

# The SPCS SOCIETY

for the promotion of community standards



Incorporated  
Society

No. 217833

Registered

25/09/75

## SOCIETY FOR PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY STANDARDS INC.

Charity No. CC 20268

(Registered 17/12/07)

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**Newsletter December 2018 Issue 124**

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## NOTICE: SPCS 2018 AGM

**Date/Time 3 – 4.15 p.m Sunday 30th Dec. 2018**

**Venue:** Broderick Road Chapel, 17 Broderick Rd,  
Johnsonville (parking available opp. church)

**Followed by questions & discussion**

**Mission:** SPCS Inc. seeks to promote the moral or spiritual  
welfare of the community as part of its charitable goals.

### The First 3 Objects of the SPCS Constitution are:

(a) To encourage self-respect and the dignity of the human  
person, made in the image of God.

(b) To uphold the universally held principles: “Every human  
being has the inherent right to life”.

(c) To promote wholesome personal values, consistent with the  
moral teachings of the Bible, including strong family life and  
the benefits of lasting marriage as the foundation for stable  
communities.

**Membership of the Society** is open to all those who  
commit to support all of our objectives and make  
an annual donation to the Society (see p. 14 for  
membership details and/or visit: [www.spcs.org.nz](http://www.spcs.org.nz))

Please make your donation online direct to the Society’s  
ANZ bank account 06-0541-0116866-00 or make a  
deposit at your nearest ANZ branch. Alternatively,  
mail us a cheque made out to “SPCS Inc.” (or full  
Society name) - to P.O. Box 13-683, Johnsonville, 6440.

Please add a reference note to any online deposit record  
identifying yourself and/or your organisation AND send  
us a stamp addressed letter if you wish to receive a  
receipt for your donation for tax rebate purposes.

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# Imago Dei (“image of God”). A theological term, applied  
uniquely to humans, which denotes the symbolical relation  
between God and humanity. Only mentioned three times in the  
Old Testament (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1,2; 9:6).



**SPCS Inc. gained Bronze level membership status  
of this anti-corruption incorporated society which  
is a registered charity, on 19/11/13, and supports  
its objectives and vision. See [www.tinz.org.nz](http://www.tinz.org.nz)**

# Presidential Urgent Appeal

## For Funding Support for 2019



Dear members, friends and supporters of SPCS

The Society is now in its 18th year of operation since the passing of its founder Patricia Bartlett OBE and in its 43rd year since it became an incorporated society. The SPCS executive is very conscious of the challenges it faces to continue the “Stand For Decency” and engage in the “promotion of community standards” begun back in 1970 by our founder and the thousands of financial Society members throughout the country who so valiantly supported her and the national executive.

On behalf of the national executive I appeal to you to please help us find funding sources for the Society so we can continue and expand our work going into the year 2019. We are most grateful for all donations received this year which is indicative of the wonderful goodwill that exists among members.

The SPCS executive is in good heart and we are always very encouraged by your ongoing support. Please send your donations – cheques made out to “SPCS Inc” (or use full name of Society) to P.O. Box 13-683 Johnsonville, 6440 marked “Presidential Appeal”. Alternatively YOU CAN MAKE A DONATION DIRECT TO THE SPCS BANK ACCOUNT online, or over the counter at your local ANZ bank. The Society’s Johnsonville ANZ Bank Account number is: **06-0541-0116866-00**.

Kind regards and God’s blessings for the festive season

John Mills - President Elect – SPCS

**Please Note:** The prompt renewal of any outstanding membership donations for the current financial year (1/1/18 – 31/12/18), and for the 1919 financial year would be greatly appreciated ! ☺ All donations (\$5 and over) are tax deductible (33% deductible against all taxable income) and we will send you a receipt for your donation if you request it and send us a stamp addressed envelope. ☺

## The Seymour End of Life Choice Bill



The *End of Life Choice Bill*, sponsored by **David Seymour** ACT MP (photo above),<sup>1</sup> was drawn from the members’ bills ballot on 8 June 2017. The Bill proposes that any New Zealand citizen or permanent resident 18 years or older will be eligible for ‘assisted dying’ if he or she suffers from:

a terminal illness or other medical condition that is likely to end his or her life within 6 months; or

a grievous and irremediable medical condition; and

is in an advanced state of irreversible decline in capability;

experiences unbearable suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner that he or she considers tolerable; and

has the ability to understand the nature of assisted dying; and the consequences for him or her of assisted dying.

**Note:** The executive summary of the written submission by SPCS on the euthanasia petition that was submitted to the Health Select Committee was published in the Society’s last newsletter (Dec. 2016).

WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND that you carefully read the information on these websites and inform others of the content.

<http://www.nathaniel.org.nz/euthanasia>

<https://euthanasiadebate.org.nz/>

<http://www.life.org.nz/euthanasia/euthanasiakeyissues/impact-on-society/>



<sup>1</sup> Photo sources

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/67196078/act-leader-not-a-hologram>

“Abortion” Poster: Source: <https://www.zazzle.com.au>

## What is the *Imago Dei* ? Part III

By David H. Lane M.Sc. Hons, Dip. Tchg.

Continued from last Newsletter

[Note: Refer to S. 2 (a) of the SPCS Constitution]

Objectives: 2. (a) “To encourage self-respect and the dignity of the human person, made in the **image of God**



The Apostle Paul refers to man in his letter to the Church members at Thessalonica as a trichotomy (or tripartite being - a composite of three parts<sup>2</sup>) “spirit and soul and body.”<sup>3</sup> Paul prays that all three “may ...be preserved [by God] *complete*, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” and that “the God of peace Himself [will] sanctify [all believers] *entirely*.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This conception is common to other religions. See: Martin Lings, *Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1980 [1<sup>st</sup> pub, London: Perennial Books, 1964] 27.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. 5:23 (NASB). In Latin *spiritus, anima and corpus*. This tripartite view is not opposed to the dualistic view of man (body and soul). They correspond to alternative ways of looking at the soul. The question is whether the “spirit” (Gk. *pneuma*) belongs to the soul, presumably as its essential core. (In ancient Greek *pneuma* was the word for “breath,” and in a religious context meant “spirit” or “soul”). Proponents of the tripartite view assert that this verse spells out clearly the three components of the human, emphasised by the descriptors of “whole” and “entirely.” Based on the reference in Heb. 4:12 to “...the division of soul and spirit,” opponents of the tripartite view argue that spirit and soul are just a repetition of synonyms, a common form used elsewhere in Scripture to emphasise the idea of completeness. Proponents of the tripartite view argue that this verse makes it clear that there is a distinct difference between soul and spirit, though conceding they may be so interconnected and so similar that they would be hard to separate without scriptural clarity. Opponents argue that there is no real separation here (though there must be some difference, at least in emphasis, if two different words are used), but the two are only used as a metaphor of things hard to differentiate, like “the thoughts and intentions of the heart” used in the same verse. The Old Testament consistently uses three primary words to describe the parts of man: *basar* (flesh), which refers to the external, material aspect of man (mostly in emphasising human frailty); *nephesh*, which refers to the soul as well as the whole person or life; and *ruach* which is used to refer to the human spirit (*ruach* can mean “wind,” “breath,” or “spirit” depending on the context). See Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro, *A Brief History of the Soul* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011). This book provides a history of the soul in Western Philosophy from Plato onwards.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. 5:23. Italics added.

Paul’s focus, as was that of Jesus Christ in his ministry on earth, was on the *whole* person and the *whole* man – as a psychosomatic *unity*. Theologian Murray Harris contends that the New Testament presents a basically “monistic anthropology” in that its focus is, for example, on the *whole* person as undergoing a transformation at the resurrection, not the survival of a disembodied ego.<sup>5</sup> Other scholars have referred to this emphasis on the *whole* person as “non-dualistic pluralism,”<sup>6</sup> a term used to reflect Scriptural teaching that God’s graces and gifts such as immortality are not assignable to only part of man, but only to the *whole* person. Unless there is some modification to a person’s *whole* being – whether we refer to it as a transformation or an exchange – no mortal may inherit immortality.<sup>7</sup>

Jesus emphasised that a man must “be born again” to inherit the Kingdom of God.<sup>8</sup> This radical transformation is a true work of grace by God’s Spirit involving the *whole* being of man.<sup>9</sup> Those who put their faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord and repent of their sins and obey Him, are gifted a “heart of flesh” to replace the “sinful heart of stone” so that they can truly love God and others as themselves.<sup>10</sup> The radical nature of this transformation, whereby the Spirit comes to take up residence in the heart of the true believer, foreshadows that transformation that will take place in the future for each believer at the final resurrection.<sup>11</sup>

The New Testament teaches that God “foreknew” and “predestined” a people “to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He [Jesus] might be the first-born among many brethren. And whom He predestined, these He also called, and whom He called, these He also justified, and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”<sup>12</sup> The Apostle Peter declares that the God-man, Jesus Christ, “was foreknown [by God the Father] before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of [those] who through Him are believers in God.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Murray Harris, “Resurrection and Immortality: Eight Theses,” *Themelios* 1.2 (Spring 1976): 50-55.

