

Anthropology

The Creation of Man

Anthropology (*anthrōpou logos*) includes the topics that relate to man as created and holy and as apostate and sinful. It excludes those relating to man as regenerate and sanctified because these belong to redemption, which is a special provision not contained in creation. Man's endowment by creation provided for his actual holiness and his possible apostasy, but not for his recovery from apostasy. Anthropology comprises only what man is and becomes under the ordinary arrangements of the Creator: what he is by creation and what he makes himself by self-determination. Man's creation, primitive state, probation, apostasy, original sin, and its transmission are anthropological topics. Anthropology is principally concerned with the doctrine of sin, not because man is ideally and originally a sinner, but because he remained holy but a short time, and consequently his history, apart from redemption, is that of moral evil and its development. Shed

In systematic theology, logically everything that *follows* anthropology grows like a many-branched tree *out of* anthropology. The views one takes of mankind's original constitution and primal history determine in a direct way views one takes of Christ, His work of redemption, the doctrine of salvation and even of final destiny (in heaven or hell). It is therefore important that we seek to understand the first part of the Bible about human origins in the light of how the rest of the Bible understands it. There is a unity of teaching. Culver

The doctrine of humanity has an unusual status. Here the student of theology is also its object. This sets anthropology apart from doctrines like theology proper and Christology (although not from doctrines like soteriology, which is, of course, concerned with the salvation of humans). Our anthropology will determine how we understand ourselves and, consequently, how we do theology, or even what theology is, that is, to the degree that it is thought of as a human activity. Grudem

Psalm 8

For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David.

¹ O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

² From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.

³ When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;

⁴ What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him?

⁵ Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!

⁶ You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

⁷ All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

⁸ The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

⁹ O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

The Biblical Account

Genesis 1:26–27

²⁶ 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.”

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 2:7

⁷ Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

The Biblical Account

Two things are included in this account; first that man's body was formed by the immediate intervention of God. It did not grow; nor was it produced by any process of development. Secondly, the soul was derived from God. He breathed into man "the breath of life," that is, that life which constituted him a man, a living creature bearing the image of God. C. Hodge

Additional Scripture

Matthew 19:4

⁴ And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

Mark 10:6

⁶ “But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE.

1 Timothy 2:13

¹³ For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.

After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it: and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change. Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures. (Westminster Confession of Faith, IV/ii) Reymond

A Worldly Perspective

A Machine

An Animal

A Sexual Being

An Economic Being

A Pawn of the Universe

A Free Being

A Social Being

If a human being were a mere 'sac of water' with an interesting 'variety of chemicals reacting with one another therein,' as in some current materialistic philosophy, then a book on physics and chemistry might explain him sufficiently, though no such being, in my judgment, could possibly either write or read such a book. If he were also 'a fantastic piece of workmanship in bone, muscle, and nerve—a high point of evolution in the animal kingdom,' a biological approach might suffice. If he be only a 'busy hedonist' prowling for pleasure until jaded and exhausted he covers his disillusionment in the night of death, then something on psychology might help explain mankind. If, Gnostic, New-Age style mankind is a misplaced piece of divine mind, temporarily dislodged and longing for home back in the cosmic flux, then a dash of metaphysics is in order. (The quotes are from F. I. Collingwood.)

But, if mankind is as significant and magnificent as his aspirations (freedom, fulfillment, immortality) and ideals (goodness, beauty, truth) suggest, then the religious dimension must be brought to the Hebrew poet's question. Only the illogic of special interest, or of intellectual myopia, could lead one to accept any one of these partial views just suggested. Yet there are contemporary 'intellectuals' committed to each one of them. Culver

The Christian View of Humanity

A human being is a creature of God, made in the image of God.

The image of God is intrinsic and indispensable to humanity.

The human also has an eternal dimension.

Yet the human, to be sure, as a part of the physical creation and the animal kingdom, has the same needs as do the other members of those groups.

The Term “Man”

Genesis 5:1-2

¹ This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.

² He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.

Genesis 1:27

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

No Pre-Adamities and No Non-Adamites

That there was an original, single, first male is a revelation of the familiar narrative of Genesis. There were no pre-Adamite human predecessors. What puts this out of all question, with those who believe the divine revelation, is, that it is expressly said, that before Adam was formed, 'there was not a man to till the ground,' (Gen 2:5). 'And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul' (Gen 2:7 KJV).

Culver

A Literal Adam

Romans 5:12–21

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

¹³ for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

¹⁶ The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.

¹⁷ For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

²⁰ The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Literal Adam

1 Corinthians 15:21–22

²¹ For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.

