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# THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE IMAGE OF GOD

DS212—Doctrine of Humanity  
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## ÆONIC IMAGE CONFORMITY

1. Identity in the Covenant
  - 1.1. Adam and Christ are the representatives of the two basic covenants. All people are either “in Adam” or “in Christ” (cf. Rom 5:1–12; 1 Cor 15:35ff).
  - 1.2. A great distinction is made between fallen people in Adam and regenerated people in Christ. Reformed theologians often call this distinction the *antithesis*.
2. The Image and Covenant Representation
  - 2.1. After the Fall into sin, this worldly age is characterized by the first Adam, the disobedient son. The age to come is characterized by the last Adam, the obedient son. Each of these representatives embodies the wisdom or spirit of his particular age (Rom 5:12–15; 1 Cor 15:45).
  - 2.2. We may use Eph 1:3 as a paradigm for understanding what it means to be “united” to either Adam or Christ (see Table 1).
    - 2.2.1. Eph 1:3—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,
    - 2.2.2. From this we can draw out three aspects of our life in Christ. It is (1) personal (2) Spiritual and (3) eschatological.
  - 2.3. We come to bear the image and exhibit the characteristics of the covenantal head of the “age” to which we belong (Col 2–3; Eph 4:17ff).
  - 2.4. The purpose of predestination is that God’s people would be conformed to the image of Christ in order that he would be the firstborn among many brothers (Rom 8:16–17, 29).
    - 2.4.1. Romans 8:16–17—<sup>16</sup>The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
    - 2.4.2. Romans 8:29—For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Characteristics of Union (Eph 1:3)	This Age	Age to Come
Personal		
Spiritual		
Eschatological		
Corresponding Deeds		
Existence Characterized By		

## KLINE'S *IMAGES OF THE SPIRIT*, THE IMAGE OF THE TRIUNE GOD, AND ESCHATOLOGY

- In *Images of the Spirit*, Meredith Kline seeks to demonstrate how man is created, not simply in a generic conception of the image of God, but in the image of the Spirit as a special revelation of God's glory in history.
- He explains his project in the preface: "Once it is seen that God the Spirit in his theophanic Presence is the divine paradigm in the creation of the image of God, a conceptual overlap, if not synonymity, will be recognized between the *imago Dei* and concepts like messiahship and the Spirit's filling or baptism of God's people. And to perceive that it is the same Spirit by whose charismatic enduing the church is qualified to fulfill the great commission who also, as Paradigm-Creator of man in the image of God, endowed him to execute the cultural commission, is to possess a vital coherence factor for working out a unified world-and-life field theory, inclusive of creation and redemption and, within the area of the redemptive accomplishment of God's creation designs, comprehensive of both holy and common vocations.<sup>1</sup>"
  - Kline suggests that once the reader understands this particular pattern, he will come to understand better Christ's role as Messiah, the indwelling of the Spirit, and baptism.
  - The Holy Spirit, who is the ultimate pattern (archetype) for man in the creation of the image of God, is the same Spirit who bestows spiritual gifts upon God's people so that they can carry out the great commission—making disciples and baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19–20).
    - The Spirit also equips them to execute God's original command to guard and keep in the garden (Gen 2:15; see Gen 1:26, 28). In fact, contemplating the archetype of the image of God will assist us in developing an entire world-and-life view.

<sup>1</sup> Meredith G. Kline, *Images of the Spirit* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999), 11.

