

# The Trinity

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 23 September 2018

Preacher: Harvey Guest

[ 0 : 00 ] Starting off, couldn't be easier. You have this handout in front of you, and we begin by reading article number one of the 39 articles of the Church of England, the Church of England in Canada, in the ANAC form.

There is, of faith in the Holy Trinity, article one, there is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, hearts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible.

And in unity of this Godhead, there be three persons of one substance, power and eternity, of one substance, power and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

A faith in the Holy Trinity, article number one. There it is. Sort of a watchword for this talk.

I want to begin right off the bat with a kind of watchword, a kind of controlling idea. It couldn't be simpler. From a theologian. It's not important in his name.

[ 1 : 26 ] This is common to the whole ecumenical tradition of the Holy Catholic Church. Quote, Christian theology is biblical reasoning.

Christian theology is biblical reasoning. It is an activity of the created intellect. There's our watchword for the morning.

Simple, straightforward, I think. You can't be more profound than that kind of statement. Christian theology is biblical reasoning. It is an activity of the created intellect.

So, the Christian confession is that God is Trinity. We hear that in article one. If you will, the language varies a little bit, but not too much about these infinite mysteries.

Eternal Father, eternally begetting, eternally begotten Son. The Eternal Spirit, eternally proceeding from this mystery.

[ 2 : 37 ] That is God the Trinity. Strange language. We're not used to it. Eternal Father, eternally begetting, eternally begotten Son.

The Eternal Spirit, eternally proceeding from this mystery. One God, three persons. Each person fully and absolutely God.

Each person is God. Absolutely, without qualification. So, the article says, in that regard, one substance.

Not a bit of God in each person. Each person is eternally God. The Gospel reveals. The Gospel reveals that God is Trinity.

This is really important. The Gospel reveals that God is Trinity. How God is Trinity is incomprehensible to the created mind.

[ 3 : 48 ] That God is... The Gospel reveals that God is Trinity. God is Trinity. How God is Trinity is incomprehensible to the created mind, to the created intellect.

Carl Barth, on this particular point, quotes St. Augustine. St. Augustine got it so right. If God, it is not comprehensible.

If comprehensible, it is not God. So says the Bishop of Hippo, 1500 years ago. God is...

God is... God makes himself communicable. We can talk about God. But... We... Not to be mistaken with God being comprehensible.

God can make himself knowable. We can talk about God. But that doesn't mean that we can comprehend God. There you have it.

[ 4 : 54 ] So the Church of Jesus Christ confesses the Trinity. As we all know, Article 1. The Reformers who did the prayer book, they have to start with the Trinity.

Where else would you start? The Church of Jesus Christ confesses the Trinity and learns, has learned over the centuries, to think and to speak in hopefully an appropriate and faithful manner about this revealed mystery.

Mystery. Yes. Incomprehension here, if you will, incomprehensibility calls for humility. But it does not call for silence.

God wants us to know him and to speak about him. God loves us, wants to be in fellowship with us. We need to talk. So attention to language, right off the bat, is called for, isn't it?

The article, you've got it in front of you again. You'll notice this. It sort of, it dawns on us as we read it carefully. The article speaks of, for instance, the living God. This is beautiful language, isn't it?

[ 5 : 56 ] Our God is living. The living God. Everlasting, the article says. It speaks of power, of wisdom. It speaks of goodness.

This God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This language is in article 1. That is obviously Bible language.

language. Usually, Bible language is concrete. Sometimes it's mythological. I've done with you the other day. You know, the Psalter of God gets angry, and fire and brimstone come from his nostrils. He's spoken of like, in that concrete, quote, mythological language. Concrete mythological, it's usually, frequently visual, very visual pictures of God.

Very earthy, if you will. Sometimes, it could be referred to, for good or for ill, it's always commonsensical, at that, at one level. Thank goodness it is. God speaks to us, in a commonsensical language, that we can understand.

[ 7 : 01 ] That is, Bible vocabulary, Bible language, is in, is in article 1, article number 1. We'll call that, in fact, for today, language number 1. Language number 1.

We also hear, in this article, of course, another kind of vocabulary, another kind of language, which obviously just feels different, doesn't it?

Things like, without body, without parts, without passions, and we hear a further, something about a unity, of this Godhead, and then, three persons, one substance.