²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

The Uniqueness of Man

Reymond

1. Man's creation occurs as the last major event of the sixth day of the creation week, as the climax of God's activity. Clearly, God intended all that he had done prior to man's creation to be preparatory to the creation of man.
2. The very pattern of expression introducing the details of the consecutive acts of creation—quite uniform until the account reaches the creation of man—undergoes a noticeable change at 1:26. Instead of the “And God said: ‘Let there be’ “ formula (1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24), we are confronted with the new expression “And God said [not ‘Let there be man’ but]: ‘Let us make man’ ”—suggesting almost a pause in the divine activity for the purpose of solemn divine counsel.
3. It is man alone who is described as having been created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–27).

The Uniqueness of Man

Reymond

4. Man is granted dominion over God's creation as God's vicegerent (Gen 1:26-28; 2:19-20).

5. The creation of man receives special attention in Genesis 2:5-25, which is *not* a "second account" of creation differing in many details from the account in Genesis 1, but a more detailed account of God's creative activities on day six of Genesis 1. Genesis 1 as it were gives an overview of the creation week as a whole, then concentrates in Genesis 2 on the creation of man.

6. Man is distinguished from the animals in a very special way in Genesis 2. Not only is he made their ruler in the Genesis 1 narrative, but also *into man's nostrils alone* does God breath the "breath of life" (Gen. 2:7).

The Uniqueness of Man

Reymond

7. It is to man that God gives the capacity of rational speech. Indeed, it is to man that God himself speaks, thereby ennobling him and honoring him above the animals.

8. Finally, it is with man that God enters into covenant.

The Uniqueness of Man

Culver

Man is the crown of God's creative art, ... and best in an ascending scale.

Mankind was created male and female, with no distinction being drawn between the degree to which each sex shares in the excellencies, privileges and duties involved; perhaps the two in *aggregate* rather than each *in toto* is 'in the image and likeness of God.'

Human beings have the duty to multiply their species by natural reproduction. There was first a single act of divine creation, producing an original male. Then out of the male the first female (Gen. 2). After that, procreation was to be the method of enlarging the numbers of our race. That this was to be only within monogamous marriage is later specified (Gen. 2:23-25; 4:1ff.).

The Uniqueness of Man

Culver

A special point is made of the privilege of mankind to use the fruit of the earth (as do animals also Gen. 1:29, 30) for food. This privilege is not an aspect of *dominion* and *subduing* set forth earlier in Genesis 1, even though perhaps intended as enlargement. The ground from which the human body was taken is to furnish his bodily nourishment.

Image and Likeness of God

Genesis 1:26

²⁶ 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.”

Image and Likeness of God

Definition

What is ... 'image' as understood in Old Testament times? It is derived from a root meaning to cut, as of a statue or chiseled likeness (1 Sam. 6:5, 11) in two or three dimensions as of heathen gods (Amos 5:26) or even of pictures (Ezek. 23:14). A chiseled, three-dimensional statue is the primary sense, though a molded image also could be a *tselem* (Num. 33:52). Culver

The Latin phrase *imago Dei* means "image of God" and is sometimes used in theological discussions in place of the English phrase "image of God." Grudem

Image and Likeness of God

When God says, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26), the meaning is that God plans to make a creature similar to himself. Both the Hebrew word for “image” ... and the Hebrew word for “likeness” ... refer to something that is *similar* but not identical to the thing it represents or is an “image” of. The word *image* can also be used of something that *represents* something else. Grudem

When we realize that the Hebrew words for “image” and “likeness” simply informed the original readers that man was *like* God, and would in many ways *represent* God, much of the controversy over the meaning of “image of God” is seen to be a search for too narrow and too specific a meaning. When Scripture reports that God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26), it simply would have meant to the original readers, “Let us make man to be *like* us and to *represent* us.” Grudem

Image and Likeness – An Illustration

Genesis 5:3

³ When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

Conclusions Regarding the Nature of the Image

Erickson

The image of God is universal within the human race.

The image of God is universal within the human race.

There is no indication that the image is present in one person to a greater degree than in another.

The image is not correlated with any variable.

In light of the foregoing considerations, the image should be thought of as primarily substantive or structural.

The image refers to the elements in the human makeup that enable the fulfillment of human destiny.

Specific Aspects of Our Likeness to God.

Grudem

Moral Aspects

Spiritual Aspects

Mental Aspects

Relational Aspects

Physical Aspects

Why Was Man Created?

Isaiah 43:7

⁷ Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.”

Ephesians 1:11–12

¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,
¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

1 Corinthians 10:31

³¹ Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

What Is Our Purpose in Life?

Psalm 73:25-26

²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.

