

More Cross-currents in Mission – Nature of God in Missions

1. Holy Trinity Is the Key

Trinity is not just a baptism formula, it is the mark of the new humanity created by conversion and baptism. It indicates the ultimate model of Christian koinonia, the sharing fellowship of agape wherein distinctions are maintained with equality. Mission is eternal in the Godhead because of the dynamic nature of love. Mission is not that which started with the incarnation, though the incarnation is the only absolute model of mission. Creation was mission; incarnation was mission; the descent of the Holy Spirit was mission; and consummation awaited is mission.

2. The Incarnation Is the How of Mission

Proclamation or evangelization, diakonia, koinonia, eucharistia were all daily thing in the early church, filled with the Holy Spirit.

3. On Discipling the Nations

The most neglected part of our present mission is “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded”. The discussion about “cross-currents in mission” has to include mission and discipleship; evangelization and marturia, or martyrdom: Christian mission; worship and eucharistia as mission (as in the Romanian church today)

4. On Holistic Mission

Newbigin, in reply to Paul G. Schrottenboer says “I am willing to ‘buy’ ‘holistic mission’, but not ‘holistic evangelism’”. Holistic theology is Trinitarian theology, and holistic mission is Trinitarian mission comprising both personal and social ministry, the whole person and the whole world, meeting the material needs, physical requirements, cultural enlightenment, political liberation, historical and eschatological dimensions of life, secular and spiritual hunger, personal freedom and social justice, and the quest for equality, fraternity and liberty. The Pentecostal sharing community, which “day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes,... praising God and having favor with all the people” (Acts 2:43-47), was the result of holistic mission directed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is a sin to be rich in a poor world, and we need to share both our material and our spiritual needs in the kingdom of God.

5. Prayer Is Primary

Emil Brunner: the church exists by mission.

A more holistic view: the church exists by worship and mission, as fire exists by burning. In Russia, the church is growing more by worship than by mission. The success of both mission and evangelism depends on prayer, worship, devotion, meditation, and the Spirit filled life of the missionaries and the converts.