

Holy Trinity Sunday

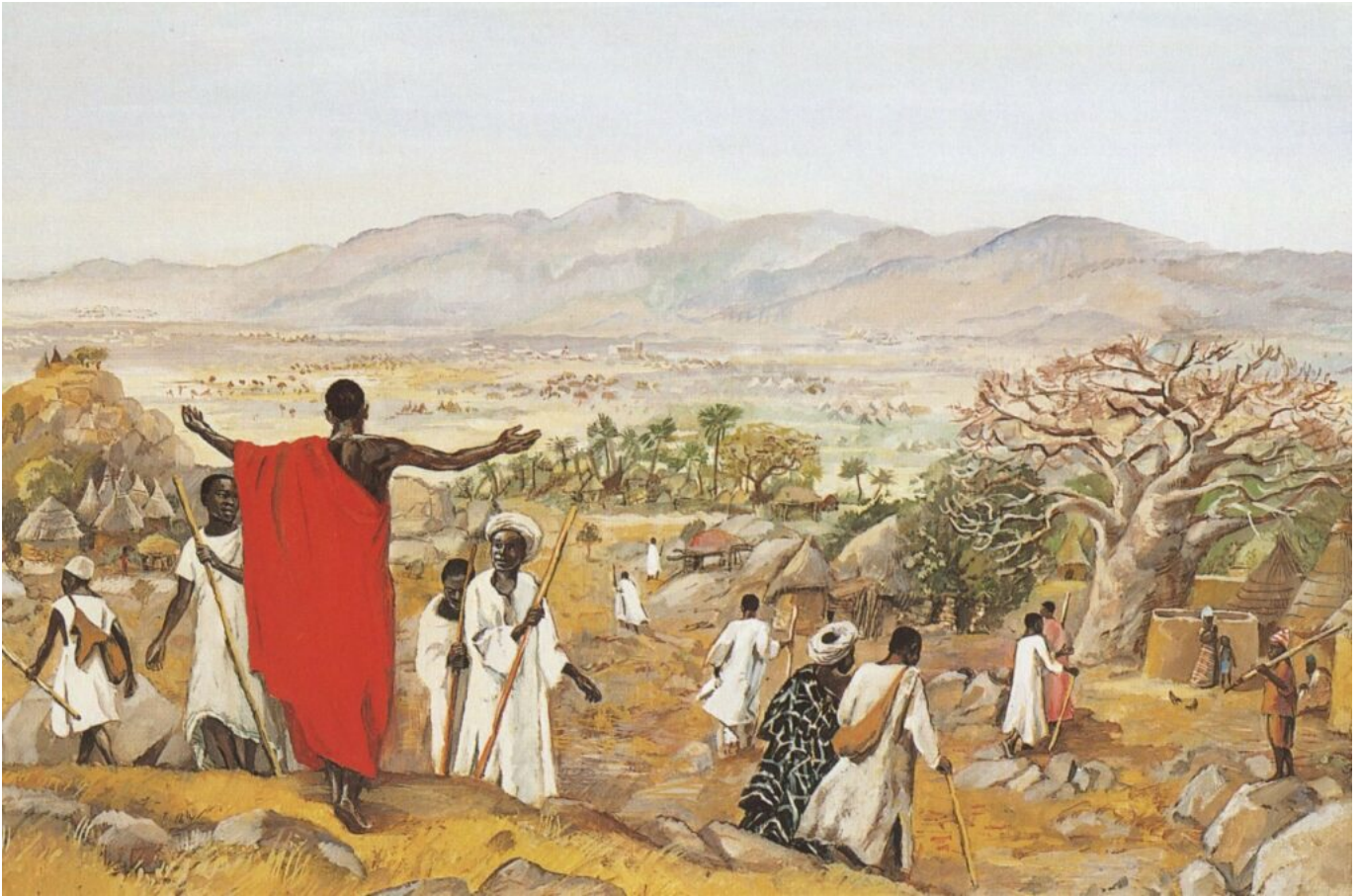
**Community Theater: God (in Three Acts) Sends Us
Forth**

Matthew 28: 16-20

Holy Trinity Sunday

Analysis by Mark A. Marius

16Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



The mission to the world (Jesus Mafa, Cameroon; via Art in the Christian Tradition, Vanderbilt Divinity Library)

Jesus acts out God's love for us by dying on the biggest stage, crucified by his critics. But God's Word is more powerful than the stage, so God gives Jesus the authority to continue the show. And with that act our script is flipped as God imparts his grace and mercy.

DIAGNOSIS: Apart from God Our Words Die

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem): Authors or Actors?

Who is responsible for your narrative? You? Or are you just an actor in God's story? Whose story are you trying to tell anyway? When you get so focused on being the main character it is easy for you to depart from God's script and narrative to serve your own flesh. Whether or not you end up the hero of your own story,

