

Was sagen die christlichen Kirchen zur Frage des Human Enhancement?

Wird nach der Position der christlichen Kirchen gefragt, muss man bei vielen ethischen Problemfeldern auf eine Vielfalt von oft gegenläufigen Antworten verweisen.

Im Falle des Human Enhancement ist das anders: 125 Kirchen haben im Rahmen der Conference of European Churches (CEC) im Jahr 2010 eine Expertengruppe eingesetzt, die gemeinsam ein zwanzigseitiges Diskussionspapier zum Thema vorgelegt hat. Der vollständige Text mit dem Titel „Human Enhancement – A Discussion Document“ ist, zusammen mit weiteren Publikationen zum Thema, auf der Homepage der CEC zugänglich: www.ceceurope.org.

Im Folgenden vier ausgewählte Argumente des Dokuments:

1

“When we speak of „creation“, however, this should not be read simplistically. The notion of creation embraces a continuous evolutionary unfolding of the natural order, of which God is both author and sustainer. Christian faith is not a rival scientific theory, but a meaningful way of looking at the world beyond science, which offers a complementary dimension to that of science. From the timeless wisdom of our scriptures and traditions, we seek to derive ethical insights, which we offer for guidance, encouragement or restraint to the application of science. In this understanding, we human beings are not autonomous products of chance, free to do as we please in all things. We have a creator, on whom we and all things finally depend for our existence, and to whom we are related in being the bearers of God’s image. [...] One implication of bearing God’s image is that we are made creative. Here we would especially affirm scientific inquiry, technological innovation and medical endeavor, as reflections of the image of God in us. The desire to understand ourselves and the world around us, and to intervene in that knowledge [...] these are God given. Humans have thus sought to make improvements to our human condition in many ways [...]” (p.9f)

Biblischer Schöpfungsglaube und naturwissenschaftliche Erklärung der Wirklichkeit stehen nicht im Widerspruch. Im Gegenteil: Biblischer Schöpfungsglaube und die Wahrnehmung des Menschen als “Gottes Ebenbild” ermutigen zu naturwissenschaftlicher Forschung und medizinischem Fortschritt.

2

“Before we draw our conclusions from this discussion, we need first to clear the air about transhumanism and its advocates, which has rather distorted the debate about enhancement so far. We make an unashamedly theological conclusion. In so far as it seeks a kind of *technological* salvation without God, we regard the transhumanist project as a quasi-religious erroneous endeavor. It is as false hope which will not work, yet it has the potential to mislead people. It correctly identifies human aspiration to better ourselves from our present situation, but wrongly diagnoses both the problem and the solution. We believe the technology will not change the problems of human nature, nor remove our dependence on God, or the goal of our humanity of harmony in union with God.”(p. 18)

Das “trans-humanistische” Versprechen einer technologischen Perfektionierung des Menschen ist als unrealistisches und quasi-religiöses Heilsversprechen zurückzuweisen.

“Enhancement seems a misleading hope, because it can never be fulfilled. [...] Our Christian theology teaches us that we are created by God for relationship with God, and can never ultimately be satisfied with merely created things, even with ourselves. Good as these maybe in many ways, they still leave us wanting what only God can meet.” (p.4)

Zwischen Gott dem Schöpfer auf der einen und seiner Schöpfung und Geschöpfen auf der anderen Seite gibt es einen kategorialen Unterschied.

3

“The concept of human enhancement tends to be presented individualistically and seems to be inherently unjust in an already divided and unjust world. It might have a stronger case if it was directed towards improving the lot of the have not’s of the world. But the rhetoric of human enhancement points the opposite way.” (p. 19)

Geht es beim Human Enhancement vor allem um individuelle Optimierung und wird soziale Ungerechtigkeit dadurch noch verschärft?

4

“A biblical view of the body shows different ideals and priorities. Every human being, especially the weak and the poor, is precious in God’s eyes, uniquely valuable regardless of the perfection of his or her body. [...] God is not interested in ‘superman’, but with ‘everyman’, and with the unique response each can make. To enhance our capacities may be of private interest but is limited and vulnerable. Our cultural ideals of beauty, strength and ability, run the risk of becoming goals of an elusive perfection which, even if achieved, suddenly slip through our fingers and is gone. The issue is not to make our bodies more functionally efficient, but what we do with what we have.” (p.13)

Das biblische und nicht zuletzt auch christliche Menschenbild setzt nicht auf eine Perfektionierung des Körpers, sondern ermutigt zu einem realistischen Umgang mit der Begrenztheit des menschlichen Lebens.

“We consider that human improvement or perfection cannot merely be equated to optimal bodily function, physical health and enhanced capacities. The perfection for which a Christian strives is of a very different order from our Western pre-occupation with the demands of maximal performance and efficiency, or its exaggerated view of physical beauty. Its goals are expressed in terms of the ‘imitation’ of Christ, of Christ being ‘formed in us’, or union with Christ. This involves a deep affirmation and celebration of life, of the human body, and the good things God has provided, including creativity and technical ingenuity. But at the same time it embraces the suffering and pain of the world and our human morality [...]” (p.13f)

“Our deepest problems are less in any physical limitations we may have, than in our moral, relational or spiritual failings, as the world’s ongoing conflicts show. What is wrong with the human condition is not a lack of strength, longevity, intelligence, beauty, athleticism, art, science or even education, but in the moral and spiritual shortcomings of humanity, individually and collectively. From the point of view of a Christian anthropology, no matter how much we enhanced ourselves, our inherent human failings would remain because they lie beyond technical fixes [...]” (p.19)