

## Trinity 2 BCP

**O LORD**, who never failest to help and govern them who thou dost bring up in thy stedfast fear and love; Keep us, we beseech thee, under the protection of thy good providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The first great commandment, to love God with all our hearts and souls and minds and strength.  
Minds.  
Intellects.  
How do we love God with our intellects?

By using our heads, intellects. By thinking, questioning, ratiocination. By challenging what goes on around us in a godly way. You can't say that Jesus is not challenging: everything he does is challenging. He challenges establishment, Romans, Pharisees, pompous asses, the lot. He condemns nothing – well not quite, he condemns hypocrisy and pretence and people who impair the development of children, he condemns almost nothing, but is always full of compassion. Hear the epistle in that wonderful phrase: *whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

These two readings tell us, as do so many others, that Divine wisdom is not that of the world. Pilate asked what is truth. Wrong question. Right question: who is truth. And the way of truth is compassion, not rules. bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. *And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*

The challenge for us is: how? That is why we need to think and reason. God gave us brains: let us use them. Let us feed them by asking godly questions, studying Holy Scripture, applying reason to Scripture and to the society in which we live. Anglicanism famously regards its three pillars as Scripture, reason and tradition. We read Scripture (d we hear it?). We bang on a lot about tradition. But we are sometimes too unwilling to think about our religion. We see a lack of compassion in too much rule-bound behaviour: it's always been done this way.

Let's be intelligent about our faith. The key thing, perhaps, is to do nothing that comes between ourselves and anyone else and God. We are bound to get it wrong, because we don't see everything, and that is the sin of the world that Jesus takes away, but we can do our best. That is all we can do.

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