



DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

Holy Trinity Sunday (C) – Romans 5:1-5

Focus: *A Hope Which Does Not Disappoint*

word of life

“...and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5 NRSV)

Read Romans 5:1-5

In the liturgical church calendar, Holy Trinity Sunday follows the Festival of Pentecost. It is rare to devote a Sunday to a belief, rather than an event in the Bible (especially in the life of Jesus) or to the teachings of Jesus for his followers. Trinity Sunday is a day to ponder the great mystery of how God is revealed to us. Preachers search to find the words to describe one God, yet Father, Son and Holy Spirit; one God yet Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

1. *How do you describe the Holy Trinity?*
2. *What questions do you have about the Trinity?*

In this passage from Romans, Paul refers to God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. There is a cyclical rhythm to Paul’s writing as he explains the results of God’s actions through Jesus Christ. Paul begins, “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand...” (Romans 5:1 NRSV) Out of sheer grace, God has acted through Jesus Christ, and humans are the recipients of the gift.

It is unclear in the original language of Greek in Romans 5:1 if the translation should read “we have peace” or “let us have peace.” Many have debated if Paul believed peace from God has already been given or that peace is yet to be obtained through Jesus Christ.

3. *How do Christians have peace through Jesus Christ—now?*
4. *What are the implications of the phrase “let us have peace with God”?*

Because God has already acted through Christ, we dare to hope—even to boast in that hope. Boasting is not about us and our feats on this earth. Instead we boast about God’s action which overflows and touches our lives. In Christ, we have access to God like never before. We boast out of a confidence in a gracious God who has been revealed through Jesus Christ.

5. *What do people often boast about?*
6. *What does it mean “to boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God” (Romans 5:2b NRSV)?*

Boasting is not limited to the glory of God; Paul encourages us to also boast in our sufferings, for hardships are not without lessons. “And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:3-5 NRSV)

God’s love is poured into our lives and hearts. Thus, we begin and end in a hope rooted in God alone, knowing it is the Holy Spirit of God at work in our lives.

7. *What phrase in this passage rings true to you?*
8. *What does it mean to live with hope?*

Word among us

Mr. Sam had given quite a bit of thought to the Sunday School class for Holy Trinity Sunday. He was ready when the class arrived. Proudly, he showed the class an ice cube, a glass of water, and steam from a cup of boiling water. As if at a science fair, Mr. Sam described in great detail the three forms of water found in solid, liquid, and vapor.

Then Mr. Sam drew on the board a stick picture of a man and wrote the words *father, son, and brother*. Finally, he drew three intertwined circles and began to discuss the Holy Trinity. When Mr. Sam finished his presentation, he felt quite pleased with his teaching—even boastful. He turned to ask the class for comments and questions. A brave girl asked, “Aren’t you just talking about God?” A boy jumped in, “I didn’t know we had three gods!” Someone else asked if he could chew on the ice cube. Another student asked to use the bathroom.

1. *How do you respond when people think the Trinity means there are three gods?*
2. *What do you think is helpful to emphasize when discussing the Trinity?*

On Holy Trinity Sunday, we read this beautiful lectionary passage (Romans 5:1-5) written by Paul in his letter to Romans. He wrote these words at the end of his life after he had experienced much tribulation and hardship. Although Paul knew firsthand of suffering and pain, he also knew about being strengthened by the grace of God. He wrote from one who had endured and persevered, one who had his own character shaped by suffering.

Paul was a first-person witness of how God’s love was poured out upon him and of a peace with God through Jesus Christ. There is no doubt Paul placed his hope in sharing the glory of God. It is that foundation of hope which shaped Paul’s life and teachings.

3. *How has it changed your life to have hope in God?*
4. *What does it feel like to hope?*

faith practice in daily life

Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed

Our hope is rooted in the actions of the Triune God—Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. We baptize in the name of the Triune God, acknowledging the work of God through Jesus Christ to claim us by the Holy Spirit forever. When we remember our baptism, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Trinity.

5. *What in baptism reminds you of the Holy Trinity?*
6. *What person of the Holy Trinity do you feel closest to? Why so?*

The One who is holy and gracious freely chooses to move in our world in many and various ways, touching and transforming lives. As humans with limited knowledge, we who are finite too often place limitations upon the ways God operates in the world. But God exceeds any of our finite expectations. In the Triune God, we know a true and certain hope.

7. *How important is it for you to believe in God who is beyond human explanations? Explain.*
8. *What can you face in your life because you have hope?*

Prayer

Triune God, pour out your love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit and give us hope. Amen.

last word

This week, depict hope through art or words.

Daily Faith Practices

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