

THE223 Christian Narrative 1 Creation and Fall

Unit 3 Discovery Exercise

The Bible in Culture

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The Bible in Culture – The Image of God and the Evolutionary Process

Instructions:

The objective of this exercise is to analyze and isolate varying applications of Biblical text. Then, after understanding two opposing positions, to offer your own opinion be it in agreement with one or the other position, or be it a hybrid between the two. *The key is not to become a content master but an informed decision maker.*

1. Read the following four blog articles (2 which argue that the image of God can come through evolutionary process, posted on biologos.org and 2 which argue that the image of God cannot come through the Evolutionary process, posted on answersingenesis.org)
2. Write a response to these two articles in which you argue which position concerning the image of God most closely aligns with Biblical evidence and why. Also, offer the strengths and weaknesses of the position you choose to defend. Remember that this is a critique, not a witch-hunt. Our conversation as both Christians and scholars should always be seasoned with grace.

Evolution and Image Bearer, Part 1

April 15, 2015 By Tyler Greenway and Pamela Ebstyne King, <http://biologos.org>

One of the challenging issues raised for Christians by the science of evolution is understanding what it means for an evolved human to be made in the image of God (*imago Dei*). Evolutionary theory implies that species are not neatly distinguished from one another in discrete categories. Instead, it posits that the ancestry of life on earth is better understood as a slow, continuous development with ever-changing lines differentiating species from one another. Species, including humans, have changed over time and continue to change. If, according to evolutionary theory, the human species has evolved from non-human ancestors over the course of hundreds of thousands of years, how might we understand humans as uniquely bearing the image of God?

In a previous BioLogos blog post, Dennis Venema suggests that modern homo sapiens have evolved along “different evolutionary trajectories.” While all modern homo sapiens share common ancestors from Africa, some homo sapiens also have Neanderthal and Denisovan ancestors. Who, then, were divine image-bearers – the common ancestors from Africa, Neanderthals, Denisovans, their mixed species children, or all of the above? In other words, if the lines differentiating species from one another are less clear and the development of a species is seen as an extended, continuous process involving the mixing of different related species, how are we to understand modern humans as divine image-bearers in comparison to the direct ancestors of humans who presumably were not? One way of addressing this question is to consider the role divine image-bearers are given and the capacities required for that role. If bearing God’s image requires a particular role with particular capacities, those species that lack those capacities and therefore cannot act in that role are not image bearers of God. Those species that possess those capacities may then be considered potential image bearers, in the sense that these species have the necessary capacities for this role. In this way, a line may be drawn between direct ancestors of humans that most likely did not bear the image of God and those that may have. We believe this approach is compatible with existing interpretations of the *imago*—whether Christological, relational (i.e., being in relationship with God), functional (i.e. fulfilling God’s role or commission to humankind)—and also compatible with understanding how God could have used natural processes to enable humans to become unique image bearers. (Tomorrow’s post will address a different approach to understanding the image of God in the context of evolution as well.)

This method is, of course, somewhat complicated by disagreements concerning what it means to be made in the image of God. These disagreements, while certainly interesting, will not be resolved here. For the sake of this post, one well-established feature of the *imago Dei* will be focused on: the role of dominion or stewardship over creation. We will then consider which capacities are required for this role to be performed in a meaningful way. Two broad examples are the ability

to learn about creation and flexibly care for different species with different needs and the ability to plan for the benefit of these species.

The ability to learn about creation is important for dominion because different species require different care. Here we may discuss various psychological capacities that enable this ability. Theory of mind—the ability to consider the intentions, desires, and beliefs of other minds—is greatly useful. In order for a divine image-bearer to exercise dominion, he or she must understand that gazelles prefer to eat grass and lions prefer to eat gazelles. Various aspects of intuitive biology may also be useful as they allow humans to understand the basic needs of species in general (e.g., food, water, shelter, etc.) and to differentiate between species and attribute specific needs to them. These abilities, in turn, allow humans to flexibly care for different species with different needs. The sheep can be led to pasture and the fish left in its pond where they may both respectively thrive, rather than applying one method of care to both.

