

According to HRN, "the Church . . . must be described as the community which responds to God-in-Christ and Christ-in-God. . . . It is to God-in-Christ, to the universal, absolute and unconditioned in the particular that the early church renders account. . . . [But] the Church looks not only to the absolute in the finite but to the redemptive principle in the absolute" ("The Responsibility of the Church for Society": 118 f.).

I should, of course, wish to make a somewhat similar point. To speak of "God-in-Christ" is to identify Jesus *formally*, as the decisive re-presentation of the meaning of ultimate reality for us, where "ultimate" means, among other things, "last, all-determining, all-encompassing, ubiquitous." On the other hand, to speak of "Christ-in-God" is to identify God, or the meaning of ultimate reality for us, *materially*, by reference to the love disclosed through Jesus.

Thus one may say, in trinitarian terms, that it is God the Father who brings us to Jesus Christ through the internal testimony of the Spirit in our hearts, even as it is Jesus Christ who brings us to God the Father through the external testimony of the Spirit in the apostolic witness of the church. Or, thinking of John 1:18, one may say, that the assertion, or implication, that Jesus is the Son of God "not only identifies Jesus as the only Son of God but, at one and the same time, also identifies the only true God as the Father of Jesus" (*The Point of Christology*: 25).

In the most formal terms, what is involved here is the interplay of original and decisive revelation—or, in W.A. Christian's terms, the interplay of the "basic supposition" suggested by common human experience, which makes possible a "basic question" and an "open commitment," on the one hand, and the specific "suggestion" and "basic proposal" for answering this question, which derives from uncommon, historical experience, on the other hand (86 ff., 247).