

The Trinity – Jesus is Baptised

Matthew 3 v 13-17

Context:

We saw in our last study for Trinity Sunday that though the Bible never mentions the word 'trinity', nor do the writers ever explain the mystery of how God can be both *One* and *Three*, nevertheless, the truth of this glorious doctrine appears all through the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. The focus of the biblical authors is on the Trinity *in action*. They are eager to show us the many ways in which the three persons of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – work in partnership to accomplish their perfect will in the world and in our lives as Christians. In today's study we explore one such example. Let's travel to the banks of the River Jordan and join the crowds being baptised by John.

Observation:

1. From where did Jesus travel to the Jordan and why (v 13)?
2. What was John's reaction and why (v 14)?
3. How did Jesus respond to John (v 15)?
4. What did Jesus see as he came up from the water after being baptised (v 16)?
5. What did Jesus hear at that moment (v 17)?

Meaning:

1. Can you identify the three members of the Trinity in action in this passage?
2. What actions do each of them perform?
3. In the earlier part of Matthew chapter 3 it is clear that baptism was intended for sinners (see v 2 & v 6). It is also clear in the Bible (e.g Hebrews 4 v 15) that Jesus wasn't a sinner. John recognised this (see v 14 and compare with v 11-12). So, why do you think Jesus insisted on being baptised by John? What do you think he means by his explanation in v 15?
4. What do you think is the significance of what happens in v 16 – why did the Holy Spirit descend and alight on Jesus at this moment? – see Isaiah 11 v 1-9, Isaiah 61 v 1-3, John 1 v 29-34.
5. What is the significance of the voice from heaven (v 17)? On what other occasion in the life of Jesus did something similar happen?

Application:

1. If someone were to ask you to explain the Trinity, what would you say?
2. How do you see the three persons of the Trinity at work in your own life and experience?
3. In what ways does the doctrine of the Trinity distinguish the Christian faith from other religions (e.g Islam, Judaism, Hinduism)?

Pray:

- Thank God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – for their work in your life.