In order to helpfully rule over creation, image bearers also need to plan ahead for the benefit of these species. Sheep taken to the same pasture too often may create an environment that can no longer sustain the life of the sheep or the life of other co-existing species. Here we may also speak of particular psychological capacities, such as a certain amount of self-control and the ability to delay gratification. Without these abilities, humanity may wreak havoc on ecosystems in order to pursue their own gain or obtain immediate rewards. Further, image bearers may need to examine potential futures, set goals, and implement these goals. In this way image bearers may foresee problems and helpfully avoid them.

To a degree, these capacities exist in other species as well, but the extent to which they exist in the human species is unique. This method may allow us to say that those groups of humans that possessed these capacities, such as theory of mind and self-regulation, were potentially image bearers, but those groups of direct human ancestors that lacked these capacities were likely not image bearers. For example, if Neanderthals lacked a number of necessary capacities for dominion, it may be accurate to say that they were likely not image bearers. But, if Neanderthals, like modern humans, possessed these capacities and were capable of exercising a meaningful amount of dominion over creation, it may be accurate to say they were potential image bearers.

This method does raise further questions about humans or groups of humans with limited capacities in these areas, and for this reason, this method may be better applied to species as a whole, rather than to individuals. Tomorrow's post will address the different ways by which humans have borne the image of God across time.

Evolution and Image Bearers, Part 2

April 15, 2015 By Tyler Greenway and Pamela Ebstyne King, <http://biologos.org>

Evolutionary theory raises interesting questions for Christians, particularly concerning what it means for evolved humans to be made in the image of God. In yesterday's post, we considered one way in which we may begin to understand how we might distinguish species that may or may not be considered potential image bearers based on the psychological capacities required to bear the image of God (the imago Dei).

Further consideration of evolutionary theory and the imago Dei, however, raises another interesting question. If we consider the entirety of human history, dating back to our first human ancestors until today, we may wonder about the image bearing actions, behaviors, or qualities of humans throughout history. We may ask, how have humans borne the image of God across time and in different cultural contexts? For example, the businesswoman in New York City grabbing a cup of coffee before hopping on the subway is presumably an image bearer of God, but so is the hunter-gatherer spending his time fashioning stone tools. An interesting question rises out of this comparison: Do humans today image God differently than those humans living 1000 years ago, 10,000 years ago, or even further back? These considerations may be helped by a dynamic conception of the image of God as considered by developmental psychology. We recognize both the continuous work and movement of the Holy Spirit in the lives of humans and also the malleability of the human species providing the capacity to readily adjust to a variety of cultural contexts. Building on these notions, we suggest that a dynamic approach, one that recognizes the human propensity to change and grow, to understanding the image of God allows for a theologically and scientifically coherent conceptualization of what it means for humans to bear God's image. Given the plasticity inherent in human development and the ongoing sustaining and perfecting work of the Spirit, we make two propositions regarding a dynamic perspective of the image of God. The first is that the actions or behaviors by which individual or communal entities relate to God and image him are not fixed throughout time and place; they are dynamic. Secondly, that the imago is less about a static or fixed image and more about an active or dynamic imaging as humans relate to God and God's creation.

The first point suggests that the imago Dei may not be evident in the same way across different historical or cultural contexts. For example, during the Enlightenment, the use of reason may have gained importance and helped illuminate an individual's relationship with God. In more recent times relational qualities, such as having a coherent identity or expressing empathy, may better enable individuals to participate more fully in Christian fellowship and in the life of the triune God. This is not a relativistic claim about the imago, but rather a supposition about how cultural and historical context shapes different opportunities for imaging God that may then inform the intellectual history of the doctrine of the imago Dei. This notion differs from the historical tendency to attempt to locate

the image of God in a particular quality that a human possesses and allows for the image of God in humankind to deepen and expand throughout history.[1]

