

God not only *reveals* himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but God *is* Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Again we are at the end of all our thinking and we can only agree with Augustine, when he wrote, "We say three persons, not that we wish to say it, but that we may not be reduced to silence." Indeed, the church may not be reduced to silence at this point. It has to preach the *full* Gospel of salvation and therefore it has to speak of *God the Father* who so loved the world that he gave *his only-begotten Son*, so that every one who believes in him (the work of *the Holy Spirit!*) may not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16). This one text, the glorious summary of the Christian Gospel of salvation, is at the same time the foundation of the Christian doctrine of the Triune God, a God who not only created us, but who also saves us and through his renewing power leads us to eternal life.

TRINITARIAN NATURE OF GOD REPORT

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The group supported Dr. Runia's paper. The following paragraphs mention some of its implications for those engaged in evangelization, which the group discussed.

1. The historical revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ in Scripture is the necessary basic doctrinal requirement of evangelism in any religious or cultural environment.

2. It is not imperative for a worker to preach the doctrine of the Trinity at an early stage of evangelism. This may well wait until people become Christians and obtain by the Holy Spirit the capacity to receive the doctrine. This point applies also to the doctrines of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

3. Though a presentation of the Gospel may be comparatively simple in content, as long as it contains an adequate scriptural explanation of the person and work of Christ, God is well able to reveal himself in the hearts of hearers whom he loves and whom he created.

4. Presentation of Jesus Christ by philosophical arguments, or by reference to God's creation, or by appeal to man's sense of his own need, or by sharing his presence in his church, allows useful points of contact for subsequent preaching of Christ in revelation; but these approaches must be regarded as pre-evangelism and not as a substitute for true Gospel preaching.

5. While the explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity may have a place in apologetic or defensive preaching in order to counter prevailing misconceptions such as pantheism or deism, at some point the speaker must require response to the historic Christ whom the Bible reveals.

Notwithstanding all the foregoing, the group emphasized that only the biblical doctrine of the Trinity as given in orthodox historic confessions of faith implies a full-orbed world view which meets the whole need of man. Therefore all Christians should be taught the doctrine of the Trinity as fully as possible in post-evangelistic ministry both for their own souls' need and to counter the various related heresies current in evangelical spheres today.