<sup>6</sup> S. Laeuchli, “Monism and Dualism in the Pauline Anthropology,” *Biblical Research*, 3 (1958): 15-27. Cited in Harris “Resurrection and Immortality: Eight Theses,” 26: “Pluralism exists only *sub specie unitatis*, under the assumption that man is basically one.”

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. 15:53. Cf. 2 Cor. 5: 2-4; Rom. 2:7.

<sup>8</sup> John 3:3. This process is so radical that it requires a death before the gift of new life can be granted and received. See Jn. 12:24; Rom. 6:6; 8:10; 14:9; Gal. 2:19-20; 1 Cor. 15:36.

<sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17. Cf. Ezek. 36:26; Jn. 3:3.

<sup>10</sup> See Ezek. 36:25-27.

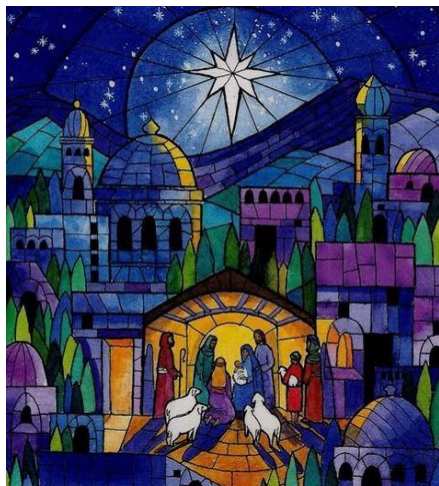
<sup>11</sup> 1 Cor. 15: 51-57; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Col. 3:1-4. Jesus’s body, unimaginable in its glory and power, will be the model for the new body to be granted to every true believer. 1 Jn. 3:2. Also see: Dan. 12:2; Jn. 5:28-29; 6:39-40; 11:23-24; Acts 24:15.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 8:29-30

<sup>13</sup> 1 Pet. 1:20-21



It follows that *IN Christ*, who is the “first born of all creation”<sup>14</sup> through whom God made all things,<sup>15</sup> Man was created *before all worlds*. *Man existed in the mind and heart of God from all eternity*. C.S. Lewis summed up this truth well when he wrote:



“In the Incarnation, God the Son takes the body and human soul of Jesus, and, through that, the whole environment of Nature, all the creaturely predicament, into His own being. So that ‘He came down from Heaven’ can almost be transposed into

‘Heaven drew earth up into it,’ and locality, limitation, sleep, sweat, footsore weariness, frustration, pain, doubt and death, are, from before all worlds, known by God from within. The pure light walks the earth; the darkness, received into the heart of Deity, is there swallowed up. Where, except in uncreated light, can darkness be drowned?”<sup>16</sup>

“The Incarnation is not an episode [i.e. it is not primarily a temporal event<sup>17</sup>] in the life of God: *the Lamb is slain* - and therefore presumably born, grown to maturity, and risen - from all eternity. The taking up into God’s nature of humanity, with all its ignorance and limitations, is not itself a temporal event, though the humanity which is so taken up was, like our own, a thing living and dying in time.”<sup>18</sup>

God’s union with our race in Jesus Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of mankind, is to be received as the interpretation of all other facts, as the basic truth now revealed in the mystery of the universe.

<sup>14</sup> Col. 1:15

<sup>15</sup> Col. 1:16

<sup>16</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (1st publ. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1964; Fontana Books, 1966) 73. Cf., Ps. 139:11-12; Is. 25:8; Jn. 1:4-9; 1 Cor. 15:54; 2 Cor. 5:4; Heb. 2:14.

<sup>17</sup> See Gerard F. O’Hanlon SJ, *The Immutability of God in the Theology of Hans Urs Von Balthasar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 22: “Since God is eternal and it is God who becomes incarnate there is a very real sense in which, from the timeless view of eternity, the plan to become incarnate and the incarnation itself are not primarily temporal events at all.... There is no temporal change in God due to the incarnation, and if we are to speak at all of a potency being actualised in the event of Christ becoming incarnate then clearly we may do so only in an analogous sense which would take account of the non-temporal natural of the reality in question.”

<sup>18</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Fern-seed and Elephants and other essays on Christianity* ed. Walter Hooper (1st publ. by Fontana 1975; London: Collins, Fount Paperbacks 1977, 5th impression 1978) 71.

Such a mystery, as German Roman Catholic philosopher and theologian Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889-1977) concludes, can only be grasped *by faith*:

“...Christ fully possessed a human nature ontologically, but that His *person* is not created, and is not a mere *imago Dei*,<sup>19</sup> but rather the Second Divine Person of the Blessed Trinity, who assumed human nature. Therefore from the ontological point of view there is an essential difference between Christ and all other men. We possess this truth *by faith*.”<sup>20</sup>

Russian religious and political philosopher Nikolai A. Berdyaev (1874-1948) recognised that Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary’s Cross was the *sole* basis upon which man could gain true freedom and be restored to *the likeness of the perfect image of God*, for he wrote:

“Christ’s own suffering was due to His taking upon Himself the sin and evil of the whole world.[<sup>21</sup>] It was infinitely greater and more salutary than our sufferings.[<sup>22</sup>] Christ, like us, passed through the experience of being forsaken by God[<sup>23</sup>]. But His experience of it was incomparably more bitter and terrible than ours. Through it the freedom of man and of all creation was established once and for all [<sup>24</sup>].... The Gospel appeals to the inner spiritual man and not to the outer man, a member of society. It calls not for external works in the social world but for the awakening and regeneration of the spiritual life, for a new birth[<sup>25</sup>] that is to bring us into the kingdom of God.”<sup>26</sup>

“... it was only in Christianity, through Christ and the Christian revelation, that man found himself, reached spiritual maturity and became free from the power of the lower natural elements. In the person of Christ the God-Man man has fully come to exist. The fundamental Christian conception of man is real and not symbolic. It implies the transfiguration and illumination of the created nature of man, i.e. the actual attainment of the highest qualities and not a symbolic representation of non-human values in the human world. The central anthropological idea in Christianity is the idea of Divine humanity, of real divinely human kingdom.

<sup>19</sup> *Imago Dei* (“image of God”). A theological term, applied uniquely to humans, which denotes the symbolical relation between God and humanity. Only mentioned three times in the Old Testament (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1,2; 9:6).

<sup>20</sup> Dietrich von Hildebrand, *The Devastated Vineyard* trans. from German by John Crosby and Fred Teichert (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973) 113. Italics added.

<sup>21</sup> 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Jn. 2:2.

<sup>22</sup> See Is. 53:3-5; 7-8; 10-11.

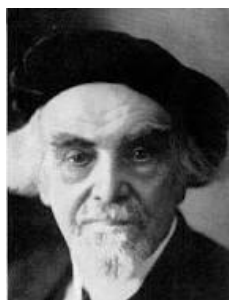
<sup>23</sup> Matt. 27:46

<sup>24</sup> C.f. Heb. 9:28: “so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many ...”; Heb. 10:12: “...but He [Christ], having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God.”

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:3-7; Eph. 2:4-5

<sup>26</sup> Nikolai Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, trans. (from Russian) by Natalie Duddington (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1937) 155, 159.

Christianity leads to the deification of the human and not the angelic or the animal nature, because Christ was the God-man and not God-angel.... Ethics cannot be based upon a separation between God and man, the divine and the human.”<sup>27</sup>



Berdyayev [photo to left] was greatly influenced by Eastern Orthodox theology and employed the term deification within that context.<sup>28</sup> Deification: a concept of redemption and sanctification, is drawn mainly from the idea of participation of true Christian believers in the divine life as found in 2 Peter 1:4.<sup>29</sup>

Derived as it is from expansive reflection on this verse as from any philosophical doctrine, the theological concept of “participation in the divine life” provided a framework – a biblical and patristic legacy which continued into medieval theology. It is also found in major Western theologies such as Augustine, Aquinas, Luther and Calvin.<sup>30</sup> It was what the Greek Fathers of the Church termed the *theosis* of man - the possibility of a direct or mystical union between man and God.<sup>31</sup> In Christian theology, divinisation (deification, making divine, or *theosis*) is the transforming effect of divine grace.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 147-48: “In contradistinction to [pantheistic and monistic philosophies e.g. those of German philosophers Fichte, Hegel and Schelling] there is the spirituality based on the union of man and God, on Divine humanity, through which man may be deified without surrendering his human nature to Divine nature. Deification implies a distinction between God and man, a dialogical and dramatic relationship between them. If man were already Divine, or if he were entirely sinful and separated from God by an absolute gulf, then such deification could not take place. This deification or *theosis*, which is a fundamental feature of Eastern Christian mysticism, is neither a monistic identity with God nor a humiliation of man and the created world. Theosis makes man Divine, while at the same time preserving his human nature. Thus, instead of the human personality being annihilated, it is made in the image of God and the Divine Trinity. The personality can be thus preserved only in and through Christ.”

