

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Holy Trinity Sunday – June 7, 2020

“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.” (Matthew 28:20)

Although the doctrine of the Trinity is a great mystery, it has many practical implications for a Christian worldview. For one thing, it shows us that God is fully personal, and this fact makes Christianity distinct from other religions. Let’s see why this is so.

Essential to personhood is being related to other persons since relationships define who someone is. This is also true for divine persons. The Father is only Father in relation to the Son. The Son is only Son in relation to the Father. And the Holy Spirit is only Holy Spirit as the bond of love between the Father and the Son. Because of these relationships, the triune God is fully personal. He is personal through and through.

In contrast to the Trinity, however, Allah is impersonal since he is unrelated to anyone “prior to” creation. Moreover, in some schools of Hinduism, ultimate reality is explicitly impersonal. Here an impersonal substance creates and destroys the cosmos by cycles of expansion and contraction. Finally, in Buddhism ultimate reality is also explicitly impersonal with an impersonal process replacing the impersonal substance of Hinduism.

In non-Christian religions, an ultimate impersonalism prevails. As a result, personal realities like love, goodness, meaning, purpose, and knowledge have no root in the ultimate level of reality. In Christianity, by contrast, an ultimate personalism prevails since the entire creation is governed by the meaning and purpose of the fully personal, triune God. Hence, it makes sense to speak of personal realities like love, goodness, knowledge, etc. since they are rooted in the ultimate level of being. Of course, non-Christians also believe in these things, but they can do so only because they live in a world that is created and sustained by a fully personal God. So it is that only by faith in the ultimate mystery of the Trinity does created reality become less mysterious for us. This is the Christian worldview.

Prayer: Almighty God, cause us to see how your triune nature shapes every aspect of our thought and lives. Amen.

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