- Human beings have been given a special place in God’s creation, and to understand our basic constitution is to understand better our place in this world and the world to come.
  - Kline notes that dogmatic theologians have long studied the subject of creation in the image of God, but usually from the perspective of what it means to be human. These are not exactly the same questions.
  - The Glory-Spirit at the Creation
    - The creation account describes the Spirit hovering over the waters using a word only used elsewhere in Scripture in Deut 32:11. The imagery is that of “an eagle hovering protectively over its young.”<sup>2</sup>
    - The exodus account describes the theophanic Spirit similarly (Ex 19:4). This description is apt, since the cloud is made up of winged creatures, cherubim and seraphim. When it comes, you hear its wings (Ezek 1:24; 10:5).<sup>3</sup>
      - Moses connects the Spirit in the wilderness to the Spirit in creation by using similar language. By doing this, he invites us to see the exodus redemption as a re-creation according to the Spirit.
      - But Exodus is not the only place where this is evident. In fact, this Spirit-creation motif is found throughout Scripture.
        - The Spirit is identified particularly with the glory-cloud in several places (Neh 9:19, 20; Is 63:11–14; Hag 2:5).
        - Psalm 104 even recognizes the Spirit as, “the one who makes the clouds his chariot and moves on the wings of the wind (כַּיָּוֵן, rûʾh), making the winds his angel-messengers and flames his servants.”<sup>4</sup>
      - These verses reveal the Spirit’s important role in creation and redemption and the pattern according to which men are created and re-created.
    - This points to an eschatology of glory, that is, a movement toward a final destination, a development and organic connectedness of God’s plan of progressive revelation and consummation.
      - The Son is glorified with the glory he had with the Father before the foundation of the world. Kline notes how the glory-Spirit was this glory’s effulgence in the Old Testament.
      - We should keep in mind the eschatology of glory as the resurrected Christ becomes life-giving Spirit (1 Cor 15:45). Also, if we are created in the image of the glory-Spirit, we are eschatologically re-created in the image of the resurrected Son (Phil 2:6–11; 3:10-11, 21; Rom 8:17).
- The Glory-Spirit as Archetype
  - Kline starts to build his case for the glory-Spirit as archetype.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 15.

- He sees warrant for this recognition from the fact that the Spirit is hovering over the waters when clouds and light are creatively named.
        - Since these elements of creation are linked particularly with the Spirit in subsequent biblical passages, Kline concludes that they must have been created after the archetypal pattern of the Spirit.
        - He also notes the Spirit’s special involvement with the creation of man (Gen 1:26; 2:7).<sup>5</sup> He “was made a living soul by divine inbreathing.”<sup>6</sup> Receiving the breath (רוּחַ, *rûḥ*, πνεῦμα) of life suggests more than mere creative agency (e.g. Ps 104:29–31; Lam 4:20; Ezek 37:1–10, 14; Lk 1:35; Jn 20:22).
      - He writes, “As Genesis 2:7 pictures it, the Spirit-Archetype actively fathered his human ectype. Image of God and son of God are thus twin concepts.”<sup>7</sup>
    - The relationship between Adam and Seth in Gen 5:1–3 is an analogue to this Spirit image-begetting.<sup>8</sup>
      - Here, he grants some archetypal features to the Son. “The eternal, firstborn Son furnished a pattern for man as a royal glory-image of the Father.”
      - And so, Kline introduces the notion that the image must be more reflective of God as Trinity rather than simply as one person.
        - If men are created in the image of God and he is Trinity, then we should expect that creation in the *imago Dei* would be trinitarian.
        - The opening vision of Revelation alludes to this: “[t]he theophanic figure was, further, a blend of ‘ancient of days’ as well as the ‘son of man’ of Daniel 7:9ff, and thus fully trinitarian.”<sup>9</sup>
    - The trinitarian God is also *covenantal*. He is faithful in this process and creates/re-creates from within a special relationship to his covenantal people.
      - It is visible especially in the Sabbath as covenantal sign (Exod 31:13).
      - The Sabbath pattern typifies God’s creative activity, and is consummated in its realization.<sup>10</sup> By continuing in the pattern of six days of work and one day of rest, human beings reflect God’s covenantal creative work.
      - These themes intersect in the New Jerusalem and the coming of the consummated holy of holies, Christ, the Spirit-temple (cf. Gen 2:1–3; Rev 21:22).
  - Toward a Reconstruction of the Image-of-God Concept
    - If the glory-theophany is indeed the paradigm for creation, we should expect to see it featured prominently throughout the Bible whenever the image is invoked.

