

How Do We View Christianity?

Two Ways: Plan A and Plan B

State of Mankind's Heart and Sinful Actions (Jeremiah 17:9 & Mark 7:23):

Plan A: My heart is good; therefore, the evil actions that I do make me a sinner.

Plan B: My heart is evil; therefore, the evil actions that I do are because I am a sinner.

State of Mankind and Jesus' Actions (Ephesians 2:1-10 & Ezekiel 37:1-14):

Plan A: I am infected with sin; therefore I ascend to Jesus so that I can get a hold of forgiveness and be healed.

Plan B: I am dead in sin; therefore Jesus descends to me so that I can receive forgiveness and be made alive.

Cause of Salvation (Romans 8:29-30; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15; 2 Timothy 1:9 & Ephesians 1:3-6):

Plan A: God saves me in view of my faith; therefore, I am saved on account of my faith.

Plan B: God saves me in view of His mercy & the work of Christ; therefore, I am saved insofar as I receive by faith.

The Gospel Proclamation (Acts 8:35; Romans 10:13-17 & 1 Peter 1:12):

Plan A: Gospel proclamation is an announcement of good advice to be applied.

Plan B: Gospel proclamation is an announcement of good news to be believed.

Faith and the Word of God (Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23-25 & Hebrews 4:12):

Plan A: As I hear the Word of Christ, the Word enables me to have faith. (*i.e. Informative words that I act upon.*)

Plan B: As I hear the Word of Christ, the Word creates faith in me. (*i.e. Performative words that act upon me.*)

Justification and Righteousness (Romans 4:1-12):

Plan A: Justification is my internal transformation, where I am made completely righteous.

Plan B: Justification is God's external declaration, where I am accounted completely righteous for Christ's sake.

Location Of Justification And Assurance (John 3:14-15, 19:30; Hebrews 12:2):

Plan A: Justification is something that happens inside a person, thus we look inward to one's heart for assurance.

Plan B: Justification is something that happened outside a person, thus we look outward to Jesus/Cross for assurance.

The Sacraments (Matthew 26:27-28 & 1 Peter 3:20b-21):

Plan A: Communion and Baptism are acts of my obedience and commitment brought to God, on my behalf.

Plan B: Communion and Baptism are acts of God's forgiveness and grace brought to me, on Christ's behalf.

Faith and Obedience (Romans 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:3 & Galatians 5:6):

Plan A: Obedience produces Faith.

Plan B: Obedience is a fruit of Faith. OR Obedience that consists of Faith.

Acceptance and Obedience... a.k.a. Sanctification (1 John 4:19 & Matthew 22:37-40):

Plan A: I obey (*i.e. love*); therefore I am accepted (*i.e. loved*) by God.

Plan B: I obey (*i.e. love*); because I am accepted (*i.e. loved*) by God through Christ.

Complete Sanctification (Hebrews 10:10-25 & Ephesians 2:10):

Plan A: Complete sanctification is the goal of all good works.

Plan B: Complete sanctification is the source of all good works.

Progress In Sanctification (Colossians 3:5-17 & Galatians 5:22-25)

Plan A: Progress in sanctification is the movement of the Christian upon holiness.

Plan B: Progress in sanctification is the movement of the Holy One upon the Christian.

Good Works (Ephesians 2:8-10 & James 2:14-26):

Plan A: Good works are prescriptive for salvation.

Plan B: Good works are descriptive of salvation.

Ongoing Effects of Original Sin and Grace (Romans 7:24-25 & 1 Timothy 1:15):

Plan A: I was a sinner who was saved by Grace. (i.e. viewing original sin and forgiving grace in the past tense.)

Plan B: I am a sinner who is daily saved by Grace. (i.e. viewing original sin and forgiving grace in the present tense.)

Understanding Repentance And Sanctification (Galatians 3:10; Galatians 5:24 & Colossians 3:5-ff):

Plan A: My sinful nature needs to be reformed daily.

Plan B: My sinful nature needs to be crucified daily.

Ongoing Struggle Against the Sinful Nature (Romans 8:13; Philippians 3:12-14 & 1 John 1:8-10):

Plan A: There is spiritual depth and maturity in this life when the struggle against the sinful nature entirely ceases.

Plan B: There is spiritual death and deception in this life when the struggle against the sinful nature entirely ceases.

Spiritual Blessings (Ephesians 1:3-14 & Colossians 2:9-10):

Plan A: Jesus is the means to every spiritual blessing; He is a means to another end. (i.e. Jesus helps me attain joy.)

Plan B: Jesus is the source of every spiritual blessing; He is the end. (i.e. Jesus is my holiness and joy.)

Worship (Luke 2:20 & Isaiah 6:1-8):

Plan A: Man is the speaker; God is the audience in worship; God responds to man's sacrifice of worship with pleasure.

Plan B: God is the speaker; Man is the audience in worship; Man responds to God's sacrifice of Christ with pleasure.

Prayer Conversation (Revelation 3:20 & Psalm 51:15):

Plan A: Prayer begins by me knocking on God's heart with my words; God responds to me in a prayer conversation.

Plan B: Prayer begins by God knocking on my heart with His Word; I respond to God in a prayer conversation.

Tithing Motivation (Exodus 25:2 & 2 Corinthians 9:7):

Plan A: God has blessed me in innumerable ways in life, because I give to God.

Plan B: God has blessed me in innumerable ways in Christ, therefore I give to God.

Church Discipline (Matthew 18:15-17 & Galatians 6:1):

Plan A: Church discipline can be summarized as vengeance for a wrong.

Plan B: Church discipline can be summarized as redemption from a wrong.

The Great Commandment & The Great Commission (Matthew 22:36-40 & 28:16-20):

Plan A: The Great Commission is about serving our neighbor through loving works.

Plan B: The Great Commandment is about serving our neighbor through loving works.

Plan B: The Great Commission is about disciplining our neighbor through the Gospel.

Exegesis Example (Matthew 13:44):

Plan A: The kingdom is the treasure & I am the man; I was willing to give up everything to obtain the kingdom.

Plan B: I am the treasure, the field is the world & Christ is the man; Christ was willing to give up everything to obtain me.

Assumption Example (Romans 6:1-23 & Galatians 2:17):

Plan A: Assumes the will is free, therefore, the preoccupation is always how to keep freedom in check, how to bind.

Plan B: Assumes the will is bound, therefore, the preoccupation is always how to set out the Word that frees.

Teaching Sheet By: Pastor Matt Richard (Revised 2-13-2012)

www.pastormattrichard.com