to admit that God is mysterious and elusive. But the disciples were convinced that when they looked at Jesus they saw something of God. The life, the death, the resurrection of Jesus revealed far more about God than they ever knew before.

If we want to know what God is like, we should look at Jesus. We won't see everything, we won't know everything, God is too deeply mysterious for that. But we can see enough, we can see as much as we need to. We can see that God is loving, we can see that God is caring, that he cares for each one of us. We can see that God shares in the sufferings and problems of the world. He isn't a distant God cut off from us, He is involved in everything that happens on earth.

The Trinity is the way the church has tried to come to terms with our experience of God. When the disciples met with Jesus they were convinced they were meeting with God. The church has always seen the experience of the Holy Spirit as our experience of God. But we need to be very careful in all that we say about God. We can talk about knowing God, but there's always so much more we don't know about Him. The more we come to know God, the more we realise just how much we don't know about Him.

With best wishes,

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