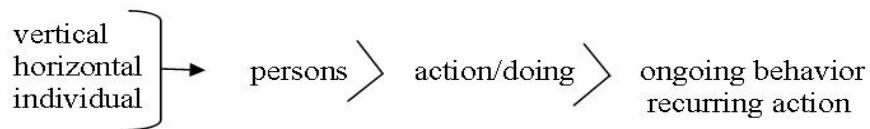


# THE INTERPERSONAL CHARACTER OF CHRISTIANITY

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## INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the three-part series: the in-life operation of Christianity: (1) vertical relationship to God, (2) horizontal relationship to other people, and (3) personal development in the context of those other two dimensions



## I. CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSON

### A. Image of God

Corporately: Genesis 1:26-27      Man and woman in the image of God

## SOCIAL CHARACTER

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Emotion</u>	<u>Will</u>	<u>Spirit</u>
humor	love	responsibility	
creativity	trust	purpose	
language communication			
self-transcendence			

Genesis 1:20b-23  
**5:1b-3**  
**1:24**

### B. (Personal) Interpersonal

Individual elements: social capacity (relational)  
 divine purpose (responsible)

## II. EVIDENCE FOR THE PRIORITY OF THE INTERPERSONAL PRINCIPLE (See “Bases for Interpersonalism: The Integrating Reality for Christian Truth.”)

Four kinds of things: person, nature, law, rationality

Personal process is carried forward by influence and response to influence.  
 Natural process moves forward by force (in-built natural laws).  
 Legal process is carried forward by authority.  
 Rational process (metaphysical process) is carried forward by form.

- A. Big words in Christianity:
  - grace vs. law
  - faith vs. works of law
  - mercy vs. justice
  - promise vs. eventuation
  - love
  - reconciliation
- B. Genesis 1:1, 3a—nature
- C. Galatians 3:16-19a—law
- D. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5—reason

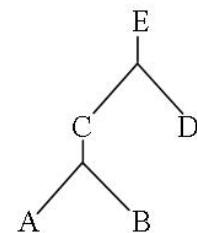
Summary: Person created nature.

Promise preceded law.  
 Christ transcends reason.

Every perversion of Christianity has been some kind of departure from interpersonal process as the fundamental reality in the Christian worldview.

### III. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAUSES (See “Characteristics of Interpersonalism.”)

- A. Compromise  
 (thesis, antithesis, synthesis)



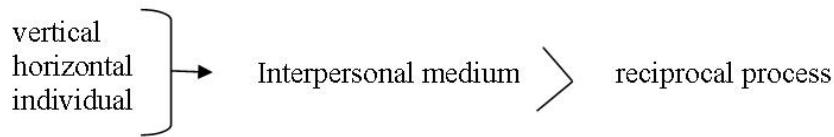
- B. Chain reaction (domino effect) A → B → C → D

- C. Reciprocation  
 (sets up a spiral, not a circle particularly) A ↔ B  
 (degree, hence, growth is possible)

Nature, law, and reason tend to be either-or (categorical), but a person allows for continuum; hence, it is not as easy to give a time when as with law, which is very categorical.

### IV. RELATIONSHIP OF RECIPROCITY TO BASIC CHRISTIANITY SERIES

DEVELOPMENTAL GROWTH: sanctification, faith, assurance, love, fellowship, self-image, coping



V. OTHER FACTORS BESIDES (1) reciprocity (mutual change),  
 (2) degree/continuum (hence, gray areas):

- (3) Intention/motive and attitude (internal factor) are important.
- (4) Relationship across diversity
- (5) Projecting consciousness over behind the other person's eyes
- (6) Change is by influence (vs. authority or force): example, reasons given, explanation, showing you care about the other person.
- (7) flexibility/complexity. Interpersonal relationship is the most complex reality there is. That is so because "slippage" can happen on both sides of the relationship (in contrast to stimulus-response, e.g.)

Summary: Christianity operates in terms of the characteristics of persons.

Christianity addresses the principles that govern interpersonal relationships.

#### THAT IS BASIC CHRISTIANITY

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