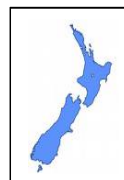


The SPCS SOCIETY

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)

P.O. Box 13-683 JOHNSONVILLE 6440 NZ

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Newsletter June 2017. Issue 123

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NOTICE: SPCS 2017 AGM

Date and Time 7.30 p.m Friday 30th June

Venue: Central Baptist Church, 46 Boulcott St,
Wellington (free parking available opp. church)

AGM followed by Free Public Address
(All welcome)

8 pm to 8.45 p.m. approx.

**Lecture topic: "Voluntary Euthanasia –
Assisted Suicide"**

Speaker: Dr John Kleinsman

Director of The Nathaniel Centre, Wellington #

Followed by questions & discussion

Concluding with supper: 9.00 p.m. – 9.15 p.m. approx.

New Zealand Catholic Bioethics Centre

Membership of the Society is by way of a donation for those who commit support to our objectives. See page 9 for membership details and/or visit our website www.spcs.org.nz

Please make a 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) – 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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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

News Item: New Chief Censor Appointed

In a NZ Government Press Release² dated 27 April 2017 Internal Affairs Minister, Hon. Peter Dunne, announced the appointment of David Shanks as the Chief Censor of Film and Literature for a three-year term. (Applications closed on 30 September 2016). The appointment was effective from 8 May 2017.³



New Chief Censor David Shanks⁴

“Mr Shanks is a senior public servant who has held roles as chief legal officer and a number of acting deputy chief executive positions. His senior management and legal experience in the public sector will be of great benefit to the Classification Office.” Mr Dunne said.

The Office of Film and Literature Classification is an independent Crown entity, established under the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 to examine and classify publications, including films, videos, books, magazines, sound recordings and computer files.

Recently the Classification Office has created a new RP18 rating specifically for the popular Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*. The classification recognises that teens are watching and will continue to watch the series, while signalling the strong content (including gratuitous scenes of rape, sexual abuse and suicide) and emphasising the essential role of parents and caregivers in discussing this material with young people in their care.

² <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/chief-censor-appointment>

³ <http://www.classificationoffice.govt.nz/about-nz-classification/a-brief-history-of-censorship-in-new-zealand.html>

⁴ <https://nz.linkedin.com/in/david-shanks-a4650251> Mr Shanks who completed a (LLB)/BA at Otago University, also has a Master of Laws (LL.M.), First Class Honours, from Victoria University. He has held the roles of Chief Legal Advisor, General Manager of Human Relations and Deputy Chief Executive within the Ministry of Social Development. Most recently, he was Director - Health and Safety and Security at the NZ Ministry of Education.

Mr Shank's predecessor Dr Andrew Jack, who was Chief Censor from 7 March 2011 to 7 May 2017, stated:

“If I’m watching pornography that’s R18, there’s nothing wrong with that. Except that if I watch large quantities of it, it may be influencing the way I interact with real life people.”

In a Media Release dated 22 September 2016 Dr Jack said the Classification Office is viewing an increasing amount of horrific and gratuitous sexual violence in mainstream entertainment targeting young people: “Violent media is helping to shape a violent New Zealand,” he stated.⁵

Having learnt of the ‘diet’ of films our Chief Censor has to watch, a reporter wrote: “Having to watch sex and violence on films that come into the Classification Office must be enough to make you want to watch *The Sound of Music* on loop.”⁶

The Society was very pleased to learn of the resignation of Chief Censor Bill Hastings in July 2010. Appointed Deputy Chief Censor in 1998 and Chief Censor in 1999, he described his job as involving “by and large ...a pretty steady diet of sex, cruelty, horror and violence.” He admitted after 12 years in the job he had been getting “perilously” close “to view[ing] the role of chief censor as a career.”⁷

The Society holds strongly to the view that neither the Chief Censor nor his or her deputy should be allowed to serve more than two terms (i.e. six years maximum) in their respective statutory roles, because of the corrosive and toxic impact that viewing large quantities of porn, particularly that which contains gratuitous violence combined with sex, can have on their minds. By watching such “large quantities of it” they run the very real risk of desensitisation, potentially impairing their ability to make proper judgments relating to classification decisions that are critical to the protection of vulnerable persons such as children and young persons, from harm.

