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TH 602
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5-3-1 Assignment: Bird 5.4.8-5.5.2

QUESTIONS

1. What is the scriptural basis for theosis?
2. What does Bird conclude about the unifying image for salvation?
3. What are the issues behind universalism?
4. What does Bird argue about the fate of those who die in infancy?
5. What does Bird conclude about the security of salvation?

Answers

1. Bird uses 2 Peter 1:4 (...so that you may participate in the divine nature), Romans 8:29 (...to be confirmed to the image of his Son), 2 Corinthians 3:18 (...are being transformed into his image...), John 15:4-9 and John 17:23 (...they may be brought to complete unity).
2. He states that no single image of salvation has the power to display all of the images of salvation. Thus, he concludes that the center of salvation resides in the gospel announcement of the God who saves.
3. First, the bible clearly states about judgment and eternal separation. Secondly, biblical texts used to justify universalism are habitually misunderstood and unconvincing. Thirdly, universalists overemphasize the objective dimension of salvation and neglect the importance of subjective appropriation.
4. He suggests that all children are conditionally elect and do not have Adam's sin imputed to them until a time of accountability.
5. Bird believes one cannot lose one's regeneration or forfeit their "new creation status." People who abandon their faith do "lose" their salvation...but their faith still sets them on the course for salvation and will be inevitably and assuredly saved.

TERMS

- Theosis: Also called "deification," one of the various images of salvation that pertains to humanity's participation in the Son and transformation into the image of the Son.
- Universalism: A view on the scope of salvation which argues that all human beings will be saved in the end
- *Ecclesia Mista*: Visible church comprising faithful, struggling, potential, fallen, and uneven believers.

In Chapters 5.3.2-5.4.1, Bird continues to explore other images of salvation— eternal life, theosis, and nearness & access. He concludes that there is no single image that can fully grasp and display the power, significance, goal of salvation. He then carefully examines the various arguments about the scope of salvation— universalism and exclusivism to remind the reality of the wrath of God and the necessity to preach the gospel to every living person. He argues regarding the security of salvation that it is impossible to lose one's salvation— even if one may abandon and "lose" their salvation, they will still be inevitable and assuredly be saved by God's grace.