




right now counts forever

Metaxoi Memorandum:

To Those Who Will Rule With Jesus in the World to Come

Volume V - December 2011

Greetings in the Name of the Lord Jesus,

Christmas is upon us and for most of you who are in the pastorate it means many wonderful times of enjoyment and rejoicing, but also many opportunities to minister to the depressed, the ill, and those who can't quite see the goodness of God in the season. But in either case, it means that you are busy and do not have time to read another thing..... But here is another thing for you to read that might give you some help, or at least perspective.

Commentary

I think we would all agree that the resurgence of Calvinism and especially the "young and restless reformed type" fostered by Jonathan Edwards- -- Oops!!! I mean John Piper- has captivated hundreds of thousands of young people. What is not as well known is that there are many Arminians who have taken the challenge to write against Calvinism as of late to try to combat the surge. Check the web for the Arminian counter attacks. However, as you know both forms of theology in whatever stripe all teach a form of Lordship Salvation and thus destroy much of assurance for the believer. As to which is worse, I will leave it to you to be the judge. But the net result is that there is a lot of hostility to Free Grace Theology from both sides. This is significant for those of you who are pastors, for your people are often times robbed of the divine assurance that the Lord desires His people to enjoy. I hope that you have developed a biblically clear and culturally applicable theology of assurance. Often we know what we mean, but others are not as clear as to what we mean by what we say. So, let's make sure we are clear.

Resources to Consider - Or maybe--Stocking Stuffers????

Ecclesiastes reminds us that "The writing of books is endless and wearisome to the soul." However, on the other side of things - leaders are readers. Let me make you aware of some new resources.

- "For Calvinism" by Michael Horton and "Against Calvinism" by Roger Olsen (Both published by Zondervan) If you are in need of new resources that are short and straight to the point then these are helpful. Both men are entrenched in their views and fully aware of the others' view. Together you can get an irenic, up-to-date debate on the issues.
- "The New American Commentary: The book of Hebrews" by David Allen vol. 35; Broadman Holman. Here it is. At last, an up-to-date commentary that is aware of all the views. And, after an excellent exegetical evaluation of all the views, he comes down and agrees with.....you guessed it - the Free Grace view. Allen does not agree with all of Free Grace Theology, but on most of it he seems to understand the issue. He in fact is aware and interacts to some degree with the Free Grace work that has been done on Hebrews including Robert Govett, G.H. Lang, Zane Hodges, Jody Dillow, Randy Gleason, and Kem Oberholtzer. Dr. Allen holds to Luke as the author of Hebrews and provides even more of a defense of this thesis in his monograph: "The Author of Hebrews", which was his dissertation and now has been published this year by Broadman and Holman. I am leaning toward his view of authorship. Give it a read.
- "The Book of Hebrews" by Arnold Fruchtenbaum, published by Ariel Ministries, of which Dr. Fruchtenbaum is the president. He also provides a free grace commentary to a point. He follows the notes of Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost. Hence, it is an old time, dispensational view which has many good aspects to it. It does not deal with the key exegetical issues or data and is uneven at times, but it is a good commentary that flows with good exposition and leads to a Free Grace view. (If you are looking to buy one or the other, go with Allen--- more for the dollar.)
- "The Naked Gospel" by Andrew Farley; Zondervan. This is a book from a pastor in Lubbock, Texas and a Free Grace writer. The first half of the book seeks to proclaim that the gospel is free in terms of justification, but further, he demands that the law is not to play a role in the life of the believer in sanctification. In this regard it is much in line with the theme of, "The Grace Awakening" by Chuck Swindoll. Kudos. The second half of the "Naked Gospel" seeks to articulate the views of Bob George, Major Ian Thomas, and the Victorious Christian Life theology (VCL). There is much good in the identification principles found in VCL and earlier under Miles Stanford in his Green Letters theology and later in Neil Anderson. However, most free grace people will not accept the view of the VCL or Bob George, that as a Christian I do not need to confess sin since it is already paid for. Hence, there is no distinction between judicial and familial or relational forgiveness. The book understands First John 1:9 as a

message to non-Christians, not to believers. He also concludes that the believer does not go in and out of fellowship. Also, the treatment of James 2 seems more in line with Reformed teaching than Free Grace. Finally, he does believe that the New Testament never tells us to live an upright life to seek rewards. I think it is interesting that Zondervan published this book that holds to this aspect of VCL. However, lest you think there are none who find this theology viable, Dr. John Best, Ph.D., former professor from Dallas Seminary's New Testament department, was the President of VCL in Dallas.

Closing Thought

Remember the words of O.W. Holmes, "*The man of action has the present, but the thinker commands the future from his study.*" You men and women, as pastors and teachers, and as Metaxoi are to be both, men and women of action and thinkers. Hence, we must demand the time to think and develop the habit of thought.

May your Christmas be full of joy. Do not lose the central point in the midst of all that you are doing to serve others.

May your families be blessed by your love and leadership in their lives.

May the New year open up new venues of ministry, but most importantly--

May you experience a deeper walk with the Savior.

Serving Him with you
Until He comes for us,

Fred Chay
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