Don't recall Paul, ever saying that, to the church at Rome. Never talk like that. That is not, we can say for sure, that is not, Bible language, as a rule.

That's not, Bible language. It is obviously, somewhat abstract. It is somewhat, analytical. It is analytical. At its best, it seems to me, it seeks pure conception.

[ 8 : 08 ] There's something beautiful, about a pure conception. It sort of, sets aside metaphor, sets aside pictures. Thomas Torrance, talks about, kind of language, that seeks out, pure, pure conception.

God is worthy, of that at times. That's the kind of language, you find here. Again, it's not Bible language, it's abstract, it's analytical. It is very, very, very rare, in the Bible.

It's sometimes there, I would say, it's sometimes, sort of, there's an approach, to it in the Bible. The Bible usually, presents precision, by way of, extended observation.

Get a lot, of talk about God, that begins to build up, precise ideas about God. What is definitely, not to be said about God. What are good things, to be said about God. But here we have, in article number one, obviously a kind of, abstract, analytical language.

For today, we're going to call that, language number two. Article one, has Bible language in it, has abstract, language in it. I find it wonderful, I hope you do too.

[ 9 : 13 ] I know we're off, to a fast start, here today. I find it just wonderful, I know you do too, just to think, about God. I hope that's, true for you.

Just to think, about God, is good. This is impossible, but in a measure, to just put ourselves, and our concerns, questions of relevance, aside, and just think, about God.

I think it's a wonderful, wonderful thing to do. To think, with some effort, to think worthily, about what, one theologian, calls God, the mystery of the world.

My favorite thing, outside of words, outside of scripture, to simply, to talk of God, is from Karl Barth. Barth calls God, famously, he who loves, in freedom.

That's how Barth, thinks about God. He, who loves, in freedom. That's God. He who loves, in freedom.

[ 10 : 25 ] Indeed, Bible approaches, we say, abstract language sometimes. The Bible says, in him, we live, and move, and have our being.

We have our being today, because God, wills us, to have it. In him, we live, and move, and have our being.

We don't command, ourselves, to exist. God does. You see, the creed, article one, rather, speaks of this. So, I want to jump right into, let's go into, article number one, just for a while, forgetting

about ourselves, just thinking about God.

And we're going to start off, with a bit of language number two, the abstract stuff, the analytical stuff. Theologian says it, very simply, I forget the theologians, I've been, I'm quoting here often, they've been reading about, the Trinity all summer, I think it's George Hunsinger, a great, best scholar, in the United States.

God's absolute being, he says, God's absolute being, is his eternal reality, as the Trinity. Again, that's very simple, and straightforward. God's absolute being, is his eternal reality, as the Trinity. [ 11 : 45 ] But, here we jump into, language number two stuff, with some difficulty, but it's a delight, to think about God, along these lines, and it's always open, to further elucidation, we engage, the whole Christian tradition, of thinking about God, when we think about, the Trinity.

God's absolute will, his absolute being again, is his eternal reality, as the Trinity. But we may say, about this God, and we'll see why, in a moment, and here's language number two, stuff for sure, this God has, what has been called, and may be called, a contingent will.

God is absolute being, but God also has, what may be called, a contingent will. God, the creed, so I keep calling it, the creed, excuse me, article one, article one, along with the creed, article one, reminds us, that God, if you will, became, a creator.

Article one, says, the language is, the maker, and preserver, of all things, visible, and invisible. Just a footnote there, I didn't, was, I think, I think the, the whole tradition, talks about God, as the creator of, the creeds, the true God created, everything that's invisible.

The Greek world, our world too, thinks that there's something out there, called fate, infinite, powerful, and some people may secretly think, that our God is subject to fate, he's not.

[ 13 : 22 ] God created, everything that's invisible, there is no fate really. God's sovereign will, rules over all things. The creator, the maker, and preserver of all things, visible, and invisible.

You see here, that God has always been, a father, begetting a son, but God was not always, a creator.

God, became, a creator. In his sovereign freedom, he contingently said, I will create that which is, other than myself.

