

THREE EXTRAORDINARY MISSION VISIONARIES

“Brother Andrew” Andrew van der Bijl (1928-2022)

Dutch Christian missionary (d. 94)

Son of poor blacksmith and invalid mother

In Colonial Dutch Army in Indonesia,

involved in a massacre of Indonesian villagers,
depressed, wounded, began reading the Bible

Returning to the Netherlands, going to church

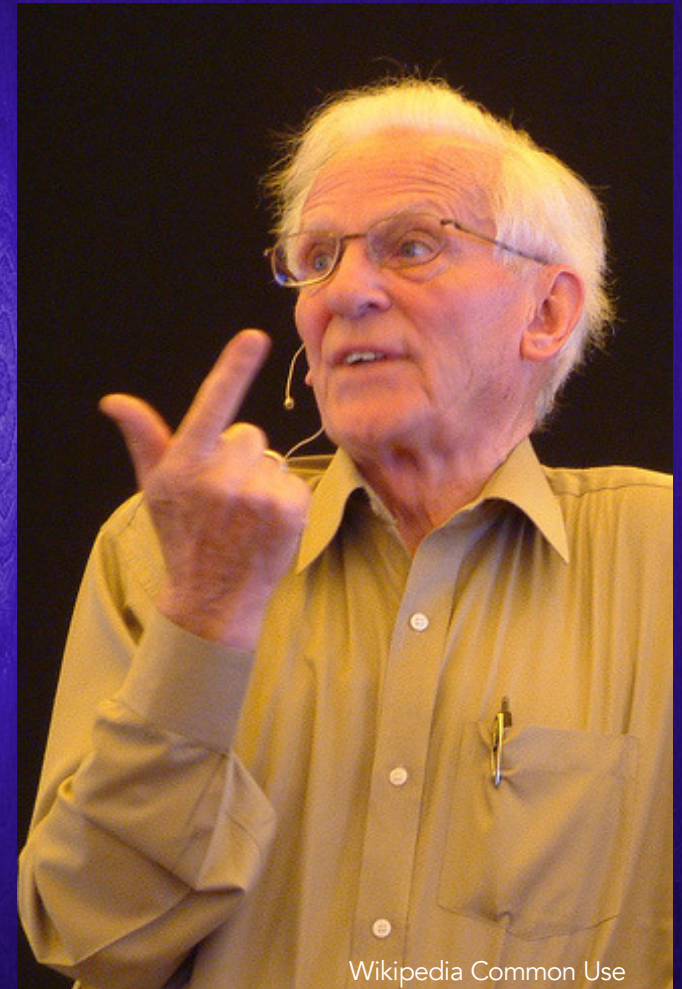
Trained at WEC mission training camp, Scotland.

Entered the Communist countries with Bibles,

When the “Iron Curtain” opened, he turned to

Mao’s China and the Muslim world— Hamas, PLO.

God’s Smuggler (1967), 10 million copies in 35
languages; *Open Doors* (1955) in 60 countries (2022)





THREE EXTRAORDINARY MISSION VISIONARIES

George Verwer (1938-2023), d. 84

American visionary and evangelist

Founder of Operation Mobilization (OM)

As 16 year-old, converted at a Jack Wyrzten crusade with Billy Graham in Madison Square Garden.

Later at Moody Bible Institute, he met wife Drena.

To Mexico (1957) to Moscow (arrested & deported)

For George, passionate, radical discipleship is the only legitimate option for true believers.

Operation Mobilization launched in 1961,

One of the largest international missions in world

With 5 ships, beginning with the Logos (1971),

Visiting 151 countries, 49 million visitors to the ships



THREE EXTRAORDINARY MISSION VISIONARIES

Loren Cunningham (1935-2023), d. 88, 10/6 kneeling at the altar during a brush arbor revival meeting in 1948 at the age of 13.

Founded Youth With A Mission in 1960,
Theme: "To know God and to make Him known."

Expanding global missions movement has reached into every nation on earth through evangelism and mercy ministries (YWAM.org) training up to 25K a year.

Full-time staff in 200+ countries and various denominations and Christian traditions, serving at over 2,000 YWAM locations in nearly 200 nations. Millions have served in YWAM programs as students, short-term volunteers and full-time staff.

University of the Nations, Kona, Hawaii

TRINITY & PURPOSE OF LIFE

A DEEPER CALL TO MISSION



For many, the deepest WHY of MISSIONS is lacking. Or perhaps we should say that there are many levels of understanding the WHY of the gospel. Some of Christianity's most zealous evangelists, church-planters, and missionary workers simply go forth in obedience to the Great Commission. *I was lost. Now I'm saved. Therefore, I have a job to do.* And in some respects THAT understanding is enough.

Nevertheless, whereas the EXPERIENTIAL REALITY of the Holy Trinity may at times be present in our lives, the GREATER CONCEPTUAL WEIGHT, THE THEOLOGICAL BALLAST of missions (indeed of Christian life itself) is OFTEN LACKING.



As the early church realized, Christian experience is not enough. Greater matters as to the nature of God and the very structure of all existence were at stake amidst a pluralistic world of mystery religions, emperor worship, sophisticated philosophies, and cultural bias if not hatred of Christian faith—not unlike our present day.



The early church was compelled to articulate ever more carefully right thinking (ortho-doxy) about the one God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in ways that had never been expressed yet which captured the biblical portrait of God's own revelation.