<sup>5</sup> But does involvement or agency in creation demand an archetypal role?

<sup>6</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, 21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

- To make this case, Kline begins with the official-functional aspect of the image. He pictures God as king at the center of divine royal-glory. This glory is revealed in light, in “theophanic radiance.”<sup>11</sup>
    - This official-functional aspect is imaged in man too. He has been given dominion over the creatures (Gen 1:26) and the authority and mandate to execute justice (cf. Gen 9:6).
  - These aspects come to fuller realization through man’s re-creation in the glory-image of the Son (2 Cor 4:4).
    - Re-creation involves the eschatological movement from bearing the likeness of the man of dust to bearing the glory-likeness of the Spirit-man from heaven (1 Cor 15:47–49).
    - In sum, God is fashioning his people to be “the image and glory of God” (1 Cor 11:7).<sup>12</sup>
  - Kline introduces another distinction that may help incorporate these aspects, image-likeness instead of the broad sense, and glory-aspect instead of the narrow sense.<sup>13</sup>
  - This comprehensive image is composed of three components: functional (or official), formal (or physical), and ethical.<sup>14</sup>
    - They correspond to the archetypal glory according to which man was created.
    - He writes, “Functional glory-likeness is man’s likeness to God in the possession of official authority and in the exercise of dominion. Ethical glory is reflection of the holiness, righteousness, and truth of the divine Judge (not just the presence of a moral faculty of any religious orientation whatsoever). And formal-physical glory-likeness is man’s bodily reflection of the theophanic and incarnate Glory.”<sup>15</sup>
  - Each of the three components has an eschatological dimension.
    - As he exercised his official functions, he would increase his dominion and subdue the earth (king).
      - He would interpret his world according to the Word of God (prophet)
      - He would maintain and further establish the holiness of the glory-realm of the garden (priest).
    - He would also grow in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness toward the consummated image held out to him as the reward and goal of obedience to the Covenant of Works.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

- Upon attaining this consummated image, he would be transformed from glory to glory, bearing the same Spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν) that Christ bears after his resurrection (1 Cor 15:42ff).
- From the many texts referenced above, it should be apparent what this means for the elect.
  - But what significance does this dynamic eschatological aspect of the *imago Dei* have for the reprobate of Romans 9? Is the *imago Dei* also moving toward a consummation among them (cf. Eph 4)?
    - Man continues to be God’s image-likeness, but has lost the glory-aspect of that image. He writes, “Man in the Fall became destitute of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).”<sup>16</sup>
    - By common grace, some aspects remain, but overall fallen man has lost his glory-vestiture, his radiant clothing.
  - “The covering of glory was replaced by the nakedness of shame. Though still possessed of an official glory by common grace, man was stripped of righteousness, holiness, and love of truth. Whatever semblance of ethical glory was maintained by common grace, such does not clearly figure in the Bible’s identification of postlapsarian man as still the image of God. Fallen man is a naked image.”<sup>17</sup>
- Thankfully, this is not the end of the story. What is lost in the Fall is recovered for the elect by Christ.
  - It is bestowed upon his people through a Spirit-wrought union with the glorified and resurrected Son.
  - “In this respect too there is movement from glory to glory, for the blessedness of Christian death is the ‘first resurrection,’ the intermediate state, where the believer, perfect in righteousness, is present with Christ to live and reign with him (Rev 20:4–6), and beyond the second (i.e., bodily) resurrection the overcomers, possessed of the fulness of formal and ethical glory, participate with the enthroned Christ in the consummation of man’s official royal glory (Rev 3:21).”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 32–33.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 15:35FF—THE MAN OF DUST AND THE MAN OF HEAVEN

