

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31/Romans 5:1-5/John 16:12-15

Today we celebrate Trinity, and when I was preparing this sermon, I found a quotation from Ryle very useful in explaining in simple terms what trinity means to us as Christians, **“It was the whole Trinity, which at the beginning of creation said, “Let us make a human being”. It was the whole Trinity again, which at the beginning of the Gospels said, “Let us save human beings”.** So, looking at the three personalities of the Godhead, Trinity means four things to us:

- In the creation narratives, Trinity reminds us that we have been privileged to partner God in creating.
- In Jesus Christ/In the gospels, Trinity reminds us that we have been privileged to save the creation.
- In the Holy Spirit, Trinity reminds us that there is still more work to be done in spreading the gospels to the entire universe.
- The Holy Spirit is our hope

Now the John 16:12-15 begins by saying, **“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot understand them now”.** I guess this was sad and confusing news to the disciples. For Jesus his time was up and was prepared to face the cross but for the disciples could not see that. But, for the disciples, they could not believe it because they were prepared to relate with the warrior-king and not with the suffering-servant. And seeing the disciples’ unpreparedness, Jesus taught them about the role of the Holy Spirit, **“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...”**

But Paul seemed to have understood theology of trinity better than the disciples for he said in Romans 5:1-5, **“Not only this, but we also rejoice in our sufferings”** Rejoicing in suffering was a dominant thought in Paul’s theology. In 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, Paul boasted in his suffering which demonstrated the selfless quality of his ministry. However, it is important for us to note that by so saying, Paul was not a masochist. He is not necessarily suggesting that we should solicit suffering or find pleasure in it. His joy is rooted in his faith that God transforms Good Fridays into Easters, God embeds a blessing in every hardship for those who trust in him.

What is interesting is that Paul was writing to Christians who were so familiar with the Pax Romana (Roman Peace). The **Pax Romana (Roman Peace)** was a period of relative peace and stability across the **Roman Empire** which lasted for over 200 years, beginning with the reign of **Augustus** (27 BCE - 14 CE). The aim of Augustus and his successors was to guarantee **law**, order, and security within the **empire**, even if this meant separating it from the rest of the world and defending, or even expanding, its borders through military intervention and **conquest**. So, in this case there was safety in the Roman Empire but there was no peace. Why, because Rome established peace through domination, it pacified resistance by forcing the conquered peoples including Christians to acknowledge Caesar as the Lord.

Paul then drew a distinction between peace being offered by the Roman Empire and the peace being offered by God. God's peace is built on love while the Romana Empire peace was driven by dominance. This is what Paul alludes when he said in Romans 5:1-5, "**We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**". Though Paul used the Greek word "**eirenen**", as a Jew his understanding of peace with God as reflected in his theology should have been driven from the Hebrew word, "**Shalom**" which suggest more than the absence of hostility but speaks of well-being, prosperity, or salvation of the Godly person.

In Trinity we rejoice in partnering God in creating, In Trinity we rejoice in partnering God in saving the universe, in Trinity we rejoice in partnering God in propagating the good news, in Trinity we rejoice in suffering with Christ but of course with great hope that the Spirit of truth/the Holy Spirit is among us and will guide us into all the truth. It is through the love of Christ that we have access to God's grace but not only access but grace ushers us into the presence of God. Amen.