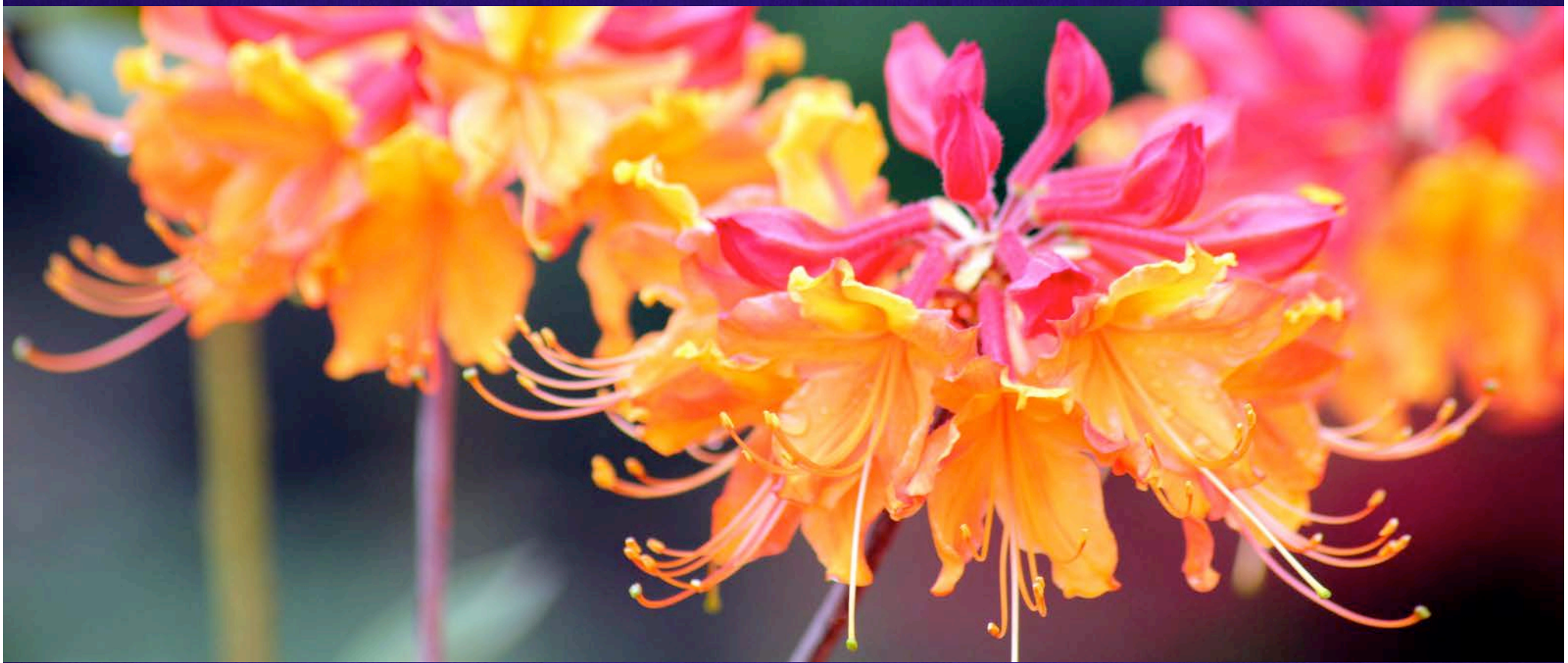


They understood, as you and I must understand, that EVERYTHING spirals out of our understanding of God. If God is the Absolute, then this God and our understanding of this God is ground zero for everything else. This is GOD, the CENTER OF EVERYTHING, the fundamental reality of all existence—all time-space existence, all spiritual realms of existence.



“God is the foundation and fountain of all being and all beauty, from whom all is perfectly derived, and on whom all is most absolutely and perfectly dependent; of whom and through whom is all being and all perfection...”

Jonathan Edwards, *The Nature of Virtue*, in G. McDermott, “Drawn by God’s Beauty,” *Beeson*, Mar 2016, 6



“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” A.W. Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, 9

BACKGROUND:

The Upper Room Discourse, John 13-17

Our Lord's "High Priestly Prayer"

Gethsemane, the Trial, and the Crucifixion "It is finished."



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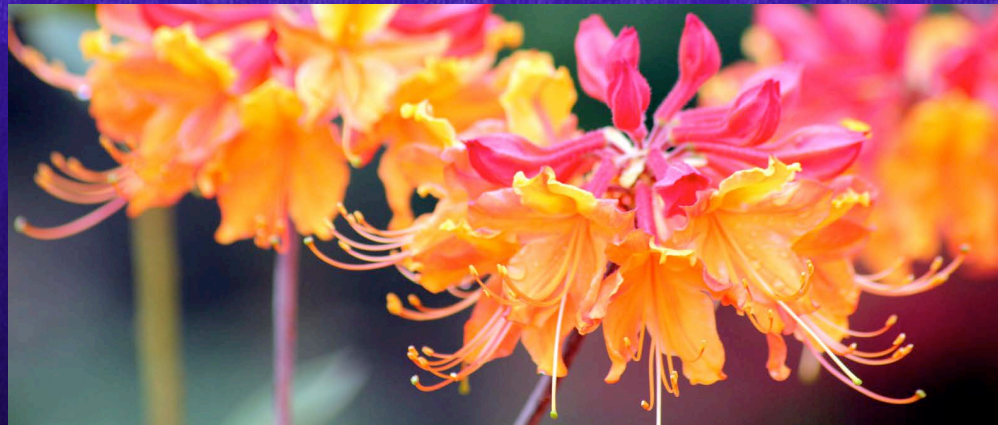
The Upper Room Discourse, John 13-17
Our Lord's "High Priestly Prayer"

Gethsemane, the Trial, and the Crucifixion "It is finished."

LORD GOD: "They will look on **ME**, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an **ONLY CHILD**, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a **FIRSTBORN SON**" (Zec 12:10; Jn 19:37)

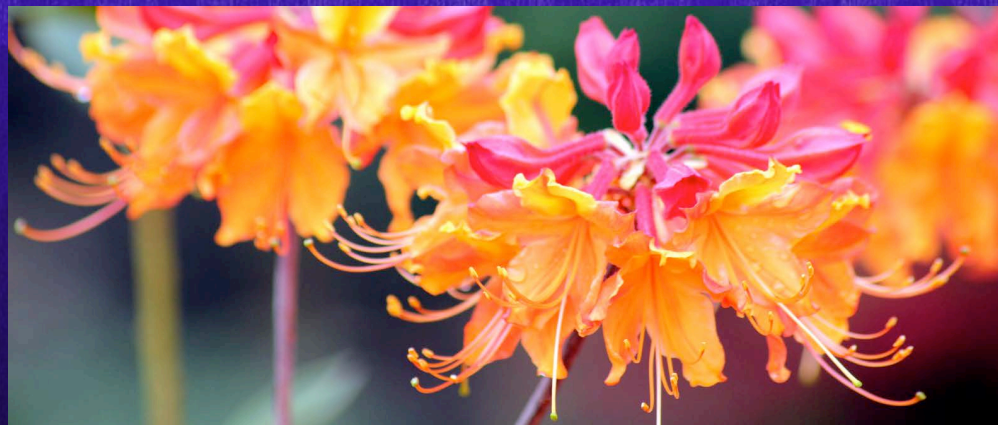


Bracketing the Crucifixion and Resurrection Jesus prays to the Father (Jn 17:18): "As you sent me [verb *apostellō*] into the world [*kosmos*], I have sent them into the world."



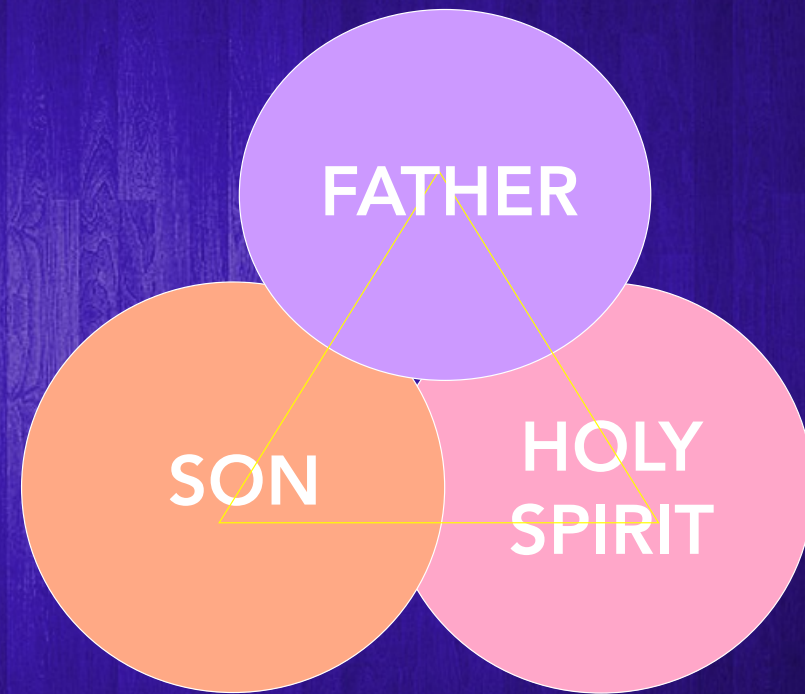
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After the resurrection, now again, Jesus tells the disciples: 20:21-22 "'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed [on them] and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"