<sup>29</sup> 2 Pet. 1:4: “For by these [promises] He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.” (NASB). Italics added.

<sup>30</sup> Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (eds) *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in the Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 123. Also see p. 117: “Sometime after the Reformation Western theology ceased to formulate its understanding of redemption and sanctification using the traditional language of deification.”

<sup>31</sup> See Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image of God* (New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary, 1974). Lossky provides the perspective of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

<sup>32</sup> F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingston, eds. (1997), “Deification,” *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Always careful to draw and preserve a clear distinction between the divine essence and divine energies, patristic and medieval theology affirmed that man participates in the energies of God, *not* the essence.<sup>33</sup> Any pantheistic identification between the two is therefore excluded.



The Last Judgment<sup>34</sup>

There is union, but not confusion.<sup>35</sup> This tradition was equally careful to preserve the divine aseity.<sup>36</sup>

Accordingly, Saint Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 206-298 to 373) summed up the purpose of the Incarnation by saying: “God became man that we might be made god.”<sup>37</sup> Here he is drawing on the theology of deification. .

British writer and theologian Charles Williams (1886-1945) has expressed this same truth when he wrote:

<sup>33</sup> For example Bonaventure’s 13<sup>th</sup> century theological metaphysics enabled him to posit a relationship between Christ the center and the human person as image of God. He took the view that the human person as image is a creative center. See Zachary Hayes, “Christology and Metaphysics in the Thought of Bonaventure,” (Supplement. Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure) *The Journal of Religion* 58 (University of Chicago Press, 1978) S82-S96.

<sup>34</sup> Source: <https://www.christthesavioroca.org/images/Icons/last-judgment-banner.jpg>

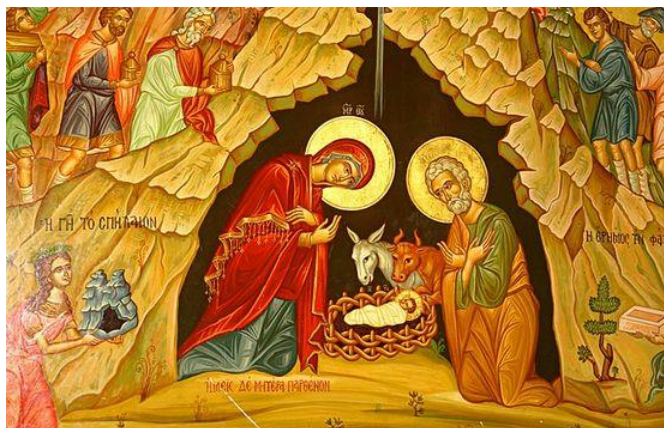
<sup>35</sup> Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (London & Oxford: Mowray, 1979) 28. Also see p. 98: “God’s Incarnation opens the way to man’s deification. To be deified is, more specifically, to be ‘christified’: the divine likeness that we are called to attain is the likeness of Christ. It is through Jesus the God-man that we men are ‘ingodded,’ ‘divinized,’ made ‘sharers in the divine nature’ (2 Pet. 1:4). By assuming our humanity, Christ who is Son of God by nature has made us sons of God by grace. In him we are ‘adopted’ by God the Father, becoming sons-in-the-Son.”

<sup>36</sup> “‘Aseity’ comes from the Latin *aseite*, meaning literally “of oneself.” Used by God, it denotes that He exists in and of Himself, independent of anything else. He is self-existent... The biblical basis for God’s aseity is found in the facts that 1) He existed prior to and independent of creation and that 2) He brought into and sustains in existence everything else that is.

<sup>37</sup> Athanasius, *De incarnatione* 54,3. Cited in Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (1st publ. 1963; Middlesex, U.K.: Penguin, reprint 1976) 29. Also see pp. 56, 132, 224, 236-42. Note use of “god” with reference to man. See Ps. 82:6; Jn. 10:34-35.



“Had he willed, [God] could presumably have raised for his Incarnation a body in some other way than he chose. But he preferred to shape himself within the womb, to become hereditary, to owe to humanity the flesh he divinized by the same principle – ‘not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God.’ By an act of substitution - he reconciled the natural world with the world of the kingdom of heaven, sensuality with substance.”<sup>38</sup>



**Nativity Scene: Bethlehem**

Eugeniy Lampert notes: “God-manhood is the call to mankind to manifest the image of the Creator in human life. *Man is a creator*, in virtue of his divine-human (theandric)<sup>39</sup> nature and of the image and likeness of God in him.” He adds that this is the “ontological and ethical basis of Berdyaev’s teaching about man. And he takes on the task of discovery, defining and justifying the image of the Creator in man.”<sup>40</sup>

St Paul’s teaching of the theandric nature of Christ as understood in traditional and mainstream Christology involves the perfect harmonisation of two natures: the subsistence of Christ’s human nature in the divine Word (the *Logos*) and the subsistence of the divine Word in the human nature. The latter subsistence as David Coffey expresses it “becomes the basis of all further divine communication to the sacred humanity. And it sums up in a thoroughly unified way the total mystery of Christ.”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Charles Williams, *The Descent of the Dove: A Short History of the Holy Spirit in the Church* (1st publ. Longmans Green 1939; London: Collins, The Fontana Library, 1963) 213.

<sup>39</sup> Theandric – Literally “God human,” referring to those actions of Christ in which he used the human nature as an instrument of his divinity. Of or relating to the divine and human or their union or joint operation.

<sup>40</sup> Eugeny Lampert, *Nicolas Berdyaev and the New Image Ages* (in the Series: Modern Christian Revolutionaries, General Ed. Donald Attwater) (London, John Clarke, n.d) 45-46.

<sup>41</sup> David Coffey, “The Theandric Nature of Christ,” *Theological Studies* 60 (1999): 405-431. At p. 430.

The immediate agent of the hypostatic union is the Holy Spirit sent for that purpose by the Father, though the ultimate Agent remains the Son.<sup>42</sup> Just as Jesus was able to make a *declaration* that He and the Father are One,<sup>43</sup> He prayed that his disciples and all who would come to believe in Him, would *participate in* this union through the Spirit as a *declaration* of the Truth of His message and so that unbelievers might believe in Him.<sup>44</sup>

Man’s “worthiness,” according to Scripture, is not based on his own achievements or righteousness,<sup>45</sup> but is based solely on the meritorious salvific life and substitutionary atonement of Christ.<sup>46</sup> God has ransomed his people - yes, but by a price exceeding every other price (the death of His Son) and, if it is paid to anyone, paid to Himself.<sup>47</sup> The true meaning of atonement is much fuller than the ideas limited to this analogy.<sup>48</sup> What satisfied God the Father, as Maurice notes, was:

“... that His [God’s own] character could now first be seen in One Who bore our nature. In Him only could He see humanity as He had formed it... free and glorious, because entirely submissive to Love. Christ alone offered a complete sacrifice.... (it was) the fruit of Love, the image of Love in the Son, answering to the archetype of it in the Father... (the Son) presented that perfect reflex of His own character to the Father with which alone He could be satisfied.”<sup>49</sup>

Swiss theologian and Catholic priest **Hans Urs von Balthasar** (1905-1988) wrote:

“And as the Son of God is the eternal icon of the Father, he can without contradiction assume in himself the image that is the creation, purify it, and make it enter into the communion of the divine life without dissolving it (in a false mysticism). It is here that one must distinguish nature and grace.”<sup>50</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 430-31. The First Council of Ephesus was held in 431 AD.

<sup>43</sup> Jn. 10:30. The Father indwelt Jesus the Son through the Spirit and Jesus dwelt in perfect union with His Father by obeying Him in all things, performing all His Works, and walking in perfect fellowship with Him.

<sup>44</sup> Jn. 17:21-26.

<sup>45</sup> Is. 64:6

<sup>46</sup> 1 Cor. 1:30.

<sup>47</sup> 1 Pet. 1:18-20.

<sup>48</sup> In reaction against the “Penal Substitution” analogy used in Scripture, many theologians have adopted the theory of Exemplarism, sometimes called the moral theory or the “Abelardian Doctrine” or the “subjective” theory. The moral theory holds that men are saved by the repentance brought to men by looking on Christ’s self-giving love. Calvary it has been said - is the “school of penitence of the human race.” There is no Scriptural support for this view.

