

Chapter 1 : Image of God Definition and Meaning - Bible Dictionary

Systematic theology is not biblical theology; but if it would be Christian, it necessarily must rest upon biblical theology. Therefore, this paper, aiming primarily to determine a Christian belief, will have the following structure: First, I will examine the Old Testament teaching on the image of.

How is Man Created in the Image of God? If created physically after His image then what about those born with physical defects? If spiritually then what about those who happen to have very deranged minds, who are just ruthless and evil? Bruce Hi Bruce, Thank you for writing in and submitting your question. I think that you have put yourself in a false dilemma by only allowing two limited interpretations of man being created in the image of God. Actually, this is much more complex but, because as human beings we are so close to the answer, we tend to overlook some of the other aspects of our unique creation. The words "image" and "likeness" used in Genesis 1: We are taught in John 4 that God is Spirit and does not reside in a physical body. However, this does not preclude the physical body being some part of the image of God. We exist currently as body and soul together. It is meaningless to talk of us as just a soul or just a body when we are alive on earth. Both are intricately intertwined to make you the person you are. God as a trinity is one being, acting with as much unity as our soul acts with our body. Our bodies are living, and Paul emphasizes that we serve a living God, not one of gold or silver or stone. In fact he says that those idols cannot be God because it would take a living being to create us as living beings. This is a highly rational argument, and difficult to find objectionable. God by His nature is a rational being. He operates by the laws of logic. He is not constrained by them because they are some kind of "higher force", but they are the natural outflow of His will; they are His nature. He is as much a rational being as He is a loving being. Also, man is intelligent; aware of his surroundings and capable of changing them. He does not act on instinct, but should be able to control his natural drives for higher purposes. Every man has the ability to choose for himself his actions. He is morally aware. Man understands that certain things are good and certain things are evil. Adam most certainly did understand that disobeying the will of God was wrong, and there could be dire consequences to his actions. Although we now must struggle against our evil nature to obey God, we still have moral understanding and comprehension of good and evil. Lastly, one of the ways the image of God manifests itself in man is that only man can be aware of God and is capable of fellowshiping with Him. This part of man was exercised freely in the Garden before the fall. Obviously, the universality of religion shows that awareness of God and some need for a relationship with Him is common to man. Your question has the implication that those people who have mental or physical deficiencies are somehow not created in the image of God. I find that this is not true. Rather, it shows that the image is somehow skewed or distorted. I liken this to an analogy of a car being made in a certain likeness such as the body style of a corvette. When it is wrecked, the damage does not nullify the idea of being formed in that likeness, but shows the image as defective and in need of repair. Every person who is aware, no matter how slight his mental faculties, lives by some ethic, some moral code, and some decision-making processes. Thank you again for an intriguing question. I hope that you will study these things further and ponder them with prayer. May God bless you as you seek to uphold Him in the public square. E-newsletter Signup Get the latest news and articles delivered to your inbox each month - absolutely free!

Chapter 2 : Man ~ Made in the Image of God - SBC LIFE

"The image of God in humanity is critical to our understanding of what makes us human."¹ Genesis is the key passage of Scripture whereby foundational teaching on the image of God begins.

Christianity has been guilty of a patriarchal history that has been oppressive of women. Our conception of God as masculine, e. God as Father or King, certainly contributes to our slide into patriarchy. Although written in patriarchal contexts, the Bible itself does not refer to God exclusively in masculine metaphors. There are, albeit few, feminine metaphors used to describe God in the Bible. In this post, I want to highlight the maternal or motherly metaphors used. We see this in Ruth 2: The Psalms used this imagery a number of times: But a variation of this image paints a God who also pushes his children to be independent and to grow stronger. Mother eagles are known to teach their young ones to fly by deliberately pushing them out of its nest but catching them before they plunge to their doom: Here, we see that the maternal instinct to protect the children can produce wrath as much as warmth. Beware the fury of a mother! No sentimental mother-image here. God as Human Mother Of all the prophets, Isaiah seems to be the fondest in painting God as an actual human mother as these three verses attest: But now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant. Though she may forget, I [God] will not forget you! I like it for its compassionate and faithful portrayal of God but also because it is one of the few feminine images of God that I can use in a service. It reminds the congregation that God is beyond gender; the gender pronouns are simply metaphors to help us understand God who is always beyond our full understanding. An Essential Guide , Abingdon: But using female metaphors for God is not a radical feminist innovation as the biblical passages above show. It is also part of early Christian history. Here, I refer again to Japinga: In the second century Clement of Alexandria mixed his metaphors in his description of Christians nursing at the breast of God the Father. From all eternity God lies on a maternity bed giving birth. In an ancient patriarchal culture, it is not surprising that the ancient Hebrews used masculine pronouns for God. It was about glorifying Nature, with a capital N. It was born not from a veneration of female humanity but rather born from a confusion of the divine with nature; in essence, Mother Earth was worshiped as Mother Goddess. Thus, all that are primary issues with nature, i. These religions tend to merge sex with religious ecstasy and economic security agriculture and husbandry. It is not surprising, then, that many of their religious rituals involved sexuality, even temple prostitutes. What do you think of the concept of God as a mother? Have you heard it used in a worship service? How did you feel or react? What other images for God are found in scripture?

Chapter 3 : Teaching Kids to Reflect God's Image " Parenting Like Hannah

Image of God. It would be difficult to overstate the centrality of the image of God as a crucial theme in biblical theology. From the beginning of the end in Genesis (protology) to the end of the beginning in Revelation (eschatology), the image of God is crucial for understanding the flow of redemptive history.