THE MISSION OF GOD:

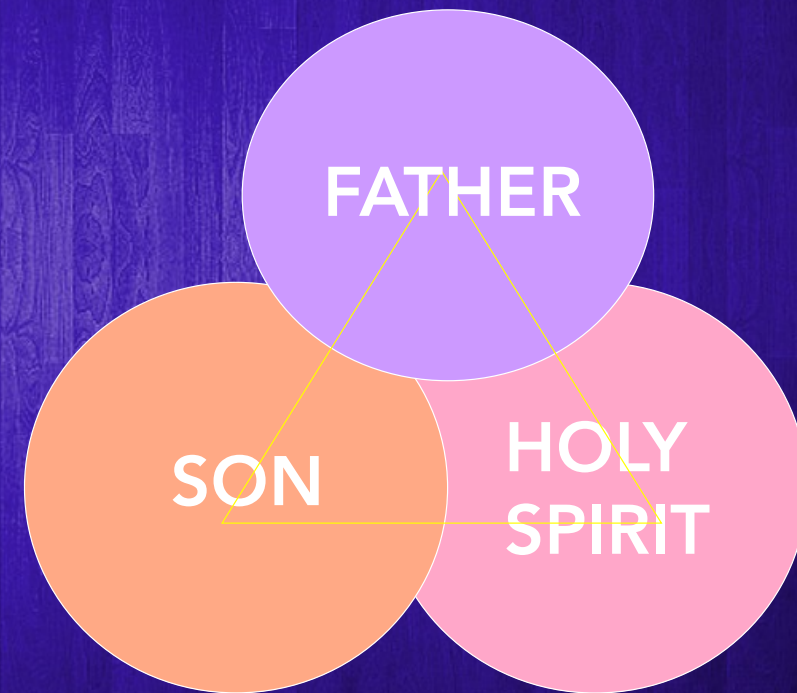
Theme: As the *Missio Dei* Is the Expression of Who God Is, so *Missio Dei* Becomes the Essential Expression of Faith in the Life of the Believer.



WHAT IS THE *MISSIO DEI*?

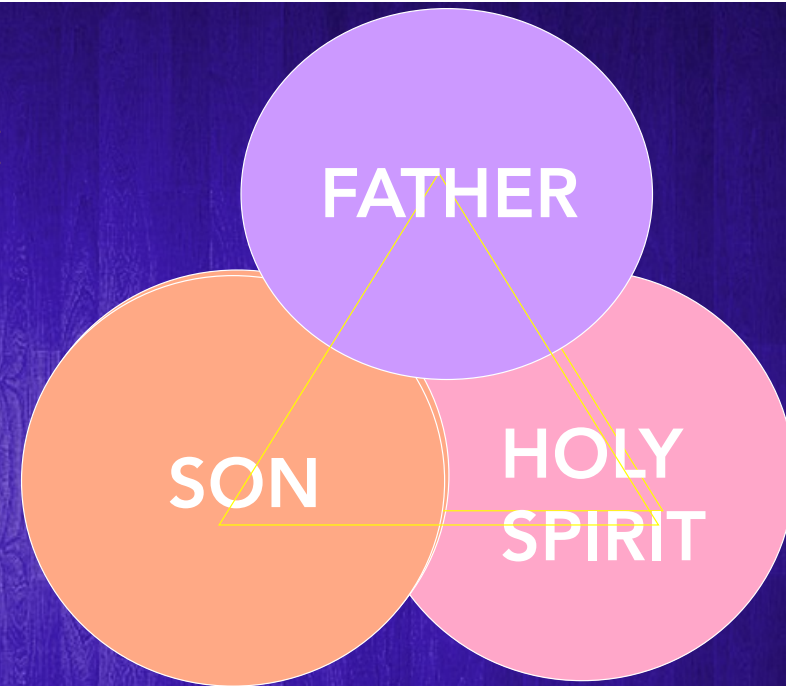
Two Historic Meanings:

1. The Trinitarian movement of the Father sending the Son and Spirit.
2. By 1900 "Missio Dei" was increasingly adopted to speak of the mission imperative for all believers.



TRINITY & PURPOSE OF LIFE: A DEEPER CALL TO MISSION

I. THE FATHER SENDS THE SON
AND THEY SEND THE HOLY
SPIRIT INTO THE WORLD.



“...‘As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed [on them] and said ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

A. What Does Missio Dei Reveal about God?

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The triune God is the eternally self-giving God, utterly unlike any other religion's concept of God or gods.

A. What Does Missio Dei reveal about God?

The Father loves the Son

Son Loves the Father and he proves it by obedience.

Spirit, the Other Comforter, loves the Son and the Father,

Each glorifies the Other, exalts the other.

The Persons of the Trinity are not identical. Each reveals himself in distinct relationship to the Others.

We see profound self-givingness on the part of each Person.

Eternal Trinity

Trinity in Creation

Design by John Dyer

B. What Does Missio Dei Reveal about God's Engagement with Creation and Humanity?

John 1:14 "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

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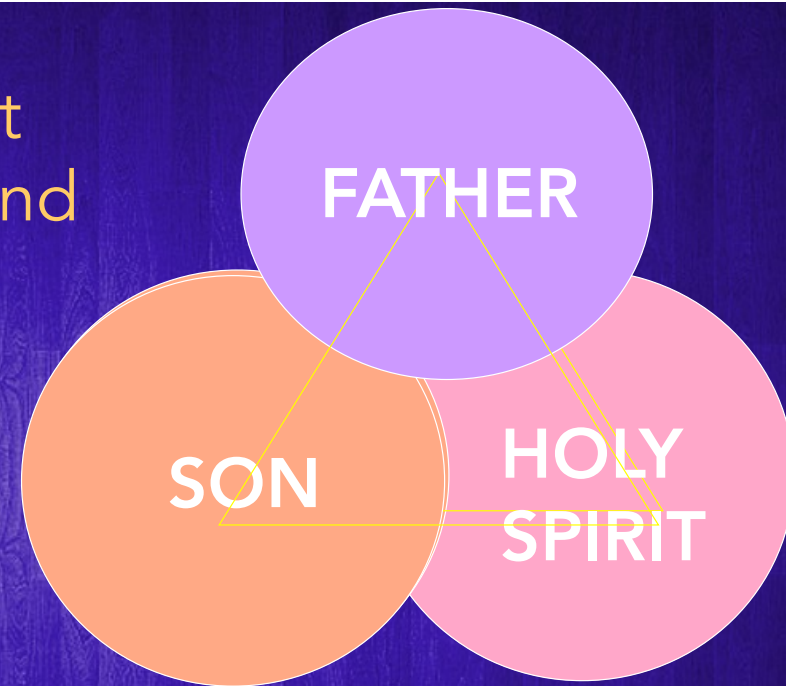
3:35 "The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands."