⁶ <http://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/film/80044376/National-Portrait-Dr-Andrew-Jack-Chief-Censor>

⁷ <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/3837148/Chief-film-censor-to-become-a-judge>

Presidential Urgent Appeal for Funding Support for 2017/18



Dear members, friends and supporters of SPCS

The Society is now in its 17th year of operation since the passing of its founder Patricia Bartlett OBE and in its 42nd 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 executive I appeal to you to please help us find funding sources for the Society so we can continue and expand our work for the remainder of 2017 and into 2018. We are most grateful for some very generous donations received last year which is indicative of the wonderful goodwill that exists among members.

Please Note: The prompt renewal of your membership donations for the current financial year (which commenced on 1/1/17), 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 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) 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

John Mills - President Elect - SPCS

The Seymour End of Life Choice Bill



The *End of Life Choice Bill*, sponsored by ACT MP David Seymour (photo above),⁸ was drawn from the members’ bills ballot on 8 June 2017. It may receive its First Reading vote by August 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.

The Pro- Euthanasia Petition

National MP Simon O’Connor – Chair of Health Select Committee that considered a Petition from former Labour MP **Hon Maryan Street** and 8,974 others requested:

“That the House of Representatives investigate fully public attitudes towards the introduction of legislation which would permit medically-assisted dying in the event of a terminal illness or an irreversible condition which makes life unbearable.”...

⁸ Photo source

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

The petition was presented by Ms Street and her supporters to MPs on 23 June last 2015 and garnered cross-party support. The petition asked for a change to existing law. In response the Health Select Committee began the process of undertaking an investigation into ending one's life in New Zealand.

As of 11 August 2016 The Office of the Clerk had processed a total of 21,436 written submissions. More than 1800 submitters felt strongly enough about the euthanasia issue that they indicated that they wanted to appear in front of Parliament's Health Select Committee to speak to MPs directly. Committee chair, National MP Simon O'Connor, was responsible for the hearings that have been held around New Zealand. A parliamentary issue has not garnered similar levels of public participation since the same sex marriage bill in 2012.⁹ The euthanasia petition was instigated by the voluntary Euthanasia Society of New Zealand and Ms Street following the death of the right-to-die campaigner and lawyer, Lucretia Seales.

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

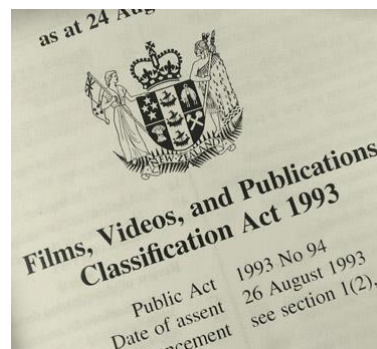
The Voluntary Euthanasia Society made a big deal of the fact that 'the Health Select Committee received a record 21,533 submissions on the issue, claiming that this indicated intense public interest in a potential law change. However, they assumed incorrectly that most submissions would support the change. Instead an analysis of the results showed the very opposite! The Care Alliance analysed 21,277 submissions, excluding duplicates and a small number that could not be coded. An independent research company reviewed a sample of the coded submissions and concluded "with at least 95% confidence that the overall classification percentages are accurate within no more than 0.4% variation".

The results showed that 77.1 % of submissions (16,411) were opposed to a law change, 19.5 % (4,142) were in favour, and 3.4 % (724) were neutral or unclear on this issue.

⁹ Labour MP Louisa Wall's marriage equality bill promoted fierce debate with the select committee receiving more than 20,000 written submissions, including one from SPCS.

