

TRINITARIAN REVOLUTION!

RICHARD ROHR

I think we are in the beginnings of a *Trinitarian Revolution*. History has so long operated with a static and imperial image of God—as a Supreme Monarch and Critical Spectator living in splendid isolation from what he (and God is always envisioned as male in this model) created. His love is perceived as unstable, whimsical, and preferential.

Humans become the God we worship. So it is quite important that our God is good and life-giving. That's why we desperately need a worldwide paradigm shift in Christian consciousness about how we perceive and relate to God. This shift has been subtly yet profoundly underway for some time, hiding in plain sight.

The slowly-dawning revelation of Trinity was supposed to have radically altered our image of God, but for the most part it did not. The old dualistic hardwiring was too ingrained. In order to come together in politics and religion, to take new scientific findings in biology and quantum physics seriously, and for our species and our planet to even survive **we must reclaim relationship as the foundation and ground of everything.**

In his book, *The Structure of*

Scientific Revolutions, Thomas Kuhn popularized the phrase “paradigm shift.”¹ Kuhn said that paradigm shifts become necessary when the plausibility structure of the previous paradigm becomes so full of holes and patchwork “fixes” that a complete overhaul, which once looked utterly threatening, now appears as a lifeline.

I believe we're at precisely such a moment when it comes to our image of God. Instead of the idea of the Trinity being an abstruse conundrum, it could well end up being the answer to Western religion's basic problem.

As Catherine LaCugna writes:

*The God whom Jesus loves, relies on, by whose power he heals and forgives sin, is not a political monarch, a tyrant, an aloof authority figure, a castled king or queen whose subjects cannot visit, an isolated figure who cannot suffer because he does not love. . . . The God of Jesus Christ is, as Bonaventure put it, the fontalis plenitudo, the fountain overflowing with mercy and justice, and also the telos, the end and fulfillment of every creature.*²

God has forever redefined power in the Trinity! God's power comes through powerlessness and humility. The Christian God is much more properly called all-

vulnerable than almighty, which we should have suspected and intuited by the shocking metaphor “Lamb of God” found throughout the New Testament.

Unfortunately, for the vast majority, God is still “the man upstairs,” a substantive noun more than an active verb. In my opinion, this misunderstanding is partly responsible for the quick expansion of practical atheism and agnosticism we see in the West today. Rational and sincere people wonder, “If God is almighty and all-loving, then why is there so much suffering in the world?”

If God is all-vulnerable, then perhaps God stands in solidarity with all pain and suffering in the universe, allowing us to be participants in our own healing. This does not make sense to the logical mind, but to the awakened soul it somehow does.

Let the *Trinitarian Revolution* take root! □

Notes

1. See Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, (Chicago Press, 2012).
2. Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God For Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (HarperSanFrancisco: 1991), 399.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, *The Divine Dance* (Whitaker House, 2016), 35-36, 171.