B. What Does Missio Dei Reveal about God's Engagement with Creation and Humanity?

Jn 5:20-26 "For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. ...For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to his Son **that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father.** Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him....**For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself."**

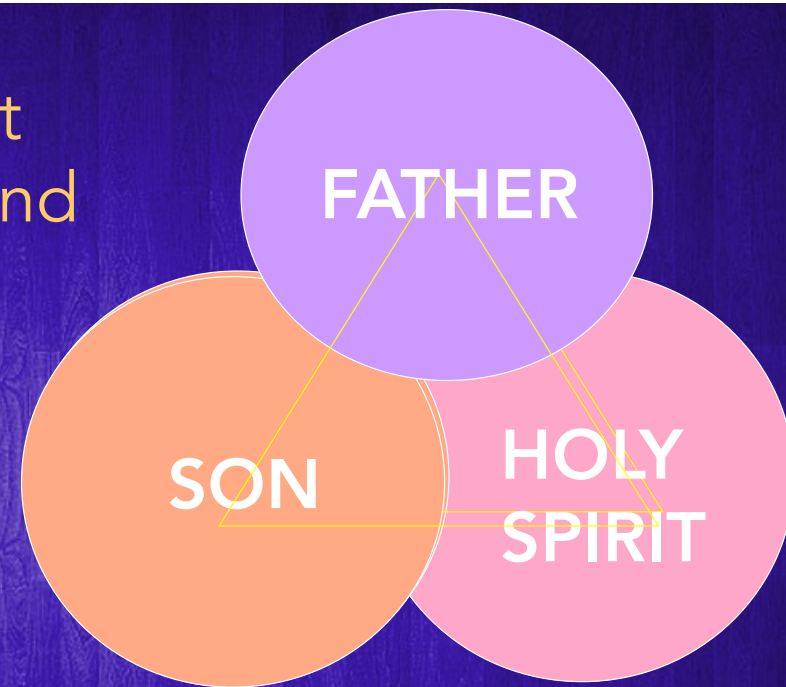
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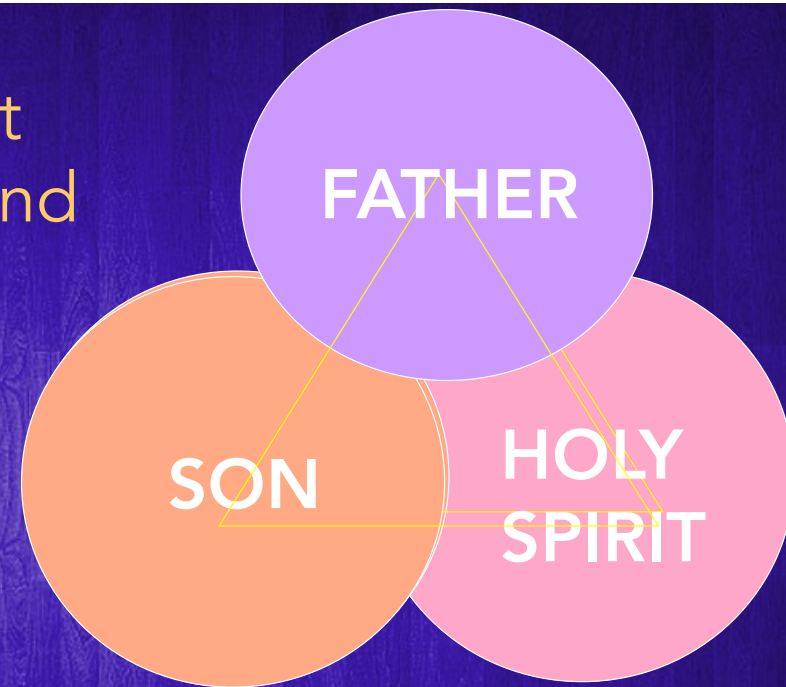
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- Each person of Godhead is intimately involved with creation and recreation.
- God loves the world, including sinful humanity.
- Through the Cross, Holy God (Moral Absolute) has made a way for persons to be forgiven, reconciled, adopted, and made righteous. 2Co5:21



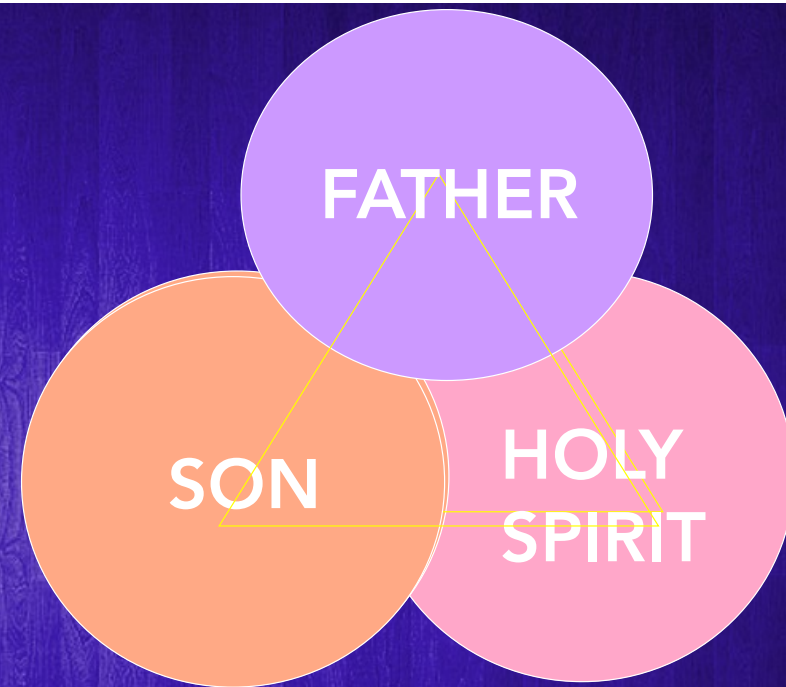


The cross “stands as the defining moment in God’s relationship to all creation—the pinnacle and epitome of all he desires to show us of himself. It is a self-assertion and a self-declaration, but one that is less like a political manifesto and more like a proposal of marriage. God says to his people at the cross of Jesus: *‘This is who I am. All that I am I give to you, and all that I have I share with you.’*”

Daniel Hames & Michael Reeves, *God Shines Forth: How the Nature of God Shapes and Drives the Mission of the Church* (Crossway, 2022) 55

C. Holy Trinity Definition:

“The one true God eternally exists as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one in nature, equal in glory, and distinct in relations.”