He did not have to. In freedom, he created. God became, a creator. So we can talk about God, having a contingent will. In freedom, like we, he decided to create something, other than himself. Amazing. God, has always been father. He has not always been a creator. He became, a creator. Language number two stuff, does sort of take you into, interesting sort of assertions, about God.

[ 14 : 29 ] There it is. Further attempts to unfold, this, in language number two, may go something like this.

Again, we're in the language of number two, so you have to be patient, with that kind of language. We can say this, with the tradition, God constitutes himself, as Trinity, as Trinity, eternally.

In his freedom, he constitutes himself, as Trinity, eternally. God doesn't find himself, to be a Trinity. He constitutes himself, in freedom, to be the Trinity, eternally.

That is amazing. God, otherwise, he determines himself, as a creator. Get the distinction. Our God is determined, as Trinity, he constitutes himself, to be a creator.

Yes. That's amazing. We're going to say goodbye, to language number two, because it is sort of, different, rarefied. It's, where does this take us?

[ 15 : 44 ] But we can also say this, on the basis of this, Trinitarian thought, it's throughout the tradition. But, this is amazing. In our God, therefore, we now know this, because of God the Trinity, and God the creator.

Apparently, in our God, what we call, simultaneity, and sequence, are not, exclusive to one another. God is, really different, than we are. One of the benefits, of Trinitarian thought, is just simply, you keep having, I hope it's in a moment, moments of adoration, and wonder.

How different, God is, from us. And part of our adoration, of God, our wonder at him, is that simple, realized recognition.

It's a feeling. I remember, I said, I want to forget about myself, and just think about God. But of course, it's really impossible. Every now and again, it just comes back on you, as you think about God.

[ 16 : 52 ] God is really different, than I am. And that's, a wondrous recognition. He means us, to know this. God, it's as if, God says to us, all the time, I'm really, different, than you.

I'm God. You're a creature. In God, simultaneity, that's a certain sense, his eternity, and what, what follows, in God's mysterious being, as sequence, again, are not exclusive.

One theologian says it, I think, very, a bit provocatively, but wondrously. To say, quote, God is eternal, is to say that God has, and is, time, himself.

God, is himself, time. God has a history, within himself. He's eternally, Trinity, says article one. But he became, the sequence, the maker of heaven, and earth. How strange, is our God? How very strange. But, the church, again, speaks about Trinity.

[18:11] Because, and now a little break, from language number two. Just at, at random, I grab these, and that's a bad way to do it, but, why not? It's in, it's, hopefully our minds have enough scripture, in them that we can say, God speaks about Trinity, because, well, Paul said to Titus, the goodness, and loving kindness, of God, our Savior, has appeared.

The goodness, and loving kindness, of God, our Savior, has appeared. Appeared. He's visible now. God, and his goodness, and his loving kindness, made it, himself, visible.

There's the beginning, of, where Trinitarian, thought begins, it's just the church, staring, and staring, and staring, and staring, at scripture, and saying, what does it tell us, about, what the word God, means?

What does the word God mean? The word, famously, with God, says John's prologue, is God. And the word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace, and truth.

lived, of course, in Israel, the chosen scene, for his appearing. God, is God, and here's a mystery, there's a something, with God, and that with God, is God, says John's prologue, completely clearly.

[19:49] Naming John's prologue, is one of the places, in scripture, where a bit of, analytical language, shows up. There are approaches, to it, at least in holy scripture. The word, was with God, and the word, was God.

There's God, and there's, with God. And with God, is also God. God, God. That's amazing. amazing. The word, with God, is God.

That's amazing. The form of God, Paul says to the Philippians, the form of God, emptied himself, and took the form, of a servant.

Isn't that amazing? God, emptied himself, and took the form, of a servant. God can do that. He can empty himself, and take the form, of a servant, but remain God, at the same time.

Didn't stop being God, when he did that. There it is, the form of God. The church baptizes, in the name, of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

[20:57] Is it Romans 8? You find a beautiful, the spirit, of him, who raised Jesus, Paul says in Romans 8, 11. The spirit, of him, who raised Jesus.

A little, Trinitarian moment, in Romans 8. God, the spirit, who raised him? God, the Father, the Father of Jesus, raised Jesus. The spirit, of him, who raised Jesus.

Amazing stuff. The article, again, Trinity thought, arises out of, long, difficult, engagement, with all, of scripture.

