

The Adopted Life

Second Sunday of Advent ~ 12.05.2010

Welcome Christ By Welcoming Each Other

Central to the Triune God's life with us is hospitality—the art of making space in your life for others. Yahweh made space in his life for creatures, but when he came to Adam & Eve's house for a visit, they hid behind the houseplants and pretended they weren't home. From one perspective, the incarnation is the Trinity's way of injecting their hospitable-ness back into the human race.

Let's be honest: All of us have done our part to make the world an inhospitable place for others, and that is why Christ's welcoming presence is painful to us. It contradicts us, crushes us (Ps 72.4), burns us (Mt 3.7-10), and even kills us (Isa 11.4). But even our death is made to serve our resurrection. Pain hurts, but it is a gloriously effective teacher.

Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans because of inhospitable race relations between the Jewish and Gentile believers there. Paul had to give them the painful reminder that when God welcomes you into his life, it is so that you can extend that same welcome to others (Rom 15.9-12). When the Trinity welcomed us into their life, it meant brining all of our crap—even death—into their life. And if hospitality hurt God, it will surely not be painless for us. But as we do the hard work of bearing with each other, the glorious Triune harmony is earthed in our human life-together (15.5-7).

~ John Stonecypher