- The apostle Paul draws an important lesson from man’s origin by developing it in 1 Corinthians 15:47–49.
  - <sup>47</sup> The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.
  - <sup>47</sup> ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. <sup>48</sup> οἷος ὁ χοϊκός, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ χοϊκοί, καὶ οἷος ὁ ἐπουράνιος, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ ἐπουράνιοι. <sup>49</sup> καὶ καθὼς ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ, φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου.
- God created man’s body of the dust and his soul of nothing—a new substance. He breathed life into the body and it became a “living soul.” Christ, however, became “life-giving Spirit.”
- Basic summary of 1 Corinthians 15:42–49
  - Paul compares the glory of the resurrected Christ to:
    1. The believer’s body of death (vv. 42–44)
    2. Adam’s body or mode of existence before the Fall (vv. 45–49).
  - Paul maintains that when compared to the imperishable glory and power of the resurrected Christ, Adam’s pre-Fall body *as well as* his post-Fall body are σώμα ψυχικόν (natural bodies).
  - In other words, Adam’s prelapsarian body is closer in mode of existence to his fallen body of death than the glorified body of the resurrected Christ.
- Paul asks two questions in verse 35.
  - “How are the dead raised?”
  - “With what kind of body do they come?”
- Paul’s answer to the second question drives us to the future and eschatological mode of human existence while contrasting it to the past protological mode and present typological and fallen mode.
  - The answer begins in verse 35 and continues through verse 50.
    - In speaking of different kinds of bodies, each has its own set of distinguishing characteristics.
    - Verse 39–41—“For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. <sup>40</sup> There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.”
  - In verses 42–44 Paul compares and contrasts the distinguishing characteristics of the body of death to the body of resurrection.

- The body of death is *sown* perishable (v. 42), in dishonor (v. 43), and in weakness (v. 43). It is a physical body (v. 44a).
    - The resurrected body is *raised* imperishable (v. 42), in glory (v. 43), and in power (v. 43). It will be a spiritual body (v. 44a).
  - Paul’s argument takes an important turn in v. 44b, when he begins to compare the body of death to Adam’s pre-Fall body.
    - In verse 44b–45, Paul argues that the same distinctions that we make between the body of death and the resurrection body can also be made (in some sense) between the resurrection body and Adam’s pre-fall body.
    - In other words, when we compare Adam’s pre-fall body to both the body of death and the glorified resurrection body, it is “closer” to Adam’s pre-fall body.
    - Paul’s argument turns on an eschatological point. The natural body presupposes the existence and offer of the Spiritual body. Eschatology precedes soteriology, because protology presupposes eschatology.
- How do we know the pre-fall body is similar to the body of death?
  - Verse 44b begins a new argument by starting a new protasis/apodosis pair (Εἰ ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἔστιν καὶ πνευματικόν).
    - This marks a new comparison. At the same time, the protasis continues to be concerned with the σῶμα ψυχικόν even though the apodosis is now concerned with σῶμα πνευματικόν.
    - The same qualifiers that were used to describe the body of death are used and apply in some sense to the pre-fall body.
  - And in verse 45, Paul appeals to the creation of Adam, which of course refers to his body *before the Fall*. “The first man Adam became a living being/creature” (cf. Gen 2:7).
    - Adam’s existence before the Fall was also σῶμα ψυχικόν. The reference of σῶμα ψυχικόν has widened now to include Adam’s pre-fall body as well as the body of death.
      - Though Adam’s pre-fall body was “natural,” this cannot be likened to anything as a result of sin. We must be very careful to protect the integrity of the prelapsarian order.
      - At the same time, Adam was not created glorified, with consummate eschatological life.
        - In comparison to the glorified resurrection body, Adam’s pre-fall body was “weak and perishable.”
        - It was non-eschatological and non-glorified.
      - Still, we must distinguish further between prelapsarian bodies without sin and postlapsarian bodies which are dead specifically because of sin.
- How do the body of death and the pre-fall body differ?
  - Remember, the body of death was characterized as having been sown perishable, in dishonor, and weak. Those qualities come to full expression through the Fall.