The church, looks at all, of scripture, and says, what is it telling us, the word God means? And it says, it's telling us, strangely, that God is Trinity.

The article, speaks again, speaking with, using language, number one there, I hope you keep looking, at the article, as I talk away here. The article, speaks of God, the Trinity, as infinite, in power.

[21:57] That's something, less abstract, very emotional, and I find, it's just beautiful language. Think, that God is infinite, in power, wisdom, and goodness.

The tradition, if I call it that, over and over again, calls such glories, that belong to God, the Trinity, quite reasonably, these are glories, that belong to God, that are communicable.

people. We can understand that, in a pretty straightforward, manner. In Christ, we believe, they were supremely present, these wonderful glories, wisdom, goodness, power.

But each of us, of course, in a measure, possesses, each of these things. Perhaps, in a woefully, small measure. But some form, or trace, of these things, are in all humans.

Heaven, if you will, gifts, gifts, gives to creatures, some wisdom, some goodness, some power. We, we share, in these communicable, attributes.

[23:05] The state, of these gifts, before and after, the mystery of iniquity, enters the creation, is much disputed, in the Christian tradition. Some Christian traditions, see us, utterly fallen.

You know, the famous Calvinist language. What is it? We are, beyond, beyond, retrieval. Total depravity. And other traditions say, well, let's back off, from that a bit.

We still bear, God's image. There are traces, of these communicable, gifts in us. That's a reasonable, and good conversation, for Christians, to have. But that St. Augustine, called pagans, virtues, he called them, magnificent vices, or something.

That we see, goodness, but everything's distorted. I think Pascal, got it perfectly, correct, when he calls, he calls we humans, glorious ruins.

I think that's, I love that, from Pascal. Seems to just capture, so much of scripture, so much of just, who we are. We are glorious. God created us.

[ 24 : 08 ] He sustains us. He has a future for us. We are glorious. But we have been ruined, by sin. Glorious ruins. In the literary tradition, just off the top of my head, you know, famously, Milton presents, Satan, at times, as quite beautiful.

Because Milton remembers, that the evil one, used to be an archangel. An angel of light. Naive, people forgetting, the Christian tradition, forgetting, the Bible, then come along, stupid, and say, oh, Milton must have really liked, the evil one.

He must have been, one of his party, because he shows him, to be, you know, glorious. Well, that just is a witness, in the literary tradition, of a culture, forgetting scripture, forgetting the Christian tradition.

You can be glorious, but also ruined. That's how, Milton presents, the evil one, in Paradise Lost. we are, glorious ruins.

We are, all of us, are not omnipotent. But God, will, through his spirit, communicate, to us, a measure of power.

[ 25 : 25 ] So power, is a communicable, attribute, of God the Trinity. God is omnipotent, but he can give, to creatures, his, a measure of power. We'll never, be omnipotent.

Some, I think probably, someone, maybe in the White House, could say that, to Donald Trump.

We're not omnipotent, but we can, we have a measure of power, given to us, by our creator.

These, these distinctions are, I know, some people, quite reasonably, find them just, that they're perplexing, and they, would just rather, not bother, with this kind of, approach, to talking about God.

But on the other hand, I'm sure, I hope you've had this experience, they can be, for some people, they have been for me, they kind of bring you, a kind of intellectual comfort, because they bring a kind of, a kind of beginning, of understanding, of why the tradition, says various things, about God. For instance, it is a bit strange, isn't it, when we hear, in article one, that God, God is without, the Trinity, is without body.

[ 26 : 33 ] Without parts, without, this is most, controversial for some, some people, are real bothered, reasonably enough, God is, says article one, without passions.

No passions in God, says article number one. God is not, without body, and without parts, is usually not, too much of a problem, for us.

But it is, it takes us into, language number two, kind of issues, doesn't it? God is not, to be thought of, this came up last week, a bit, in conversation, with Jim Packers, he was talking, about God's eternity. God is not, to be thought of, as extended, in space.

And therefore, he'd have, there'd be a part of God, there, and another part of God, over there. God is not, to be thought of, that way, if we're going to be, careful with our imaginations, and our thinking.

God is, not extended in space, he doesn't have parts. Again, part of God, there, another part of God, all over there. If you will, here is another area, where you think, isn't God unthinkable, in one sense?

