

“Faith Matters” # 19 – Reflections of the Trinity – August 27

The Christian faith celebrates the Trinity of (1) Father, (2) Son, and (3) Holy Spirit. The three combine, creating what Scripture calls “Love”. That’s a self-giving kind of love, not the prevalent gimmee kind. The Trinitarian God is love. Science reflects the Trinity. For science, it’s (1) Energy, (2) Matter, and (3) Information. Those three combine to bring about what we call Creation, or the universe.

There’s an infinite number of examples of that scientific trinity, such as black holes. You and I are more familiar with what Einstein found: that (1)E, energy equals the mass of (2)M, matter, times the speed of light squared: $e = mc^2$. That (3) information explains much of how the universe works.

Now what’s exciting for us is how the scientific trinity and the Christian Trinity are similar. (1) God as Creator is Energy; so it’s no wonder that the Old Testament tells us that no one has seen God and lived. (2) God as Jesus Christ comes to us as Matter that we can see: flesh, bones, hair, etc. (3) God reveals God’s self through Spirit, which the Apostle John refers to as the Spirit of Truth, and not just spiritual truth, informing us of all truth.

A mother who is known to one us complained that her 14-year-old son no longer believes in God. He had attended church regularly. My suspicion is that the God he can no longer believe in is an old, bearded Man sitting on a throne way up in the sky, a kind of infinitely powerful, divine Santa Claus. I wish that boy could encounter God as life-giving Energy who meets us in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

I know that’s a huge jump for him. It was for the Apostle Paul, too, who wrote, “When I was a child... I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.... Now I know only in part...” and he concludes in a trinitarian way: “Faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love” [I Cor. 13:11 ff]. There’s that self-giving Love again.

As that boy and we, too, learn about science’s trinity, we will see how it is a reflection of the Holy Trinity that is Creator, Saviour, and Holy Spirit. Thanks be to God.

(by Rev. Willard Pottinger – Erskine Presbyterian Church, Hamilton)