

F. Modern Concepts

There are four "modern" concepts to which our standards address themselves...anachronistically perhaps, but with real meaning just the same. These modern concepts represent classic errors in church history but, having been changed in being brought into acceptable church doctrine, must be reckoned with as modern intrusions into truth. Our analysis must be brief.

1. The Kenotic question

The idea that Christ completely emptied Himself and was only a sort of shell-like divinity (based on spotty exegesis in Philippians 2) must be set aside as contrary to the Word and our standards. Kenosis, to some extent, is another accommodating device to escape the fact as to whom Christ really was. By voiding His person and authority we are less liable to the demands He makes on us in a Divine sense. Ironically, kenotic theologians often talk of a "following of Jesus" that is more pronounced than we might expect. But it is not the Jesus of Divine Being...more the example and teacher who could resume His divinity after the cross.

2. Liberal Theology

Seeing Christ as no more Divine than any other being, liberal theology makes something of his supposed prodigious powers while completely denying the god-man concept and, in some cases, the very existence of Jesus. Our standards will accept no Saviour who is less than very God of very God.

3. The Yielded Savior

A bit harder to define and somewhat more difficult to treat, the concept of the Lord to the effect that He did His works only by yieldedness to the Holy Ghost --and never in His own energy -- is an error more in what it purports than in what it states. There is a yieldedness in the economics of the Trinity and we do not seek to deny it. But the standards call for an integrity of the Person of the Lord in all phases of His ministry and activity. He is always God and acts in the Divine role with repeated telling effect.

4. The "Sin" Question

In recent years in Christology there has been a renewal of the problem.."Could Jesus have sinned?" Without a full discussion of all the ramifications, our standards call for a Christ who was Divine in all operations and, as Aquinas said it, had a human nature that did not embarrass the Divine nature. While no specific wording with the given Latin phrases is used to this immediate end, our Christology calls for a Saviour who did not...and could not...sin.

G. Concluding Notes: A reminder of our standards and where we now find ourselves.