- Yet in general, these qualities still apply to the pre-fall body though *without sin*.
  - Perishable
    - Adam’s body as created was subject to change. While it was created good, he could either fall into sin or be confirmed in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.
    - Therefore, given Adam’s probation, this body held the potential for perishability.
  - Dishonorable (ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ)
    - Many uses of ἀτιμία occur in with reference to sin (Rom 1:26; 1 Cor 11:14–15).
    - However, ἀτιμία does not *require* a sinful context. Some simply refer to “common” vessels (Rom 9:21; 2 Tim 2:20).
    - We must allow the context of 1 Corinthians 15:43 determine which way ἀτιμία is being used. The contrast between the pre-fall body and the glorified resurrection body is *eschatological* not *ethical*.
      - ἀτιμία for pre-fall Adam was a covenant-historical state, not an ethical one.
      - The contrast between the body of death and the glorified resurrection body is both eschatological and ethical.
  - Weak
    - Weakness should not be considered in terms of a negative ethical context of a deficiency either.
    - In comparison to the glorified resurrection body, the body *as sown* is weak. Again, it is mutable and subject to change.
- Let’s return to the protasis/apodosis in 44b: *If* there is a σῶμα ψυχικόν *then* there is also a σῶμα πνευματικόν.
  - This statement presupposes an eschatology. It does not seem to make sense any other way.
  - Geerhardus Vos: “The Apostle was intent on showing that in the plan of God from the outset provision was made for a higher kind of body . . . the abnormal body of sin and the eschatological body are not so logically correlated that the one can be postulated from the other. But the world of creation and the world to come are thus correlated, the one pointing forward to the other.”<sup>19</sup>
  - Gaffin: “The correlation of protology and eschatology does not necessitate attributing the notions that creation is inherently in need of redemption or that the works of creation and redemption are identical. These are plainly excluded by what he says in these verses and elsewhere. What this passage does teach is that the eschatological prospect held out to Adam (and which he failed to obtain) is realized and received its

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<sup>19</sup> Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology*, 169n19.

specific character de facto by the work of the last Adam. The following three propositions define the limits of further dogmatic reflection on these verses: (1) Eschatology is a postulate of protology. (2) Soteriology is not a postulate of protology. (3) Soteriology is eschatology.”<sup>20</sup>

- Adam and Christ are representative figures who embody what they represent (vv. 47–49).
  - Verse 48—As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.
    - Adam was not merely a man formed from the dust, he represented an order of humanity that likewise was “of the dust.”
    - Christ is the man of heaven, who represents “those who are of heaven.”
  - Christ facilitates the transition from dust to glory (Phil 2:5–11).
    - Christ assumes a human nature, yet without sin. He assumes nothing less than a σῶμα ψυχικόν.
    - And therefore, he accomplishes the originally-intended eschatological move from σῶμα ψυχικόν to σῶμα πνευματικόν through his resurrection.
  - The heavenly and Spiritual form of existence Christ receives through his resurrection what his people receive in salvation.
    - In verse 20, Christ is described as the firstfruits (ἀπαρχή) of those who have fallen asleep.
    - This is an agricultural metaphor.
      - Farmers would bring in the firstfruits of their crop at the beginning of harvest. It was the preeminent portion, but it was the beginning of a greater and complete harvest yet to come.
      - Paul is speaking of a *harvest* of resurrection. Christ is the firstfruits of a greater harvest, which would be the resurrection of all his people.
  - Verse 49—Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.
    - Paul employs an argument from the lesser to the greater.
      - The two images are compared, but the latter supersedes the former.
      - Eschatology moves from one to the other—from the lesser image of dust to the greater image of heaven.
    - This is a summarizing picture of covenant image conformity. Christ accomplishes what was originally offered to Adam in the garden.
    - Adam, however, failed to obtain it and fell into sin along with all those whom he represents. They likewise, bore his now fallen image.
    - The salvation accomplished by Christ and applied by the Spirit does not merely restore a pre-fall σῶμα ψυχικόν, it forms the glorious σῶμα πνευματικόν after the image of the resurrected Christ (Rom 8:29).

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<sup>20</sup> Gaffin, *Resurrection and Redemption*, 82.