SPCS SUBMISSION ON: Films, Videos, and Publications Classification (Interim Restriction Order Classification) Amendment Bill.

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/member/2016/0205/latest/DLM7029804.html>



On 2 February 2017 the Society made its written submission to the Justice and Electoral Committee on the private member's bill sponsored by National List MP Chris Bishop. This bill was introduced to parliament on the 10th November 2016, and had its 1st reading on 7th December 2016. It would amend the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 to provide the President of the Film and Literature Board of Review, and the High Court, with flexibility when making interim restriction orders, to classify the order as applying to a particular age or class of persons, or for a particular purpose. At present all orders granted can only serve to impose a total (albeit *interim*) 'ban'.

The 8-page Ministry of Justice Report on the Submissions to the Committee on the Bill made note of the SPCS submission and took its views into account. The Commentary on the Bill by the Committee was released by parliament on 7 June 2017 and the Bill received its approval, with recommended amendments. It will go to a second reading in the House, with timing dependent on the government's legislative programme. The Society's submission proved very relevant as it set out arguments against the removal of the Interim Restriction Order mechanism and supported retention of the powers the President of the Board currently has, to grant a total 'ban' on a publication that is subject to review. SPCS pointed out that an order issued by the High Court in 2002 proved effective in shutting out the French rape film *Baise-Moi* from a film festival while the Board of Review, under direction from the Court, reviewed its R18 classification (SPCS was the successful applicant that sought the order). Soon after it was 'banned' by the order, the Beck's Incredibly Strange Film Festival, directed by Ant Timpson, which had tried to screen it, was closed down for good. In Australia *Baise-Moi* was banned.

What is the *Imago Dei*? Part I

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

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

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



According to Christian doctrine the mystery of personhood is rooted in God who speaks of Himself in the plural (“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...”),¹⁰ as if to imply that the image (*imago Dei*) is that in God which *is* plural: the divine hypostases of Divine Persons in the Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Man, created a living person, both male and female,¹¹ was declared by God to be “very good”¹² and was made capable of enjoying spiritual life (communion) in fellowship with fellow man (a person) and with God his Creator (a Person).¹³ The most distinguished Catholic philosopher of the 20th Century, Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), in his paper “The Immortality of Man”, contends that it is “simple and decisive intuition, by means of which the incomparable value of the human person is revealed to us”¹⁴ He highlights the fact that St. Thomas Aquinas warns us that the Person is what is noblest and most perfect in the whole of nature.¹⁵

The fullest expression of our personhood will be revealed in the eschaton, the final eternal state of things, which will be issued in at Christ’s return. Christian believers look toward to that full sanctity and glory that is promised to them involving the resurrection of their mortal bodies.¹⁶ All the Abrahamic traditions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, teach that only man among earthly creatures is made in the image of God.

The Hebraic scholar, Dr Nahum Sarna, expresses the orthodox Judaeo-Christian view of the nature of Man, when he stresses the fact that Man is “the pinnacle of creation.”¹⁷ He notes that Biblical revelation emphasises three times that *Divine activity* was involved in Man's creation (Heb. *bara* - “to create”¹⁸ [Gen. 1:26-27; 5:2; 9:6]), and that “the pagan bond between man and nature has been severed once and for all,” according to the Genesis account. This account of creation has been viewed by many scholars as a strong polemic against idolatry with the clear affirmation that God manifested His presence through human persons as His image. The influential Swiss Protestant (Reformed) Neo-orthodox theologian Emil Brunner (1889-1966) wrote, in 1952: “Man's decisive position above Nature, however, is attained in the fact that he does not worship it as divine ... So long as man regards Nature as divine (as is the case throughout the pagan word) he is not really its master, he has not really risen above it, and he is also not really capable of being truly human.”¹⁹

¹⁷ N.M. Sarna, “Understanding Creation in Genesis”, in Roland M. Frye ed., *Is God a Creationist?: The Religious Case Against Creation Science* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983) 165-68.