Reflections on Christian Anthropology "A context in which to approach many of the difficult questions that confront" the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches is presented in a document on Christian anthropology released Dec. The national-level dialogue group said it was hoped that this report would "offer a reasonable approach within which each church can better understand the different teachings and practice of the other as regards human sexuality, Christian marriage, the ordination of women to the ministerial priesthood, Marian doctrines and devotions, and the communion of saints, and by which further studies of our teachings on these questions can be conducted in more profitable and less polemical ways. The purpose of the study, a covering letter noted, was "to identify those areas in Christian anthropology which contribute to the understanding of our relation as men and women in Christ and in Christ to one another. We have tried to explore together a large theological context within which several subjects of deep concern to our two churches may profitably be considered: The following paper indicates the range of this theological exploration and some of the agreements and disagreements which we have discovered. As in many other matters, our disagreements do not always follow along lines of church membership. Jesus as the Image of God A. Jesus Shows Us What God Is Like There is unanimous and complete agreement among us, based on a common interpretation of New Testament texts and acceptance of the decisions of the early ecumenical councils, that the only adequate "image" of God is Jesus Christ. One has only to recall such New Testament passages as Colossians 1: Our ability to speak of God and apprehend what he has done in Christ, however, is based upon the fact of creation. God was revealing himself in the act of creation, which occurred before Jesus Christ, and even before human beings, appeared in the evolving universe. The use of that creation is the only way we, a part of it, can refer to God. The work of God in Christ and the new dispensation offered to the world by the Father in his Son is best appreciated in terms of creation and recreation. Redemption in Christ is recreation in him, a new type of total dependence upon him; in this sense, new life in Christ can only be understood on the basis of the first creation which the Son came to restore and lead beyond itself by the power of his Spirit. The new creation, although it is more than nature, can only be referred to in terms of the natural order God first created; in fact, Christians believe that the Word of God, the agent of the new creation, is also the means by which God first created the universe. The Epistle to the Hebrews, in the verse preceding the one we have already quoted, speaks of the Son as he through whom the world was created 1: Creation and recreation are the key to each other in the Christian life, and so it is that the methodology we have employed in this study has found it necessary, on the one hand, to use nature as a key to understanding who God is and what he does in Christ, and, on the other hand, to use recreation in Christ as the key to understanding the purpose of the first creation, which preceded it in time. Theological anthropology is a central concern to our churches because it provides and probes concepts, images and symbols from creation for receiving and appropriating, expressing and communicating our understanding of the God in whom we believe. Our finite minds can have no comprehensive knowledge of him, but Christians believe that Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, indicates to us in human terms who God is and what God is. Our churches together affirm the Christology of the Chalcedonian definition: He is, therefore, described, as we have seen, as the image of the invisible God. God is shown to be a communion of divine persons, mysteriously related in infinite, personal, self-giving love. Our churches together affirm that God is triune. Both subscribe to the definitions of Christian faith set forth by the first ecumenical councils: Quicumque Vult Jesus is truly human, truly endowed with human consciousness, intellect and will. He has the same type of appetites and feelings, and goes through the same processes of thinking and willing, that we do as we exercise our freedom, responsibility and rationality in the world. Because God incarnate as Jesus was truly human, he was committed to all aspects of the created order, limiting as they are. He was a male. He belonged to a particular family; he spoke a particular language. Joseph followed a particular trade, which Jesus

also followed Mk. Are these particularities relevant to the image of God in him? Although we may affirm things about God on the basis of our knowledge of Jesus, those affirmations must be subject to careful and critical evaluation to determine their theological significance. Male and Female Since human beings are made in the image of God, and are sexual, the question presents itself: Is God imaged forth more adequately in one sex rather than the other? We find in the biblical evidences a clear preponderance of masculine over feminine imagery for God. In the Old Testament, God is depicted, for example, as shepherd, king, father and husband: Some understand this imagery to depend in large part upon the patriarchal structure of the social order in ancient Israel. God knows what it is to carry a child in the womb, to cry out in labor, to give birth Is. The psalmist envisions God as mother Ps. Wisdom shares in the divine attributes, and appeals to the faithful disciple to embrace her as bride and mother Prov. In the New Testament, the reference to God as Father predominates. This name, "Father," becomes synonymous with God in the fourth Gospel. Jesus teaches his disciples to address God as Father in prayer Mt. Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, is a male. He longs to gather her children as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings Mt. Female imagery of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit appears in certain strands of patristic and medieval theological reflection and piety. The Wisdom texts of the Old Testament are brought forward and interpreted as describing an eternal aspect of God in feminine terms; these are at times associated with the Word and at times with the Holy Spirit. Greek theology in Byzantium pursued this line of thought and dedicated many churches to the divine Sophia. The Holy Spirit is hymned as "mother" by St. Ephrem, and Christ is praised as "mother" by Clement of Alexandria and later by St. Anselm and Dame Julian of Norwich. In the medieval West, mystics and theologians exhibit great freedom in applying masculine and feminine names to God. The maternal imagery of bearing, birthing, nursing, nurturing, comforting and so on, carries forward in the spiritual writings of this period a rich expression of divine-human intimacy. Christ himself was sometimes depicted as feminine and motherly often drawing on the mother-hen passage: Christian religious experience and theological reflection, then, have discovered a full range of human characteristics, male and female, in the sacred humanity of Jesus. The unseen God, however, is beyond sexuality. Our attempts to speak of God necessarily rely on analogy and symbolism. Nor can human images and symbols for God avoid having either a masculine or feminine character. But, of course, God is neither male nor female; rather, as creator, God virtually includes the perfections of both sexes, as well as those of all creatures. Sexual Union and the Imaging of God The decisive statement affirming that both male and female image God, and that they image him equally, is to be found in the book of Genesis: For human beings by nature seek their fulfillment not just in sexual union, but in ever wider forms of community. Sexual relationship is thus a pointer to such wider community. But it is not only as individuals that male and female human beings image God: The division of humankind into two sexes creates a framework for interrelationships that image self-giving in God. As embodied persons we exist either as women or men. Sexuality is a given, irreducible mode of being in the world. Our bodies are not merely the somatic envelopes of our spirits, nor are they purely instrumental. Rather, we exist as a substantial unity of body and spirit. And we are saved in our bodied existence. Whereas sexuality is manifested in bodily differences, it is erroneous to equate sexuality with its genital expression. Taking marital union as that which is meant to express self-donation in love, this nuptial relationship then becomes a paradigm for the relationship between God and ourselves, as well as for other experiences of human relatedness. For one thing, it highlights the dimension of "otherness" which is often described in terms of sexual duality or complementarity. Men and women fulfill complementary functions in regard to procreation and the steps leading to it. This procreative complementarity does not in itself imply superiority or inferiority, domination or subservience. On the contrary, it underlines the call to communion and images identity-in-difference in a human way. The value of the sexual relation as a paradigm lies, in fact, in this remarkable and unexpected quality: If the relationship of male and female is thus taken as a paradigm, it follows that all forms of human community should be structured as open communions, open beyond themselves because of the close bonds which tie the members together. Humans who belong together by birth, by culture, by language, by historical and geographical heritage, by shared tastes and purposes, will be joined in such a way that their union will always remain open to the wider human community, and ultimately to the universality of humanity in time and space. He alone is Second Adam. Both