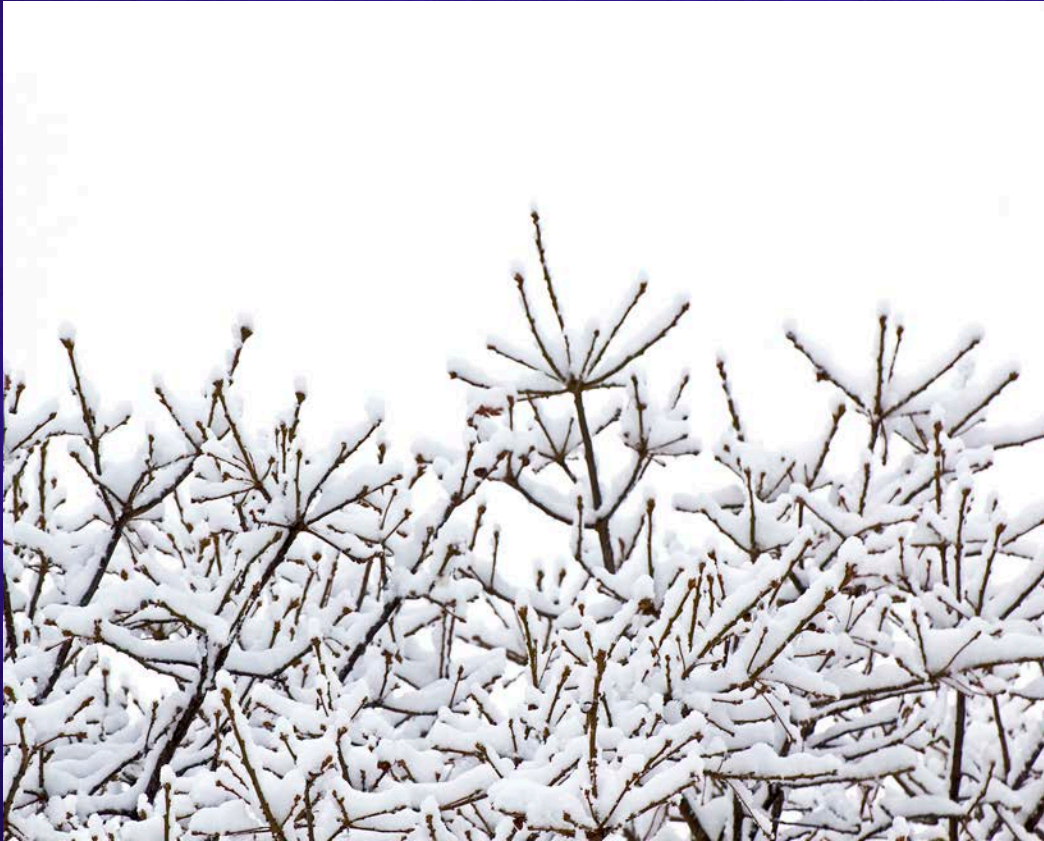




Eternal Trinity

Trinity in Creation

Design by John Dyer



“The most beautiful pattern of all and therefore the pattern of all consent and harmony is God’s love among the three Persons. By this [Jonathan] Edwards meant [that at the center of everything stands:] [1] each Person’s loving consent to the glory and will of the other two Persons, and [2] then to the Trinity’s design for the creation.”

(McDermott, “Drawn by God’s Beauty,” 7)



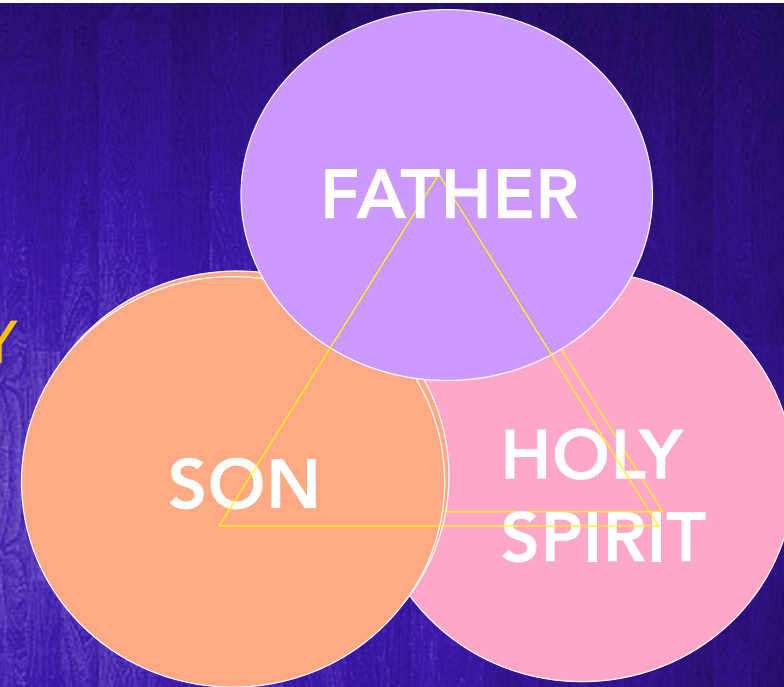
©Stefan Forster, Greenland, BBC online May 1, 2020

TRINITY & PURPOSE OF LIFE

A DEEPER CALL TO MISSION

I. THE FATHER SENDS THE SON AND THEY SEND THE SPIRIT INTO THE WORLD.

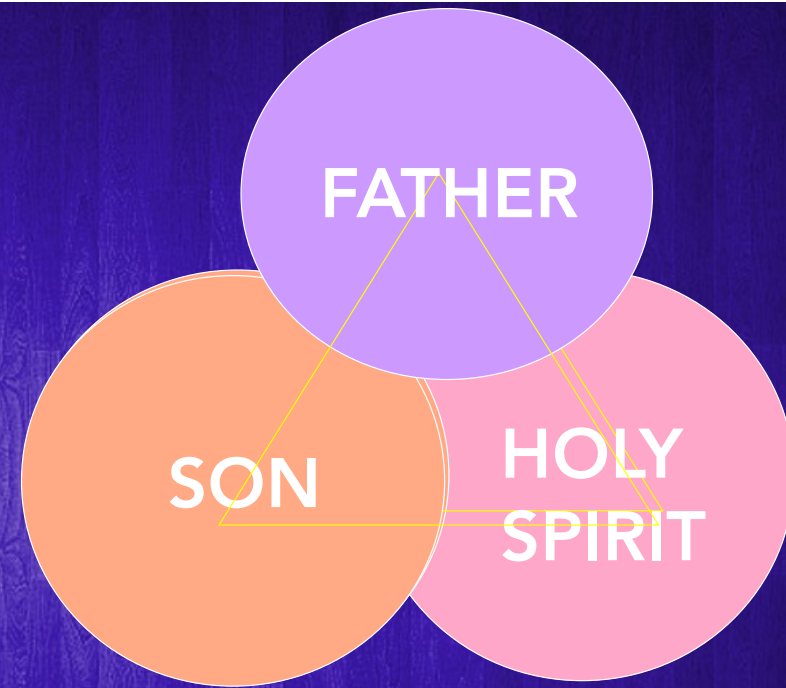
II. THE TRIUNE GOD'S MISSION IS MADE OUR MISSION.
He Has COME, We Are CALLED.



"... 'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" Jn 20:19-20

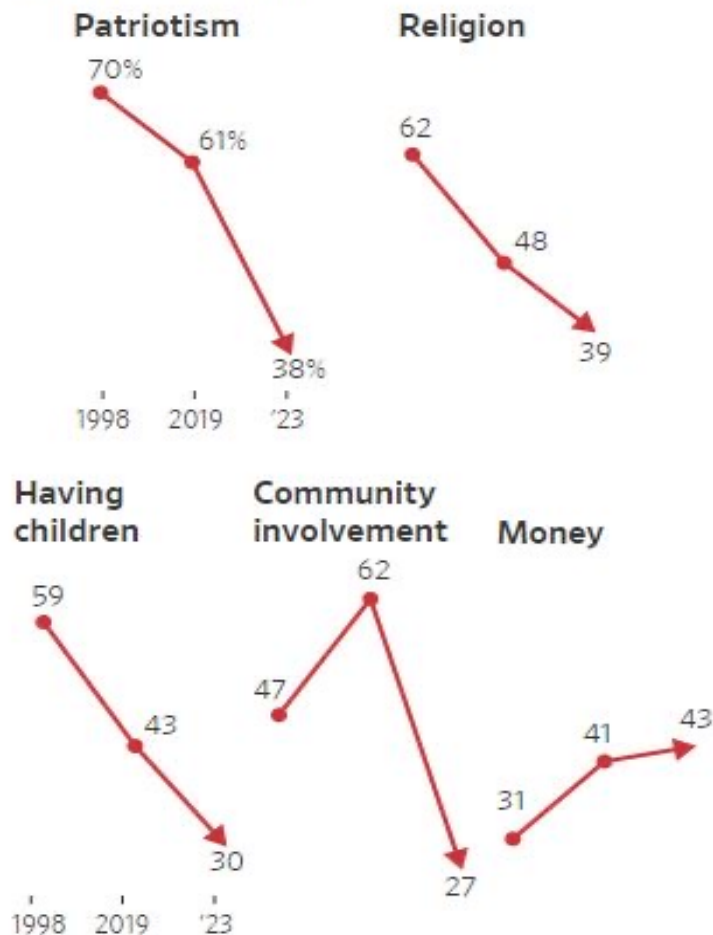
II. THE TRIUNE GOD'S MISSION IS OUR MISSION.

