

Coffee to Go | Trinity Sunday

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Karin Peter

Karin Peter 00:27

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the seasons, and scriptures, and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm your host, Karin Peter, and along with host, Blake Smith, and we welcome you on our journey of coffee to go today because every week we asked this question, where are we with Jesus this week? Well, this week today is Trinity Sunday, it is the day where we explore this concept of Trinity. And for a lot of people might come from traditions where the Trinity was not really part of your experience. For many Community of Christ, people who grew up RLDS from a long time ago, the Trinity is not part of that experience, but it very much is Community of Christ experience and how we understand the divine, in our experience together and in our personal lives. So where are we with Jesus on Trinity Sunday? Well, we are hiking up a mountain, we are heading towards where Jesus is, and Jesus is on a mountain. And on that mountain, a commissioning is going to take place a sending, sometimes we think of commissioning as kind of getting a badge. But that's not what we're talking about here. We're talking about being commissioned or sent, as Jesus prepares to not be physically present, but spiritually present in the community that we know as God, Jesus, Holy Spirit. Those three understandings of God form a community. We understand Father, Son, Holy Ghost, or Father, Son, Holy Spirit, or we may understand Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. So one of the things I want to point out here, when we talk about the Trinity is that we have liturgical language in the church, not a lot, but we do have some, there's a statement that we all use when we officiate at a wedding, that's part of our liturgy. Our communion prayers are part of our liturgy. But this statement, Father, Son, Holy Ghost, or Father, Son, Holy Spirit, that's part of our sacramental liturgy that we use when we baptize someone. That language is a shared language with the rest of Christian community. And it's important that we state that upfront, that for sacramental and liturgical purposes, we use Father, Son, Holy Ghost, or Father, Son, Holy Spirit, in those sacramental moments in those religious rituals. However, how we talk about God, how we experience God, how we name God, in our life and experience, how we teach about God is broad. And we can use lots of different words to kind of try to capture or illustrate this nature of trinity of three and one when we're talking about God. And one I particularly like is Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. God, Jesus, Holy Spirit. However, you want to experience that and think about those three aspects of God, that's great. We are happy for people to explore. Whatever words you use for it, we want to think of this scripture that we're going to hear, as this moment of sending. We understand that God sent Jesus. We talked about that, I think, on our third Coffee to Go with God so loved the world. God sent Jesus, Jesus, we learned from the scriptures, sends the Spirit, "wait here for the advocate to come" or the Comforter to come. We heard that a couple

of episodes ago. The Spirit then sends or commissions or grants authority to the church. And when I say the church, I mean people. The people of the church, have been sent along with the Spirit to empower them. So the church is all of us. It's Jesus followers, or in some cases, Jesus watchers, Jesus observers, or even just all interested parties that might be along for the Jesus ride wherever you kind of see yourself in that, let yourself just for the purposes of this be part of this greater body called the church God sent Jesus, Jesus sends Spirit, Spirit sends and commissions us. So let's hear that. Let's hear this what happens up on the mountain. Blake

Blake Smith 04:55

Now this is a very concise passage, unlike the topic, that it leads us to.

Karin Peter 05:04

A lot of words there. We want to be clear.

Blake Smith 05:08

Just to be clear, this is this is as short as it gets when it comes to the Trinity. After that, there's no telling. It's our passage today comes from Matthew 28. It's the 16th, through the 20th verse.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said, to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

So as you mentioned, this passage itself uses the terminology Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, which is part of our liturgical practice for sacraments. And yet, we have the ability in Community of Christ, especially, to understand that in ways that are relevant to us. The important piece about the Scripture is that we are sent. And being sent means to go out in the name of, and act in the way of the one or ones who send us. And, in this case, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer... Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit. And if we act in the way of the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, or Father, Son, Holy Ghost, it isn't to be all pious and preachy. Humility, as we've talked about in a number of our episodes, is core to who Jesus is, especially. And so to act in the way of Jesus and to act in the way of the Spirit or act in the way of the Creator is to do so with humility, and with great love. It's also to participate in the care of creation. So what does that look like? It might look like for us participating in the care of creation, engaging in acts of justice and redemption, or developing and sustaining healthy, authentic relationships with God, others, ourselves and the earth. But the most important part, again, is that we are sent. So, how do we experience that make that real for ourselves this week, Karin?