male and female find representative expression in him, and in him there can be no difference between male and female being in the image of God. The Synod of Douzy declared *et Eva ipsa est Adam*. Thus "Eve herself is indeed human Man," which reflects the belief that in Christ male and female are profoundly identical in their humanity. This identity was established in the creation. Human disobedience, however, disrupted this communion with God; and under the conditions of human life distorted by sin, the identity has been rendered imperfect, a fact symbolized by the different curses pronounced on Adam and Eve. Everywhere in history the relation between male and female labors under some degree of alienation. But in Christ, Christians believe that the relation of all persons to God has been restored, and in that redemptive act all are reconciled to each other. In the situation of redeemed humanity in the kingdom of God, and in the church which anticipates that perfection, male and female are once more identical in their capacity to be images of God. Though the human person shares the condition of sexuality with most other material life-forms, human sexuality is of a different order. The creating and nurturing activity of the living God can be reflected and symbolized by sexuality in any part of the created order. Human sexuality, however, whether male or female, is that of a free and responsible creature capable of self-possession and deliberate self-donation in love. The fact of human sexuality, therefore, opens human beings to the possibility of entering into loving communal relationships which reflect the communion of divine self-giving love in God. Yet the Genesis account vividly tells us of the entrance of sin into human life and the consequent distortion of the imaging of God in the human person. We find, as a result of sin, that persons, instead of being open to the other in self-donating love, become self-centered, self-seeking and self-absorbed. They become incapable of either giving or receiving the very love they were created to image. Instead, they experience sexual disorder, a drive either to dominate others or to be subservient to others. Coercive power tends to replace love as the strongest cohesive force in human community. History testifies to much destructive inequity between men and women and to the evolution of roles in a way that undermines the dignity of both sexes. An example would be the responsibilities prescribed for women which even in the industrial democracies isolated women from the process of political enfranchisement and placed women in a position of legal inferiority to men until the success of the suffrage movement. The result of this legal treatment of women contributes even today to their being treated as inferior.

Chapter 4 : "A Critical Examination of the Biblical Teaching on the Image of God, a" by Timothy T. Faber

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the.

I used it for a devotion for our Upward Basketball games. It could also be used during Awana council time. Also, try these other great Bible object lessons! Digital camera or photo and a small mirror Scriptures: And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like Him and reflect His glory even more. The Bible tells us in Genesis 1: Accept varied answers and comment positively on them so kids will continue to participate. Have the following definition to summarize and clarify the meaning of "image. Ask them if the photo or "image" is actually that person. In the same way, we are created in the "image of God. The dictionary gives this definition: Describe the person in the photo to them and ask them to guess who it is from your description. Ask them how they were able to recognize them so quickly when you showed them the photo. We can use words to describe Jesus, but if we can show others His image in us, they will be able to recognize Him more easily. How can we do this? We can be mirrors! Hold the mirror in three different ways while asking them if they can see their reflection. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like Him and reflect His glory even more. We can use words to describe Jesus, but if others can see an image of Him in us, they will be able to recognize Him more easily. More Christian object lessons We do preview the websites to which we link, but are unable to peruse them completely. Our editorial content is not influenced by advertisers or affiliate partnerships. Your information will be kept confidential and not be used for solicitation. Email Subscribe Free Ebooks: Welcome to Creative Bible Study! Find out how to be spiritually filled by having daily quiet time to spend with God. Creative object lesson devotions with tips on how to make the most of time youâ€™ Christian Devotion on Prayer Nov 05, 18 This Christian devotion takes a look at 1 Thessalonians 5: Breathing is natural, consistent, constant andâ€™ Thanksgiving Bible Verses Nov 05, 18 Use these 30 thanksgiving Bible verses to guide you in honoring and praising God with an attitude of gratitude! I promise to use it only to send you Creative Bible Tidbits.

Chapter 5 : Biblical Maternal Images for God - The Junia Project

A Christian Object Lesson - "Image of God" Use this Christian object lesson to teach how we are not only created in God's image, but our lives should also reflect His image each and every day.

And God blessed them; and God said to them: In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him. Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. Pseudepigrapha[edit] The Pseudepigrapha , as intertestamental books and elaborations on Old Testament writings, are helpful in learning of plausible understandings ancient Jewish communities possessed about the Image of God, as mentioned in Genesis 1: Although the Pseudepigrapha texts are numerous, the only book noted to make reference to the imago dei is 2 Enoch—namely, 2 Enoch And, quite fascinatingly, the text only makes reference to the concept twice, and each time shares a different understanding. The Lord with his own two hands created mankind; and in a facsimile of his own face. Small and great the Lord created. Whoever treats with contempt the face of any person treats the face of the Lord with contempt. It is estimated the reference to "small and great" concerned ranking and responsibility. If such an estimation is to be credited as a valuable and acceptable interpretation within this pericope, then it would seem the writer of 2 Enoch 44 is arguing every human being, irrespective of social standing in societies, is an exact copy—a duplicate—of the LORD. Certainly this passage exceeds Genesis 1: Understand how, on account of this, he constituted man in his own form, in accordance with a similarity. And he gave him eyes to see, ears to hear, and heart to think, and reason to argue. This chapter of 2 Enoch almost functions as its own retelling of the creation account, albeit in a very truncated manner. The verse preceding 2 Enoch This verse is quite similar to Genesis 1: On the one hand, 2 Enoch 44 offers modern readers the understanding the imago dei is reflected in the face—possibly, simply meaning the very being of a human person—of a human, while 2 Enoch 65, on the other hand, suggests human beings are made in the Image of God, but it, like Genesis 1: Apocrypha[edit] When considering extra-biblical texts, the Apocrypha , a collection of non-authoritative texts with a widespread debate about canonicity, contains key insight into understanding Image of God language. The Imago Dei is mentioned scarcely within the Apocrypha. There are only a couple of passages that explicitly use "image" terminology to describe humanity as the Imago Dei: The Wisdom of Solomon 2: Wisdom of Solomon 2: The Apocrypha mirrors the language brought about in Genesis 1: This theme is repeated in Wisdom of Solomon in 1: Wisdom of Solomon 1: God did not make death, and he does not delight in the death of the living. For he created all things so that they might exist Wisdom of Solomon 2: For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. The righteous, because they are made in the image of God, can rest in the full hope of eternal life. The wicked, because they choose to participate in the company of the devil, are subject to death. Sirach adds to the end, that man receives the strength of God. There is much discussion of what it means to say that God created man in his own image and likeness; commentators are divided. The words of vv. Another passage in the Apocrypha comes out of 2 Esdras 8: In context, this passage is a cry to the Lord declaring favor over humankind. This is perhaps a mirror of the dominion claim found in Genesis 1: According to 2 Esdras, God surrounds man with the creation of the world for the sake of man and thus, he may have mercy on man for he is "called your own image!" 2 Esdras 8: The remainder of this article focuses on Christian interpretations of the term. To assert that humans are created in the image of God may mean to recognize some special qualities of human nature which allow God to be made manifest in humans. The moral implications of the doctrine of Imago Dei are apparent in the fact that, if humans are to love God, then humans must love other humans whom God has created cf. The human likeness to God can also be understood by contrasting it with that which does not image God, i. We may say that humans differ from all other creatures because of the self-reflective, rational nature of their thought processes - their capacity for abstract, symbolic as well as concrete deliberation and decision-making. This capacity gives the human a centeredness and completeness which allows the possibility for self-actualization and participation in a sacred reality cf. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus acted to repair the relationship

