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TH 602
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5-3-1 Assignment: Bird 4.4 - 4.4.2

QUESTIONS

1. What are the two modes of Atonement that are based on “subjectivity”
2. What are the other modes of Atonement mentioned in this chapter?
3. According to Bird, what is a major task of theology?
4. What is the argument behind Christus Victor?
5. On what premises does Berkhor form his penal substitution argument?

Answers

1. First is moral influence, which argues that Christ on the cross/death should influence us to be good. The other is exemplary that Jesus died on the cross to make humanity good and that Jesus is a good example to follow.
2. The six other forms mentioned are recapitulation, ransom, Christus victor, satisfaction, governmental, and penal substitution.
3. It is to expound the meaning of the word *for* in “God is *for* us” and “Christ died *for* us.” In other words, it is to understand the implication/meaning of Christ’s death (P. 441).
4. Christus Victor argues that Jesus’s death is significant because it produced victory over death, the devil, and evil.
5. Berkhor builds his premises over the fact that God cannot overlook sin due to His just and holy character, his demand for a sacrifice from the sinner is consistent with His law and nature, and the nature of sacrifice is consistent with God’s desire to save everyone, his veracity demanded that penalty should be executed and that the giving of His son reflects the need for an atonement.

TERMS

- Atonement: Derived from Old English word meaning to unite, it is a term referring to the needed redemptive action between sinful mankind and the Holy God which was performed through Jesus’ crucifixion
- Recapitulation: A “form” of atonement that views Christ in light of Adam– that Christ is the recapitulation of Adam. Thus, He has to replay over the sequence of Adam’s life stage, from birth to death.
- Ransom: A “form” of atonement that is believes that Jesus Christ had to die to pay a ransom to Satan.

In Chapter 4.4 -4.42 Bird introduces the various atonement theories or “mode” that have been developed throughout history. He explores eight modes– recapitulation, ransom, Christus Victor, Satisfaction, Moral Influence, Exemplary, and Governmental and penal substitution. For each mode of atonement, he carefully examines its history and argument to provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of each theory. Ultimately he suggests that there is not one most central theory of the atonement although he believes that Christus victor, penal substitution, satisfaction, and exemplary should be used together, with CV being the crucial one.