¹⁸ When used as a noun “*bara*” means the Creator Himself (Eccl. 12:1 “Remember also *your Creator* ...”; Is. 40: 28 “*The Creator* of the ends of the earth ...”). As a verb “*bara*” is used exclusively as a term for Divine *bringing forth*, for which there is no corresponding human analogy. It is used on other occasions in the Old Testament outside Gen. 1-2 (eg. Num. 16:30; Ps. 51:10). “*Bara*” is never used with the accusative of a material of which something is to be made. This shows that the Divine creativity has no conditions or premises. Creation is something absolutely new. It is neither actually nor potentially inherent or present in anything else. The Genesis text makes a clear distinction between creating (*bara*) and making (*asah*). However, in Is. 43:7 Divine activity is described by using these two words as well as *yatsar* (formed): - “Whom I have formed [*yatsar*] even whom I have made [*asah*].” The verb “*bara*” adds to *asah* (to make), the force of something completely new which did not exist before (eg. Ex. 34:10 - “Behold I am going to make [*asah*] a covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not *been produced* [*bara* - lit. created] in all the earth ...”; Nu. 16:30 “But if the Lord *brings about* an entirely new thing”; Is. 48: 6-7 “I proclaim to you new things from this time ... They are *created* now”; Is. 65: 17 “For behold, I *create* new heavens and a new earth ...”). See Thomas J. Finley, Dimensions of the Hebrew Word for “Create”, *Bibliotheca Sacra* (October-December 1991): 409-423.

¹⁹ Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption* (Lutterworth Press, 1952) 67.... The word “master” should not be taken to mean that man is given a licence in Genesis to exploit and abuse nature. Rather, man is to be a loving custodian of all of God’s creatures and a wise recipient of all the bounty creation provides for his material needs.

¹⁰ Gen. 1:26. C.f. Gen. 3:22: “Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; ...” Also see Gen. 11:7: “Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language..”

¹¹ Genesis 1:27

¹² Genesis 1:31.

¹³ Gen. 1:18-25; 1 Jn. 1:6-7.

¹⁴ Jacques Maritain, “The Immortality of Man,” *The Review of Politics* (October, 1941) 411-427. At p. 411.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ I Cor 15:50-57; Jn. 17:23-24; I Jn 3:2-3.

Sarna notes that once man recognises the fact that he belongs to a different ontological order than nature, then "no longer is man a creature of blind forces."²⁰

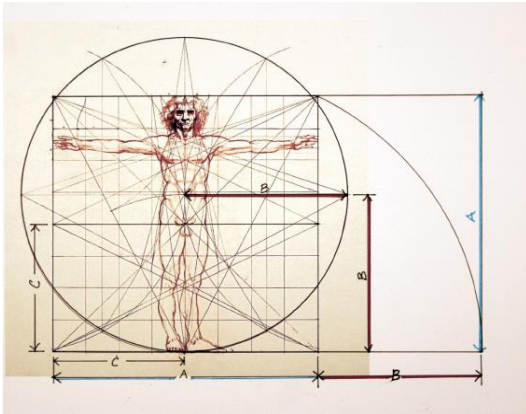


Fig. 2 Vitruvian Man: Drawing after Leonardo da Vinci by Jose De Jesus. It shows the relationship between the circle and the square as a result of the Golden Section. The relation: $(A+B)/A = A/B = \Phi$ which is the Greek letter Phi or 1.618.²¹

The writer of Genesis states that which is confirmed by the Apostles: man was created in "the image [Heb. *selem*] of God"²² [Latin = *Imago Dei*] and as such his life is very precious, truths that apply both before and after the Fall of man.²³ Neo-orthodox theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968) noted "...it is not surprising that neither in the rest of the Old Testament nor in the New is there any trace or the abrogation of this ideal state, or the partial or complete destruction of the *Imago Dei*."²⁴ The Apostle Paul teaches that man (male) is made "in the image [Heb. *selem*] and glory of God",²⁵ and both male and female were made in the "likeness [Heb. *d'mût*] of God".²⁶