A. What Is Happening in US and Global Culture?



"If man is not made for God, why is he not happy except in God? If man is made for God, why is he so opposed to God?" Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*

Percent who say these values are 'very important' to them



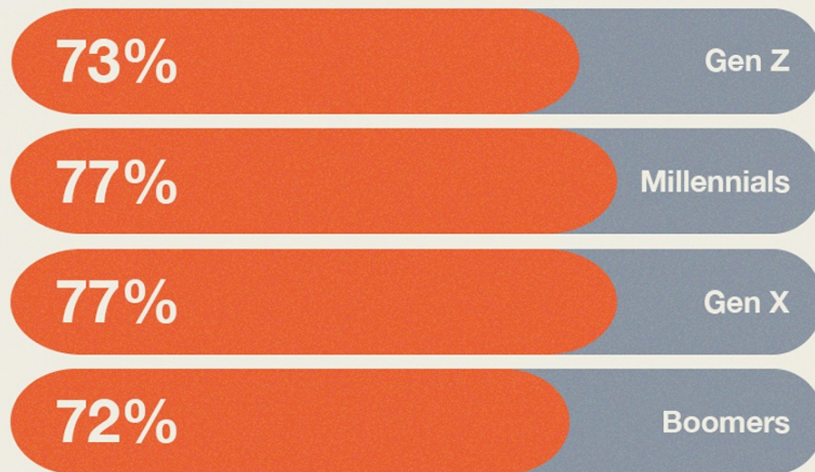
A. What Is Happening in US and Global Culture?
Priorities of values
What is very important to you?
Patriotism, Religion, children,
social involvement, money.

American changing values, 1998-2023
Wall Street Journal, et al., March 2023

Source: WSJ/NORC poll of 1,019 adults conducted March 1-13, 2023; margin of error +/-4.1 pct. pts. Prior data from WSJ/NBC News telephone polls, most recently of 1,000 adults conducted Aug. 10-14, 2019; margin of error +/-3.1 pct. pts.

Barna

A vast majority of U.S. adults report that they would like to grow spiritually:



SPIRITUALLY
open

n=2,000 U.S. adults, October 21-31, 2022

Yet most US adults desire to grow in spirituality.

“This trend toward spiritual openness represents an exciting opportunity for churches. What might your church do to make the most of it?”

From Barna’s collaborative study on spiritual openness in partnership with Gloop and He Gets Us. April 10, 2023.



MARVEL™
S T U D I O S

Across the world, younger generations seek hope. They yearn for the supernatural. In some ways, they have faith and hope, but aren't sure why. Their faith and hope have no where to go.

II. THE TRIUNE GOD'S MISSION IS OUR MISSION.

A. What Is Happening in US and Global Culture?

B. The Problem of Selfish CHRISTIANS, Personal Emptiness



Odilon Redon, "Golden Cell, or Blue Profile," 1893, British Museum, in Ursula King, *Christian Mystics* (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1998) 7

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How is understanding God as Trinity central to our own personhood (as *imago dei*)?



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B. The Problem of Selfish Christians,
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C. The Problem of Selfish CHURCHES,
COLLECTIVE Emptiness



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II. THE TRIUNE GOD'S MISSION IS OUR MISSION. He Has COME, We Are CALLED.

B. The Problem of Selfish CHRISTIANS

C. The Problem of Selfish CHURCHES

D. How is understanding God as Trinity central to our own personhood and the life of the church?



Jesse Lowe, student Project DTS

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you....Receive the Holy Spirit."

II. THE TRIUNE GOD'S MISSION IS OUR MISSION. He Has COME, We Are CALLED.

By imitation of the triune, self-giving God, we unlock the very essence (ontology) of ourselves, our churches, and missions. In so doing, we are filled with the life-giving power of God.



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"Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life." Jn 12:25

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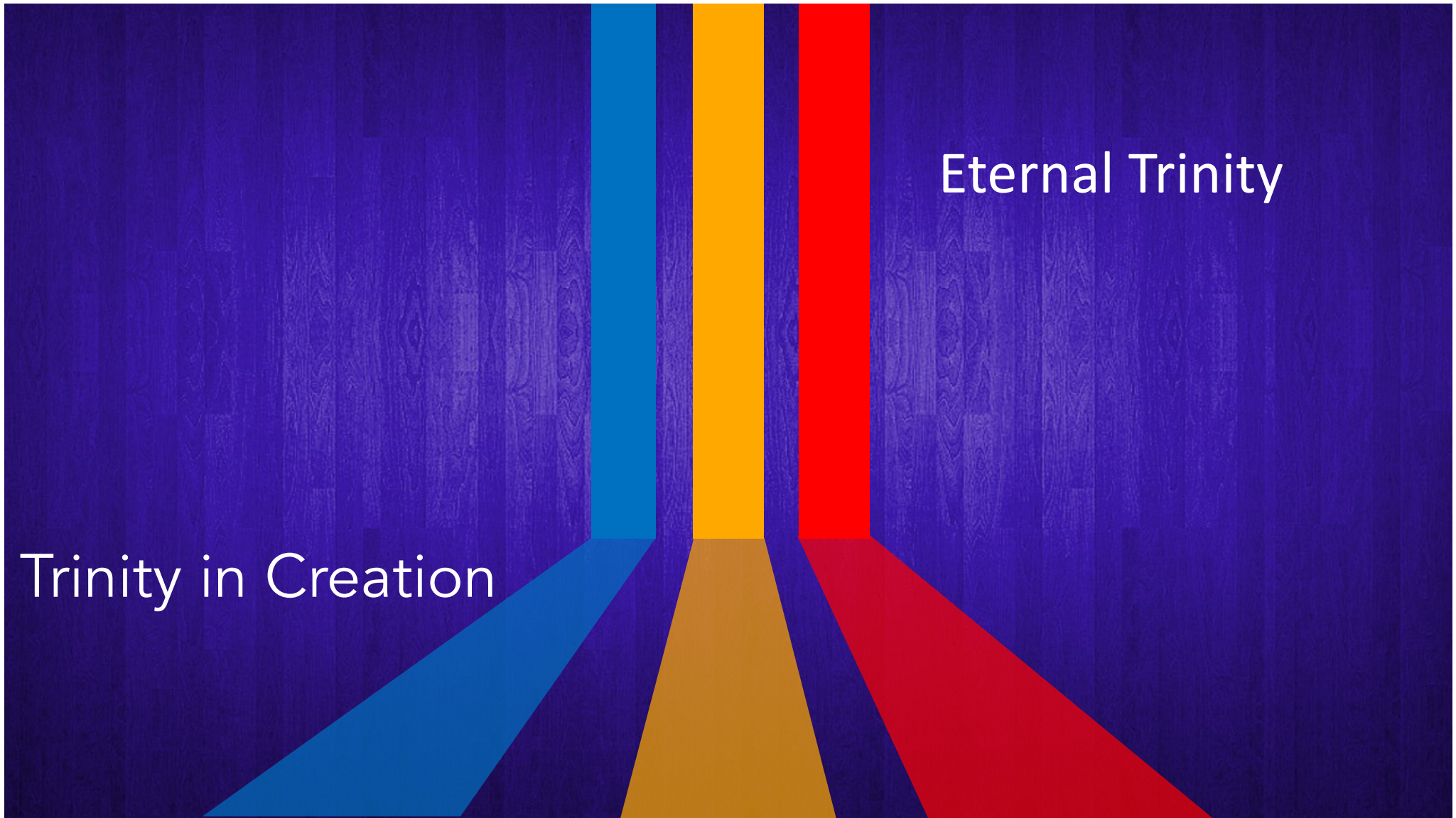
Missionary God & Missionary Church