with the Creator and freely offers the resulting reconciliation as a gift. Also in 1 Corinthians Also in Romans 8: And also in 2 Corinthians 4: For the past 2, years, theologians have examined the difference between the concepts of the "image of God" and the "likeness of God" in human nature. Origen viewed the image of God as something given at creation, while the likeness of God as something bestowed upon a person at a later time. The likeness was a *donum superadditum*—a divine gift added to basic human nature. This likeness consisted of the moral qualities of God, whereas the image involved the natural attributes of God. When Adam fell, he lost the likeness, but the image remained fully intact. Humanity as humanity was still complete, but the good and holy being was spoiled. The image is just that, mankind is made in the image of God, whereas the likeness is a spiritual attribute of the moral qualities of God. First, there is no "and" joining "in our image" with "after our likeness. It is common in speech and writing to repeat an idea using two different words to give reinforcement to the given idea. In this case the author did not intend to distract us from the idea but rather to insert a focal point. Historical context[edit] Scholars still debate the extent to which external cultures influenced the Old Testament writers and their ideas. Mesopotamian epics contain similar elements in their own stories, such as the resting of the deity after creation. Christianity quickly came into contact with the philosophical trends and ideas of the Greek-speaking Mediterranean, as displayed in Acts. Some Christians sought to marry Greco-Roman philosophy with Jewish tradition in an effort to appeal to Gentiles and explain the existence of Christ. Just as some Christians argued that the Old Testament prophecies had prepared Jews for Christ, others argued that the classic philosophers also paved the way for Christian revelation for Gentiles. Aristotelian philosophy and an emphasis on applying rationality and reason to theology played a part in developing scholasticism, a movement whose main goals were to establish systematic theology and illustrate why Christianity was inherently logical and rational. Reformation theologians , like Martin Luther , focused their reflections on the dominant role mankind had over all creation in the Garden of Eden before the fall of man. The *Imago Dei*, according to Luther, was the perfect existence of man and woman in the garden: Regarding the *Imago Dei*, he writes, "Its nature as an image has to do with the fact that it goes beyond itself and manifests something that it is not". It is the dynamic that sets the human being in motion towards the totally Other. Hence it means the capacity for relationship; it is the human capacity for God. While some would argue this is appropriate, J. Richard Middleton argued for a reassessment of the Biblical sources to better understand the original meaning before taking it out of context and applying it. Substantive, Relational and Functional. The substantive view locates the image of God within the psychological or spiritual makeup of the human being. This view holds that there are similarities between humanity and God, thus emphasizing characteristics that are of shared substance between both parties. Some proponents of the substantive view uphold that the rational soul mirrors the divine. What is important is that the substantive view sees the image of God as present in humanity whether or not an individual person acknowledges the reality of the image. The substantive view of the image of God has held particular historical precedence over the development of Christian Theology particularly among early Patristic Theologians see *Patristics* , like Irenaeus and Augustine, and Medieval Theologians, like Aquinas. Humankind before the fall see *Fall of Man* was in the image of God through the ability to exercise free will and reason. And we were in the likeness of God through an original spiritual endowment. While Irenaeus represents an early assertion of the substantive view of the image of God, the specific understanding of the essence of the image of God is explained in great detail by Augustine , a fifth century theologian who describes a Trinitarian formula in the image of God. Medieval interpretation of the substantive view[edit] Aquinas , a medieval theologian writing almost years after Augustine, builds on the Trinitarian structure of Augustine but takes the Trinitarian image of God to a different end. Medieval scholars suggested that the holiness or "wholeness" of humankind was lost after the fall, though free will and reason remained. Furthermore, rabbinic Midrash focuses on the function of image of God in kingship language. This leveling effectively embraces the substantive view and likens humankind to the earthly presence of God. The rabbinic substantive view, conversely, does not operate out of the framework of original sin. It is instead likened to a "painful but necessary graduation from the innocence of childhood to the problem-laden world of living as morally responsible adults. Insofar as the image and likeness of God is transmitted through the act of procreation, Cain and Abel provide examples of what constitutes adequate and inadequate response to the

image, and how that image either becomes fully actualized or utterly forsaken. Midrashim interprets Gen 4: Those who hold to the relational image agree that humankind possess the ability to reason as a substantive trait, but they argue that it is in a relationship with God that the true image is made evident. Later theologians like Karl Barth and Emil Brunner argue that it is our ability to establish and maintain complex and intricate relationships that make us like God. For example, in humans the created order of male and female is intended to culminate in spiritual as well as physical unions Genesis 5: Since other creatures do not form such explicitly referential spiritual relationships, these theologians see this ability as uniquely representing the imago dei in humans. Archaeology discovered many texts where specific kings are exalted as "images" of their respective deities and rule based on divine mandate. Ecological impact[edit] With the rise of contemporary ecological concerns the functional interpretation of the image of God has grown in popularity. Some modern theologians are arguing for proper religious care of the earth based on the functional interpretation of the image of god as caregiver over created order. Thus, exerting dominion over creation is an imperative for responsible ecological action. Imago Dei and human rights[edit] The Imago Dei concept had a very strong influence on the creation of human rights. Puritan origin of human rights[edit] Glen H.