In Genesis 5:1 the Hebrew word *d'mût* is used to denote "image" and in Genesis 9:6 the Hebrew word *selem* is used to denote the same. In the Septuagint both Hebrew words are translated in the Greek as *eikôn*.²⁷ Current scriptural exegesis views these Hebrew words *selem* and *d'mût* as synonymous.²⁸ Man was also created with a moral likeness to God.²⁹ He was created because God willed it (for His pleasure),³⁰ to mirror God's glory as the pinnacle or apex of creation,³¹ not to "mirror" the glory of so-called 'Mother Nature' or the evolutive process as such; because man's origin is in God,³² not in natural processes.³³ Man was given authority to exercise or have "dominion" over all of nature,³⁴ a point that some theologians argue today is critical to an understanding of *imago Dei*.³⁵

²⁷ In the New Testament the primary word used for image is *eikôn*. It is used 24 times and of these in 12 it denotes physical representation and in five it relates man to the image of Christ or God (Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 11:7; 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10).

²⁸ James Barr, "The Image of God in the Book of Genesis – A Study in Terminology," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 51 (1968-69):15-26. Also see John Piper, "The Image of God: An Approach from Biblical and Systematic Theology," *Studia Biblica et Theologica*, (March 1971). Thomas Aquinas expressed a contrary view: Likeness is distinct from image "so far as any likeness falls short of image, or again as it perfects the idea of image." Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (New York: Benzinger Bros., 1947) I: 477; John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*. Trans. John King. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.) 1948. Calvin 1:15:3.

²⁹ Col. 3:10; James 3:9.

³⁰ Rev. 4:11: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

³¹ Genesis 1:26-28; 2 Corinthians 3:18. Von Rad wrote "Humans are the apex, the climax, the goal of all creation" see: Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), 57.

³² Matt. 19:4

³³ Cf. Heb. 11:3.

³⁴ Gen. 1:29-30; Ps. 8:6-8. The words to "have (or exercise) dominion" translates the Hebrew verb *radah*, which is an expression usually associated with a King's rule (1 Kings 5:3; Ps. 77:8; Ps. 110:2; Is. 14:6; Ezek. 34:4).

³⁵ D.J.A. Clines, "The Image of God in Man," *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968): 95-99; A.H. Konkel, "Male and Female as the Image of God," *Didaskalia* 3/2 (April 1992): 2-3; Michael Welker, "Creation and the Image of God: Their Understanding in Christian Tradition and the Biblical Grounds," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 34/3 (Summer 1997): 446-448. Cited in Ryan Klassen (2004). C.f. Psalm 8:6-8 "Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands..." Old Testament scholars are virtually unanimous in understanding the image of God in Old Testament texts to refer to the cultural mandate, that is, for humans to exercise dominion over Nature.

²⁰ Sarna, "Understanding Creation in Genesis".

²¹ Figure Sourced from <https://www.researchgate.net>

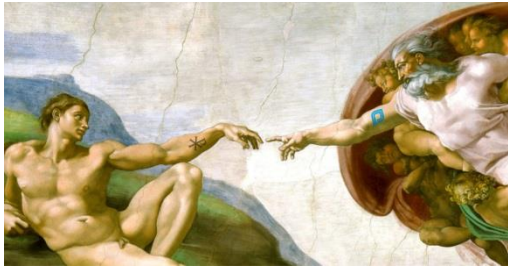
²² Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6

²³ Gen. 9:6. The prohibition against murder, issued to Noah and his sons after the Flood, appeals to the fact that man is made in the image of God. The benefits of being created in God's image continue to be present realities after the Fall.