[ 27 : 43 ] All of God, the tradition teaches us, over and over, all of God, is everywhere. That's a, a strange thing, how different God is, than we are.

One famous way, of putting this, may come from a pagan, source for all I know, but, it's, I think Augustine, approves of this, kind of saying, so does Pascal, other people, in the medieval tradition, will say this, kind of thing.

God is a circle, with, center everywhere, circumference, circumference, nowhere. God is a circle, center everywhere, circumference, nowhere.

That's an interesting thought, you ever had someone say to you, usually, people trying to give you the gears, because you're religious, or you're a Christian, and, why would God be interested in, you

know, me?

Why would God be interested in little things, particular things? Isn't God, shouldn't God be just looking at the big picture? Why would God be concerned about, particular little things?

[ 28 : 47 ] Well, because God is everywhere. All of God can be present to you, and be present to everybody else. To big issues, to small issues, God is everywhere. God is a circle, center everywhere, circumference, nowhere.

God really is different than we are. Well, say. Even better than that, sometimes that might seem to make God a bit passive. He's just there.

I find John Webster's simple statement about God, here, very moving. He says, God presents himself, in freedom.

God always presents himself, in freedom. That's who God is. Pantheists, you see, don't believe that. They imagine that God is everywhere, and that they will necessarily find God, when they look for him, anywhere.

They'll, God will, because of God's being, they'll, they'll find him. He'll have to be findable. Well, God will be everywhere, you see, but the point being, from Mr. Webster, that God presents himself, in his freedom to you.

[ 29 : 59 ] He's not, at your command. Present yourself, God, I'm looking for you. God will present himself, but he presents himself, in freedom.

Mr. Center was going to do, his doctoral work, at St. Andrews, with John Webster, but Mr. Webster passed away, in his 60th year, so sad. Wonderful Christian theologian.

Pantheists, again, thinks, thinks God, thinks that God, must be necessarily there. No, the Trinity is free, as we saw earlier, the, the, the Trinity is so free, it was free, even to just become, a creator one day, if we can say, one day.

Became a creator. I will give the gift, of existence to others, the Trinity decided. Overflowing with love, and kindness, and generosity.

But what about, again, what about this God, without passions? This again, as we say, is a problem for some, and not unreasonably, it's a bit offensive, God has no passions, makes them seem, unreal, and weird.

[ 31 : 03 ] Oliver O'Donovan, I haven't read, I haven't, some of the best books, have great titles, haven't read this yet, I want to someday, Oliver O'Donovan, has written a book, about the articles, I love the title, the 39 articles, is the title of this book, a conversation, with Tudor Christianity, that's interesting, the articles do come, from Tudor Christianity, which reminds us, it gives us a simple reminder, that doctrine, unfolds in history, so when some people, hear that God's, without passions, there is a little bit, of a worry, reasonably enough, has a mere, terrifying, absolute, found its way, into Trinitarian thought, maybe, Aristotle's famous, unmoved mover, has shown up, which would distort, perhaps, the biblical presentation, of what the word, God means, the tradition, wisely worries, about things like this, finds itself, compromised a bit, with thought, outside of scripture, and that's why, there's, you know, there's another, kind of Trinitarian thought, comes along and says, wait a minute, we don't like, quite where that's going, and there, it unfolds, maybe,

Aristotle's, unmoved mover, is here, because Aristotle's, unmoved mover, would not have passions, what do you know, to know, he's above passions, what about the gospel, what about the God of Israel, speaking through Hosea, the prophet, famously, a God, you remember that book, where God agonizes, over his people's, wayward ways, is that a God, without passions, the scriptures, show God, passionately, loving his people, even as they are, wayward, and he wishes, to bring them back, well language, number two here, may help, I must, move along here, we're running out of time, remember, from the beginning, God has, on one view, of Trinitarian thought, God has, absolute perfections, and he has also, become a God, of contingent perfections, so he is eternally, I'm repeating myself, eternally, father, son, and spirit, but he became a creator, he has this contingent perfection, where God became a creator, and that's one of his glories, so here's the kind of assertion, that answers the passions, in God thing, for sake of time, the impassable, sovereign God, that is without passions, so, constituting himself, as we said earlier, he constitutes himself, as the eternal God, nothing impinges upon him, there's nothing there, to impinge upon him, nothing conditions God,

