

Reading: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Are you happy? You might have been too busy to ask yourself this question. It's an important question. Can I invite you to think of a time when you were happy? It might have been last week, or maybe it was last year. I hope all of us can think of a time when we were happy. Hold that time we will come back to it soon.

Today is Trinity Sunday and we Christians have some very profound insights into the nature of God.

Firstly, God is a community of love: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is so much love at the heart of God that it pours out into all creation and makes the universe. We read in Genesis that God's Spirit broods across the waters bringing order out of chaos.

God is best known for loving, creating, and bringing beauty out of chaos. This can all seem a bit academic until we read in Genesis that we are made in the image and likeness of God, that in all of us there is the spark of the divine image.

Returning to my question, "When were you most happy?" I'm going to take an educated guess and say there are three times you have been most happy.

1. When you are among people that love you.
2. When you are being creative.
3. When you are bringing order out of chaos.

Happiness is people that love us.

Our families are meant to be the place where we are surrounded by love. Of course, this isn't always the case, and the church is God's plan to surround all of us with a place of care even when families are far away or not loving or caring. That's why we have coffee and chat, so that once a week people have somewhere they can go and be surrounded by people who care. That's why we have the Care Bears - so that hopefully people are not left alone but have a link with the church, a community that cares for them. That's why we baptize, and marry, and bless homes and families, and weep and laugh at people's funerals. In doing these things we are surrounded in love.

If you are unhappy, find someone who cares for you, (there are lots at church.) This doesn't mean people who agree with you or people who don't challenge you, but it does mean people who want the very best for you. To be happy we need to be cared for and we need to care for someone else. Like God the Holy Trinity, we are designed to be a community of love.

Secondly, to be happy we need to find expression to our creative energy. Because we are created in the image and likeness of God, we have a divine spark of creativeness,

and that creativeness needs expression. For some it's in music, for others art. It might be writing or gardening or baking, or computer programming, or knitting or whatever. (If your gift is baking, please see me afterwards and I'll give you my address to drop your baking off too.) I hope all of us have had the experience of doing something creative and feeling transported beyond ourselves. "Where did that idea come from?" we ask to ourselves. The answer, of course, is God. We human beings need outlets for our creative energies.

Thirdly, being made in the image and likeness of God, we are happy when we are bringing order out of chaos. Just as God brought order out of the primeval waters so we need to bring beauty out of chaos.

Tidying your workshop or kitchen or deck or your garden. It might feel like a chore, but it can bring us happiness. Doing your taxes, washing the car, finding time to plan a holiday, writing your memoirs. I'm planning my autobiography but haven't yet found anyone to write it for me.

If you are one of those obsessively tidy people who has nothing left to tidy, find a teenager's bedroom. My friends had teenagers who left their room in a terrible mess. So, each week she went in with a rubbish bag. Anything left on the floor went in the rubbish.

Our reading in Proverbs provides an insight into the very heart of God. God is beginning the work of creation and has a companion who is working alongside Him delighting in His creation, rejoicing in the inhabited world, and delighting in the human race. Personified as lady wisdom, Christians later came to see this companion as the pre-existent Christ spoken of in John's Gospel ... "In the beginning was the Word and through Him all things came into being."

We too are called to work alongside God, delighting in God's creation, using our divine creative spark to bring out the very best of our human nature, to enjoy the company of others.

Happiness is being at home in our divine nature.

Elizabeth Webb writes, in a commentary on this passage:

It is by the power of delight that God brought forth the world, and Proverbs 8 tells us that God delights in particular in humanity. God's delight is the power that drives God to create, forming all that is through the ordering power of divine joy. Human life, guided by God's Wisdom in the ways of righteousness, is God's special delight; Wisdom draws human beings into delighted relationship with the divine.

Trinity Sunday stands to remind us that we have a rightful claim on happiness. That joy and contentment are within our reach when we begin to live out of the divine image placed within us so long ago.

If you are unhappy find companionship. If you are unhappy find expression for your creative self. If you are unhappy find a corner of chaos and bring it to beautiful order.

Joy Cowley, New Zealand poet and Christian, writes:

*Precious child, don't ever say that you are nobody.
You are not nobody. You are not even somebody. You are special, a one time, never to be repeated act of God's creation. You are unique. Listen! Ever since the beginning of the universe, when God spoke the word that created matter, ever since the emergence of life on this planet, there has never been another being made exactly like you. Not only that. There will never be another like, again. Not ever! Think about that for a moment. Consider your giftedness, unlike any other. Reflect on the position that only you can fill. Doesn't that say something to your heart?*