²⁴ Karl Barth, "The Doctrine of Creation," *Church Dogmatics*, III/1, ed. G. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958) 200. Barth asserts that "man is created in correspondence with the image of God." In other words he is an image of The image of God (Christ).

²⁵ 1 Cor. 11:7. The explicit linkage of "image" and "glory" in this verse is noteworthy. It is apparent that reflecting God's glory is an important component of possession of the divine image, perhaps deriving from Psalm 8:5. See Preben Vang, 1 Corinthians (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014) 148. C.f. Is. 43:7; 2 Cor. 3: 18.

²⁶ Gen. 5:1; James. 3:9 James uses the concept of *imago* in the same way as God uses it in Genesis 9:6 – to provide a rationale for a prohibition on cursing and slander, referring to "men who have been made in the likeness [Gk. *homosiosis*] of God".



Davis contends that: “The dominion which man enjoyed in the Garden of Eden was a *direct consequence* of the image of God in him.”³⁶ The dominion mandate has never been rescinded by God and it is referred to by King David in Psalm 8 to explain how much the Creator cares³⁷ for mankind who He created “a little lower than God” (or transl. - the angels), relative to all other living creatures in the physical realm.³⁸ The same passage is quoted in the Book of Hebrews to emphasise mankind’s unique role, with respect to “the world to come”.³⁹ It is noteworthy that linked directly with the reference to *imago Dei* in Genesis 1:26-27 is the instruction God gave to man as recorded in the next verse: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it,”⁴⁰ which follows on directly from the blessing He gave to humankind, empowering them to fulfil these roles.

What then is the concept of *imago Dei* (“image of God”), widely considered to be a foundational doctrine central to Christian anthropology⁴¹? At first blush, based on the three references to it in the book of Genesis,⁴² it would appear to be a definition of human nature, but upon closer inspection, taking full account of biblical revelation as a whole, it redirects our attention toward the nature of the triune God and His Glory – revealed in the face of Jesus Christ.⁴³ Jesus is “the heavenly man,”⁴⁴ who is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation”.⁴⁵ The *imago Dei*, as noted earlier, is first presented in the context of a revealed eschatological hope.⁴⁶

³⁶ John L. Davis, *Paradise to Prison* (Salem: Sheffield Publishing Co. 1998) 81. Italics added.

³⁷ Psalm 8:4: “What is man that thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man that Thou dost care for him?”

³⁸ Psalm 8:4-8.

³⁹ Hebrews 2: 5-8.

⁴⁰ The word subdue translates the Hebrew word *kabas* which means literally “to trample under ones feet” (Jer. 34:11-16; Zech. 9:15; Neh. 5:5; 2 Chr. 28:10).

⁴¹ The doctrine of *Imago Dei* is considered to provide an understanding of the true nature of humanity, as individuals and as a corporate entity. It is widely viewed as the basis for the Christian valuation of human life and to define the true purpose of humans in this world and the next.

⁴² Gen. 2:27; 5:1-2; 9:6.

⁴³ 2 Cor. 4:6

⁴⁴ 1 Cor. 15:49

⁴⁵ Col. 1:15

⁴⁶ Gen. 3:15. Here is a prophecy concerning the coming Messiah.

Noreen L. Herzfeld, writes that the concept of the *imago Dei* “has been used over the ages to represent our understanding that what matters most in our nature is that which we share with God. We must never lose sight of that relationship with God, even as we share aspects of our nature....”⁴⁷ The best-known and historically the most widely held understanding of *imago Dei* is perhaps one that views it as defined by certain God-given characteristics and capabilities, psychological or spiritual, inherent in the structure of human nature. It has been reasoned that these features or properties, individually held, presumably resemble corresponding qualities in God, and because of this humans must be like God. The divine image refers to “something *within the substantial form* of human nature, some faculty or capacity man possesses”⁴⁸ to cite Ramsey’s characterisation of this understanding. Because the *imago dei* is viewed as a quality or capability located within the human, supporters of this view have theorised that it remains present regardless of whether or not a person acknowledges God. It is viewed as constituting us as embodied human persons⁴⁹ and cannot be lost. Insofar as its locus is the very structure of human nature, this view has been designated the terms “structuralist” or “substantive” view.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Noreen L. Herzfeld, *In Our Image: Artificial Intelligence and the Human Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002) 84. This book has been described as the first extensive theological engagement with the field of Artificial Intelligence.

