研究業績 (欧文)

The Trinity and the Bible ⁽¹⁾

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The Trinitarian doctrine and the Biblical canon had each their own process of formation but both took shape side by side almost at the same time, i.e. toward the fourth century, and with the same purpose of defending orthodoxy. It goes without saying that both play great roles in Christian thought even today. It is therefore necessary to clarify the relation between this doctrine and the Scripture, going beyond the disciplinary distinction of dogmatics and Biblical studies.

There are primitive people to whom the number three symbolises perfection. In the history of religion, the triad of deities, as in the case of Osiris, Isis and Horus, is not rare. Throughout the Bible, too, three plays important roles, i.e. Noah's three sons, invoking three times the name of God, the triad of faith, hope and love, et cetera. These examples show the weight of threefoldness but not the oneness of three.

According to the Trinitarian doctrine, God is one in being and nature and yet He is in three persons or hypostases. This is often considered a logical mystery. However, the one and the many are interchangeable in many languages as the example,

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- (1) This is a summary of the communication given before the General Assembly of the Japanese Society of Christian Studies on Oct. 12th, 1972 at Tokyo Union Theological Seminary. It is intended to supplement and develop what was written in '*Le Langage et l'Évangile*', Geneva, 1948, pp. 143 ff. Cf. its reviews in the Exp. Times LXI, 1949, pp. 94 f., the Scott. Journ. of Theol. vol. 2, 1949, pp. 433 ff., the Journ. of Bibl. Lit., LXIX, 1950, pp. 292 ff. etc.

"The United States (plural) is a republic (singular)," shows. The plurality of the form in which one God is revealed is no mystery. One and three are really numbers. It is necessary to avoid the misuse of the word mystery and to give special meaning to numbers saying one father, one son and one spirit making one God. Moreover, the theory of complementarity as regards the incompleteness of one matter without its correlation or counterpart is also relevant to explain the Trinity; each of the three is correlative with the other two. It is important to stress the deep mystery of the content of Trinity which belongs to the divine realm and cannot be adequately expressed in human language but was nevertheless revealed through Logos Incarnate.

Although several passages in the New Testament point to the Trinity, they are not numerous enough to establish a doctrine directly upon a textual basis. However, they show first the evidence of the unity of the Father and the Son and then the deification of the Spirit given through the Risen Christ.

The Bible says the Son of God and the Spirit of God but not the Father of God. God and the Father are often synonymous. There are texts which suggest the identity of the Father and the Son but there are also texts which make the latter subordinate to the former. The character and position of the Spirit is also fluid. This indicates the supremacy of God the Father on the one hand and the growing tendency of deification of the Son and the Spirit on the other. All three should be interpreted correlatively and in view of eschatological perfection. In short, we can find in the Bible a latent doctrine of the Trinity in the process of formation.

The Father, the Son and the Spirit each plays an important role in the Bible. The Spirit is much stronger than the other cardinal hypostases, logos and sophia. But the Trinity is not the selection of three major concepts. Rather Christology is the basis

of its formation. The conviction that the worship of Jesus as the Lord is not only consistent with, but also the fulfillment of Biblical monotheism, is the greatest factor of the rising doctrine.

Biblical monotheism is not the worship of oneness but faith in God who unites, who makes all mankind one through salvation. The Trinity expresses not only the unity of the three hypostases, but also God the Creator-Father of the unity among all men, which is given through the redemption of His Son and the guidance of His Spirit.

The Trinitarian doctrine is relevant not only to the understanding of the Bible but also to Christian worship. The tradition of commemorating the significance of the Trinity on the Sunday after Pentecost must be re-evaluated on the basis of Biblical scholarship.