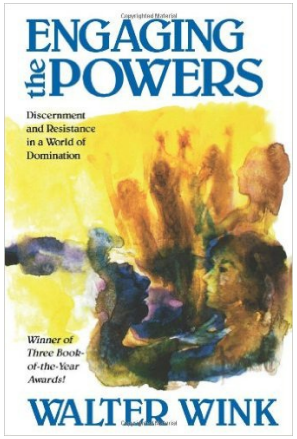
SERMON TAKE-HOME NOTES — June 15, 2025

Title: "The Trinity: God's Dance of Love That Is Saving Us from the Human Dance with Violence (Evil), Part 1"



Pastor Paul's nomination for the best opening sentence in a book of theology is from Walter Wink's *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*:

> One of the most pressing questions facing the world today is, How can we oppose evil without creating new evils and being made evil ourselves.

We've suffered through another week in which the human faith in violence to stop violence has been all around us, permeating the news through many stories. Isn't that faith in violence to stop violence the new evil that has been perpetually created by our efforts to oppose evil?

Here's something even crazier: The Trinity tells the story of how it took a concerted effort by three persons within God's self to work together to save us from this vicious evil circle. Human relations in history keep repeating themselves to end-up with an ultimate faith in the politics of violence. The divine relationships with God's internal 'self' have plotted to enter human history through the sending of the Messiah to suffer our violence on the cross; through the Parent-Creator God's raising of the Messiah to new life; and through the Spirit of Truth's continual working to guide humankind into the truth.

John's entire Gospel tells the story of the Trinitarian God entering history through the cross and resurrection of the Messiah so that the Spirit of Truth could continue throughout history to invite us into faith in God's saving politics of love. We see a compact glimpse of those internal divine relations as the Son speaks to the disciples about the Father and the Spirit of truth. But we see the mission of salvation that they are plotting pull-off in the verses immediately preceding:

> And when the Spirit of truth comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and justice and judgment: about sin, because they do not have faith in me [*because they instead have faith in the power of violence*]; about justice, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer [*which is why the Spirit of truth will need to carry on the work of helping us to know true justice*]; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned [*in other words, the Jewish Council and the Roman governor condemn themselves because they are about to condemn the Messiah sent from God, who was sent in order to live for us a politics of love instead of a politics of violence*]. — John 16:8-11, with Pastor Paul's additions for context

Here's the bottom line: We saw again this week how most people still put their faith in the traditional human politics of violence when they feel threatened. But because the cross and resurrection have happened in history, the Spirit of truth is still able to do its work. Especially when followers of Jesus — you and I — get on board and join the Trinitarian dance of love. So today, after another long week of witnessing the consequences of the human faith in violence, let's celebrate the Trinity's dance of love. Let's celebrate that you and I are invited into a politics of love, even in the face of humanity's continuing dance with the politics of violence.

How do we oppose evil without becoming evil ourselves? By joining the Trinity's dance of love that saves us from the vicious circle of violence.

Next week: "The Trinity: God's Dance of Love That Is Saving Us from the Human Dance with Violence (Evil), Part 2" a more in-depth look at Trinitarian relations thru Luke's story of the Gerasene demoniac.