God, but this God, determines himself, doesn't constitute himself, but determines himself, to become, an obedient, incarnate son, and become, in fact, the suffering servant, that Isaiah the prophet said, was coming into the world, the second person, of the Trinity, incarnate, in Jesus of

Nazareth, with the mystery, of Jesus of Nazareth, becomes a suffering servant, he emptied himself, became a suffering servant, without ceasing, to be God, the impassable God, the Trinity, without passions, is, if you will, divinely free, he's not Aristotle's, unmoved mover, he's divinely free, he's the God who, nothing conditions him, but he's free, to save, he's free, to take upon himself, a passionate life, what a strange God, he can be both, passionless, but out of his free love, and passionlessness, he becomes, a suffering God, in the mystery, of Jesus Christ, we are not, to think of God, as a prisoner, here's one of the most, radical thoughts, you can think, just deal with this, as you will, it's so,

I think Karl Barth, says this, we are not, to think of God, as a prisoner, of his own attributes, I'm passionless, sorry, I can't help you, in your sin, creatures, no, I'm passionless, but I'm free, to enter into, your dilemmas, and take your, passionate, horrible situation, down upon myself, God can do that, he's without passion, but his, contingent, will, might be, to take, upon himself, the sin of the world, and even, to cry out, to himself, why have you, forsaken me, oh, we worship, a very strange, God, who's other than we are, he can do this, we cannot, do things like this, the, impassibly, sovereign one, is able, to achieve, what he wills, through, the son's, suffering, says Colin Gunton, who's the, lecture at, Regent College, died a few years ago, the impassibly, sovereign one, is able, to achieve, what he wills, through the son's, suffering, in some sense, God may appear, as his, opposite, where, isn't our God, strange, God, the Trinity, opens up, mysteries about God, that God, is this way, scripture reveals, how God, could be this way, is beyond, the created intellect, and, we learn, adoration, intellectual adoration, if you will, by thinking, such thoughts, Trinity's, attributes, God has, again, absolute, perfections, that are simply, revealed as there, in the mystery, of God's freedom, but, God, at the same time, has, contingent, perfections, contingent, absolutes, no, contingent, perfections, which, God may, also, reveal, to us, absolute, perfections, contingent, perfections, how, again, this could be, is, incomprehensible, to the created mind,

[ 37 : 30 ] Christian theology, again, is, biblical, reasoning, running out of time, it is, an activity, of the created, intellect, again, I spent some time, reading about the Trinity, this summer, that's why, when Alexandra said, say something, in September, I thought, sort of fresh in my mind, I'll do it, reminded again, of how strange, our God is, God is, other, than we are, but Trinity thought, is biblical reasoning, or comes from the Bible, because God the Trinity, has, repeated himself, in our world, if you will, the tradition speaks, of God, imminent to himself, but then this, God who's imminent to himself, did a work, for our salvation, in the world, there's eternity, here's our world, this is usually, in the tradition, called the economic Trinity, we know, that God is like this, here, because the Trinity, repeated himself, down here, if you will, the gospel is the Trinity, working for us, and therefore, the tradition knows, this is who God is,

God is father, God is son, God is spirit, that's why, the creeds, our liturgies, our hymnody, all says that, one way or another, over and over again, God the Trinity here, has revealed himself, to us here, and therefore, we know, that's what God is really like, it was, it was, at work here, the Trinity comes to us, in our dark, and alienated, and fragile, and sinful world, it was, into, Karl Barth loves to talk about this, God came to us, in our far country, God the Father, sent the Son, becoming incarnate, and that forever, behold, the great creator, takes himself, a house of clay, a robe of human flesh, he takes, which he will wear, forever, God, Barth says, has decided, not to be God, without us, he's decided, to love us that much, he's taken humanity, up into his own life, in the Trinity, the second person, is incarnate,

Jesus, when he returns, we're going to see, a Jewish rabbi, in eternal glory, the second person, of the Trinity, the one who upholds, the universe, by the word of his power, through whom all things, were created, says the prologue, that's our Jesus, that's him, it was into a far country, again, that God the Father, sent the Son, and the spirit of the Son, as we hear, in that little Romans, 8 verse 11 moment, reveals to us, the Son, as the tradition, likes to say, only God, can reveal God, only God, reveals God, truths about God, so, thinking, the Trinity, thinking God's thoughts, after him, if you will, in the Bible, here, think about me this way, the whole Christian tradition, is there, God is, as article one says, he's eternal, God is, an immensity, and it is, this, immensity, which comes to us, as Charles Hodge, a very, hard to read theologian, from the 19th century, at Princeton, he calls the doctrine, of God's immensity, an intensive, perfection, it's not a,

God is not, a mere immensity, it's intensive, that's why God, acts for us, in Mary, the second person, of the Trinity, came and lived, in Mary's womb, on the cross, he dies, for the world, he, is,

exiting, an empty tomb, for us, this is, God's actions, for us, God the Trinity, in this, our far country, this is the God, who did this for us, I must close, it thinks us, to think Trinity, as in John Webster's words, into, a vision of, intellectual selfhood, he calls it, here's a new world, to think yourself into, this is the world, that God would have us, think ourselves into, a new intellectual, selfhood, uses that phrase, when he became, the Regius Professor, of theology, at Oxford, the successor, to Rowan Williams,

Webster's very orthodox, he gives a lecture, in which he says, why does Oxford, have a theologian, in its midst, aren't we sort of, anachronisms, what are we doing here, and in his inaugural address, he brilliantly talks about, a university is a place, where different visions, of the intellectual self, are on display, we have an enlightenment, vision of the intellectual self, the Christian intellectual self, is different, and on a university campus, they should have, the ability to speak, to one another, that's how, John Webster, now it's saying, the late John Webster, speaks to the modern world, about, well let's talk about, different forms, of the intellectual self, the Christian intellectual self, is its own self, it's distinct, a lot of what, article one says, we know, children of the enlightenment, who are articulate, and thought, they call, that's gibberish, father, eternally begetting, a son, a spirit, proceeding, that's the kind of thinking, that of Voltaire, and all the children, of the enlightenment, say away with this mystery, but the Christian church, is a new world, where a new, intellectual selfhood, is born, and we know God, is this mystery, of the Trinity, there it is, unique to the Christian faith, is the doctrine, of the Trinity, if the church gets, much much worse, much more compromised, by our culture,

[ 44 : 02 ] I wonder if the days coming, when major denominations, will start to archive, the doctrine, of the Trinity, because it really, makes us different, than others, amongst us, the Trinity, teaches us, closing, the Trinity, teaches us, to think, the Trinity, the Trinity, again, is the gospel's God, it's by staring, long and hard, at the scriptures, as a whole, the New Testament, in particular, that we find out, that the gospel's God, is the mystery, of Trinity, by his own will, says James, James 1, verse 18, a verse, which Karl Barth, one of my favorites, just loves, by his own will, he brought us forth, the older versions, say that by his own will, he has begotten us, by the word of truth, the Trinity, says Barth, whenever we know it, we are rather, begotten by it,

God is speaking this, through his spirit, into us, into his beloved people, at the church, think of me this way, God says, I am Trinity, I am Father, eternally begetting, Son, Son, eternally begotten, proceeding, is the spirit, I give you the spirit, to teach you, how to think, to renew your mind, and get to know, the Trinity a bit, in this world, because in eternity, I suspect, we are going to spend, forever, exploring, exploring, this mystery, how this could be, there it is, wonderful topic, I know a lot of that is, strange, a bit odd, people who have too much time, in their hands in the summer, like me, and read a few books, about the Trinity, but I think it's wonderful, I find it healing, to learn that there's a way, of thinking, which I would call, a thinking, into adoration, that's what Trinity thought is, this is God, this way, what, infinitely adorable, that God is this way, that we know, he's this way, amen, let me say a word of prayer, it's five to ten, we'll see if we have time,

Lord thank you, for your revelation, of yourself, that you are a father, who creates, a son, who reconciles, a spirit, who perfects, and we will spend, now and forever, thinking about this mystery, we thank you Lord, for these truths, where they're in air, Lord we know they're, so often in air, correct them, and where they are, have any good in them, may they bless our hearts, and souls today, amen,