

5-3-1 Assignment 7 on Bird, Sec. 5.4.8-5.5.2

QUESTIONS

1. In what way do Calvin's writings appear to make reference to theosis?
2. What is Rahner's concept of "anonymous Christians"?
3. Which two general reasons does Bird give for his rejection of universalism?
4. What is the way Calvinists respond to the question of whether infants who die are saved?
5. How does Bird exegetically refute the claim that Hebrews teaches one can lose their salvation?

Answers

1. He speaks of a "transformative and participatory union with God in Christ", *not* deification.¹
2. In universalism, this refers to a "Christian" who has no explicit knowledge of Jesus and salvation.
3. Reasons: (1) the overwhelming testimony of Scripture, and (2) the character of God's justice.
4. Some infants are elect and others are not elect, and only the elect infants will be saved.²
5. The *You-Plural* suggests it warns the *community* not to spiritually deteriorate to the point of apostasy.

TERMS

theias koinonoi physeos: From 2 Peter, "participate in the divine nature", used as basis for theosis.

apokatastasis: Doctrine of restoration of all things back to original state. Of Origen. Condemned in 543.

ecclesia mixta: Concept that the church is comprised of a mix of faithful, struggling, and unbelievers.

SUMMARY

Bird rounds out the final "images" of salvation by discussing Eternal Life, Theosis, and Nearness/Access. In the end, he tries to find his preference of "central unifying image" (just like he did for atonement with Christus Victor) but settles only on the Trinitarian line: *communion with God, union with Christ, life in the Spirit*. For the soteriological scope and security, Bird addresses universalism, particularly Moltmann and Barth, exegetically and emphatically rejects it, then touches upon exclusivism. The final section is on security of salvation, specifically the question of the legitimacy of actual apostasy, which Bird acknowledges as a difficult refutation on an exegetical basis passages in Hebrews chapters 6 and 10.

¹ Michael F. Bird, *Evangelical Theology, A Biblical and Systematic Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 633.

² Michael F. Bird, 651.