

Theology 1
Intro to Anthropology & the Image of God
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*The Christian view of humanity holds that a human being is a creature of God, **made in the image of God**. This contrasts with contemporary views of humanity. The doctrine of humanity can provide us with a great opportunity to **dialogue** with the non-Christian world.*

Three False Views of Humanity

1. Humans as **machines** – human value comes from what they are able to do
2. Humans as **animals** – there is no qualitative difference between humans and animals
3. Humans as **pawns** of the universe – everything affecting humans is beyond their control

The Christian View of Humanity

- Humans have been created **in the image of a Triune God** (Gen. 1:26).
- As such, human purpose is not found in what brings glory to humans. Human purpose is found in what brings **glory to their Maker**.
- Various ideas about human creation abound. In fact, one's entire worldview is shaped by what they believe about the creation of humans. Some worldviews are **atheistic**, others **theistic**, and others that attempt to strike a synthesis between the two (progressive creationism approaches such as theistic evolution, etc.)
- The Christian view of humanity will always be grounded in the faithful interpretation of God's Word. For that reason, ideas of progressive creationism are to be rejected.
- The **Theological** Meaning of Human Creation – pp. 168-169

The Image of God

- The Bible is very clear that **humans alone** have been created in God's image.
- Biblical passages – Gen. 1:26-27, 5:1, 9:6, 1 Cor. 11:7, James 3:9
- **Three Prominent Views** of the Image of God
 - Substantive View – the image of God is some definite characteristic or quality **within the makeup** of the human. It is **something we are** rather than something we have or do.
 - Relational View – the image of God is **the relationship** we have with God, whether it be positive or negative (Brunner and Barth).
 - Functional View – the image of God is bound in **something we do**, specifically that we exercise dominion over all of creation.
- Of all the views, we should lean to the substantive because the image of God is not just something we experience or do – it is **who we are**.
- **Implications** of the Doctrine – pp. 176-177
- Abortion and Euthanasia – two very current issues that are directly related to the image of God