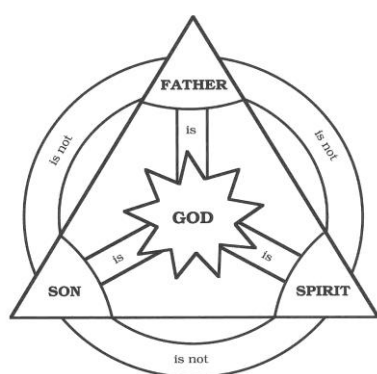
⁴⁸ Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1950) 250. Italics in the original.

⁴⁹ See Benjamin Valentin, *Theological Cartographies: Mapping the Encounter with God, Humanity and Christ* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2015), 8—84 (“Human Beings: Embodied Persons”) in Chapter 2: “Deciphering the Riddle of the Human Condition”.

⁵⁰ 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.

A variety of opinions have been expressed by theologians as to what specific structure of human nature makes up the divine image, with the human ability to reason and comprehend moral and religious truth, and the will, held most universally as defining *imago Dei*.⁵¹ Reason, the faculty by which humans are exalted above the animals, has been historically seen to be a primary characteristic humans shared with God: the rational soul mirrors the divine.

St Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430 AD), who was greatly influenced by Neo-Platonism, 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*.



Augustine's Trinitarian structural definition of *imago Dei*, elaborated in his book *The Trinity*⁵² completed around 419AD, was based on his view that the mind of man was comprised of memory, understanding, and will, and that this tripartite nature evident to man, reflected the Trinitarian nature of the Godhead.⁵³

These views depend on humanity being embodied in space-time in order to possess the “divine image” and the emphasis is on a quality of man that is *individually* held.

However the “divine image” existed in all its fullness and glory, prior to the creation of the cosmos, specifically prior to the foundation of the earth; in the Person of the Son of God - the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.⁵⁴

Jesus Christ taught that God is a Spirit,⁵⁵ (i.e. immaterial) and Paul identified Jesus Christ, the God-Man, as “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn⁵⁶ of all creation.”⁵⁷ Humans were created as *imago dei* to bridge the gap between the transcendent God and his creation, thereby being His representatives or vice-gerents⁵⁸ in the physical realm. (If *imago dei* is understood as *limited to* a “representative” understanding of *imago Dei*, it removes all structural aspects of image). St John tells us that all of creation, including man, was created to bring God pleasure.⁵⁹

Christ, as the true and perfect *imago Dei*, bridges the gap between the holy God and his fallen creation.⁶⁰ The Fall did not remove the *imago* from man but severed the spiritual relationship man had with his God, and marred the human inter-personal relationship and that with nature, that had previously enabled both man and woman to function as God intended as the *imago dei*.

⁵⁵ John. 4:24; ““God is spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” Cf. Philippians 3:3: “...we ... who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus...” Also see Gen. 1:2; Num. 24:2; 1 Sam. 10:10; 19:20; Ezek. 11:24; Matt. 3:16; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 2:11. Christ's eternal relationship with the Father is in view, and the clause means both that He Himself produced creation (the genitive case being objective, as v. 16 Direct references to Divine formlessness include: Deut. 4:12 and John 5:37.