"Evangelism is something intrinsic to the identity of the Church—not an optional extra, but something part and parcel of its very being. The Church exists by mission, as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no Church."

Emil Brunner, *The Word and the World* (SCM Press, 1931) 108

Madagascar, photo Melody Pieratt,





Trinity in Creation

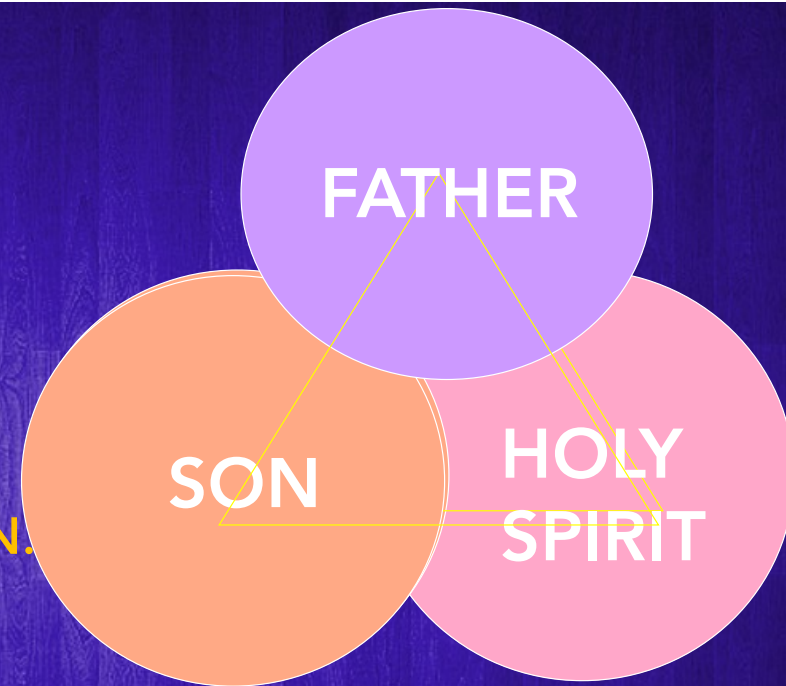
Eternal Trinity

TRINITY & PURPOSE OF LIFE

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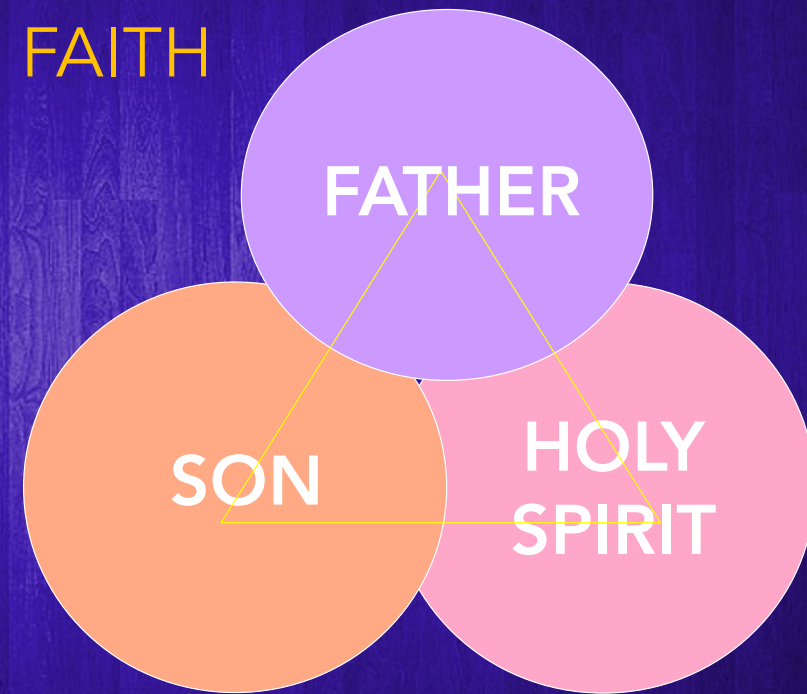
III. MISSIO DEI IS A DEEPLY PERSONAL INVITATION:
THE ESSENTIAL EXPRESSION OF FAITH IN THE LIFE
OF THE BELIEVER.



"..."As the Father has sent me, I am sending you....Receive the Holy Spirit."

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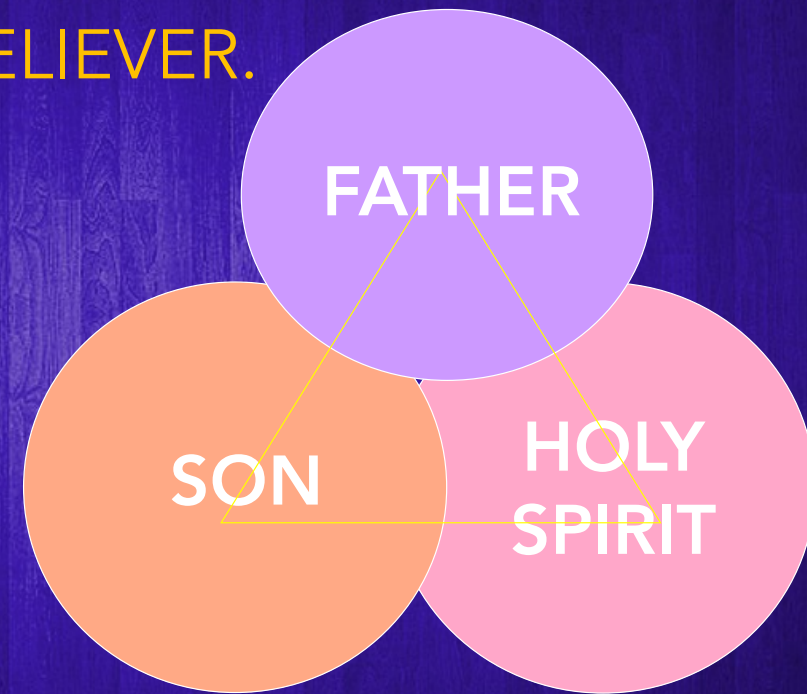
A. It is the intimate, existential divine calling; we are free to say yes or no.



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III. MISSIO DEI IS THE ESSENTIAL EXPRESSION OF FAITH IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.