Chapter 6 : Images of God: Reflections on Christian Anthropology

image of God - the creativity, cognition, conscience, community, composition, culpability, and corporeality of man - a better understanding of man's purpose, and how that purpose can be achieved, will be set forth.

Finally, the Bible says that your truest or deepest desires are also important to God. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete. Christians sometimes expect that if God calls them to some job, it will be something they hate. Otherwise, why would God have to call them to it? But the best missionaries have a great desire for the place and people they serve. Besides, who says God wants you to be a missionary? However, it can be exceedingly difficult to get in touch with your truest or deepest desires. Our motivations become so confused by sin and the brokenness of the world that our apparent desires are often far from the true desires that God has implanted in the depths of our hearts. Apart from the law sin lies dead. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. And the opposite is often true. The work that would fulfill your true desire appears at first to be undesirable, and may require great sacrifice and difficult labor. And your truest desires may be met in many areas of life, not necessarily in work. But at least you can get rid of the idea that God only calls you to something you hate. In this light, Frederick Buechner writes: For one thing, in a fallen world, you may have very little ability to choose your job anyway. Rather, it seems that circumstances prevent most people from choosing jobs they truly desire to do. It simply means that God is with you wherever you work. What does calling mean if you hate your job? Even in the developed economies, many people have little choice about the kind of work they do for a living. In Christ, believers have perfect freedom: That means you have the freedom to take risks, to fail, and to make mistakes. Would you be willing to take that job? Take heart, at the end, you will not be judged on getting the right job or fulfilling your God-given potential. What is the Work of the Lord? We have already seen that the needs of the world a form of community are important as you discern what kind of work God is leading you towards. What do they experience as your gifts and skills, the needs of the world, and the deepest desires they discern in you? The community is also an essential element in discerning who is led to the different kinds of work needed in the world. Many people may have similar gifts and desires that can help meet the needs of the world. But it may not be that God wants all of them to do the same work. You need to discern not only the work God is leading you to, but also the work he is leading others to. The community needs a balanced ensemble of workers working in harmony. One by one, medical students are matching their gifts, desires and the needs of the world to discern a leading toward medicine. But all-in-all, the ensemble of physicians is becoming a bit unbalanced.

Chapter 7 : What Does It Mean to be Made in the Image of God? - Bible Study

The biblical teaching on the image of God leads us in a different direction. "Instead of a love cup or hollow core of longings, the image is more accurately that of Moses literally reflecting the glory of God.."

Idolatry in Judaism Idolatry is prohibited by many verses in the Old Testament , but there is no one section that clearly defines idolatry. Rather there are a number of commandments on this subject spread through the books of the Hebrew Bible, some of which were written in different historical eras, in response to different issues. Idolatry in the Hebrew Bible is defined as the worship of idols or images ; the worship of polytheistic gods by use of idols or images and even the use of idols in the worship of Yahweh God. Similarly, the Nehushtan , which God commanded Moses to make and lift high to cure any Israelites who looked at it of snakebites, is God-ordained use of an image. However, as part of a later religious reform Hezekiah destroyed the Serpent, which the Hebrew people had been burning incense to 2 Kings Although Jesus discussed the Mosaic Law in the Sermon on the Mount , he does not speak of issues regarding the meaning of the commandment against idolatry. His teachings, however, uphold that worship should be directed to God alone Matthew 4: The Pauline Epistles contain several admonitions to "flee from idolatry" 1 Cor 5: Paul of Tarsus , who agreed to the Apostolic Decree , also wrote that it was permitted to do so, as long as a blessing was pronounced over it, and provided that scandal was not caused by it. However, he said that the gods worshiped in idolatry were in his belief demons , and that any act of direct participation in their worship remained forbidden 1 Corinthians The New Testament also uses the term "idolatry" to refer to worship like passion for things such as wealth, as in Colossians 3: The New Testament does contain the rudiments of an argument which provides a basis for religious images or icons. Paul of Tarsus referred to Jesus as the "image of the invisible God" Colossians 1: Early Christianity grew in a society where religious images, usually in the form of statues , both large ones in temples and small ones such as lares and penates in the home, were a prominent feature of traditional pagan religions, such as traditional Ancient Roman religion , Ancient Greek religion and other forms of Eastern paganism. Many writings by Church fathers contain strong denunciations of these practices, which seem to have included outright idol-worship. Statues on secular buildings, however, could serve as expression of secular power in various periods of Christianity, without implications of idol-worship. Early Christian art used symbolic and allegorical images mainly, partly no doubt to avoid drawing attention during the persecution of early Christians in the Roman Empire. The image of " The Good Shepherd ", a beardless youth in pastoral scenes collecting sheep , was the most common of these images, and was probably not understood as a portrait of the historical Jesus. The depiction of Jesus already from the 3rd century included images very similar to what became the traditional image of Jesus, with a longish face and long straight hair. As the Church increased in size and popularity, the need to educate illiterate converts led to the use of pictures which portrayed biblical stories, along with images of saints, angels, prophets, and the Cross though only portrayed in a bejewelled, glorified state. After the end of persecution, and the adoption of Christianity by Constantine , large churches were built and from the start decorated with elaborate images of Jesus and saints in mosaic. Small carved reliefs were also found on sarcophagi like the Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus. However large monumental sculpture of religious subjects was not produced, and in Byzantine art and Eastern Orthodox art it is avoided to the current day. It only reappeared in Carolingian art , among peoples who had no memory of pagan religious statues. Paintings of Old Testament scenes are found in Jewish catacombs of the same period, and the heavily painted walls of Dura Europos Synagogue in Syria. Christian use of relics also dates to the catacombs, when Christians found themselves praying in the presence of the bodies of martyrs, sometimes using their tombs as altars for sharing the Eucharist , which was, and in Catholicism , Lutheranism and Eastern Orthodoxy is, the central act of Christian worship. This is shown in the written record of the martyrdom of Saint Polycarp, a personal disciple of Saint John the Apostle. Significant periods of iconoclasm deliberate destruction of icons have occurred in the history of the Church, the first major outbreak being the Byzantine iconoclasm , motivated by a strictly literal interpretation of the second commandment and interaction with Muslims who have a very strict teachings against the creation of images.

