Otatara 30 May 2021 (Trinity Sunday)

**Let us love one another, for love comes from God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.** (1 John 4.7-10)

Today is Trinity Sunday – did you know? Or care?! Today we celebrate God as Father/Creator, Son and Spirit. This is mainstream theology, but not clearly defined in Bible.

Now I am not going to try to explain how God can be Three and yet One at the same time.

I am not going to give you lots of images to help make sense of the idea.

At its heart Trinity = love. Love is not just *seen in* Trinity: Trinity means nothing without love.

By love I do not mean “I love my boyfriend”, nor “I love chocolate” nor “I love having coffee with my friends”; here love means “lust after” or “like”. Love in God-terms is a deep concern and warmth towards another that gives rise to selfless action on their behalf.

“***Trinity is not only ‘who’ God is but ‘how’ God reveals himself***” (Theology Remixed p106f) ie God’s love is internal, and external.

Internal love (‘who’) is shown by unity within Trinity; (here I show a wooden model with three figures holding hands) - where does one end and another begin? Trinity is not 3 gods co-operating, but 1 God, seen in 3 ways, ever in eternal embrace.

External love (‘how’) is seen in creation, in Jesus’ ministry/death, in the gifting of Holy Spirit.

The important thing is that God cannot help offering love, even if love is rejected or misunderstood.

In the TEXT we are called to love also.

Your love, like that of God, is also meant to be shown internally and externally.

Your internal love is not so much co-operation but unity, love embracing every part of who you are as God’s people so that where one love ends and another begins is impossible to see.

Your external love seen in words, actions and attitudes. The important thing about your love is that you cannot help it. You love your community/neighbours/family/friends not because you want something from them (come to our meeting/church event, be converted, etc) but because you can’t help doing so – even if that love is rejected or misunderstood.

Our role with God is to share the gospel with our community; it is God’s job to convert people, or make them come to church (or whatever). The good news we share is of God’s *loving* Kingdom, of Jesus’ *love*, of the Spirit’s *loving* involvement in our lives. *This* is what Trinity is all about. All the highfalutin theology, however correct, is nothing without love. And love can be understood by anyone, and given by any church member, group or congregation. TEXT is for every Christian.