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Miroslav Volf on Humanity in the Trinity

We're sometimes asked "Are you sure the adoption of humanity is the gospel? I've never heard it before."

One issue we struggle with is the issue of human sinfulness. Our human nature tells us that we must first stop sinning and then God will embrace us. Unfortunately we are never able to stop sinning so we never feel embraced! The gospel is the good news that the Trinity embraced us first, even before we had the desire to stop sinning (Rom. 6:8.) Here's how Miroslav Volf expresses it:

When the Trinity turns toward the world, the Son and the Spirit become, in Irenaeus's beautiful image, the two arms of God by which humanity was made and taken into God's embrace (see *Against All Heresies* 5.6.1.). That same love that sustains nonself-enclosed identities in the Trinity seeks to make space "in God" for humanity. Humanity is, however, not just the other of God, but the beloved other who has become an enemy. When God sets out to embrace the enemy, the result is the cross. On the cross the dancing circle of self-giving and mutually indwelling divine persons opens up for the enemy; in the agony of the passion the movement stops for a brief moment and a fissure appears so that sinful humanity can join in (see John 17:21). We, the others - we, the enemies - are embraced by the divine persons who love us with the same love with which they love each other and therefore make space for us within their own eternal embrace.
~ *Exclusion and Embrace*, Abingdon Press: 1996. pp. 128-129

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