Second, this perspective emphasizes that bearing the image of God involves the whole person and the imago becomes more apparent through relating to God and others. Human nature has a plastic and undetermined element that enables humans to be shaped and formed into a better likeness of the image of God. Although psychological capacities may be relevant to the imago, this does not mean such capacities are fixed or set throughout one's life. John Webster powerfully made this point by saying that human nature is not "immobile." [2] From this perspective, perhaps arguing about what the image is (such as the human will or reason) is less the point than how one bears the image of God by participating in fellowship with God. In Webster's words, being human involves fellowship with God that "becomes through participation in the drama of creation, salvation and consummation." [3]

Thus the imago is "dynamic" in that it stems from ongoing human engagement with God's work of creation, redemption, and perfection. Such an approach affirms the importance of human reason, will, love, and relationship (capacities that are identified by different static understandings of the imago), but emphasizes the process by which these capacities enable an individual to engage in the ongoing activity of God. Given that the Spirit is the sustainer and perfecter in the process of sanctification, then we should not be surprised that there could be change over time (in someone's life or throughout history) in the expression of the imago. Consequently, when the evidence of multiple human ancestors raises the question of how the imago may have emerged within the natural order, a dynamic perspective suggests that the capacity to be an image bearer could have arisen regardless of context or even ancestors—as long as the sufficient constellation of capacities necessary to relate to God, other, and creation were present (for a discussion of some of these capacities, see previous post).

From this perspective, humans are image bearers, and similar to a photo that changes in quality or resolution as it comes into focus, so the image we bear becomes more apparent the closer our relation to God. Perhaps it is through the process of "becoming" more fully who we were created to be, through relating to God, his people, and his creation, that the image becomes more evident? Said differently, the substance is present in a picture, although we may not see it clearly. If we increase the resolution of the picture, we increase the clarity of the image. Consequently, the imago is not limited to a singular quality that mirrors the image of God, but rather we argue for a malleable understanding of bearing the image of God that becomes more apparent in relating to God.

To summarize, given the ongoing work of the Spirit and the constant change brought about within humans as they interact with God, others, and creation, perhaps speaking of "bearing the image of God" is more helpful than a more static concept of "an image." Such an approach is consistent with existing interpretations

of the imago (e.g., Christological, relational, functional) and also compatible with understanding how God could have used natural processes to enable humans to become unique image bearers. Through the processes of evolution, humans eventually had the capacity to bear the image of God in a way that was distinct from their predecessors. This is not at all to suggest that the imago itself evolves over time; but rather that how humans bear the image of God may have different nuances at different times within individual lives and also as a species throughout history.

Evolution and What the Image of God Is Not.

Image of God, Part 1

Frost Smith, August 8, 2015, <https://answersingenesis.org>

A recent two-part piece on The BioLogos Forum admits that meshing evolution and the image of God that all humans possess is a “challenging issue.” Clearly the reason for this is the number of transitional and experimental species that supposedly led up to modern humans, the crown jewel of creation that finally does bear the image of God. Confounding the matter further is the evidence of Neanderthal and Denisovan DNA in modern humans. Dr. Hugh Ross of Reasons to Believe (RTB) deals with the matter this way:

RTB’s biblical creation model identifies “hominids,” Neanderthals, *Homo erectus* and others, as animals created by God. These extra-ordinary creatures walked erect and possessed enough intelligence to assemble crude tools and even adopt some level of “culture.” The RTB model maintains that the hominids were not spiritual beings made in God’s image. RTB’s model reserves this status exclusively for Adam and Eve and their descendants (modern humans).

