

TRINITY – ETERNAL LIFE FOR NOW AND ETERNITY

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We listen to this intimate moment 2,000 years after it took place. That's incredible, isn't it? Initially, I feel kind of annoyed with Nicodemus. He has a position as a Pharisee, he is a member of the Jewish ruling council. Yet on the face of it, the questions he asks of Jesus seem so basic, even mocking. Like 'How can anyone be born when they are old? Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!'. But the answers that Jesus gives him are so rich and complex that we realise that Nicodemus' questions can't possibly be stupid.

We are told that this conversation happened by cover of night. Perhaps Nicodemus was too embarrassed or afraid of what other people would say. If this is the case, he is one of the most relatable characters in the whole of the Bible. We're all human, and we don't like to feel ignorant, or different from others. Sure, Nicodemus goes to ask his questions at night time out of fear, but at least he asks them! I can't count the number of times I have chosen to remain silent when I wanted to ask a question or know more about something out of fear of embarrassment. But Nicodemus trusts Jesus to answer his questions, even humbly calling him Rabbi, despite the controversy that was surrounding Jesus at the time.

We read this conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus on the day that we celebrate the Trinity. The Trinity – our belief that God is one in three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. It is how God moves, relates, dances and presents Godself in the world – always through the relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is an exquisite entanglement that flows back and forth. A demonstration for how we can live together - different yet all part of the same life. Our relationships with others and the world around us are tiny examples of the deep entanglements that exist in the world.

And God made these entanglements even deeper, and even more precious, as described in possibly the most famous thing that Jesus said. '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.'. This God – The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the same God whose voice causes whole landscapes to change, so loved the world that he gave himself for everyone who believes in Him. The eternal life promised by Jesus in this verse isn't just for after our material bodies pass away, but it is to do with the life we live now. This eternal life starts when we are born again in Jesus, it comes through the presence of the Spirit. And if our spirits and our flesh are intimately connected from the time of our birth, the eternal life that Jesus offers is made all the more incredible when it is fully immersed in the mess and entanglements of our world.