

## Outline of Lecture

### Chapter Three: Ray Anderson, *On Being Human* Humanity as Determined by the Word of God

p33 It is indeed debatable "that being human is the result of more than that which creaturely existence can produce and sustain." Many people deny this (e.g., humanists.)

Xns insist [i] being human *is* more....

[ii] the "more" (*imago Dei*) can be debated and denied but never expunged. Note the lengths to which the denial of this will go (e.g., "excremental assault".)

p33 Neither religion nor culture constitutes us human. *Kulturprotestantismus*

#### (DIFFERENTIATION THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD)

p34 Creation unfolds through God's speech/act.

Gen. 1:28: "And God said to them..." : we are rendered human by God's address

God's address

[1] differentiates history from nature

[2] as transcendent enables and impels us to transcend ourselves

Self-transcendence

[i] is reflected in self-consciousness: awareness that I am the subject of "me"

[ii] ensures that I am not determined *ultimately* by nature

[iii] creates the capacity for response to the author of our transcendence and our ensuing relation with him.

[iv] differentiates us from animals

[v] quickens human speech as a response to God's speech

[vi] is maintained (and hence our humanness is maintained) only by God's address.

[3] creates *ex nihilo* and thereby protects the human creation from

[a] determinism -- which operates at the level of nature

[b] perfectionism -- since our humanness is given, we can't fashion it as we fashion things made from "stuff".

[4] preserves the universe "good" as created

[a] it doesn't have to be redeemed to be good

[b] its goodness perdures despite the Fall

[i] despite any appearance -- e.g., Karla Homolka

[ii] contrary to the gnesio-Lutherans

#### Extended note on perfectionism

Humankind cannot transmute itself into something beyond its given essence. But we try:

[i] religion: sinlessness in this life, resulting in either despair or self-righteousness or oscillation

[ii] psychology: neuroticism or self-rejection or oscillation

[iii] socio-economic: the myth of progress or the myth of Marxism

[iv] "new gnosticism": body renunciation/indulgence in exercise and diet fads and "colonic cleansing"

[5] as Word of God determines human being to be good without qualification

[6] preserves as utterly distinct the being of God and the being of the creation. Therefore God is free from the creation to be *for* it. (Impossible with all forms of pantheism)

#### (DIFFERENTIATION AS RESPONSE-ABILITY)

p35 Human being is differentiated creatureliness experienced as *response* to the Word  
 p36 w.r.t. human sexuality, capacity for reproduction isn't the differentiating factor in our humanness (even though a human being is someone whose parents are human.)

Still, [i] animals reproduce sexually,

[ii] in humans reproduction isn't the only end or even the chief end of sex. (More will be said about this later.)

-determination by the Word formally differentiates us from the animals; our capacity to respond materially differentiates us.

-Anderson refers to the Trinity (p36) [1] Father and Son differ w.r.t. their relationship: the Son is ever the Son of the Father -- humans are those appointed to be sons/dtrs of God [2] however, Father and Son possess the same being or essence (deity); we and God do not.

p36 Genesis 2:

[1] God's address differentiates Adam from the animals

[2] Adam names {=defines} the animals; he decides, under God, their place in the world

[3] they are no suitable "helpmate", no satisfactory *creaturely* "other". (The divine Other, however glorious, is not a substitute for the human other.)

The animals cannot reflect Adam's essential humanness back to him. Eve is formed. Now Adam knows himself as [i] male [ii] authentically human only in the presence of another human. Therefore *essential* humanity is *co-humanity*.

Adam's capacity to respond to Eve mirrors his capacity to respond to God; i.e., to be is to be response-able (-ible); to be is to be-in-relation.

(THE RESPONSE OF THE SOUL)

p37 to be human is to be in covenant relation with God. Note the ramifications of this point.

[i] we were created for this

[ii] we may violate this, but God maintains it in that he is the covenant-keeping God

[iii] in JC, God is the covenant-keeping human

[iv] therefore we may and must become covenant-keepers by clinging to JC.

p38 Note that animals have *nephesh*, soul, life. ("spirit" is *nephesh* related to God; i.e., "spirit" describes not a component of our humanness but an orientation.

Humans become aware of God. For this reason "spirit" rather than "mind" is *the* distinguishing feature of our humanness. (i.e., spirit includes mind)

p39 infants' earliest responses are affections. [Shepherd's comments:]

[i] the infant lacks the critical realization that this is the case

[ii] I'm convinced that our crucial human responses remain affective. See Jonathan Edwards

[iii] NB the relation between the "great" and the "root" commandment (Lev 19 and Mk 12)

p39 NB the problem of self-consciousness and empiricism: there's no sci'c expl'n for self-consc. Self-cons. is a *sign* of our essential humanness as cov.-partnership with God.

p39 "Insanity can thus be understood theologically as an eclipse of the soul." {but not of the sp.!}

p39 Awareness of God is the essence of rationality, but the converse isn't true.

In script. mind is part of the unitary self known as "heart."

p39 "Theological anthropology expects self-consc. to know more than it can tell." Yes. [1] We always know more, anywhere in life, than we can tell. [2] therefore someone's ability to articulate is never the measure of what *is*.

(THE RESPONSE OF THE PERSON)

p40 The second mark of differentiation is freedom -- "spontaneity of action in response to the approach of the other." But spontaneity isn't spasticity, and freedom isn't the cap. to do anything at all. The Word frees us to respond. (We are not governed by instinct.) Our response is a *gift* of oneself to the other, usually accompanied by a *word* (speech) that declares and interprets the gift-of-self, plus (in some cases anyway) a *vow* that declares the gift irrevocable.

p41 "Personality"-- this is an aspect of the human but doesn't define the human (the Word does); people who lack "personality" don't lack humanness. {Shepherd in passing: personality is marvellously diverse -- except in abused children.}

p42 There are many potentialities (mental, emotional, physical) for humans as *creaturely*, but none as *human*. Note why this is crucial.

p42 Anderson's discussion of "traducianist" versus "creationist": don't read into this a Platonic soul-body dualism. {Shepherd is nervous about all uses of "soul": Plato lurks!}

Then what is a human being? -- someone whose parents are human.

Dogs reproduce; they don't reproduce the capacity for the Word.

Humans reproduce; do they " " " ? No! Therefore it forever remains mysterious as to how humans give rise to humans.

As creatures, we are creaturely in the way cats are. As humans, we are human *from conception*.

**Only the mystery of God is the sufficient reason for and the support of the mystery of the human.** What will preserve the humanness of the secularists if secularism triumphs? See Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.