Iconoclasm was officially condemned by the Western and Eastern Churches at the Second Council of Nicaea in AD the Western Church was not represented, but approved the decrees later. This decision was based on the arguments including that the biblical commandment forbidding images of God was because no-one had seen God. But, by the Incarnation of Jesus, who is God incarnate in visible matter, humankind has now seen God. It was therefore argued that they were not depicting the invisible God, but God as He appeared in the flesh. The Libri Carolini are a response prepared in the court of Charlemagne, when under the mistaken impression that the Nicea Council had approved the worship as opposed to the veneration of images. The emblem of the Moravian Church depicts an image of the Lamb of God Agnus Dei in ecclesiastical Latin with the flag of victory, surrounded by the Latin inscription: Vicit agnus noster, eum sequamur English: Different understandings of the use of images[edit] Catholics use images, such as the crucifix, the cross, in religious life and pray using depictions of saints. They also venerate images and liturgical objects by kissing, bowing, and making the sign of the cross. They point to the Old Testament patterns of worship followed by the Hebrew people as examples of how certain places and things used in worship may be treated with reverence or venerated, without worshiping them. The Ark of the Covenant was treated with great reverence and included images of cherubim on top of it Exodus Christianity interprets the commandment not to make "any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above" to mean to not "bow down and worship" the image in and of itself nor a false god through the image. Christian theology offers the following explanations of liturgical practice that features images, icons, statues, and the like: Catholic theology expressly affirms that the image of Christ receives the same latria or worship that is due to God; see St. The worship of whatever type, latria, hyperdulia, or dulia, can be considered to go through the icon, image, or statue: Orthodoxy teaches that the incarnation of Jesus makes it permissible to venerate icons, and even necessary to do so in order to preserve the truth of the Incarnation. Indeed, following from the Summa reference above, the veneration of icons is mandatory; to not venerate icons would imply that Jesus was not also fully God, or to deny that Jesus had a real physical body. Both of these alternatives are incompatible with the Christology defined at the Council of Chalcedon in and summarized in the Chalcedonian Creed. Both the literal worship of an inanimate object and latria, or sacrificial worship to something or someone that is not God, are forbidden; yet such are not the basis for Christian worship. The Catholic knows "that in images there is no divinity or virtue on account of which they are to be worshipped, that no petitions can be addressed to them, and that no trust is to be placed in them. XXV, de invocatione Sanctorum. The vast majority of Christian denominations hold that God particularized himself when he took on flesh and was born as Jesus; through this act God is said to have blessed material things and made them good again. A recent joint Lutheran-Orthodox statement made in the 7th Plenary of the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission, [23] on July in Helsinki, reaffirmed the Ecumenical Council decisions on the nature of Christ and the veneration of images: As Lutherans and Orthodox we affirm that the teachings of the ecumenical councils are authoritative for our churches. Orthodox and Lutherans, however, have different histories. Lutherans have received the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed with the addition of the filioque. The Seventh Ecumenical Council, the Second Council of Nicaea in , which rejected iconoclasm and restored the veneration of icons in the churches, was not part of the tradition received by the Reformation. Lutherans, however, rejected the iconoclasm of the 16th century, and affirmed the distinction between adoration due to the Triune God alone and all other forms of veneration CA Through historical research this council has become better known. Nevertheless it does not have the same significance for Lutherans as it does for the Orthodox. Yet, Lutherans and Orthodox are in agreement that the Second Council of Nicaea confirms the christological teaching of the earlier councils and in setting forth the role of images icons in the lives of the faithful reaffirms the reality of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God, when it states: Certainly this is not the full adoration in accordance with our faith, which is properly paid only to the divine nature, but it resembles that given to the figure of the honored and life? Martin Luther defended the use of "importance of images as tools for instruction and aids to devotion". The Schneeberg Altarpiece was placed at the high altar of St. Wolfgang im Salzkammergut and as Lutheran sacred imagery, reflects "the devotional forms of fifteenth- and early sixteenth century northern art". God designed the temple, employing artisans to create its beautiful and ornate workmanship. Writers, speakers and musicians have always taken part in

worship services. Art is and always has been part of the church. John Calvin , the progenitor of the Reformed tradition of Christianity that influenced the Continental Reformed , Congregational , Anglican and Presbyterian traditions, [28] was always extremely hostile to all publicly displayed religious images, which were systematically destroyed by Calvinists, as in the Beeldenstorm in the Netherlands. Packer , in Chapter 4 of his book *Knowing God*, writes that, "Imagining God in our heads can be just as real a breach of the second commandment as imagining Him by the work of our hands. Another typical Christian argument for this position might be that God was incarnate as a human being, not as an object of wood, stone or canvas, and therefore the only God-directed service of images permitted is the service of other people. See vestments controversy Non-use by Amish[edit] The Amish are an Anabaptist Christian group that forbids the use of images in secular life. In their critiques these groups argue that such practices are in effect little different from idolatry, and that they localize and particularize God, who, they argue, is beyond human depiction. Differentiation from idolatry[edit] Idolatry is consistently prohibited in the Hebrew Bible , including as one of the Ten Commandments Exodus There is a great deal of controversy over the question of what constitutes idolatry and this has bearing on the visual arts and the use of icons and symbols in worship, and other matters. As in other Abrahamic religions the meaning of the term has been extended very widely by theologians. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: Man commits idolatry whenever he honours and reveres a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons for example satanism , power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money etc.

Chapter 8 : 17 Bible verses about Image Of God

In these verses, Moses tells us that God created man in His "own image," and after His "likeness" (v. 26). In the history of Christian theology, some have distinguished between the "image" and the "likeness" of God in human beings.