The model predicts many biological similarities will exist between the hominids and modern humans but also significant differences. The greatest distinctions between modern humans and the hominids can be seen in their cognitive capacity, behavior patterns, technological development, and culture, especially artistic and religious expression.²

Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell has addressed Reasons to Believe’s views in “Does Hugh Ross Believe in Soulless Ancient Humans?” In a two-part series on BioLogos, however, authors Tyler Greenway and Pamela Ebstynne King have taken this idea a different direction by not giving any indication of a belief in a literal Adam and Eve and by delineating divine image-bearing as a matter of fulfilling that very role itself:

If bearing God’s image requires a particular role with particular capacities, those species that lack those capacities and therefore cannot act in that role are not image bearers of God.³

The BioLogos Forum writers note that such a role is multifaceted; therefore they decided to use, for the sake of example, the role of a divine image-bearer in the singular capacity of dominion/stewardship, presumably because of the mandate given in Genesis 1:28. Beings able to fulfill that role are those with “the ability to learn about creation and flexibly care for different species with different needs and the ability to plan for the benefit of these species.” In this view, the image of God is merely a matter of function and ability, not a matter of being. This definition sadly, and surely unintentionally, leaves open the idea that those with severe mental or physical disabilities may not be able to bear the image of God.

The first part of the BioLogos Forum series then begins to delve into “psychological capacities” that enable humans to recognize differing needs of animal types and appropriately care for them, including proper planning, self-control, and even goal-setting. The authors argue that “these capacities exist in other species as well, but the extent to which they exist in the human species is unique.” Given some of the Neanderthal fossils and tools that have been found, it might be hard to argue that they did not possess those abilities. Indeed, the authors admit at the end of the first article of the series, “[I]f Neanderthals, like modern humans, possessed these capacities and were capable of exercising a meaningful amount of dominion over creation, it may be accurate to say they were potential image bearers” [emphasis mine].

Moving on to the second article in the series, the authors raise another question: “How have humans borne the image of God across time and in different cultural contexts?” With a nod to the role of the Holy Spirit,⁴ the authors concluded that the *imago Dei* is dynamic, i.e., adaptive to current circumstances and abilities, requiring differing behaviors, while allowing for individual differences and personal growth in image-bearers. They believe this method, unlike others, allows for the image of God to broaden as time passes. They offer the following example:

[D]uring the Enlightenment, the use of reason may have gained importance and helped illuminate an individual’s relationship with God. In more recent times relational qualities, such as having a coherent identity or expressing empathy, may better enable individuals to participate more fully in Christian fellowship and in the life of the triune God.⁵

This plasticity of humankind’s conscientiousness is indeed a hallmark of history—both good and bad. But, with this understanding of image-bearing being a gradual development of god-like qualities that man came to possess, one is left to wonder if mass-murderers and ruthless dictators then bear the image of God at all, though “modern” humans.

But, back to the point of entertaining evolutionary timelines, when/where/how did hominids become “humans” if there were no Adam and Eve? The authors suggest

when the evidence of multiple human ancestors raises the question of how the *imago* may have emerged within the natural order, a dynamic perspective suggests that the capacity to be an image bearer could have arisen regardless of context or even ancestors—as long as the sufficient constellation of capacities necessary to relate to God, other, and creation were present Through the processes of evolution, humans eventually had the capacity to bear the image of God in a way that was distinct from their predecessors.⁶

While an arguably novel concept, it seems that making the image of God a process rather than an endowment, a clear statement in Genesis 1:26 and 1:27, only

muddies the waters more by adding a spectrum of mental capabilities and spirituality to the already-existing spectrum of physical morphologies that supposedly make up human evolution. We are again left with a nebulous and unsatisfying answer as to how, in an evolutionary paradigm, man became an agent of God, bearing His image with a purpose. Why would God use a cruel and senseless process to bring about man to then, supposedly, shepherd the creation already stained with blood, disease, and death? What exactly is man supposed to have dominion over, when mankind had been developing already under the dominion of nature, red in tooth and claw?⁷ And, most importantly, why would we need a Savior if we were already developing a godliness-of-sorts and if death and disease were longer residents of the world we supposedly evolved to shepherd? This view also, with no stated or clear “Adam” and “Fall,” would elevate man, the “first Adam(s),” into the role of the “last Adam”—to rescue the world, instead of being stewards of a perfectly created world in which we wreaked havoc.⁸ And where are those potential-but-not-quite image-bearers now—dead and buried with their not-quite soul? In such an indefinite model, perhaps some answers could be posited to these questions, but sticking with God’s clear account of when and how man became a living soul bearing the image of God precludes the questions entirely and makes sense of the entirety of Scripture whereby a “first Adam” dooms creation and a “second Adam” restores it.