<sup>49</sup> F.D. Maurice, *The Prayer Book and the Lord’s Prayer* edtn, 256-59. Cited in W. Merlin Davies, *F.D. Maurice: A Prophet for Today* (New Zealand: ColCom Press, 1992) 123.

<sup>50</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, “A Résumé of My Thought,” *Communio: International Catholic Review* 15 (Winter, 1988): 5. [contin...]



**Balthasar** [see photo<sup>51</sup> to left] emphasised the personal and relational nature of Christianity and like Swiss Reformed theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968), the core of his conviction with respect to his understanding of “Imago Dei” was to turn away from a direct analysis of who the human being is *qua* human being and towards God in Christ in whose image he is made.<sup>52</sup> This is his

starting point and it is in recognising that our being loved by God as creatures made in his image, that we arrive at the proper biblical starting point to understanding “Imago Dei.” Balthasar and Barth stressed that to understand “*Imago Dei*” we need to look at what Scripture informs us about the fullness and unity of God. It is Christ Jesus who represents the very fullness and unity of God. Balthasar presented Christ as what he calls the “*Gestalt*” – the real “form” of God. Christ is our identity as creatures made in his image.

In seeking to understand the true nature of man within creation Balthasar contends that we must start from the perspective of God as revealed in Scripture in Christ within the Trinity, as fully God and fully man, the Christ whose goodness, truth and beauty within the Godhead in Love.<sup>53</sup>

Christian teaching recognises that the eternal God has placed eternity within the heart of man<sup>54</sup>, that spiritual faculty known as “*Intellectus*”, so that he can truly come to know, with the aid of God’s Spirit, the One who is *not* subject to the flux of time.<sup>55</sup>

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Reproduced in *Hans Urs Von Balthasar: His Life and Work*, ed. David I Schindler (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991) 1-5. This work in *Communio* by Balthasar was first published posthumously. Cited in Dominic Robinson, *Understanding the ‘Imago Dei’: The Thought of Barth, Von Balthasar and Moltmann* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011) 84.

<sup>51</sup> Source: <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/an-introduction-to-hans-urs-von-balthasar.html>

<sup>52</sup> See: Robinson, *Understanding the ‘Imago Dei*, 45-82 (Chapter 3: Barth); 83-128 (Chapter 3: Balthasar).

<sup>53</sup> See John O’Donnell, *Hans Urs von Balthasar* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1991); *The Mystery of the Triune God* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1988).

<sup>54</sup> Eccl. 3:11: “He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.”

<sup>55</sup> Jn. 17:3 “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”



**St Augustine (354-430 AD) of Hippo**

Spirit is not to be assigned among “the things from which times flow” wrote Saint Augustine. It is not flux, nor does it engender flux. On the contrary, it constitutes the source whence all unity, stability and permanence to be found in the material world are derived. Ancient metaphysicians understood this well, that all such unity that is displayed and observed in material things is a mere “reflection, as it were, of a higher unity which resides on the spiritual plane.”<sup>56</sup>

The miracle of truly coming to know God through His Son Jesus is consummated on the authentically spiritual plane. The Biblical doctrines of man and the Incarnation do harmonize. The point of intersection of the Divine and the terrestrial plane could only be fully revealed in one created Being, the *Man* Christ Jesus, a confirmation that God considers *Man* the pinnacle of his creation.

Christ came into the world from the Father, leaving Heaven to partake of flesh and blood.<sup>57</sup> A body had been prepared for Christ<sup>58</sup> by the Father, and Christ revealed to man the “*image of God*” in all its *fullness*, unmarred by sin.<sup>59</sup>

The Bible teaches that true knowledge of God’s mystery, the ineffable attributes and character of the unseen God, that to which “many prophets and righteous men desired to see and to hear”<sup>60</sup> - is knowledge of Christ Himself, “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”<sup>61</sup>

Knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent *is* life eternal.<sup>62</sup> Eternal life is therefore found *in* God’s Son alone.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Wolfgang Smith, *Theistic Evolution: The Teilhardian Heresy* (Tacoma, WA: Angelico Press/Sophia Perennis, 2012) 50.

<sup>57</sup> Heb. 2:14

<sup>58</sup> Heb. 10:5

<sup>59</sup> Acts 3:44; Rom. 1:17, 3:21,25, 4:25, 8:3; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 4:15, 7:26; 1 Jn. 3:5; 1 Pet. 2:22.

<sup>60</sup> Matt. 13:16-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12

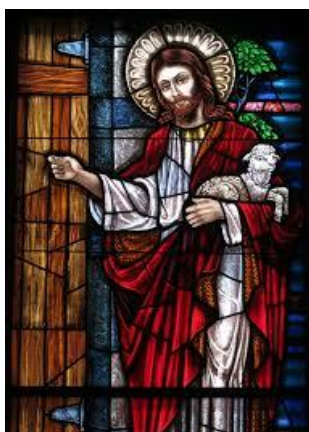
<sup>61</sup> Col. 2:2-3.

<sup>62</sup> John. 17:3

<sup>63</sup> 1 John 5:11-12; Acts 4:12

To *know* is not merely to have a notion of that which stands in the place of the true object, but *to be in direct communion and fellowship* with the True Object of Faith – the Lord Jesus Christ who alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life<sup>64</sup> and the only Mediator between God and Man.<sup>65</sup> It was to this end and for this purpose that mankind was created - to have fellowship with God, through His Son, and bring glory to Him - and this occurred from the very beginning of creation. The gracious and loving invitation to man to have fellowship with God through His Son is succinctly expressed by Jesus himself in the Book of Revelation:

Behold, I [Jesus] stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.<sup>66</sup>



The response of receiving Him by faith is the gateway to becoming the children of God through His Son.<sup>67</sup> Immortality is gifted by God to the Christian enabling him by grace to enjoy fellowship with God in Christ<sup>68</sup> and with those that are part of His body, forever.<sup>69</sup> Deathlessness and incorruptibility result from full participation in the eternal divine life mediated by the Spirit<sup>70</sup> involving a process of growth and transformation, which for the Christian commences at the point of conversion.<sup>71</sup> It has its reality sealed for the believer by the Spirit of God.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>64</sup> John. 14:6

<sup>65</sup> 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Acts 4:12; Heb. 8:6.

<sup>66</sup> Rev. 3:20. C.f. Jn. 1:18; 1 Jn. 1:18; 2:24.

<sup>67</sup> Jn. 1:12: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name," C.f. Jn. 3:8; 1 Jn. 3:1.

<sup>68</sup> Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23.

<sup>69</sup> 1 Jn. 1:7.

<sup>70</sup> Rom. 8:2, 11.

<sup>71</sup> Jn. 3:3, 36; 5:24; 6:47; 20:31; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Jn. 5:11-12; 3:14;

<sup>72</sup> Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:16, 23. 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30.

The destiny of all faithful Christians is to lay hold of an immunity to that principle of decay and deterioration which characterized humanity in Adam,<sup>73</sup> through participation in the endless life of God.<sup>74</sup>

In Scripture the term "(eternal) life"<sup>75</sup> is treated as the equivalent to "immortality."<sup>76</sup> It is only after the resurrection that believers will 'put on' the garment of immortality.<sup>77</sup> Immortality is therefore not a human right or heritage gained at birth. Man is not constituted immortal because he possesses, or is, a soul. He becomes immortal because God, the only one who intrinsically (or essentially) possesses immortality,<sup>78</sup> transforms him by raising him from the dead *and* clothing him with immortality on the basis that he is *in* Christ. The soul is not immortal in the sense that one of its properties is 'participation in the eternal life of God.' Immortality when graciously gifted to man by God, is *derived or extrinsic*. As Harris notes: "The subsistence of the individual through and after death is not equated with immortality (in the Pauline sense)."<sup>79</sup> Participation in the divine nature in the fullest sense is an experience reserved only for those who belong to Christ.<sup>80</sup>

For the Christian, the contrast is not between body and soul, or mind versus body or outward form versus Idea; but instead between the creation that Paul teaches has been delivered over to death and destruction due to the entrance of sin into the world,<sup>81</sup> and the *new* creation;<sup>82</sup> that is the contrast between the corruptible body and the incorruptible resurrection body.

In Greek thought, it is precisely *apart from* the body that the soul attains to full development of its life.

<sup>73</sup> Gen. 2:17; Jn 3:16; Rom. 5:12-21.

<sup>74</sup> Jn. 17:3, 23. Cf. Phil. 3:8, 10.

<sup>75</sup> Paul uses the terms "life" and "eternal life" interchangeably as is the case in John's Gospel and Epistles. See R.W. Thomas, "The Meaning of the terms 'Life' and 'Death' in the Fourth Gospel and in Paul," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 21 (1968): 199-212, esp. 204. Cited in Harris, "Resurrection and Immortality" (1976).

