One of the leading scholars of early “Christology” (i.e., early portrayals/beliefs about Christ) in the English speaking world is Larry Hurtado, emeritus professor of New Testament at the University of Edinburgh. Larry is an established New Testament scholar, with additional expertise in such fields as the Gospel of Mark and textual criticism – the area of his dissertation work in the 1970s. I first came to know Larry in connection with textual criticism. He was probably 10 years ahead of me in the field, but our dissertations dealt with roughly similar subjects. He has written two particularly important books on Christology, one a short piece and the other fairly massive. He is widely seen as an expert.

Larry has a blog and on it he has written a critique of How Jesus Became God, which, as you know, is a kind of Christology for popular audiences. Much of what Larry says in his blog post is positive, but some, as you would expect, is negative. I agree completely with his positive comments and with none of his negative ones.

Some of the negative comments are actually misreadings of my views. When his post appeared a few days ago, I wrote him an email indicating that what he charged me with saying or assuming in fact was NOT something that I either said or assumed. After several email exchanges back and forth, Larry graciously agreed to set the record straight about my views, as set forth in my book. This is important because once these points are set straight, there are really very few negative points in his review, and these few are areas of genuine disagreement where I think we can have a genuine academic discussion.

If you want to see Larry’s original post, it is here: http://larryhurtado.wordpress.com/2014/05/29/how-jesus-became-god-per-ehrman/ ; if you would like to see where he clarifies the points where he has misread me (well, in two of the three instances; for some reason he didn’t cite the third one - but it’s not a huge point in any event), it is here: http://larryhurtado.wordpress.com/2014/06/02/ehrman-on-jesus-amendments/

What I’ll do in subsequent posts is first, indicate where he has misread me (and show how or possibly why he has misread me), and second, engage with him on the points that remain where he has not misread me but where we simply disagree.

Before doing that, I should make a comment on Larry’s opening salvo of the original review, in which he said the following:

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