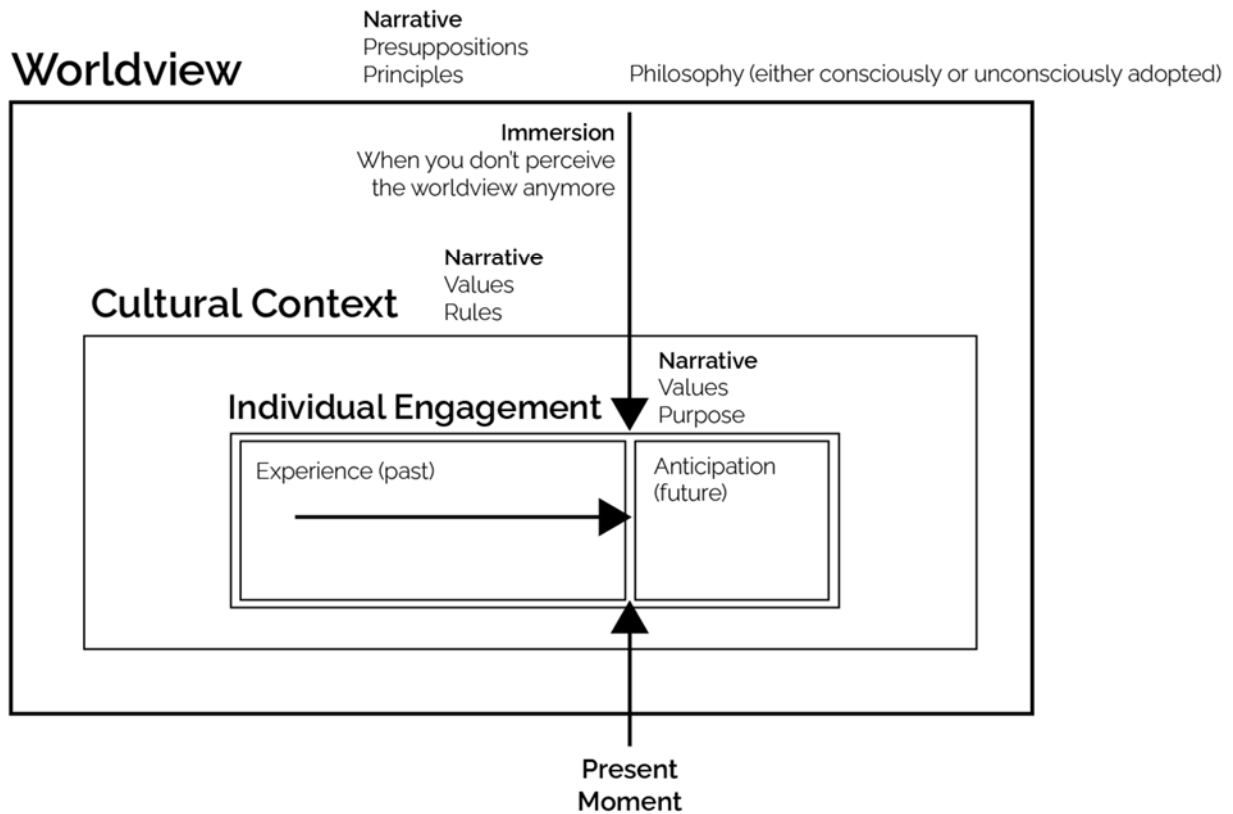


Book 4: Beyond Personality: Or First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity

1. Making and Begetting



A man who changed from having *Bios* to having *Zoe* would have gone through as big a change as a statue which changed from being carved stone to being a real man. And that is precisely what Christianity is about. This world is a great sculptor's shop. We are the statues and there is a rumor going round the shop that some of us are some day going to come to life. (p. 159)

2. The Three-Personal God

- a) The doctrine of the Trinity resolves tensions in the text where Jesus, the Father, and the Spirit are different but the same in essence and nature. They are sometimes spoken of interchangeably.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor 13:14)

- b) Jesus and the Holy Spirit are specifically identified as God.

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. (Heb 1:1-4)

"Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. (John 8:58-59)

"I and the Father are one." Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him. (John 10:30-31)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (2 Cor 3:17)

- c) The Trinity explains how love can be a central part of God's nature. You need more than one person to have love (love is other-centric). (Lewis comes to this idea in a later chapter, p. 174)

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Matt 3:16-17)

3. Time and Beyond Time

If you picture Time as a straight line along which we have to travel, then you must picture God as the whole page on which the line is drawn. We come to the parts of the line one by one: we have to leave A behind before we get to B, and cannot reach C until we leave B behind. God, from above or outside or all round, contains the whole line, and sees it all. (168)

4. The Good infection

And now, what does it all matter? It matters more than anything else in the world. The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance. There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made. (176)