

# SERMON NOTES Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## sunnysidechurch

**Theme: Trinity Sunday, when we celebrate the truth that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit; One God, three persons.**

Main passage: **Matthew 28.16-20**      Additional Passage: **Psalm 8**

### Some of the main themes from the sermon

#### Trinity Sunday

This passage is set for Trinity Sunday, mainly because of v19, which names the three persons of the Trinity. Rather than dwelling on theological theory, I would like to look at the two bible passages set for today and let them lead us to a deeper understanding of the God who created us, who redeemed us and who lives within and between us.

#### A puzzled Psalmist

In Psalm 8, the Psalmist looks at the glory of creation and asks ‘What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?’ (v4). He is awed by the realisation that God has made us ‘a little lower than the angels’ (v5).

Thinking back to Genesis 1.28-33, God had always had a very high view of the role humans should play in His creation. Then, of course, human rebellion wrecked that high role as God’s stewards of creation and saw the spoiling of all that God had made.

#### A rescue plan

The next few millennia are charted in the bible as God works through his people from Abraham through Moses and the Prophets to mend the devastation wrought by human rebellion. This rescue plan, the establishment of God’s Kingdom, reaches a climax in the person and work of Jesus who brings in God’s kingly reign. See for instance Matthew 12.28 and Luke 4.17-21.

#### Jesus explains God’s high destiny for his disciples in the new creation

Fast forward to the scene at the very end of Matthew’s Gospel: Jesus is with the eleven disciples on the mountain (Matt 28.16). He has risen from death and tells them that ‘All authority in heaven and on earth’ has been given to him (v18). God really is King now. Therefore, he says, go....

**Go and make disciples, baptise them and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you**

Jesus hands the responsibility for making God’s Kingdom come to his disciples. The chain reaction by which God’s Kingdom will grow is down to us. Interestingly, if you look at the Book of Acts, they face the same conflicts and joys that Jesus did. Maybe we should expect the same.

**And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age.**

But we are not on our own. Jesus promises that he will be with us always, through the Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost, which empowers us to do all that Jesus did as we take on his life. This Spirit is more present in our lives than we often are aware. We just need to become aware of his continuing but often quiet influence on our individual lives and common life.

#### *Some questions for thought and discussion this week*

- ① Think about and discuss times when you have known in your innermost being that the Holy Spirit was present with you.**
  - ② If, as the passage and sermon suggest, the spreading of God’s Kingdom is down to us, what does that mean for the way we do each of the following:**
    - React to the news of what’s happening in the USA?
    - Cope with disappointment?
    - Decide how to spend our time and money?
  - ③ Think about an area of your life that causes you pain. How would it be different if God’s Kingdom came ‘on earth as in heaven’?**
  - ④ Often the things that are wrong in our lives are the result of complex and intractable causes. How can we pray and act both faithfully AND intelligently?**
  - ⑤ Do we expect too little of Jesus if ‘all authority in heaven and on earth’ has been given to him? If so, why might this be?**
  - ⑥ Are there any other issues that the sermon has raised for you?**
- Mentioned in the sermon: ‘Simply Jesus’ by Tom Wright – a Good Read!!**