

Various readings

Excerpts used in Worship

THE SPIRIT

“The Holy Spirit, in making real the Christ-event in history, makes real *at the same time* Christ’s personal existence as a body or community. Christ does not exist *first* as truth and *then* as communion; He is both at once....” (p.111)

“So we can say without risk of exaggeration that Christ *exists only pneumatologically*, whether in His distinct personal particularity or in His capacity as the body of the church and the recapitulation of all things. Such is the great mystery of Christology, that the Christ-event is not an event defined in itself—it cannot be defined in itself for a single instant even theoretically—but is *an integral part of the economy of the Holy Trinity*. To speak of Christ means speaking at the same time of the Father and the Holy Spirit. For the Incarnation, as we have just seen, is formed by the work of the Spirit, and is nothing else than the expression and realization of the will of the Father.” (p.111f)

*John Zizioulas (1985), Being as communion: studies in personhood and the church.
New York, St Vladimir's Seminary Press.*

THE SON

“The Father appears in biblical narrative of God’s life with us as the ‘whence’ of divine events, as the Given from which they come or to which they return...” (p.194)

“Correspondingly, the Spirit appears as the ‘whither’ of God’s life. Through the biblical story, the Spirit is God as the ‘Power of the future’... The Spirit is God coming from the future to break the present open to himself... The ‘whither’ of divine events is not their passive aiming point, but their emergence and activation from the future.” (p.194)

“If the Father and the Spirit are [such whence- and whither-] poles of the divine eternity, it is then the life of the Son... in which these rhyme, in which the unity of the divine life is accomplished. Death is time’s ultimate act; that God transcends time must finally mean that God transcends death. Normal gods transcend death by immunity to it or by being identical with it. The way in which the triune God transcends death is by within himself triumphing over it: by the Son’s dying and the Father’s raising him again. The whence and the wither of the divine life are one, and so the triune God is eternal, in the event of Jesus’ resurrection.” (p.195)

Robert Jenson (1995), Essays in theology of culture. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans.

THE FATHER

“Christ refers all homage from himself to the one who “sent” him, his “Father”, just so accomplishing our salvation and appearing as the Son. This God is the Father only as the one so addressed by the Son, and at his central appearance in the story he turns over divine rule to the Son and indeed ‘abandons’ his role as God, leaving the Son to suffer the consequences of godhead by himself. And the Spirit as God glorifies and testifies to, only the Father or the Son, just so enabling the proposition ‘God is Spirit’ ”. (192f)

“...if God is triune, then created time must be the *accommodation* God makes in his own life for persons other than the three he himself is. For in the biblical story of the divine life, the whence of the divine life is the whence also of creation, and the whither of the divine life is the outcome and end of creation. We creatures appear *within* that narrative whose agents—Father, Son and Spirit—between them enact God’s life. We inhabit the story that is the story of God. God is indeed the one ‘in whom we live and move and have our being’ ”. (199)

Robert Jenson (1995), Essays in theology of culture, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans.