

God the Holy Trinity: 'The Lover of Mankind'

Supplementing the talk by Father Demetrios Bathrellos

'God is love'.

1 John 4:8

Is there a God?

- Some people fail to believe in God.
- Others believe mistakenly about Him.

What about the Christian God?

The Church believes:

- A** Its God is the true God, who loves us
- B** He is One God
- C** He is three Persons and One God
 - Each Person of the Trinity is fully God
 - The Persons are distinct but never divided
 - He is the God of love and communion
 - God is good, just and merciful
 - The unity of God distinguishes Christianity from religions that believe in many gods
 - The Trinity distinguishes it from Judaism and from Islam.

How do we know God?

- A** Through the creation
- B** Through revelation:
 - First to the people of Israel
 - Then through sending His Son to be born a man (the Incarnation), thus revealing God in human flesh.



Christ Carrying his Cross, fresco,
Monastery of Voronet, Romania

Believing

- A** It is not enough to know about God, we need a relationship with God
- B** We can never know God fully.

How does the Trinity affect us?

We look at an icon of the Holy Trinity. It speaks of our own relationships with each other.

God's love

- 1 Is free and creative
- 2 Is immeasurable and unconditional
- 3 Is unselfish
- 4 Is forgiving
- 5 Is personal
- 6 Is caring and provides for all our needs
- 7 Respects our freedom
- 8 Teaches us
- 9 Is just
- 10 Is humble and sacrificial.

Why does God allow suffering?

- Christ on the Cross shared our suffering
- Christ is with us when we suffer
- We can use our suffering in positive ways.

'He is a good God who loves mankind'

The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom

'Sonship is a gift which cannot be lost, although it can be profaned.'

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom



The Hospitality of Abraham
Byzantine Museum, Athens (14th Century)

Recommended Reading

- i. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of Bishop Kallistos, *The Orthodox Way*, revised edition (St Vladimir's Seminary Press: Crestwood, New York, 2002) ISBN 0-913836-58-3
- ii. St. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit* (St Vladimir's Seminary Press: Crestwood, New York, 2006) ISBN 978-0-913-83674-3

Your notes:
