BOOKS I HAVE READ: GOD IN 3D

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Category: Observations

I've read a lot of books on the Trinity over the years, but nothing quite like God in 3D: Finding the Trinity in The Bible and the Church Fathers by Colin Green. It's a fascinating book built around the central, simple theme that the Old Testament description of the Temple contains basic threads that point to the triune nature of God, which is more fully revealed in the New Testament.

The book is a medium format paperback of just over 250 pages. The style is probably best described as academic-light. It is aimed at a general readership, and there is a light smattering of footnotes and a good bibliography. Unfortunately, it will set you back about Â£20 for a paperback at and even the Kindle version is not cheap (don't even think about buying the hardback).

> *This is a journey to discover how the first Christians were primed by the temple stories of the Old Testament and prepared by Jesus to understand the three-in-one God - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.*
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> *p. 1*

> *You don't need to have had any special training. This book is for the train or untrained reader alike, for anyone who wants to understand the Trinity, and for anyone who may have doubts about understanding it.*
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> *p. 2*

It is difficult, nay impossible, in a short review to give a detailed overview of the argument of a book like this one. The central theme is that when the Old Testament speaks of God's Name and His Glory dwelling in the Temple, these point to the Son and the Spirit, who while the transcendent God (the Father) dwells in heaven. I will admit that I didn't find the first chapter which introduced this topic very convincing. However, there is an appendix which outlines the academic case for the argument which I found very helpful. I would suggest reading this appendix either before or immediately after, reading the first chapter.

Having set out his case, the author goes on to demonstrate how the themes of the book are present through the New Testament and on into the writings of the Fathers. There is an important chapter on discipleship, a theme which distressingly is often missing from popular books on the Trinity. This chapter has helpful suggestions on prayer, reading the Bible, the Lord's supper and the communal life of the church.

The thing about this book is that it is completely novel. You won't find discussion of persons, essences or hypostases. It takes an approach to the Trinity which is rooted in Biblical theology rather than in dogmatics. I will leave it to the systematic theologians to discuss the merits or demerits of this approach. From my point of view, it presents a welcome alternative to some of the of the Trinitarian literature that I have read. It made me think and reflect on my own practice, rather than wrack my brains trying to understand what was going on - and that's never a bad thing.

Who should read this book? I wouldn't give it to someone who had never really thought about the Trinity, I'd offer someone like that Delighting in the Trinity by Tim Chester. However, for someone who has read a little theology and wants to know more, this would be an excellent follow up book to some of the basics. If only it didn't cost so much.

If you'd like to engage more with what Colin has written, he blogs here.

I was provided with a review copy of this book by the author, but I have tried not to let this generosity influence my review. If I thought it was a stinker, I would have said so.