

The Sent-ient by Trinity

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In 1993, a sports comedy about a tropical island delivered an unexpected masterclass on what it means to be human. *Cool Runnings* tells the true story of Jamaica's first-ever Olympic bobsled team. Derice Bannock, a gifted sprinter, watches his Olympic dream shatter in a split-second track accident. Refusing to quit, he recruits three misfit friends and a broken, disgraced former coach. Together, they form an impossible alliance, no money, no ice, no snow, and honestly, no business sliding down a frozen mountain at eighty miles an hour.

Before they ever touch a real bobsled, their coach puts them through a grueling training regimen. They push a rusted Volkswagen through Jamaican dirt. They sit crammed inside a wooden crate in the sweltering heat, swaying in perfect unison, learning to breathe as one body. They had to be formed before they could be sent.

Today is a unique day in the life of the Church. It is Trinity Sunday, the day we pull back the curtain on our faith's deepest mystery, that our God is not a lonely, solitary ruler, but a beautiful, eternal community of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is also Peace with Justice Sunday, the day we remember that the Gospel is not a private country club for our souls, but a revolutionary movement meant to dismantle systemic oppression and bring God's shalom to a fractured world. These two things might feel disconnected; high theology on one hand, boots-on-the-ground justice on the other. But our scriptures today bridge that gap with one undeniable truth: **the God who formed you is the very same God who sends you.**

You may notice a strange hyphen in the sermon title, right in the middle of the word *sentient*. Usually, to be sentient simply means to be conscious, to feel pain and joy. But when we look at Genesis and Matthew together, we discover that God calls us to something deeper. We are not just alive. We are **Sent-ient**, a people created, formed, and trained by the Triune God for the express purpose of being propelled into a world crying out for peace with justice.

To understand what it means to be sent, we must return to the very beginning. Genesis opens not with a silent, static deity, but with a holy, dynamic commotion. The earth is a formless void. Darkness covers the deep. And the Spirit of God — the *Ruah*, the divine breath — sweeps over the face of the waters. Right there in the chaos, the Trinity is already at work, whispering creation into being. God speaks. The Word goes forth. The Spirit hovers.

Then, at the pinnacle of this creative masterpiece, God says something unprecedented: “*Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness.*”

Hear the plural. Hear the community. You and I were not created by a detached, monochromatic god who wanted isolated subjects. We were spoken into existence by a relational, collaborative, Triune God. To be made in God’s image means that community is baked directly into our DNA. We are hardwired for connection and engineered for relationship.

This same God instructs newly formed humanity to exercise dominion over creation. That word has been badly abused; used to justify slavery, crush the vulnerable, and strip-mine the earth. But because we bear the image of a loving, self-giving Triune God, our dominion must look exactly like God’s care. It means stewardship, keeping things in a state where God can look at them and say, “*It is very good.*” To be truly sentient means having a heart wide awake to the world, able to feel a deep, holy ache when confronted with poverty, racism, and violence.

But being made in God’s image is only the first step. Just like those sprinters in *Cool Runnings*, you can have all the raw potential in the world and still need rigorous training before you can survive the icy track of real life.

God did not form us once in the garden and walk away. God is still forming us, and sometimes that formation looks like discipline.

We see this in Matthew 28. The eleven disciples gather on a mountain in Galilee. Notice the raw honesty of the text: “*When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.*” Standing in the presence of the risen Christ, they are still wrestling with fear and uncertainty. They are an unpolished team.

For three years, Jesus had been running them through an intense training program of the soul. He took them into the dirt of human suffering. He showed them how to touch the untouchable, feed the hungry, and confront corrupt systems of power. He disciplined their egos. He stretched their capacity for mercy. He was training them to understand that the kingdom of heaven is not about dominance; it is about justice, mercy, and peace.

The local church is meant to be that same training ground. Church is not a theater where we sit as passive spectators. It is a gymnasium for justice, a laboratory for peace. When we gather week after week, praying the liturgy, confessing our sins, studying the scriptures, the Triune God is actively training us. Softening our hard hearts. Dismantling our prejudices. Teaching us to synchronize our lives with the rhythm of the Spirit, just like those four men in a wooden crate, learning to sway together as one.

Why does God invest so much energy in forming us? Matthew 28 gives the answer: because we are being *sent*.

Jesus stands before those worshiping doubters and delivers the Great Commission: “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.*”

Notice the destination. Jesus does not say, “*Stay on this beautiful mountain and build a monument.*” He says, “*Go.*” Go into the valleys. Go into the crowded, chaotic cities. Go where people are hurting, where systems are rigged, and where peace feels like a distant dream.

This is the moment we transform from merely sentient into truly **Sent-ient**.

On this Peace with Justice Sunday, we are reminded that obeying Christ's commands is not only about personal morality; it is about public justice. It means demanding fair wages for workers. Dismantling racial hostility in our neighborhoods. Protecting the immigrant. Feeding the hungry child. Preserving creation for generations yet unborn. Above all, we are to share the good news of what Christ accomplished on the cross: peace with justice for all people. We are sent to be the physical presence of Christ in the spaces where the world is cold and unforgiving.

In the climactic final scene of *Cool Runnings*, the Jamaican team is flying down the Olympic track when a bolt snaps and the sled crashes, grinding to a halt just short of the finish line. The stadium goes silent. The dream seems dead.

But then something beautiful happens. The teammates lift themselves out of the wreckage, hoist that heavy iron sled onto their bruised shoulders, and walk together across the finish line. No gold medal, but something far greater: they transformed the hearts of everyone watching.

Church, the work of peace with justice can feel exactly like that. Sometimes the bolts snap. Sometimes we crash. But hear the final promise of Jesus: "*And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*"

You are not sent into the cold world alone. The Triune God who made you, the Christ who saved you, and the Spirit who trains you is sitting right there in the sled. And even when we crash, that divine community lifts us up and gives us the courage to keep walking.

You are uniquely made. You are meticulously trained. You are officially commissioned.

Go forth as the Sent-ient body of Christ, bringing light into darkness, peace into chaos, and justice to all nations.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.