

Abstract

This dissertation reflects upon the nature of God and considers the extent to which God can be determined to be relational. The author draws the literature review together by collating the findings under four headings: Trinity, Creation, Scripture and Incarnation. Throughout the work, a wide appeal is made to Holy Scripture, all of which is set alongside the collected wisdom of a number of expert theologians and the author's own insights. The second part of the study considers the implications for the human order which arise out of proving that God is indeed relational. A similar model is followed here in that the material being considered in this section is also grouped under four headings, these being: Image of God, Christ as Exemplar, Justice and Righteousness, Mission and Ministry. The author then commences a practical outworking by using these last four themes to interrogate interview transcripts recorded at two outreach projects being supported by the parish in which he has been placed to serve his term as Deacon-Intern in the ordained ministry of the Church of Ireland. An ethnographic approach is adopted to garner the information required. The interviews in question are in effect relaxed conversations with the two principals involved, each of whom conceived, established and continue to run the projects in question. The author has brought into play relevant excerpts of these two conversations, along with a representative sample of theoretical material, and gathered everything together to produce the penultimate chapter. Concurring that God is indeed relational, by nature and by action, the final chapter considers the consequences of that for the missional activities of God's people, by setting the literature review against the subsequent findings in the dissertation's conclusion.