But the biblical answer to this question is that men and women are created in the image of God Genesis 1: Thus, to truly comprehend what it means to be human, we must understand imago Dei, the image of God in man. The study of the doctrine of imago Dei must address four questions. First, what does it mean that man and woman have been created in the image of God? Second, how was the image of God in man marred or affected by the Fall? Third, how is the image of God in man restored in salvation? Fourth, how is this truth significant to us today? This article will focus on the first three questions by looking at the theological aspects of the image of God. Then it will take up the fourth question by exploring the practical applications of imago Dei. Theological Aspects of the Image of God That we are created in the image of God says something awesome about God in His creative purposes. But what does it mean? The theological challenge in imago Dei is the fact that the Bible does not define explicitly what it means that humanity is made in the image of God. Three authors provide helpful theological direction for us. Wayne Grudem pointed out that the words used in Genesis 1: The Meaning of the Image of God Several characteristics in the uniqueness of humanity help us understand the meaning of the image of God in man. While this is not an exhaustive list, the following seven characteristics reflect imago Dei. We are created to represent and worship our God who is Spirit. Human beings are not merely material beings. When God created the first man, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life Genesis 2: Only humans are able to relate to God in worship and communication. A vital component of this spiritual nature is immortality – human beings that will never cease to exist but will live forever. We are created by a personal God, and our personhood reflects that aspect of God. He created humans with personality, as unique individuals with self-consciousness and purpose. While every man and woman share common characteristics, no two people are alike. Since each individual is stamped with the image of God, each human life has significance before God. He created humanity with a moral compass, a conscience that gives each of us an inner sense of the difference between right and wrong. The conscience may be deadened or seared by sin, but it remains hardwired in man. The hardest question for both atheists and evolutionists is how to explain the moral nature in the human race, in every culture, in every people group, and even in every religion. God reveals the relational nature of the Trinity in this phrase: Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness Genesis 1: God created us with the capacity to relate both to God and to others. Humans were not made to live in isolated individualism. Thus, the image of God is involved in how we relate in marriage and in the fellowship of the church, and how we relate to others in the Great Commandment and the Great Commission see Genesis 2: God is a God of knowledge. While our knowledge is limited, God created us with the capacity to think, to know, and to learn. Christianity is not a mindless faith. The intellectual aspect of imago Dei means that our minds are a vital part of how we are to love God Matthew We are made in the likeness of God who Himself is love. It is the emotive facet of our makeup that allows us to experience intimacy with those close to us, to feel compassion for others, and to know the deep awe of God that causes us to delight and find soul satisfaction in Him. God is the Creator. His glory is displayed in His creation. We have an insatiable desire to create, whether producing a piece of art, starting a business, writing a book, or landscaping the yard. Nancy Pearcey observes that the first phrase, be fruitful and multiply, may mean: This passage – tells us that our original purpose was to create culture and build civilizations – nothing less. The question now is how did the Fall affect the image of God in men and women since? The first response is that the entrance of sin did not eradicate or destroy imago Dei. However, the image of God in humans was deeply marred or distorted by the Fall. Men and women died spiritually. Moral purity was lost, replaced by a sinful nature. Personality was corrupted, producing an array of psychological problems. Knowledge was degraded by false philosophies and vain imaginations. Emotions were turned to selfish desires. Creativity was despoiled by evil purposes and pursuits Romans 1: The uncorrupted image of God was replaced by the fallen image of the fallen Adam Genesis 5: Through sanctification, the believer in Jesus Christ

progressively grows in godliness, conforming more and more to the likeness of God 2 Corinthians 3: Our response is seen in such passages as Colossians 3: The work of God is His providence operating in all our life situations to conform us to the image of His Son Roman 8: That which started at salvation will be completed when Christ returns. Imago Dei will be restored because, when He appears we will be like Him 1 John 3: The Practical Applications of the Image of God There are profound implications and applications of imago Dei for the Christian and the church. John Piper highlights the significance it gives to us as human beings offering this definition: Six critical areas of application stand out. The image of God in every man and woman everywhere gives emphasis to the priority of evangelism and missions. Since humans were created in the image of God and yet are fallen sinners, they miss out on their ultimate purpose in life "to glorify God by reflecting Him, loving Him, and worshipping Him. Moreover, the immortal aspect of imago Dei underscores the urgency of reaching out to those who do not know the Lord Jesus. Their eternal destiny is at stake. No issue since slavery has so divided our nation as abortion. The reasoned voices for life must be heard. Nothing emphasizes and promotes the sacredness and preciousness of life more than imago Dei. It goes to the core of the meaning of life. It means that human life is to be revered and respected. Our stand against abortion is grounded in the fact that abortion is a sin against God as the creator of life and against the human life of the unborn whether embryonic, fetal, or viable as those who bear His image. Inherent in imago Dei is the dignity or worth of each individual. This has a profound impact on how we see, relate to and treat others. Lewis stated it well, "There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. The high Christian view of sex is based on the fact that God created man and woman in His image as sexual beings with a commitment to marriage Genesis 1: The sexual union of a man and wife is created for intimacy, fidelity, and faith. Marital fidelity "one man and one woman as one flesh for one lifetime" is used throughout the Scripture to represent the people of God and their fidelity to Him. The implications go to the heart of biblical sexual morality in a world plagued by pornography, premarital sex, extramarital sex, and homosexuality. One, it distinguishes man from the animal kingdom, for whom sex is merely a biological function devoid of any spiritual meaning, committed attachment, or moral parameters. Two, it warns us of how we dishonor God when we fail to reflect His image by taking sex outside the wonderful and ennobling relationship of marriage. Three, it is a positive guide to flourishing in marriage to the glory of God. When we look at other people through the lens of being bearers of the image of God, it is impossible to close our hearts to those who are suffering, poor, or marginalized. In His earthly ministry, Jesus healed the sick, fed the hungry, and delivered those held captive by the demonic. While He was moved with compassion by the temporal needs, He saw that meeting those needs was a bridge to meet the greater need and bring people to salvation. And so it is for us " Gospel-driven ministries of mercy are viable visual representations of the mercy of God and grace of the Lord Jesus. Jesus Christ is the image of God Colossians 1: Conclusion A robust view of imago Dei is an essential component of a biblical worldview. It informs our understanding of both the purposes of God for us and what it truly means to be human. In a culture that increasingly diminishes the value of man, concluding that the human is merely one more animal produced in a random evolutionary process, it is critical that Christians embrace the biblical account and treat others accordingly, both inside and outside the community of faith. Zondervan, , Eerdmans, , Crossway, , Harper, ,

Chapter 9 : Female Images of God in the Bible | Women's Ordination Conference

*4 Lesson One Images Created, Part 1 "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness " Genesis (NIV)
The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like.*

