

Trinity Sunday 2021 – May 30th Glory

9.30 Holy Communion Cuxton	Isaiah 6 vv 1-8 p690 Romans 8 vv 12-17 p1134
11.00 Holy Communion Halling	John 3 vv 1-17 p1065

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity; We beseech thee, that thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. (Romans 8¹⁸).

It occurred to me that we might need cheering up. And what better time than Trinity Sunday to cheer ourselves up? The most cheerful thing we can do as human beings is to glorify God. It is what we were made for, to glorify God. When we are glorifying God we are acting in accordance with our true nature. We were made in His image. We are redeemed by His Son. We are filled with His Spirit. When we are glorifying God, we are doing what we were made to do, fulfilling our human vocation. There is no greater joy than praise.

Think about our Old Testament lesson and try to share Isaiah's vision. He says that he *saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and that his train filled the temple*. He doesn't say what God looked like. God is beyond our imagination. We cannot and we must not try to make images of God. But perhaps we can think of Who God must be, of what God must be when we consider all that He has made, all the things that He has done. There is nothing which exists which does not depend on God for its very being. From atoms and subatomic particles, through our own familiar world of the objects we see and touch each day, to stars and distant galaxies, matter and energy, time and space, it is all the creation of God. Animal, mineral or vegetable? Every object that there is is of God's manufacture. The very gift of life given to plants and animals and to us human beings is the gift of God. Abstracts such as truth and beauty, wisdom, justice, mercy, love itself, spring from God. Without God there would be nothing. **PRAISE** the Lord, *O my soul : O Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glorious; thou art clothed with majesty and honour. Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment : and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain. Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters : and maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind. (Psalm 104).*

Or you might think of Isaiah's vision of the seraphim. As well as the earth, God made heaven and all that dwell therein – cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, whatever other blessed spiritual beings there may be, all the heavenly hosts, the souls of just men made perfect. And they sing, *Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory*. Psalm 104 again: *He maketh his angels spirits : and his ministers a flaming fire.*

And perhaps we just contemplate the holiness of God. And, if we do, we may well say with the prophet Isaiah, *Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.*

And what does the NT lesson have to tell us? God sends His Spirit into the world. He pours out His Holy Spirit on the Church. The Holy Spirit of God dwells in our hearts and teaches us to address God – that great and mighty God; the acknowledged Lord; worshipped by all the earth; the Father everlasting; to Whom all Angels cry aloud, the Heavens, and all the Powers therein, to Whom Cherubin and Seraphin continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory; Whom the glorious company of the Apostles praise, Whom the goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise, Whom the noble army of Martyrs praise, Whom the holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge, the Father of an infinite Majesty – that this God is our Father and we may address Him as Abba, Dad. Led by His Spirit, we are the children of God. We are therefore no longer debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh. We have been born again. We are born from above. Those who live after the flesh will die, but those who live after the Spirit put to death the things of the flesh and rise to eternal life. The people of God *worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* (Philippians 3³).

It's all beyond Nicodemus. Who is Jesus really? He is obviously a great miracle worker. God is obviously with Him. But Who is He? We need to take a fresh look if we are to come to know Him, to be born again, born from above, Jesus says, if we are to enter the Kingdom of God. But how can we be born again? We can hardly return to our mothers' wombs and begin our lives again. We need to be born of water and of the Spirit. Is that the water of Baptism? Whatever this water is, it is the water of life. The Spirit is the Lord & Giver of life. The Spirit is not only, like water, essential for life; He is like the wind, powerful, but invisible. We don't know where the wind comes from or where the wind goes to, but we know its power. We cannot live without water and air. We cannot enjoy eternal life unless we have the Spirit of God. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* Led by His Spirit, we are the children of God. We are therefore no longer debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh. We have been born again. We are born from above. Those who live after the flesh will die, but those who live after the Spirit put to death the things of the flesh and rise to eternal life.

These things are made manifest to us human beings because Jesus, *the Son of man which is in heaven*, has come down to earth to show them to us. He reveals to us the full extent of the love of God in that, *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Once, when the children of Israel had rebelled against God in the wilderness, He sent poisonous snakes to bite them. When they cried out for deliverance, God told Moses to set a bronze snake up on a pole. Anyone who was bitten by the live snakes had only to look at the serpent on the pole in order to be saved. In the same way, the Son of man, the Son of God, was lifted up on the Cross. Every sinner who turns to Him is delivered from eternal death and receives the gift of eternal life. (John 16³³) *These things I have spoken unto, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son; and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.