The Bible should be our foundational source for understanding the image of God and how and why we are here—and everything else it touches on. As man is “dynamic,” so are his ideas, constantly changing, but none satisfactory for every time and place. Yet ironically, one theme is becoming more and more constant, and that is trying to force millions of years into the roughly 6,000-year, straightforward timeline of the Bible. But our God, as only He could do, has given us timeless truth in His Word. Nothing has falsified a single claim, including a young age for the earth and a global Flood. Answers in Genesis wants people to know that our Creator has provided answers in the Bible (Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16). We call Christians to diligently search His Word and to abandon concocted ideas that go against what God recorded for us (2 Timothy 2:15–16). Want to know what the Scriptures say about man and the image of God? The next article in this in-depth series will show through the biblical account that sound answers are available, unlike those provided by any evolutionary or old-earth model.

Find out more about the gospel and how it depends on the first three chapters of Genesis with a literal Adam, sin bringing death, and the promise of the Seed of woman that would crush the serpent in Good News.

What is the Image of God? Image of God, Part 2

Steve Ham, August 15, 2015, <https://answersingenesis.org>

If you are looking for an explicit definition of what exactly constitutes the image of God in Scripture, you won't find one. Like many other doctrines, we understand the meaning and application of truth from careful contextual study of the relevant biblical usages in the Old and New Testaments. Unfortunately, doctrinal positions are sometimes obtained based on presupposed commitments to extra-biblical, human ideas. This article seeks to expose biblical reasons to reject outside influences of evolutionary thinking regarding the nature of man. In contrast, the biblical data demands that mankind is uniquely created in the image of God, distinct from all other creatures, and reflects the very character of God in our spiritual being.

The Great Distinction

"The image of God in humanity is critical to our understanding of what makes us human."¹ Genesis 1:26–28 is the key passage of Scripture whereby foundational teaching on the image of God begins. The Hebrew language of verse 27 makes it clear that God's image in mankind depicts humanity as distinct from animals.²

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:27, emphasis added)

The Hebrew word for "man" in this text is adam (אָדָם). Depending on context, the word can mean "man," "mankind," or the name "Adam."³ The sub-categories of humanity are used with different words and the distinction is visible in both Hebrew and English. These sub-categories of mankind are "male" (zakar זָכָר) and "female" (neqebah נִקְבָּה). The language usage is profound and makes a significant point that the image of God distinction is made between mankind and all other creatures, not between the sub-categories of male and female.

It is only regarding the creation of mankind that God says, "Let us make man in our own image," and God only directly breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life (Genesis 1:26, 2:7). Everything in the text of Genesis 1 and 2 denotes the intimate actions of God in creating mankind (both the first man and the first woman) compared to the general nature of creating everything else.

The Image of God Is Not Our Bodies

The human body is something that makes the human creaturely, and not necessarily something that constitutes a distinction. Animals and humans have bodies that show aspects of common design. While unique in their own way, both humans and animals can have such features as eyes, noses, legs, and arms that point to our common Creator. It is the unique creation of mankind in the image of God that distinguishes us from all other creatures.

At an appointed time in history, the Son of God stepped into His creation taking on the form of a man (Philippians 2:7). He added humanity without losing deity. Scripture also reveals that God is Spirit (John 4:24). It would appear that taking on a human body is part of what has given Jesus the ability to relate with human beings rather than it being an attribute of God as a display of His image. John tells us that Jesus became flesh to show us God's glory (John 1:14). This is the glory that mankind was meant to reflect when we were created in God's image.

Other Scriptures would suggest that a human body is not essential to image bearing. It would be difficult to suggest that the disembodied souls under the throne in Revelation 6:9–11 have ceased to be image bearers on the basis that they are awaiting their resurrection bodies. Perhaps the same may be considered for Moses and Elijah who were talking with Jesus at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–3).