<sup>76</sup> This can be established by a comparison of 2 Cor. 5:4 and 1 Cor. 15:53, 54. Harris (1976) points out supportive evidence in the significant juxtapositioning of both words in Rom. 2:7 and 2 Tim. 1:10.

<sup>77</sup> The immortality gained *potentially* at conversion, or the new birth (Jn. 3:1-21) when a person comes to be in Christ (1 Cor. 15:22b) and is "sealed in Him [Christ] with the Holy Spirit of promise, becomes that person's *actual* possession in the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>78</sup> 1 Tim. 6:15-16: "...He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see..." Cf. 1 Tim. 1:17

<sup>79</sup> Harris, "Resurrection and Immortality."

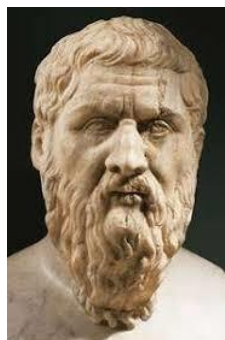
<sup>80</sup> 1 Cor. 15:23, 54f; 2 Pet. 1:4.

<sup>81</sup> Rom. 5:12-21.

<sup>82</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15. C.f. Jn. 3:3.



In contrast, according to Christian teaching, it is the inner man's very nature which demands the body for the full expression of the person.<sup>83</sup>



For Plato (b. 427 AD) [photo: on left] man is a soul, making use of the body as an instrument.<sup>84</sup> Platonism, like Gnosticism, presented the (unbiblical) belief that the physical body is a hindrance, a burden, and sometimes even a tomb of the soul. Both conceived of salvation as the liberating of the soul from its entanglement in the physical world in

order that it may take wings and return to the heavenly realm. Fr Robert North S.J. presents the Christian view:

The soul is not a bird released from its cage to flit off to the happiness of its real life. Immortality and heaven are promised to the *man*, and not (even if it were possible!) to the form apart from its matter.<sup>85</sup>

Christian scholars who view man as a psychosomatic inseparable unity, with body and soul as invisible partners in harmony in the living being, hold that while Scripture teaches that all aspects of man (body, soul and spirit) have been equally created “very good,” they are *all* affected by the Fall. However, all are capable of being sanctified through God's grace.<sup>86</sup> The relationship between psychosomatic man and his God cannot be reduced exclusively to an inward spiritual experience, but rather, as taught in Scripture, must extend to every facet of man's existence.

<sup>83</sup> See Oscar Cullmann, D.Th, D.D *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead? The Witness of the New Testament* (London, Epworth, 1958). See Chapter 2. (This is the English translation of his study *Immortalité de l'âme ou résurrection des morts?*). In the preface to the English translation Cullmann confesses “No other publication of mine has provoked such enthusiasm or such violent hostility.”

<sup>84</sup> *Alcibiades I*, 129e-130e. In some passages he seems to apply the name, man, to the whole composite. C.f. *Phaedo* 17c, 92b, 95c.

<sup>85</sup> Robert J. North, *Teilhard and the Creation of the Soul* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Pub. Co., 1967) 125. Italics in original. Plato's theory of Forms or theory of Ideas argues that non-physical (but substantial) forms (or ideas) represent the most accurate reality. When applied to man, the “soul,” contrary to Christian teaching, is regarded as superior to the body when it comes to defining his true nature and essence. Aristotle famously contends that every physical object is a compound of matter and form. This doctrine has been dubbed “hylomorphism.” However, Scripture does not teach that man is to be understood as such a “compound.” North is affirming for the believer, as taught in Scripture, that immortality is granted by God to the *whole* person – individual man constituted both a corporeal and spiritual being on account of the Resurrection unto eternal life: the new spiritual body enabling the believer to enjoy heaven for eternity in a state of transformed corporeal and spiritual existence.

<sup>86</sup> 1 Thess. 5:23.

In Hebrew thought on the nature of man there is no antithesis between physical and spiritual, between the outer and the inner dimensions, or between the lower and the higher realms. The contrast between the Greek and Hebrew views of God and the world is strengthened further by the Old Testament anthropology.<sup>87</sup> Hebrew man is not like the Greek man – a union of soul and body and thus related to two worlds.<sup>88</sup> Rather, he is flesh animated by God's breath (Heb. *Ruach*) to be constituted a “living soul” (Heb. *Nephesh*) on the day he is first created.<sup>89</sup> *Nephesh* (lit. soul) is not part of man, it is man himself viewed as a *living* creature. *Nephesh* refers to aspects of sentience and is commonly rendered “life” in English translations. In the Old Testament it is applied to both men<sup>90</sup> and animals<sup>91</sup> but not plants. The word can be used for man himself and indicate man as a person,<sup>92</sup> and also become synonymous for “I” and “myself.”<sup>93</sup> Applying a natural extension, *nephesh* is man in terms of his appetites<sup>94</sup> or in terms of his emotions or thoughts.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Ladd, George Elden Ladd, *The Pattern of New Testament Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968) 13-40.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* It is noteworthy that Philo Judaeus (Philo of Alexandria [c. 15 BC–after 45 AD]), an older contemporary of the Apostle Paul, was the first Jew who was really well-read in Greek philosophy and used it extensively in the exposition and defence of his traditional religion. Philo expressed his philosophical religion in the form of lengthy allegorical commentaries on the Jewish Scriptures, especially on Genesis. In these he showed to his own satisfaction that the ancient revelation given to Moses accorded with the teaching of the best Greek philosophers, which, in his view, was *later and derivative*. The Greek philosophy that he preferred and found to be most in accordance with [O.T.] revelation was an early form of Middle Platonism. Philo was neither approved of nor read by later orthodox Jews, but his influence on Greek-speaking and Greek-educated Christians from the 2nd century AD was great; and in important ways he determined the tone of their religious speculation.

<sup>89</sup> *Nephesh* – Gen. 2:7; 7:22. The Hebrew view is that the soul pre-exists the body. There are a variety of views about the nature of life after death. See for e.g. Apocrypha: Wisdom of Solomon 15:8. Job 12:7-10 offers a distinct similarity between (*ruah*) and (*nephesh*): “In His hand is the life (*nephesh*) of every living thing and the spirit (*ruah*) of every human being.”

<sup>90</sup> Ex. 21:23; Ps. 33:19

<sup>91</sup> Gen. 1:20, 21, 24, 30. Prov. 12:10.

<sup>92</sup> See Gen. 14:21; Ex. 16:16; Num. 5:6; Ezek. 33:6 (RSV, “any one”); Deut. 24:7 (RSV, “one”); Gen. 46:18 (sixteen “persons”). See Rev. 18:13 for this use. Often *nephesh* is used as “saving your life”, *nephesh* then is referring to complete person's life as in Joshua 2:13; Isaiah 44:20; 1 Samuel 19:11; Psalm 6:5; 49:15; 72:13.

<sup>93</sup> Ps. 34:2; Gen. 27:35, lit., that my soul may bless you,” Jer. 3:11, “herself” equals “her soul.”

<sup>94</sup> Eccl. 6:2,7. Interestingly, the idea that the soul possesses three basic abilities – feeling, understanding and willing - is relatively new, as it appears to have been first proposed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century by Johann Nicolaus Tetens (1736-1807).

<sup>95</sup> Hos. 4:8; Ps. 35:25; Gen. 34:8; Ps. 139:14; Prov. 19:2. Thought is an activity arising from the interaction of spirit (or soul) and body. Thought is an effect: the result of this postulated interaction.

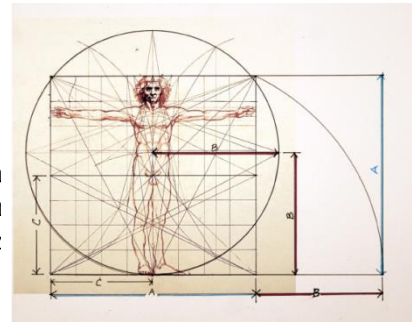
If *nephesh* is man's life, it can be said to depart at death<sup>96</sup> or return if a person revives.<sup>97</sup> The Old Testament does not conceive of disembodied souls existing in the underworld after departing from the body and such ideas owe more to Greek philosophy than the Bible.<sup>98</sup> The strict dualistic metaphysical view of man as composed strictly of a body and a soul, two ontologically distinct and separate substances, adopted historically by many Christian theologians, does not find its theological or philosophical roots in a Hebrew understanding of man. This is the case despite the account of the creation of man found in Genesis 2:7<sup>99</sup> recording an apparent 'addition' to the (*presumed*) pre-existing 'soul' of Adam by the Creator, namely the addition of the spirit (Heb. *ruach*); the outcome of the divine act is a man created as a *psychosomatic unity* – a "living being" or "person" [*nephesh*].

