

The Adopted Life

Third Sunday of Lent ~ 03.27.2011

Real Relationship

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit live in an actual, real relationship. They're not pretending. The language of Trinity is not merely a word picture. The Real Father really loves and relates to the Real Son in the Real and personal communion of the Holy Spirit.

That means that our relationship with the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit is *also* a Real relationship. This is what John points us to in his article this week about Israel in the wilderness. God is personal relationship, not a substance to be tested and experimented on. As Tim describes in his commentary on Psalm 95, this Real relationship has Real boundaries and Real consequences - both good and bad - that flow from how we live in this relationship.

I bring all this up to help us further grasp what this week's Lenten texts are telling us. A non-relational, non-personal view of God is dangerous to our spiritual health. We cannot objectify God and make him the subject of theological debate (like the woman at the well in John 4) nor can we think that God is a slot machine that dispenses salvation in response to our works of faith and/or repentance (the idea that Paul condemns in Romans 5). The Trinity really is relationship and we really are a part of that relationship. To believe anything else is hell but to allow Jesus to share his faith with us, and to believe this truth, is heaven.

~ Jonathan Stepp