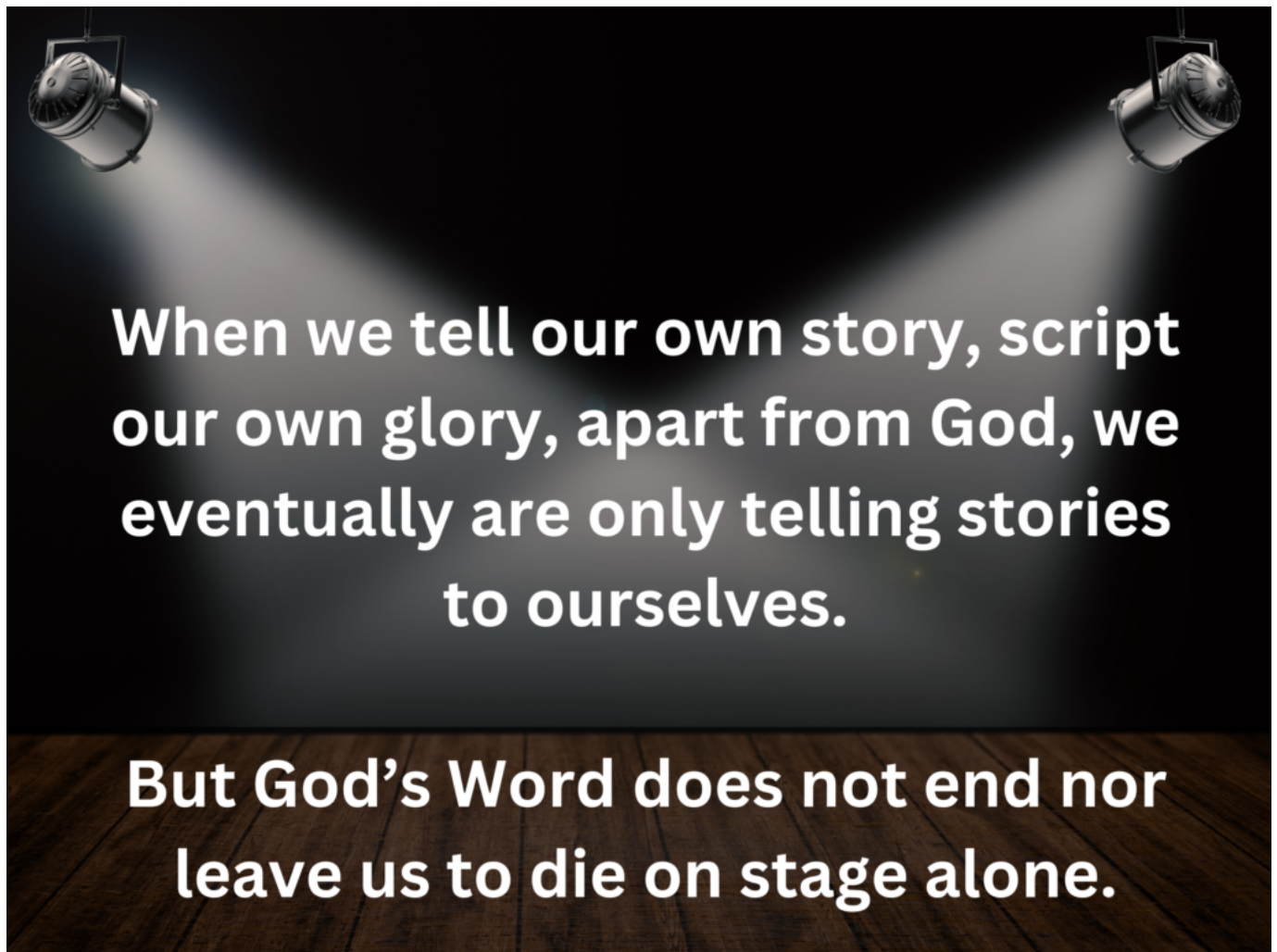
you do have character flaws to deal with. The disciples, preparing for their next act, are faced with writing their own story or continuing with God's. Jesus calls them together to give his final direction. Will they follow it?

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem): Unauthorized

When we are not satisfied in a supporting role, we reduce God to support us and our endeavors for fame and fortune. We still want that empire. We still want that power. We still want our producer, God, to fund us. However, such selfish actions are unauthorized and not in line with Christ's mission. We are not capable of fully following the directions that God gives us through Jesus. What Jesus command us to do won't make us stars. Forget it. We only know what's good for our careers.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem): Alone with Our Own Stories

When we tell our own story, script our own glory, apart from God, we eventually are only telling stories to ourselves. These fictitious stories that sound so good to us eventually only echo in the void. God, are you there? Are you listening? When we finally run out of script to act on, the curtain descends as we die on stage.



**When we tell our own story, script
our own glory, apart from God, we
eventually are only telling stories
to ourselves.**

**But God's Word does not end nor
leave us to die on stage alone.**

From Canva

PROGNOSIS: God Imparts the Word and Calls Us to Act

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution): God's Narrative Is Always with Us

God's Word does not end nor leave us to die on stage alone. Through Jesus, God turns the page to reveal the (happily?) ever-after. The hero turns out to be God's true main character: Jesus. He acts out God's love for us by dying on the biggest stage, crucified by his critics. But God's Word is more powerful than the stage, so God gives Jesus the authority to continue the show. And with that act our script is flipped as God imparts his grace and mercy to us. Matthew's Jesus lets us know from the

mountain in Galilee that we still have a big part to play.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution): Authorized

Trusting Jesus' direction, we are bold enough to follow the script God writes for us. We act out what he has commanded through the sacramental life found in Baptism and Holy Communion. We cherish our roles as community players, and practice our parts as saints. And we take the show on the road by sharing the script of God's Word with those who may have been told they were wrong for the part or simply don't have a role.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution): Holy Ghostwriter

So how does this script end? For now, it doesn't. God's favorite letters, Alpha and Omega, keep the pages turning. The Holy Ghost prompts us to imagine parts and plots and new ways to reach others to share the central theme of God's love. Everyone is invited and included. The other actors may not look like us, sound like us, or dress like us. But as long as God's Word defines what happens on stage, we have nothing to worry about. It's a mystery (just like the Holy Trinity). Not to be solved, but embraced and shared.