### The "structuralist" or "substantive" view or understanding of *Imago Dei*.<sup>100</sup>

This view which defines the locus for the substantive content of the *imago Dei* in qualities that man possesses, has been developed and systematised in the orthodox theology of the Catholic Church, notably by the work of St Thomas Aquinas (b. 1225 AD).<sup>101</sup>

These qualities that are thought to be God-like are sourced from both Scripture and anthropology and interpreted applying the dualistic metaphysic

framework that was understood to derive from Scripture itself. Man was viewed as possessing a "nature," whose substance is static and self-contained and therefore cannot be augmented or diminished, improved or destroyed, because it is comprised of an accumulation of elements which themselves are unalterable since they constitute the ontological structure of man's being. For natural man to have any connection with the supernatural, his nature must have been supplemented as Scripture reveals, with a supernatural gift which transcends the natural order. This leads man from the inherent limitations of the natural *imago* to the supernatural "*similitude*," the latter consisting in man's original righteousness (*justitia originalis*), which when 'in place' and functioning, leads to the harmonious and perfect ordering of all the natural elements. The Fall was seen as incapable of affecting the natural *imago* of those elements rooted in man's ontology, but instead original sin involved the disordering and dissolution of these parts.<sup>102</sup>



**Fig. 1** Vitruvian Man: Drawing after Leonardo da Vinci by Jose De Jesus. It shows the relationship between the circle and the square as a result of the Golden Section. The relation:  $(A+B)/A = A/B = \Phi$  which is the Greek letter Phi or 1.618.<sup>103</sup>

L. Berkhof (1939) states: "The early Church Fathers were quite agreed that the image of God in man consisted primarily in man's rational and moral characteristics, and in his capacity for holiness..."<sup>104</sup>

St Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430 AD), made rationality, which he considered to be a combination of reason and will, the primary structural aspect of the soul, which became the seat of the *imago Dei*. In his book *The City of God* Augustine wrote:

<sup>96</sup> Gen. 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21

<sup>97</sup> 1 Kings 17:22; 2 Kings 4:36; C.f. Heb. 11:35.

<sup>98</sup> Malcolm A. Jeeves, *Human Nature at the Millennium: Reflections on the Integration of Psychology and Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998). Homer and other early Greek writers express these ideas. See *Iliad*. 1.3; *Odyssey* XI. 205. E.D. Burton, *Spirit, Soul and Flesh* (1918) 26ff.

<sup>99</sup> Gen. 2:7: "The Lord God formed man of dust from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life* [spirit] and man became a *living being*." C.f. Ps. 104:30.

<sup>100</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption* trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1952) 59. Noreen Herzfeld, "Creating in our own image: Artificial Intelligence and the Image of God," *Zygon* 37/2 (June 2002): 303-316. For a recent defence of the "substantive" view see: Janet Martin Soskice, "The God of Creative Address: Creation, Christology and Ethics," in Beth Felker Jones, Jeffrey W. Barbeau eds. *The Image of God in an Image Driven Age: Explorations in Theological Philosophy* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2016) 189-204. Professor Soskice is a Canadian-born Catholic theologian and Professor of Philosophical Theology at Cambridge University.

<sup>101</sup> St Thomas considered that we see the image of God in man inasmuch as: (1) man possesses a natural ability for understanding and loving God habitually; and this ability consists in the very nature of the human mind, which is common to all men, (2) man through the power of and in conformity to God's grace, can and does actually come to love God, albeit imperfectly and (3) man comes to share in and possess the likeness of God's glory through the knowledge of Christ. The first is found in all men, the second only the just and the third only in the blessed. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (New York: Benzinger Bros., 1947), I, 471-72.

<sup>102</sup> See John Piper, "The Image of God: An Approach from Biblical and Systematic Theology," *Studia Biblica et Theologica* (1 March 1971): 15-32. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-image-of-god>

<sup>103</sup> Fig. 1. Sourced from <https://www.researchgate.net>

<sup>104</sup> Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1939) 202. C.f. Eph. 4:24: "...put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." Also see Lk. 1:75; 2 Cor. 5:17.

“God then made man in his own image. For he created him a soul endowed with reason and intelligence ....”<sup>105</sup>

St Paul teaches that Christ has come as the true *imago*, to re-establish those broken relationships and permit humans to once again function as the *imago Dei*. Paul wrote: “For in [Christ] the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.”<sup>106</sup> Here Paul ascribes to Jesus divinity equal to that of the Father. As St John put it: “To see Jesus is to see God.”<sup>107</sup> Jesus is “the effulgence of God’s glory and the *exact representation* [Gk. *character*] of his nature.”<sup>108</sup> Christ has eternally displayed in himself, the complete image of God, and retained it fully even as he was “born of a woman,”<sup>109</sup> “partook of flesh and blood”<sup>110</sup> and took on human nature through the Incarnation.<sup>111</sup>

These passages should negate any substantive (or structuralist) definition of the *imago Dei* which all depend on humanity being embodied to possess it; for the reason that Christ was the perfect image of God<sup>112</sup> before the Incarnation. Christ, “the man from heaven,”<sup>113</sup> the last Adam,<sup>114</sup> as St Paul refers to him, came to restore mankind to that image found in Adam who was “created in the likeness of God .... [effecting a restoration] in true righteousness and holiness,”<sup>115</sup> whereby each and every new believer is declared by God to be “very good”<sup>116</sup>; perfect and without blemish in Christ Jesus. Today mankind is a far cry from the majesty into which Adam was created. However, as St Paul and St John affirm, “any man” who trusts in Christ for salvation is constituted “a new creation” by virtue of being “in Christ”<sup>117</sup> and becomes a son of God.<sup>118</sup>

This divine transformation (the “new birth”<sup>119</sup>) of the believer through Christ Jesus, based on faith alone in God’s unmerited favour (grace),<sup>120</sup> is effected by the Spirit: “the first man [Adam] was made a living soul; the last Adam [Christ] a quickening spirit.”<sup>121</sup>

God, “who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist,”<sup>122</sup> by His Spirit quickens a man who is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins<sup>123</sup>, alienated from the life-giving Spirit,<sup>124</sup> and under condemnation and the wrath of God<sup>125</sup>; and calls him forth to new life in Christ (eternal life). This radical spiritual transformation of the *whole* person into the image of Christ through faith, whereby they become by the indwelling power of the Spirit, “a new creation,”<sup>126</sup> and the real hope of heaven and certainty of salvation, is instilled into their hearts by the Spirit.<sup>127</sup>

Swiss Protestant Neo-orthodox theologian Emil Brunner (1889-1966) refers to “the fact that man has been ‘made in the image of God’ is spoken of in the New Testament as having been lost, and indeed as wholly, and not partially lost.”<sup>128</sup> “He [Man] has lost it wholly – through sin. He is *not* a truly human, truly loving being. His nature does not reflect the nature of God, who is Holy love.”<sup>129</sup> Man has failed to respond to God’s love as he ought, in “the response in which God is honoured, and in which he fully imparts himself, the response of reverent, grateful love, given not only in words, but in his whole life”<sup>130</sup> and for the reason that “...the glory is not given to God, but to men and to creatures, in which man does not live in the love of God, but seeks himself.”<sup>131</sup> Brunner goes on to state:

“Man no longer possesses this *Imago Dei*; but is restored through Him, through whom God glorifies and gives Himself through Jesus Christ. The restoration of the *Imago Dei*, the new creation of the original image of God in man, is identical with the gift of God in Jesus Christ received by faith. (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). The *Imago Dei* in the New Testament, “material” sense of the word, is identical with “being-in-the-Word” of God. This means that man does not possess his true being in himself, but in God.”<sup>132</sup>

<sup>105</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York: The Modern Library, 1950) 407. He was greatly influenced by Neo-Platonism.

<sup>106</sup> Col. 2:9.

<sup>107</sup> John 12:45; 14:9. C.f. Jn. 6:40.

<sup>108</sup> Heb. 1:3; John 1:14

<sup>109</sup> Gal. 4:4

<sup>110</sup> Heb. 2:14; 1 Tim. 3:16

<sup>111</sup> Phil. 2:6

<sup>112</sup> Heb. 1:3

<sup>113</sup> 1 Cor. 15:47

<sup>114</sup> 1 Cor. 15:45

<sup>115</sup> Eph. 4:24. C.f. Eccl. 7:29 “God made man upright ...”

<sup>116</sup> Gen. 1:31

<sup>117</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17

<sup>118</sup> Jn. 1:12

<sup>119</sup> Jn. 3:1-21; 1 Pet. 2:23.

<sup>120</sup> Eph. 2:8-9

<sup>121</sup> 1 Cor. 15:45

<sup>122</sup> Rom. 4:17; C.f. 1 Cor. 1:28.