What have you been thinking about? What is the Image of God? At the start of the story is the tantalising phrase in Genesis 1, "God created man in his own image: In the image of God he created him. It is the climax of the entire creation narrative. The Earth, which was formless and empty verse 1, was first given shape and was then filled: So God created man in his own image, both male and female he created them. Firstly, the Image of God marks us out from all other living creatures, which by implication are not made in the Image of God. Genetically, we may be almost identical to our nearest animal relative, the Chimpanzee, but spiritually we are poles apart. So we will gain insight into understanding what the Image of God means, if we explore the differences between mankind and the rest of the animal kingdom. The second point of reference is of course God himself, so we will also understand the meaning of being made in his image if we explore what he has revealed of himself " in nature, in scripture and most especially in Christ. The image of God in man therefore distinguishes us from all other animals on the one hand and shows our family resemblance to our heavenly father on the other. I believe this process leads us to focus on 6 distinctive characteristics of humanity. They do not change the world they live in. The creativity we observe in them is instinctive. So birds build their nests but every year it has the same design. They never think to build on an extension, create a loft conversion or develop their skills. They just do the same old instinctive thing. God on the other hand has been creative beyond anything we can comprehend. Both science and the Bible testify that the entire universe came into existence - out of nothing! A humanist put to me recently that we have a straight choice " to believe in an eternal universe that has always existed or an eternal God who created a finite universe. We do not have that choice. The idea that the universe is an eternal static entity died in when Hubble observed the Red Shift " a Doppler effect in light from distant galaxies " which demonstrated that the universe is expanding. Atheists have been struggling to come to terms with this discovery ever since. It began " apparently out of nothing, some 15 billion years ago. This is a major problem for atheists. But nonetheless, we have original, creative ideas. Similar scientific and industrial adventures are everywhere to be found. When I went through his library of scientific and technical books, I realised the research and understanding of a vast array of people led to those particular North Sea adventures. This brings us to the second aspect of the image of God. The psalmist wrote, "Do not be like the horse and mule which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle" Ps Human intelligence is unlike anything found in the animal kingdom. We ponder the meaning of our existence, the significance of our actions and the prospects of our destiny. Unlike animals, man is a thinker and capable of being instructed and growing in understanding. Religious beliefs which are anti-intellectual and belittle our need to study and learn, have failed to see the wonder of who we are. Approaches to evangelism which diminish the proper place of argument and persuasion diminish the humanity of the people we would reach. So the apostle Paul urges that we should be "transformed by the renewing of our minds" to discern the will of God Romans But as the creation itself defies atheistic understanding, so too, human intelligence and self-consciousness also defies secular analysis. Published by Damaris, it is full of good things that are essential to the subject at hand. Nobody even knows what it would be like to have the slightest idea about how anything material could be conscious. Researchers are stumped by the very thing that drives them " they cannot understand their own understanding. Bubziszewski recalls the dilemma of self-understanding he experienced as an atheist: My mind, I supposed, was nothing more than the activity of my brain, my brain nothing more than a computational device. Of course, we do not experience ourselves as machines, but I told myself that we are machines under a double curse " the illusion of being more than machines and the desire for the illusion to be true. How a machine could suffer such things as desires and illusions deeply troubled me. In fact, all the phenomena of consciousness troubled me. I was troubled by the redness of red, the deliberateness of choice, the preciousness of my loves, the sense I sometimes had of exerting my will against an inclination " I was even troubled by the experience of being troubled. I knew

that I could not fit these things inside the theory that I was a machine, and I knew that the intuition that I was more than a machine made a better fit with reality. To get around this fact, I told myself that a machine is something that I know, whereas a soul is something that I do not know – conveniently forgetting that I experience myself, unlike machines, directly. In a sense, I thought I did not exist. Eventually, Budziszewski came to a realisation, "I had reached my conclusions not because of the data but in spite of it. We have a little seaside spot. And we sit there on sunny days and observe people arriving who have not been there before. They come round the path and stop. They often bring dogs. The dogs never do this. While their owners gasp, the dog, I have observed, is usually cocking his leg up over a nearby beach hut. Relief is experienced by dogs; beauty, awe and wonder are experienced by humans. Animals suffer from fear but as far as we can tell, they have no natural sense of guilt or awareness of good and evil choices. Yet our daily lives are dominated by such awareness. Human conscience is a major aspect of our humanity. We battle with evil within ourselves and witness it in others. The world is like that. Morality fits the facts and points us to an ultimate, absolute moral being. Yet without God, morality is merely an arbitrary code of mutually agreed manners for diners at the human lunch club, of no more significance than agreeing that we should not blow our noses at the table. The dominant theme of human existence, reflected in stories the world over, is about relationships. In a word, Love. We may be confused as to what love is; we may reduce it to intense emotions or sexual functioning. We may keep love entrapped within the limits of the nuclear family. But life and love go together so closely that the breakdown of relationships is the single biggest cause of people wanting to commit suicide. We know in our souls that we were not made to live in isolation. How do we discover what it is? Where are the deepest descriptions of it? Has the world found any better exposition of the meaning of love than in the life, teaching and passion of the Christ? No it has not; and Jesus was emphatic that loving our neighbour was the second commandment about love, not the first. As Augustine so powerfully expressed it: Here in Christ is the vision of love that elevates and redeems human life. Until the 20th century, every culture in human history has been dominated by belief in a God or gods. In the last century, atheism was imposed upon much of the world – across China, the Soviet Union and much of Europe. The overthrow of Communism and Nazism has led those oppressed people to return to their religious heritage. In the free world, where the demands of Christian belief have been cast aside by post-modernity, we have seen the enormous rise of superstitions such as astrology, spiritism and magical charms. The ultimate image-bearer All these themes then challenge our humanity and ask us if we are really alive? Are we creative, thinking, artistic, moral, relational beings, who hunger after God? Are we growing on all fronts? Are we well-balanced individuals, giving proper attention to each area? Now an image is but a reflection of the original. Sometimes the image may be hazy and distorted. But it does not exist on its own. Beyond the image is the reality. The Image of God in us not only helps us to see who we really are, but also reveals God to us. But we are not left searching through a haze to find hints and images of the One who made us. For the Christian testimony is that the one in whose image we are made, has come among us and revealed himself. The argument from Creation, from Intelligence, from Beauty, from Morality, from Love, from our intrinsic Hunger for God and of course from the person of Christ himself in his teaching, deeds, character, claims, death and resurrection are the major lines of argument for the existence of God. Poor Darwin, and poor Dawkins. This article was originally given as a talk on Genesis Chapter 1. This resource is provided by the kind permission of Peter May. He is a retired GP.