THE GOD WHO IS TRIUNE

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This is the last of my holiday reading 'reviews' for this break. I don't know if you are the sort of person who reads Systematic theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine either for work, devotions or amusement. If not, then you can safely skip the rest of this post. However, if you are a reader of Systematic Theologies, I'd like to draw your attention to some of the chapter headings in Grudem's tome.

Amongst the chapters in Part 2: The Doctrine of God, Wayne Grudem has: three chapters on the character of God, on chapter on the Trinity and others on creation, providence, prayer etc.

The problem with this is the place of the Trinity. If God is triune, three in one, then this is absolutely central to his being and cannot be treated as just divine feature among others. A triune view of God means that we need to look at the character of God, creation, providence etc. from the perspective of the Trinity. We can't simply shunt the Trinity off into one chapter among others. And this is where The God Who Is Triune: Revisioning the Christian Doctrine of God by Allan Coppedge comes in. This is essentially a systematic theology of the doctrine of God (like Grudem's part two) but written from a purely trinitarian perspective.

The book is 330 pages long and includes Scripture, name and general indexes. There is also a wealth of diagrams and illustrations. But be warned, this is not a book to sit down and read from start to finish. It is hard going. If you are the sort of person who does read systematic theologies (Grudem or others) then you should almost certainly get hold of The God Who Is Triune, but, to be honest, if you don't regularly read theology, then you needn't bother with this one either (I said you could skip the rest of this post).

Perhaps the most helpful sections of the book are the parts where he compares a trinitarian view of God with what he calls classic theism: the habitual Christian way of viewing God.

> *God, who shares life within the Trinity in self-giving love, created the heavens and earth to express this self-giving love to others. He has chosen to create human persons with whom to share life and love as an outward expression of what happens with his own being. So, contrary to some approaches to creation, the making of the universe by the triune God was not fist of all about his power and omniscience, but about his self-giving expression of life and love. This foundation sets the parameters for describing God's creative work.Â (p. 250)*

In writing this, I'm not seeking to knock Grudem's (or anyone else's) Systematic Theology. It is a very helpful book. However, it has to be said that the resurgence in interest in trinitarian thought and theology in the evangelical world over the last twenty or so years has brought new insights to our understanding. Or, perhaps, I should say has brought some old insights back into focus.

If you have an interest in systematics then you have to get hold of Coppedge's book. Though if you have such an interest, you have probably already bought it!