<sup>123</sup> Eph. 2:1-5

<sup>124</sup> Col. 1:21-23. See 1 Cor. 14:45: “So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”

<sup>125</sup> Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6.

<sup>126</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17

<sup>127</sup> Rom. 8:15-16.

<sup>128</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption* Dogmatics Vol. II trans. Olive Wyon (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014) 58.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 123. Italics in original. (“The consequences of sin on the *Imago*”).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-58.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 58..

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*



John Piper,<sup>133</sup> notes that Brunner's account cannot be correct because nowhere does Paul specifically link the "*imago Dei*" of Genesis with the "new creation."<sup>134</sup> He sums up his conclusions to his study as follows:

"The *imago Dei* is that in man which constitutes him as he-whom-God-loves. The obvious thrust of this definition is to insist that this something intrinsic to man cannot completely be specified (indeed, the Scriptures do not specify its content). My concern is to maintain, not that man is free in himself, but that he is something in himself."<sup>135</sup>

Brunner argues that our thinking will become "terribly muddled" if the two ideas of the *Imago Dei* – the "formal" and "structural" one of the Old Testament, and the "material" one of the New Testament – are either confused with one another, or treated as identical. Once the distinction is rightly made between the two,<sup>136</sup> all three of the false solutions<sup>137</sup> that arise from confusing them disappear and it then follows that "...man has been made in the Image of God is conceived *not as a self-existing substance but as a relation*" [Italics added]. He clarifies his understanding of relation as follows:

"Responsibility is a relation; it is not a substance. If, on the contrary, as in the Catholic tradition, the *Imago Dei* is conceived in the formal structural sense as the endowment with reason, as concrete freedom, then Man possesses the *Imago* of God *in himself*. This view of the *Imago Dei* is the gate by which a pantheistic or an idealistic deification of man can enter. Man then possesses the divine reason in himself; his spirit is then a "spark" from the Divine Spirit. He has "divinity within himself."...The result of this erroneous conception of the *Imago Dei* – as substance and not as relation – is a mistakenly "spiritualized view of man and his destiny."

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<sup>133</sup> John Stephen Piper, an American Calvinist Baptist pastor, is author of over 50 books and the founder and leader of [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org) and is the chancellor of Bethlehem College & Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

<sup>134</sup> Piper, "The Image of God."

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> Brunner notes: "From the side of God, therefore, this distinction between the "formal" and the "material" does not exist; it is not legally valid. But it does exist – wrongly. This means that when we look at the *Imago Dei* from our angle, that is, the angle of sinful man, it necessarily appears under this twofold aspect of the "formal" and the "material" lost destiny, lost "existence in the love of God." Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, 61.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 59. The false solutions that follow are: "...either that we must deny that the sinner possesses the quality of humanity at all; or, that which makes him a human being must be severed from the *Imago Dei*; or, the loss of the *Imago* in the material sense must be regarded merely as an obscuring, or partial corruption of the *Imago*, which lessens the heinousness of sin."

The loss of the *Imago*, in the material sense, does not remove responsibility from man; he still stands "before God" and he is still a human being...The loss of the *Imago*, in the material sense, presupposes the *Imago* in the formal sense. To be a sinner is the negative way of being responsible."<sup>138</sup>

Brunner addresses the notion of the "loss" of the *Imago Dei* when he writes:

"We are not taking sin seriously if we speak of a "relic" of the *Imago*, which man still possesses – presupposing that by the *Imago* we mean the New Testament conception. If, however, we mean what we see in the Old Testament – that which distinguishes man as man from the animal, or from the other creatures – that is, to put it more exactly, existence in responsibility, then we cannot speak of the "loss" of the *Imago Dei*... we would be minimizing the gravity of sin, were we to deny that man possesses the *Imago Dei* in this sense, or even were we to minimize its reality."<sup>139</sup>

C.F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch argue that the image of God "consists, therefore, in the spiritual personality of man, though not merely in unity of self-consciousness and self-determination, or in the fact that man was created a consciously free Ego; for personality is merely the basis and form of the divine likeness, not the real essence.... The concrete essence of the divine likeness was shattered by sin; and it is only through Christ, the brightness of the glory of God and the expression of his essence,<sup>140</sup> that our nature is transformed into the image of God<sup>141</sup> again."<sup>142</sup> Many theologians disagree that the *Imago Dei* was "shattered," in the sense of totally destroyed, but instead contend that it was only marred, or diminished, as a result of the Fall of man.

**In concluding:** Let us reflect on Hebrews 1:2-3a. "...in these last days [God] has spoken to us in *His* Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And **He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.**"

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<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60.

<sup>139</sup> Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, 123.

<sup>140</sup> Heb. 1:3

<sup>141</sup> Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24

<sup>142</sup> K.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 39. Karl Fredreich Keil (1807-1888) was a German Protestant exegetist. Several years after finishing his theological studies in Dorpat and Berlin, he accepted a call to the theological faculty of Dorpat, where he worked for twenty-five years as lecturer and professor of Old and New Testament exegesis and Oriental languages. Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890) was a Lutheran, from Leipzig. He was of Hebrew parentage; studied at Leipzig where he became a private lecturer in 1842; held the position of professor in Rostock in 1846; then in Erlangen in 1850; and then again in Leipzig in 1867.

## News Items: Media

### Judge Bill Hastings Appointed Chair of BSA

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Wellington Judge **Bill Hastings** has been appointed chair of the Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA), the Minister of Broadcasting, Communications and Digital Media Hon Kris Faafoi has announced.

Currently a District Court Judge, Bill Hastings was the 10th Chief Censor from 1998 to 2010 and chairperson of the Immigration and Protection Tribunal from July 2010 until February 2013.

He has also previously held positions as senior law lecturer, Deputy Dean of Law and member of the governing Council at Victoria University. He's been a member of the Video Recordings Authority, the Indecent Publications Tribunal and the Film and Literature Board of Review.

Judge Hastings's appointment was made in October and lasts until 31 August 2021.

#### Sources:

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA1809/S00366/broadcasting-standards-authority-appointments-announced.htm>

Press Release by NZ Government. Dated 27/09/18

<https://bsa.govt.nz/63-content/about/members/8399-bill-hastings>

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### NZ Media Council name change and new role

John Terris [photo below] of Media Matters NZ raises concerns



On April 16, 2018 an obscure press statement, which received no media coverage and would have been missed by keen readers of media commentary, announced that what used to be called the NZ Press Council, had resolved in future to call itself the NZ Media Council. Furthermore, it would be assuming responsibility henceforth for adjudicating on complaints concerning newspapers and also television content. (see <http://mediacouncil.org.nz>). This is a field which is currently the responsibility of the Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

John Terris QSO [Photo above], who serves as President of Media Matters in New Zealand, an advocacy group which campaigns against what it regards as gratuitous sex and violence in the electronic media, sees problems with this action.

He argues that this “self-styled Media Council, with no legislative sanction to do so, has set itself up to replace the ASA and BSA.” He is very concerned that it “is composed entirely of industry representatives or their clones, with no public consultation and with no licence to represent the public at large.” He contends that organisations like his own “have been given no opportunity to make comment or offer input.” He believes that “these self-appointed representatives of the media, have decided to make themselves the Judge and the Jury in their own cases.”

Clearly Terris feels that this appears to be a case of a conflict of interests and in principle opposes the principle of natural justice when it comes to any person or group like Media Matters [or SPCS] seeking to challenge the decision(s) of the new Media Council.

Whilst it is true that the current regulators (BSA & ASA) are in need of a major overhaul to bring their functions up to speed with the new platforms of multichannel Satellite Television and Viewing on Demand etc. “this attempt to close down debate on the form and substance of such a review,” argues Terris, “lacks integrity and transparency, qualities which responsible media like to claim they are guardians of.” Furthermore, he says, it “is a clumsy and reprehensible attempt to use the power of the Media itself to forestall proper legal process, which, in the Public Interest, must include the process of legislation.”

The Society (SPCS) is monitoring this situation very closely and is well aware, based on its own experiences of the complaint/review process it has engaged in with both the BSA and ASA, how difficult it is to get a fair and balanced hearing. Terris belies the new self-styled Media Council has been set up in this way because those behind it “are utterly opposed to the kind of regulation that is being introduced into every other country in the Western World (e.g. Britain’s OFCOM) where all media complaints are administered by one organisation ensuring consistency of standards and a common approach. Successive Governments in the U.K. and elsewhere have decided that the Media are simply not to be trusted to regulate themselves.”

Source: Spring Newsletter Media Matters in NZ (2018).

Note: Media Matters in NZ seeks to achieve its stated vision: “A Media Environment in NZ that is safe for all: free of gratuitous sex, violence, and offensive language. So parents can trust what their children see.