Karin Peter 07:40

Well, I find it interesting Blake that you and I are having this conversation about being sent, we both serve in an office in the office called the Office of Seventy. And that's basically our job we are sent, right, sent to share, sent to care sent to delve into deep relationships with people. So I'm glad that we're talking about this this week. So experiencing Trinity and experiencing this sent-ness, if you will, how might we live that out? Well, there's lots of ways to experience being sent. And there's lots of ways to

experience the trifold kind of nature of God. But I've tried to put them together into an experience that you can do at home to kind of live in this idea of Trinity, but also an idea of being sent. So this can be a quiet reflection that you do if that's your nature, and you want to do this in that manner, it could actually be a spiritual practice. If you have a, if you live with a housemate, or you have a family with kids, you can certainly do this as a noisy household scavenger hunt kind of experience. But basically, you are sent to find as many things in your household or yard that you can that have three parts. So for example, a pencil has three parts: wood, lead, eraser. A cherry has three parts: the fruit, the pit, and the stem. The hammer has three parts: the handle, that round flat end that you hit things with that I don't know the name of and then the claw end for taking out nails that bent. The three parts. And then one that's often used when talking about trinity and that is an egg that has the shell, the white, and the yolk. So if you're doing this with kids or a group, find those items and bring them to the table. If you're doing this as a more reflective, contemplative experience. Picture those items in your mind. If you're with a group, everybody take turns sharing an item. If it's a spiritual practice for just you, look at each item in your mind. Note what is unique about each part of that item. So what's unique about the wood, the lead and the eraser in the pencil. And then, describe or think about how all of these parts, all three contribute to the whole. The wood and the lead and the eraser, allow me to write, and edit, and refine. Experiencing that this week helps us understand how these three parts of the of what we call the Godhead or the Trinity are unique. But together, they act in me and allow me to express myself. To edit or repent or go into a way, and to refine aspects of my discipleship that helped me go deeper in my relationship with God. So as a quiet reflection, or as a noisy household activity, do a Trinity scavenger hunt this week?

Blake Smith 11:12

Wow, that sounds like a lot of fun. I'm finding myself right now trying to think of what are some of the things you did such a good job with naming some of those things around the house with three parts? I like,

Karin Peter 11:22

Oh, you don't have to tell your kids that you did that you can send them off.

Blake Smith 11:27

My kids are 24 and 32. Although they might try it, they might try it, we'll see. So there's some questions that come to mind. One of the things I think that's important here is, for me, at least, is to get the elephant out of the room or acknowledge the elephant that's in the room. And that is, this whole idea of Trinity, as I mentioned earlier, is very complex. It's not concise, like our passage of Scripture today. And for some of our listeners, I know for a long time, I didn't really understand that I could think of Trinity as anything other than Father, Son, Holy Spirit. So this whole idea of acknowledging that we can understand Trinity in ways as we did with our Scripture last week in Pentecost, in ways that that are comfortable to us, and that that have meaning for us. Because Trinity is mystery. And I think it's very difficult sometimes to live in mystery. We live in a chaotic world, there are times I will say there are times in my life when I want something to be black and white. So because Trinity is complex and mystery, the question here is How do I feel about living in mystery? Can I live with that in this chaotic life that I'm in? I know that there are times when it's difficult. But we need to acknowledge our feelings

about this mystery, and allow God and the Holy Spirit to remain mystery to us. Staying along the line of Trinity, a question that I might ask is, what are three aspects of my faith journey at this point?

Karin Peter 13:09

Ew, a trinity of faith journey, Blake.

Blake Smith 13:11

I mean, there are many ways to experience faith. And when we think about it in three parts and Trinity, that could be perhaps faith, belief, doubt. That's a pretty straightforward way. But maybe it's, for the mystic folks in our midst, it might be contemplation, meditation, and prayer, or read study, write? And for those who say, Oh, my gosh, I'm not really comfortable with mystery, perhaps it's engage, wonder and retreat. But how do we experience each one of those three parts? And how does it fit together in our faith journey? And then finally, I think it's important, because this passage is about being sent, to ask ourselves the question, How are we feeling sent? Perhaps it is being sent to care for creation, or as one who seeks to liberate, redeem and restore or as a nurturer and sustainer of relationships, lots of ways to look at our faith journey.

So I want to leave us with a blessing today and this comes from Trinity Sunday, Sounding the Seasons and the author... and I will just ask for grace on this. I am going to say that his name is Malcolm Guite. I hope that's close.

“[God] calls us out of darkness, chaos, chance, to improvise a music of our own, to sing the chord that calls us to the dance, three notes resounding from a single tone, to sing the End in whom we all begin; our God beyond, beside us and within.”

Thanks for being with us again this time when Coffee to Go. We invite you to join us for the next episode of Coffee to Go where we will continue our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.