

TRINITY SUNDAY  
 GOSPEL ST JOHN 3:1-15  
 The Way to the Father

Ripples / of **shockwaves** filter through the crowds after a preacher overturns the tables of the money changers in the temple and / drives out the traders.

The unseemly event sends murmurings around Jerusalem about / who this Jesus really is?

What does he think he's doing?

Who gave **him** the authority?

It is with this background that John **in chapter 3** records a conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus.

Nicodemus is a Pharisee who is a leader of the church and state. He is a member of the Sanhedrin Governing Council and **he strictly observes the laws of Moses** and the traditions of the Elders.

This to **him** is the way of salvation!

He's been watching Jesus, and seen his **teaching, healing and miracles** and he's very impressed.

Nicodemus wants to find out more / but he's an important man and isn't prepared to risk his reputation,

so, he comes under the cover at night,  
 for a private conversation with Jesus.

He's curious but doesn't understand why Jesus has created the turmoil in the temple.

He is questioning who this man really is?

He sees Jesus but he doesn't perceive that he is the Messiah, God the Son.

His confusion and misunderstanding mirrors ours when it comes to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

The Trinity

### Pause

The art of seeing, hearing and understanding, **or not**, is part of our everyday life.

We're constantly bombarded with information that we judge and take an opinion on, in one way or another.

Sometimes we see and perceive correctly and sometimes we don't !

When we look up at a cloudless night sky for instance, **with its countless stars**, we could say that some see **but do not perceive!**

/ Light travels at 168,000miles/second

So, what we see when we look up at the sky is something that may have / **ceased to exist** millions of years ago but the knowledge of its existence is **still coming at us** in the light we see in the stars.

The reality of their disappearance is hidden from us.

Some of us see and perceive that, but **others are deceived by what they think they see.**

We see but we don't see.

A bit like politics and politicians perhaps.....

And When Nicodemus comes to talk with Jesus,

**he is deceived by what he thinks he sees.**

He sees Jesus the man but doesn't see Jesus, God the.

What then follows is a difficult conversation.

Jesus sweeps Nicodemus initial niceties aside and goes about telling him how he must change.

He says:

*'Unless a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God'.*

The theme of this conversation with Jesus throughout is the kingdom of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and nothing short of a new start is what's needed.

**Jesus seeks belief and faith, / a change of heart through repentance and transformation (metanoia).**

But Nicodemus takes Jesus words literally and he's quick to question:

*'How can a man be born again when he is old? How can a man be returned to the womb and be born again?'*

Like many of us when we look at the stars in the night sky, Nicodemus doesn't perceive the truth of New Birth.

**He sees but he doesn't see.**

So he asks **HOW do I do that!?**

Jesus tells him / he must be reborn of water and spirit.

**Pause**

Water is symbolic of the baptism of John. The mission of repentance.

And What John achieves through the symbolic use of cleansing water,

**Jesus empowers with the Holy Spirit.**

He tells Nicodemus:

NEW BIRTH IS THE WAY OF CHRIST.

**YOU MUST ALLOW** THE HOLY SPIRIT TO / BLOW WHERE IT WILL

TRUST YOURSELF TO IT

/ ACCEPT ITS POWER, ITS DIRECTION NOT BY UNDERSTANDING BUT BY FAITH ALONE.

But how do / we know and understand that in our lives today?

**Pause**

All of us long for more meaning in life, strive for understanding when events around us **shock or frighten** or just wish to gain a stronger sense of worth and purpose.

That longing is the Holy Spirit drawing us towards the life of God,

Opening our eyes to the truth of Christ Jesus.

Without being born of water and the Spirit **we cannot see the kingdom of God**

We **cannot value** those precious things of life, the eternal things of God.

If we focus on that eternal horizon it cannot help but influence, little by little, the way we live our lives now.

The way we **make decisions, make choices** and the way **we relate to each other** and to God.

The way **we see and perceive** the reality of who God is.

**Pause**

Towards the end of chapter 3 John reveals one of the most famous lines in the Gospels:

*'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.'*

/ As we think about those words and as / we all seek to understand what it says to each of us we find ourselves face to face with God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Pause**

Today is Trinity Sunday.

The first Sunday after Pentecost when we celebrate the doctrine of the Trinity.

One God - three persons:

God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

**It 's spelt out in our collect** when we pray **that we may be led** by the glory of the eternal Trinity and the power of the divine majesty.

**In Revelation 4** We receive the vision of John who is called to heaven to see God in all his full majesty.

In all these words and images, we acknowledge by faith what we don't fully perceive or understand by knowledge.

**Our example is Jesus.** He is our model for living. Christ, the Son of Man, come down out of heaven, the second person of the Trinity, **the very life of heaven, the very life of God** in human expression.

In our reading Nicodemus **/doesn't see and perceive who Jesus really is.**

He had to learn **to see Jesus as God the Son** and accept him by faith in his heart.

Be born again of water and of the Spirit

And As he came closer to our Lord, and worshiped our Trinitarian God he became more Christ like.

He learned little by little,

**To see the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,**

And to trust the power of the Holy Spirit to lead him.

**/And so must we!**

Amen