- A. It is the intimate, existential divine calling; we are free to say yes or no.
- B. Yet obedience to our Lord in self-giving is essential to our being filling with God's Life.

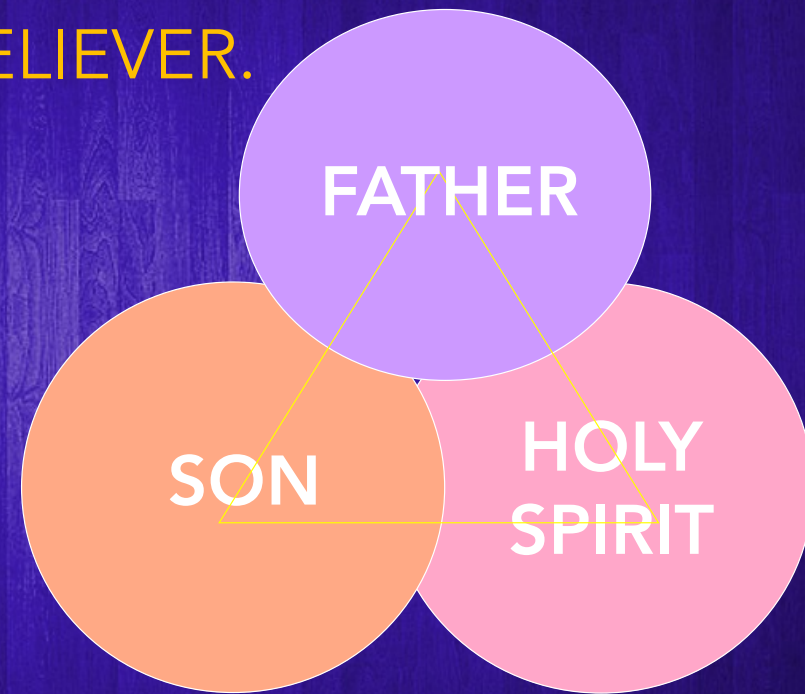


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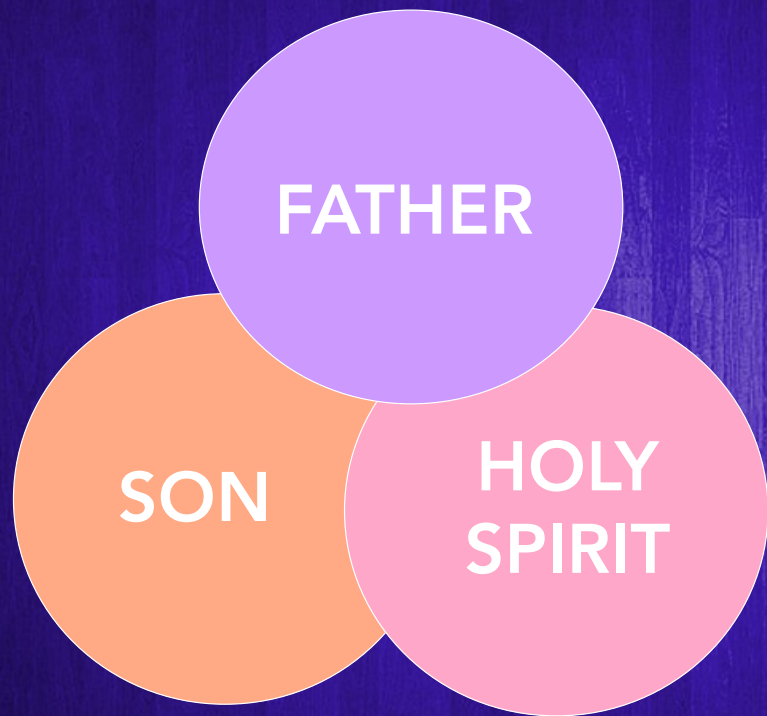
III. MISSIO DEI IS THE ESSENTIAL EXPRESSION OF FAITH IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.

Will YOU GIVE YOURSELF
unreservedly TO THE LORD?

Will you, in Christ's name, give of
yourself TO OTHERS?



"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Eph 5:1-2 ESV



III. MISSIO DEI IS THE ESSENTIAL EXPRESSION OF FAITH IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.

In the end, understanding who God is will define **WHY** you and I exist, **WHO** we are as persons, and **HOW** we may most be fulfilled individually and in relationship to other persons, and above all else to our Creator.

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III Missio Dei Is the Essential Expression of Faith in the Life of the Believer.

Lord Jesus, WHERE do I begin?



Detail, Gary M. Stolz, *W08205 Havasu Falls -- Arizona*,
Division of Public Affairs, US Fish and Wildlife Service (2005)

“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

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TO WHOM shall I go?



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Lord Jesus, WHERE do I begin?

TO WHOM shall I go?

Are you sending me BEYOND my Jerusalem and Judea?



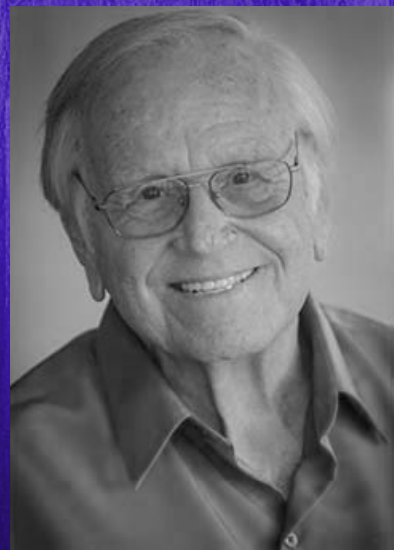
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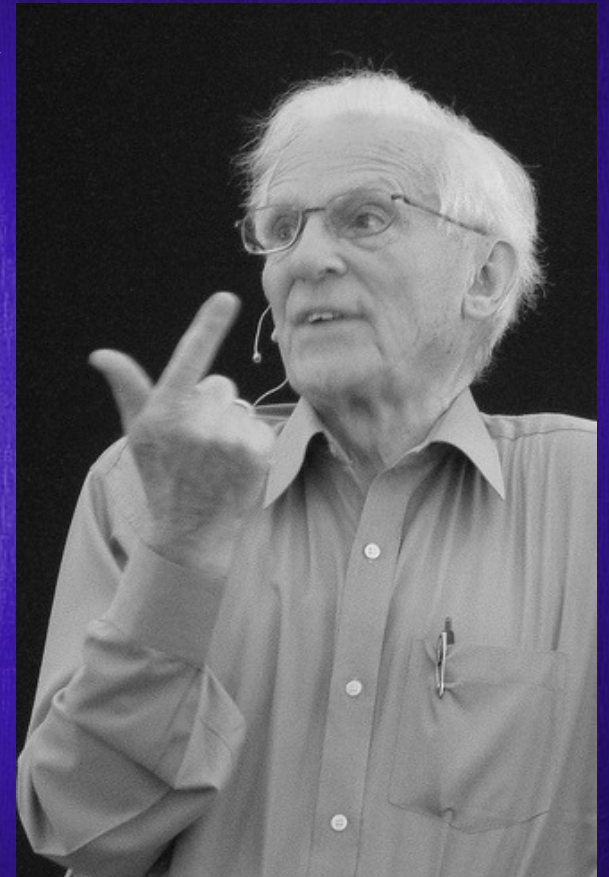


George Verwer (1939-2023),
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Loren Cunningham
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TRINITY & the Purpose of Life: A Deeper Call to Mission