²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Psalm 16:11

¹¹ You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

John 10:10

¹⁰ “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

What Is Our Purpose in Life?

Psalm 84:1-2

¹ How lovely are Your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts!

² My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Psalm 84:10

¹⁰ For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

What Is Our Purpose in Life?

Romans 5:2-3

² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

Philippians 4:4

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

¹ Thessalonians 5:16-18

¹⁶ Rejoice always;

¹⁷ pray without ceasing;

¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

What Is Our Purpose in Life?

James 1:2

² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

¹ Peter 1:6

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

¹ Peter 1:8

⁸ and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

The Pattern of Jesus

Grudem

Beyond this matter of what the image of God consists of, we must ask why the human is made in God's image. What in actual application does it mean for one to be in the image of God? What is God's intention for one within life? ... Jesus' character and actions will be a particularly helpful guide in this matter since he was the perfect example of what human nature is intended to be:

The Pattern of Jesus

Grudem

Jesus had perfect fellowship with the Father.

Jesus obeyed the Father's will perfectly.

Jesus always displayed a strong love for humans.

The Command to Imitate

Ephesians 5:1

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

1 Peter 1:16

¹⁶ because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

1 John 2:6

⁶ the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

The Fall: God's Image Is Distorted but Not Lost

Grudem

We might wonder whether man could still be thought to be *like God* after he sinned.

Genesis 9:6

⁶ “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.

James 3:9

⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

The Fall: God's Image Is Distorted but Not Lost

The Fall diminished God's image not only in Adam and Eve but in all their descendants, that is, the whole human race. We retain the image structurally, in the sense that our humanity is intact, but not functionally, for we are now sin's slaves and unable to use our powers to mirror God's holiness. Regeneration begins the process of restoring God's moral image in our lives, but not till we are fully sanctified and glorified shall we reflect God perfectly in thought and action as mankind was made to do and as the incarnate Son of God in his humanity did and does (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29, 46; Rom. 6:4, 5, 10; 8:11) Packer

Redemption in Christ

Nonetheless, it is encouraging to turn to the New Testament and see that our redemption in Christ means that we can, even in this life, progressively grow into more and more likeness to God. Grudem

Colossians 3:10

¹⁰ and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

2 Corinthians 3:18

¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Romans 8:29

²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

Redemption in Christ

The statement at the start of the Bible (Gen. 1:26–27, echoed in 5:1; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; James 3:9) that God made man in his own image, so that humans are like God as no other earthly creatures are, tells us that the special dignity of being human is that, as humans, we may reflect and reproduce at our own creaturely level the holy ways of God, and thus act as his direct representatives on earth. This is what humans are made to do, and in one sense we are human only to the extent that we are doing it. Packer

Complete Restoration of God's Image

The amazing promise of the New Testament is that just as we have been like Adam (subject to death and sin), we shall also be like Christ (morally pure, never subject to death again): Grudem

1 Corinthians 15:49

⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

Romans 8:29

²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

1 John 3:2

² Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

Conclusions from Grudem

Our moral behavior can reflect more and more the holiness of God

Our spiritual life can be enriched and deepened.

Our use of reason and language can become more accurate and truthful and more honoring to God.

Our sense of the future can become intensified as we grow in our hope of living with God forever.

Our future existence can be enriched as we lay up treasures in heaven and seek for increased heavenly reward

Our ability to rule over the creation can be extended by faithful use of the gifts God has given us;

Conclusions from Grudem

Our faithfulness to the God-given purposes for our creation as men and women can be increased as we follow biblical principles in our families;

Our creativity can be employed in ways that are more and more pleasing to God;

Our emotions can be more and more conformed to the pattern of Scripture so that we become more like David, a man after God's own heart

Our interpersonal harmony in our families and in the church can reflect more and more the unity that exists among the persons in the Trinity.

Implications of the Doctrine

Erickson

We belong to God.

We should pattern ourselves after Jesus, the complete revelation of the image of God.

We experience full humanity only when we are properly related to God.

Learning and work are good.

The human is valuable.

The image is universal in humankind.

From Grudem

It would be good for us to reflect on our likeness to God more often. It will probably amaze us to realize that when the Creator of the universe wanted to create something “in his image,” something *more like himself* than all the rest of creation, he made us. This realization will give us a profound sense of dignity and significance as we reflect on the excellence of all the rest of God’s creation: the starry universe, the abundant earth, the world of plants and animals, and the angelic kingdoms are remarkable, even magnificent. But we are more like our Creator than any of these things. We are the culmination of God’s infinitely wise and skillful work of creation. Even though sin has greatly marred that likeness, we nonetheless now reflect much of it and shall even more as we grow in likeness to Christ. Grudem