Please check out: <http://www.viewers.org.nz/>

## **The Objectives of SPCS**

### **From Section 2 of the Constitution**

- (a) To encourage self-respect and the dignity of the human person, made in the image of God.
- (b) To uphold the universally held principle: "Every human being has the inherent right to life"
- (c) To promote wholesome personal values, consistent with the moral teachings of the Bible, including strong family life and the benefits of lasting marriage as the foundation for stable communities.
- (d) To focus attention on the harmful nature and consequences of sexual promiscuity, obscenity, pornography, violence, fraud, dishonesty in business, exploitation, abuse of alcohol and drugs, and other forms of moral corruption, for the purpose of moral and spiritual improvement.
- (e) To foster public awareness of the benefits to social, economic and moral welfare of the maintenance and promotion of good community standards.
- (f) To support responsible freedom of expression which does not injure the public good by degrading, dehumanising or demeaning individuals or classes of people.
- (g) To raise money that will be used... to promote the moral and spiritual welfare of sectors of society that need special help.

### **For more details see:**

<https://spcs.org.nz/objectives/>

**Note to 2(b)** See: United Nations Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and "the child by reason of physical and mental immaturity, needs safeguards and care, including legal protection" (UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959; see also the World Medical Association's Declaration of Geneva 1948).

## **The Society Welcomes New Members**

### **How to Become a Member**

Please visit our Society on the Internet to obtain application forms, or email us, or write to us or cut out this form, complete it and send it to us.

Website: <http://www.spcs.org.nz>

Email: [spcs.org@gmail.com](mailto:spcs.org@gmail.com)

Mail – SPCS. PO Box 13-683 Johnsonville 6440

Note: Membership of SPCS is by way of a donation. Cheques should be made out to "SPCS Inc." or "Society for Promotion of Community Standards Inc." PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU WANT A RECEIPT SENT TO YOU. Yes/ No (Circle/delete. Please send stamped addressed envelope). We try and acknowledge by letter all those who send donations of \$50 or more.

Having read the Society's Objectives I wish to support your work and apply for one Full Year's Membership. I support the Society's objectives – see inset to the right of this column, or visit <http://www.spcs.org.nz/objectives/>

My Contact details are:

Name.....

Postal ..... Address .....

Tel. No. and E-mail .....

Signed.....

My membership donation is enclosed (suggested voluntary minimum is \$45 per individual).  
Yes/No

Please answer: I would like to recommend as a potential SPCS member (Please provide contact details on separate sheet to us so we can send out information) Yes/No. I wish to receive regular news updates by email Yes/No



## News Items: Charities

### Family First Maintains Charitable Status During Appeal



Family First is welcoming an order made by the Wellington High Court that the Charities Board maintain Family First's registration as a charity until its appeal against deregistration is heard in the Court of Appeal. **Bob McCoskrie**, National Director of Family First NZ. [photo to left] stated:

"The Charities Board had notified us that we were to be removed from the Charities Register tomorrow (28 September [2018]) due to the judgment by Justice France in the Wellington High Court last month which upheld the Charities Board's decision to de-register Family First as a charity," says

The High Court stated in its judgment that Family First's "...core purpose of promoting the traditional family unit cannot be shown to be in the public benefit in the charitable sense under the Act."

**Family First does not accept the High Court's analysis or its conclusions and is now appealing to the Court of Appeal.**

"An overly restrictive or narrow view of what is in the public benefit is likely to be of concern to all charities, many of which have a certain emphasis or point of view. The importance of freedom of expression and open debate in a civil society are ideals every New Zealander should be defending.

Source: Press Release: Family First

Thursday, 27 September 2018

Check out: <https://www.familyfirst.org.nz/>

For further background see:

[https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/family-first-loses-charity-status-vows-appeal-high-court?variant=tb\\_v\\_1](https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/family-first-loses-charity-status-vows-appeal-high-court?variant=tb_v_1)

## Important Breaking News:

### Australia Government Supports Charity Advocacy For Marriage

The Australian government has accepted a recommendation from the Ruddock review into religious freedom to amend their Charities Act to ensure that groups who say marriage is between a man and a woman are not stripped of their charitable status.

"This is in stark contrast to what is happening in New Zealand where the Charities Board is attempting to deregister Family First in part because of our views on marriage," says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ.

The High Court recently upheld the Charities Board's decision, stating that Family First's "...core purpose of promoting the traditional family unit cannot be shown to be in the public benefit in the charitable sense under the Act." That decision is now being appealed to the Court of Appeal.

The Ruddock Review just released says: "*The Commonwealth should amend section 11 of the Charities Act 2013 to clarify that advocacy of a 'traditional' view of marriage would not, of itself, amount to a 'disqualifying purpose'.* In response, the Government said:

*"Mere advocacy of a position contrary to Australian Government policy (even if a policy is reflected in specific legislative provisions) does not meet the threshold of a disqualifying purpose. Indeed, advocating a change to law or policy in furtherance of another charitable purpose may itself be a charitable purpose. For the avoidance of all doubt, the Australian Government will introduce legislative amendments to section 11 of the Charities Act to clarify that engaging in, or promoting, activities that support marriage as previously defined in the Marriage Act 1961 will not, of itself, amount to a 'disqualifying purpose' under the Charities Act.*

"This amendment should be introduced in New Zealand also. Marriage between one man and one woman remains a perfectly legitimate and reasonable point of view, as indeed it has been for millennia. Freedom of expression and belief, breadth of views and reasoned debate can themselves be educational and in the public benefit in the charitable sense."

"An overly restrictive or narrow view of what is in the public benefit is likely to be of concern to all charities, many of which have a certain emphasis or point of view."

Family First is appealing their deregistration to the Court of Appeal because the importance of freedom of expression and open debate in a civil society are ideals every New Zealander should be defending.

**ENDS**

For more see Media Release dated 16 December 2018

<https://www.familyfirst.org.nz/2018/12/australia-govt-supports-charity-advocacy-for-marriage/>

## Breaking News: Euthanasia

### David Seymour Struggling to Save his Contentious Euthanasia Bill [according to Right to Life]



Members of Parliament should not be seduced by David Seymour's proposed amendments to his euthanasia bill. Right to Life contends that David Seymour knew from the outset that in order to get any Euthanasia bill across the line he had to 'shoot for the stars' in order to 'get to the moon'. He knows that once any Euthanasia

bill is enacted in Parliament, then it will be only a matter of time before the criteria for those eligible for euthanasia death will be widened. There has always been the danger to the vulnerable inherent in any change to our current Crimes Act legislation. Man is a pragmatic creature and in an increasingly secular society, that has no foundation of objective morality, pragmatic measures will soon see safeguards eroded, with an ever widening class of persons eligible to be killed by a 'doctor'.

David Seymour made the astounding statement on TV One News tonight (Thursday 13th December), that following his proposed amendments, there was now no reason that the Hon Maggie Barry – who has recently submitted a Private Members palliative care bill to the ballot – should not support his bill. Such a statement shows a complete lack of understanding of why she and others oppose any euthanasia bill, which permits doctors to kill their patients.

Right to Life commends Members of Parliament for protecting the vulnerable in our community by opposing his End of Life Choice bill currently with the Justice Select Committee. They are encouraged to avoid being enticed to support this bill by the seductive amendments now being proposed.

Right to Life is delighted that David Seymour has now recognised that the majority of Members of Parliament are opposed to his EOLCB and that his bill will suffer an ignoble defeat at its second reading in March. This bill is poorly drafted and is a threat to the most vulnerable members of our community, the aged, the disabled and the seriously ill.

David Seymour should also recognise that the majority of New Zealanders are fiercely opposed to his contentious bill. A careful analysis of the more than 36,000 written submissions to the Justice Committee is being conducted by the Care Alliance. This undertaking is not complete but to date it reveals that 92 per cent are opposed to the bill.

The Justice Committee has a moral obligation to finalise its report back to Parliament reflecting the overwhelming opposition to this dangerous bill expressed by the public in their submissions.

David Seymour is desperate to save his bill and is now proposing three amendments:

For Parliament to allow doctors to kill only those in a terminal condition or to assist in their suicide and to exclude patients who have a mental health condition.

To include support for the Palliative Care bill of the Hon, Maggie Barry.

David Seymour does not understand that the bill is fundamentally flawed because it undermines the total prohibition against the taking of innocent human life, which is the foundation of the law and medicine.

There is no amendment that can be made to this bill that will make it acceptable.

Right to Life earnestly requests that the media which should be at the service of the community, now withdraw support for this dangerous bill. The media have an important role in protecting our community by upholding and defending the prohibition of the medical profession to care for their patients and not to kill them.



Ken Orr: Spokesperson. Right to Life.

Source: Right to Life Media Release: 13/12/18,  
<https://righttolife.org.nz/>

Published 17/12/18:

<http://gisborneherald.co.nz/opinion/3853439-135/struggling-to-save-his-euthanasia-bill>