

I was digging through a dusty attic box the other day, searching for some old photographs, when I came across two 8mm film reels. They were shot by my uncle Malcolm, who passed away quite some time ago. The film boxes had my name written on them, among others, and I was intrigued. What could these possibly be? I had no access to an 8mm film projector (does anyone?) so I shipped them off to a service to have them converted to DVD. A couple of weeks later, the mail arrives with my new DVD and I couldn't wait to play it. The film opens with a scene of my late grandmother basting a turkey in the oven, and then quickly cuts to shot of my older brother, at 3 years old, doing somersaults in the living room. Then the scene shifts again, and there I am, all of 13 months old, toddling around the room as my older brother cavorts in tandem. As the scene continues, my father picks me up and begins bouncing me on an easy chair. I laugh with delight and he does as well. There's no sound in the film, but you can see the love in both of our eyes. My Dad was 29 years old in the movie – he turns 92 this year. We still love each other very much.

A father, a son, and love. That's the entire point of the Trinity, the entire point of the celebration today. We can get very wrapped up in theology and puzzle over the challenge in understanding God as three persons. I won't discourage you from digging into the topic. It is endlessly fascinating. But in the end, it's not that complicated at all. God speaks his Word to the world with Love. (repeat)

If I were to show you a picture of a stranger and ask you to describe that person, you would quickly focus on their looks, what they are wearing, and attempt to discern something meaningful from the look on their face. But it wouldn't take long for you to shrug your shoulders and admit that there's not a lot more you can say. This is a still image, a snapshot in time. I wonder how many of us see God this way, or Jesus Christ. Yup, he looks like a nice guy. I guess... What do you need to make a better judgment? Action! Yes, action! Let's see this person act in the world. But wait, we have a problem. Jesus died a long time ago. There are no 8mm films of him and his Dad in existence. But Jesus had a lot of friends, and some of his friends were happy to share stories of how Jesus acted in the world. They were compiled in this book, and we hear them every week. So, can you describe Jesus now? How about God? Can you describe Him?

Well yes, in a way. You can certainly retell the stories about Jesus, and many of these are quite inspiring. You can infer something about God from these same stories, and Jesus makes some pretty outrageous claims about God. He called God his Daddy, for crying out loud. Jesus loved his Father, and His Father was very pleased with Jesus. A father, a son, and love. Yes, very inspiring. Don't you wish you could have been there to see that for yourself? That would answer all your questions, right? *The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they all saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.* What the heck? How could they have any doubts? He's right there in front of their eyes! They've seen him in action! He's come back from the dead! What more do they need?

We start with a picture. It tells us something, but not that much. We then focus on action, what that person does. Ideally, we see for ourselves, but sometimes we rely on other witnesses. Do you really know that person now? It's better for sure, but still not enough. So let's add one more piece. Let's add a relationship, a first-name basis. More than that, let's suppose that this person wants to be your friend, and he is very persistent about it. At first, you might find that a bit off-putting, like he's trying too hard, but then you begin to realize that he's genuine, that he's authentic, and you become a better person when you're around him. This person challenges you, yet never berates you when you fall short. He's encouraging and thoughtful and very reliable. Any of us would love a friend like that, wouldn't we? And then one day, he asks, "Have you met my Father?" And you reply, "Well, I've seen pictures of him." And Jesus laughs and tells you, "I and the Father are one." And all you can do at that point is fall to your knees and say, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinner."

To understand God, you need more than a picture. You need more than stories written in a book. You need more than a knowledge of Jesus. You need a relationship, built on love, and it is only because of that love, as personified by the Holy Spirit, that you can say, "Jesus is Lord." The Trinity is very simple really. Father, Son, and Love, each moving in and through the other to attract you, intrigue you, challenge you, and love you to the point of your willing and humble decision to join the divine dance. Your decision. St. Paul is crystal clear today: *We are children of God...heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.* God wants us!

I'm often asked the question, "Okay, I want that relationship. How do I get it? What do I have to do?" First of all, identify where you are in that relationship journey now. Is Jesus just a picture, a figure on a cross? Is God a Michelangelo painting? Or, perhaps, you're digging a bit deeper. Are you reading the Bible? Taking a Bible study course? Are you learning about Jesus, about God? That's progress, for sure. Are you taking part in the Mass each Sunday? Are you thinking about becoming a lector or a eucharistic minister? A hospitality minister, an altar server? More progress. How about outside of that hour a week on Sunday? Are you taking part in a Mission Circle activity? Helping to teach kids? Volunteering to coach a team? Are you praying in a small church community? Are you intrigued by prison ministry? Note the progression – Image to Action to Relationship. Father to Son to Spirit. It is an immersion process, each layer of immersion more enveloping, more challenging, more joyful than the last. That's the Trinity in the world, that's God in action.

As I watched that ancient family video, I wanted so much to drop into that living room and just sit in the chair and watch the bouncing baby boy, his doting father, and witness the love freely expressed and given. But then it occurred to me that love never dies, because God is love, and I can still call my Dad and tell him I love him, and when Jesus says that I am with you always, until the end of the age, he is simply stating a fact: I'll always love *you*. God isn't very complicated after all, is He?