Discussion outline: The Ordinary Christian's Creed

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Week #13

February 26, 2012

Reformation Fellowship Discussion Outline: Critique of the Ordinary Christian's Creed Handout #9

Points #12-16 of "The Ordinary Christian's Creed" > My Critique

A. Critique of specific assertions within these points:

- 1. **Point #12** from "The Ordinary Christian's Creed" (Handout #1):
 - a. "...it was now impossible for God to grant any human being Life rather than condemnation to Hell without violating the justice that he himself had built into the fabric of his created cosmos..."
 - i. Traditional concept of Hell is not a biblical concept.
 - ii. Impossible to grant Life...without violating justice that he himself had built into the fabric of his created cosmos.
 - (A) It is not a matter of God's justice being built into the fabric of creation as if God was answerable to it.
 - iii. Mercy triumphs over judgment; mercy grants Life in the face of the demands of justice.
 - b. "...a justice that was also inherent within the very being and character of God himself. Mankind justly deserved condemnation. For God to grant anything other than that would be unjust."
 - i. Mercy is unjust, but it is not unrighteous.
 - ii. It is false to argue that mercy cannot be extended unless and until justice is satisfied.
 - (A) Such "mercy" would not be mercy.
 - c. This restriction on God's dealings with his human creatures existed only because of the autonomous choice of Adam and Eve.
 - i. NO; mankind was damnable from the outset.
 - ii. Adam and Eve did not create the need for salvation by their transgression; Adam and Eve were created in need of salvation.
- 2. **Point #13** from "The Ordinary Christian's Creed" (Handout #1):
 - a. "This divine dilemma was a major obstacle to God's will for his human creatures."
 - i. Not really! God was not faced with a dilemma. He merely needed to choose to exercise mercy.
 - b. The fact that he could not grant such mercy to any human being without violating his own inherent justice was an obstacle to his merciful desire to save mankind.

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- i. False! God could grant mercy in direct violation of his own inherent justice, while not being in direct violation of his own inherent righteousness.
 - (A) Mercy, by definition, is a violation of justice.
- 3. **Point #14** from "The Ordinary Christian's Creed" (Handout #1):
 - a. "In order to circumvent this problem and devise a way whereby he could save mankind from Hell, God devised a plan of salvation."
 - i. Our salvation is not a "work around" that God creatively devised; our salvation is as simple and straightforward as God's choice to be merciful.
 - b. "God decided that the second person of his triune godhead would become the savior of mankind. He would descend from heaven, dwell on the earth in and among human beings, and do what was needed in order to make it possible for any human being who wanted Life to have the opportunity to receive Life rather than Hell."
 - i. Salvation comes from Jesus, the Son of God; not from the second person of the Trinity come down to earth.
 - ii. God did not "need" anything to be done in order to grant Life to mankind—
 (A) other than choose to be merciful.
- 4. **Point #15** from "The Ordinary Christian's Creed" (Handout #1):
 - a. The traditional theory of the incarnation is false.
 - i. See earlier discussion of how and in what sense Jesus is God. (Handout #4)
 - b. Logos is not the second person of the Trinity.
 - i. Logos means many things, including:
 - (A) Detailed plan for (script of, blueprint for) cosmic history;
 - (B) The author of the plan for cosmic history.
- 5. **Point #16** from "The Ordinary Christian's Creed" (Handout #1):
 - a. "The very reason of Jesus' existence, the sole purpose for his coming into the world, was to die the Life-giving death he died."
 - i. Jesus was not a Plan B to fix what had been ruined by Adam and Eve.
 - (A) Jesus was Plan A—the one in view of whom, for whom, to the benefit of whom, and with regard to whom all the ages of created reality were brought into being.
 - ii. The primary focus of Plan A is not Jesus' death; the primary focus is his eternal REIGN over the eternal Kingdom of God.
 - iii. As part of his qualifying for that role as eternal King, he was sent among us first to prophesy and to die:
 - (A) Death was not his only qualifying function.
 - (B) He also came to live an exemplary life, to exhibit a new way of being a human bring (namely, a perfectly righteous one), and to teach us the Way to Life, as our prophet and Teacher.