

TH601 sec 4.1-4.3 5-3-1 Assignment by Chun Kit Lam

Questions

1. What is “Christology from Below” per Pannenberg?
2. Who are the primary exponents of the “Christology from Above”?
3. What is the “Christology from Below” to study Jesus?
4. How do the creeds completely omit about Jesus?
5. What does it mean to do Christology from behind, below, above, and before?

Answers

1. The approach is to get behind the confessional statement and titles of the primitive Christian tradition and reach to the history of Jesus to test and justify the statements about Jesus.
2. The primary exponents of “Christology from Above” are Rudolf Bultman and Karl Barth
3. The Christology from Above emphasizes the proper method for doing Christology is heaven to earth. I prefer divine speech over human inquiry. The event of incarnation is to be believed and embraced as an article of faith.
4. The creeds completely omits any reference of Jesus’ mission to Israel and His teaching.
5. Behind is the Old Testament, below is the historical Jesus, above is the Jesus of divine speech, and before is the credal and confessional testimonies to Christ.

Terms

Ebionism: the group that believes Jesus is simply a human being who has a relationship with God but is not identified with God in any serious way

Docetism: Jesus is so divine that he can scarcely be regarded as genuinely human

Typology: a hermeneutical approach that sees in person, events and place, the prototype, pattern, pattern, or figure of historical persons, events or places that follow it in time.

Summary

Historical Jesus is only one of the many ways to study Christology. We need to do Christology from behind, below, above, and before to get a complete view of Christ. Too much emphasis from below would lead to Ebionism, but too much from above would lead to Docetism. The Old Testament does give us a good platform to study Christology prophetically, typologically, Christophany, and allegorically.