Title: Ted Peters’s proleptic theory of the creation of humankind in God’s image: a critical evaluation

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to described, analyze, and evaluate Ted Peters’s proleptic theory of the creation of humankind in God’s image. To achieve this purpose, after the introduction, the study first reviews in chapter 2 Peters’s theological biography, the context of his theology, as well as his theological system and method. Peters differs from the more traditional Christian understanding of the creation of humankind in God’s image in that he denies the historicity of the original perfect creation of Adam and Eve in God’s image and the Fall. To him, this image is to be achieved eventually after the eschatological resurrection.

Peters’s application of the concept of prolepsis to the creation of humankind in God’s image is presented in chapter 3. According to this concept, the creation of humankind is a process of becoming fully human, in anticipation of the future fulfillment. It is a response to the call forward to the image of God.

The evaluation of Peters’s proleptic theory of the creation of humankind in God’s image is done in chapter 4 by examining how Peters applies the historical-hypothetical method, especially with respect to the biblical account of the creation and fall of Adam and Eve, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the eventual transformation of human beings at the final resurrection. White Peters denies the historicity of the perfect creation and the
subsequent fall of Adam and Eve for lack of historical evidence, he accepts the resurrection of Jesus Christ by faith in the future evidence of the new creation. In view of the fact that Peters is not fully consistent in how he uses his historical-hypothetical method, the final chapter concludes that Peters’s proleptic theory is not a valid explication of the biblical account of the creation of humankind in God’s image.