This is not to say that the human body should not be highly valued. God created Adam and Eve with bodies, and their bodies were part of His "very good" creation. In Christ, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) and we are to use them as instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:12–13).

Adam and Eve were creaturely (creatures of God but not animals), as evidenced in their human body. They were image-bearers, as evidenced in their very being. The image of God is primarily a distinctive privilege of inexpressible value that mere animals do not share.

The Image of God Is Not Our Experience

Neo-orthodox theologians Karl Barth and Emil Brunner both developed theories about the image of God based on human experience. Neither Barth nor Brunner believed Genesis to be a true account of creation history. The experiential understanding of image-bearing proposes that mankind reflects God's image in the union of relationship. As mankind becomes aware of relational identity between male and female, an awareness of the concept of relationship with God becomes reality.⁴ The image of God then is essentially a relational identity (our ability to relate to God and one another) rather than an ontological essence of being. As previously stated, Genesis 1:26 shows that male and female are gender distinctions within a sub-category of mankind created in God's image and likeness. Relational union between men and women is not a definition of what it means to be made in the image of God but is a result of bearing the image of God. To show this, Old Testament theologians Dr. Russell Fuller and David Casas have explained the importance of the preposition "in" by stating, "But the preposition 'in' is significant here. It depicts the standard or pattern in which God created: God created man in (the pattern of) His image."⁵ Everything that follows this statement in Genesis 1:26, including the distinctive male/female relationship, is a secondary element to the fact that man and woman each already bear the image of God and reflect the nature of God. When God said "Let us make," the declaration of mankind in God's image was made before they were alive to experience relationships as image bearers.

The Image of God Is Not Our Function

Genesis 1:26–28 seems to read as a series of sequential statements starting with the statement about God creating mankind (both male and female) in His image and then describing the things that mankind is to do. God first declared mankind in His image and then in sequence gave them instructions for living. Adam and Eve were already in God’s image and likeness before they were given instructions for dominion, filling and multiplying.⁶ These instructions then seem to be a result of being an image-bearer and not a statement of actual being (ontological component).

While Psalm 8:6–8 also refers to dominion, this does not necessitate an argument for dominion as a component of the image of God. Moreover, this text would also imply not who man is, but what responsibility and privilege he has been given as an image-bearer who is made lower than heavenly beings. This is something exemplified in Christ as echoed in Hebrews 2:5–9. While it would seem that function is closely related to image-bearing, it is not necessarily a part of its definition.

The recent articles about the image of God on the BioLogos website⁷ predominantly describe image bearing as a relational and/or functional component that is compatible with naturalistic processes (evolution).⁸ They propose that as human beings develop psychological capacity, they gain the appropriate faculties to cope with the functions of having dominion. On this basis, the blogs posted on the BioLogos site also propose that as man and culture change, the nature of image bearing also changes in how it functions in new environments. Put simply, mankind evolves image-bearing functionality in changing environments. Evolutionary presuppositions have influenced the BioLogos authors’ definition of the image of God.

A functional view of the image of God based on evolutionary presuppositions will ultimately have an impact on how one understands sin and salvation. It is therefore no surprise to view further BioLogos articles from authors dismissing the atoning sacrifice of Christ and suggesting that Jesus’ purpose in becoming human was not His sacrificial death but to be the ultimate example of human life (function).⁹ While as the very image of God Jesus certainly does show us how to live, the Bible explicitly teaches that He came to die in order that we might be transformed in our very beings as He substituted His righteousness for our sinfulness (Isaiah 53:10–11; Mark 10:45; Romans 5:8; Philippians 2:5–10; Titus 2:14).

The Image of God as God’s Righteous Attributes

Paul’s discussions of the new man and old man give us great insight into what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). It is an image that bears the righteousness and holiness of God. When Scripture describes all of God’s attributes, it is in the context of God being the perfection of such attributes. For example, God is love, and God’s love is perfect. Humanity shares many of God’s attributes, and we were originally created to reflect God’s perfect character in righteousness and holiness. While God has character

traits that He does not share with humanity (e.g., God is self-existent, omniscient, omnipotent), we can still see His shared attributes in humanity today, even though they are distorted by sin. Attributes such as love, self-awareness, justice, grace, and mercy are distinct from attributes associated with animals. They are part of the very being of humanity.

It is true that as we look at humanity today, we see a great difference between the holiness of God's character and human character. We have distorted the very nature of God's character in humanity because of our rejection of God's holiness and rule in our lives.

Throughout church history there has been much debate about the effect of sin on the image of God in man. Even so, there are three unifying truths. First, the Bible teaches that even after sin, mankind is still created in God's image (Genesis 9:6; James 3:8–9). Second, sin has devastatingly affected the image of God in man (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1–4). And third, it is only through Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement and Resurrection that mankind can be forgiven, transformed, and conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:5–10; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

Conclusion

Evolutionary presuppositions have tragic effects on Christian anthropology (the study of humanity). If mankind has evolved the characteristic capacities for dominion and relationship that make us function as God's image-bearers, then our greatest need is to continue evolving such capacity that is ultimately seen in the example of Jesus Christ. Sadly, the doctrines of sin and salvation are destroyed. If, however, mankind is uniquely made in the image of God as part of His original "very good" created order, then our sin problem is a reality that is only solved by the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ who is the very image of God. Through Christ alone we can be made right before God and conform to the image of His Son that we were originally created to be.

Evolution and What the Image of God Is Not.

Image of God, Part 1

Footnotes

1. "About the BioLogos Foundation," BioLogos, accessed August 5, 2015, <http://biologos.org/about>.
2. "Hominids," Reasons to Believe, accessed August 5, 2015, <http://www.reasons.org/rtb-101/hominids>.
3. "Evolution and Image Bearers, Part 1," BioLogos, April 13, 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/evolution-and-image-bearers-part-1>.
4. Invoking the Holy Spirit as a means by which pre-humans (non-image-bearers) were supposedly influenced is dubious, even for theistic evolutionists. The interactions of the Holy Spirit recorded in the Old Testament are always with God's people that already have the image of God and usually for a specific purpose.
5. King and Greenway, "Evolution and Image Bearers, Part 2," BioLogos, April 14, 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/evolution-and-image-bearers-part-2>.
6. Ibid.
7. Note that the "dominion mandate" was given before the Fall of man.
8. That is, in this view without an Adam that brought sin, the world would merely need rescuing from natural violence, which man can mitigate but not eradicate. In the biblical view, Adam's sinful rebellion against his Creator by disobeying God's command in the Garden of Eden brought about eternal separation from a holy God, along with death, suffering, and a Curse that affected the whole Creation. Only Jesus Christ, the true "last Adam," has the power to rescue us from that fate, though we still should honor the caretaking role originally given us within our very limited power.
9. As the Bereans, who searched God's Word to verify or falsify man's words, not the other way around ([Acts 17:11](#)).

What is the Image of God? Image of God, Part 2

Footnotes

1. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1998), 517.
2. Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Carlisle, U.K.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 12.
3. [Genesis 6:5](#) gives an example of "adam" in the context of the whole of mankind.

4. Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 337.
5. David Casas and Russell Fuller, "[The Difference Maker: What Makes Us Special?](#)," *Answers* 9, no. 4 (October–December, 2014): 80.
6. The grammar described refers to the Hebrew *waw* construction with the imperfect verb (*rdh*) "let them have dominion." This would indicate a *waw-consecutive*. Further explained in Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2006) 121, sec. 20.3.
7. For information on the ideas published in The BioLogos Forum on the image of God, see the first article of this series: "[Evolution and What the Image of God Is Not.](#)"
8. For instance, see Tyler Greenway and Pamela Ebstyne King, "Evolution and Image Bearers, Part 1," BioLogos, April 13, 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/evolution-and-image-bearers-part-1>.
9. Joseph Bankard, "Substitutionary Atonement and Evolution, Part 2," BioLogos, June 10, 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/substitutionary-atonement-and-evolution-part-2>.