⁵⁶ Firstborn [Gk. *prōtotokos*; from *prōtos*, “first,” and *tikō*, “to beget”]. Col. 1:15 makes this clear). In His relationship to the Father, the term expresses His priority to, and preeminence over, creation, not in the sense of being the “first” to be born. It is used occasionally of superiority of position in the OT. *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* eds. W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985) 240-41. There is widespread consensus among scholars that *prōtotokos* (Gk.) [“firstborn”] means preeminent in rank, *not* the first being the Father created. See David E. Garland, *Colossians/Philemon* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1998) 87. C.f. James D.G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 97-98.

⁵⁷ Col. 1:15. C.f. 2 Cor. 4:4; Phil. 2:6; Heb. 1:3; John 1:18.

⁵⁸ Vice-gerent carries the connotation of one appointed to act in the place of a ruler, as opposed to a vice-regent who is a deputy or assistant to the ruler. Ryan Klassen, ‘As The Image: A Functional Understanding of the Imago Dei, *Quodlibet Journal* 6/3 (July - September 2004).

⁵⁹ Rev. 4:11 “... for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

⁶⁰ 1 Tim. 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

⁵¹ E.g. Samuel Rolles Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (London, Methuen, 1907) 32

⁵² Augustine, Edmund Hill, John E. Rotelle, and Augustinian Heritage Institute, *The Trinity: The Works of Saint Augustine* (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1991).

⁵³ See: Romans 1:20.

⁵⁴ John 1:14; 17:5; 22-24

As his vice-gerents,⁶¹ man was created to be entirely dependent on the Creator for guidance and direction. In carrying out the God-given task of naming the animals and tending the garden, we can assume that man took care to carry out God's rule. Being an image means being dependent upon the thing you are imaging.

The Fall of man that followed man eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, can be viewed as a grasping by man for autonomy, an attempt to exalt himself above being merely the *imago dei* to being God himself. Only God has knowledge of good and evil, an attribute of God alone, for to truly know what is good and evil, one must be omniscient.⁶² Evil springs from a wilful opposition to God, which is sin.

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*. Jesus taught his disciples and the writers of the New Testament affirm it, that His authority extends over all creation, including all humans, all unseen principalities and powers in the spiritual and heavenly dimensions,⁶³ even over man's last enemy, death itself.⁶⁴ Through His Resurrection, Death itself is "swallowed up in victory".⁶⁵ Therefore Christ is perfectly able to fully reconcile humans and creation with God,⁶⁶ whom he represents.⁶⁷ Paul wrote: "For in [Christ] the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily."⁶⁸ Here Paul ascribes to Jesus divinity equal to that of the Father. As St John put it: "To see Jesus is to see God."⁶⁹ Jesus is "the effulgence of God's glory and the *exact representation* [Gk. character] of his nature."⁷⁰ **Christ has eternally displayed in Himself, the complete image of God, and retained it fully even as He was "born of a woman",⁷¹ "partook of flesh and blood"⁷² and took on human nature through the Incarnation.**⁷³[Cont. on Pages 11-15].....

⁶¹ A person regarded as an earthly representative of God

⁶² Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984) 130-37.

⁶³ Matt 28:18; Col. 2:10; Eph. 1:21; Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:10

⁶⁴ 1 Cor. 15:26

⁶⁵ 1 Cor. 15:54

⁶⁶ Col. 1:20; 2 Cor. 5:18

⁶⁷ For a more detailed account see Charles Sherlock, *The Doctrine of Humanity* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1996) 49-72. At 66-68. Also See Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994) 442: "The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God".

⁶⁸ Col. 2:9.

⁶⁹ John 12:45; 14:9

⁷⁰ Hebrews 1:3; John 1:14

⁷¹ Galations 4:4

⁷² Hebrews 2:14; 1 Tim. 3:16

⁷³ Phil. 2:6

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Update: SPCS Efforts to seek a better Regulatory scheme and Enforcement by Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) relating to amendments made to the Companies Act 1993 that came into force on 28 August 2015.

A Report has been prepared by the Society (see last newsletter) and will be submitted to the government officials once it has been reviewed.

Update: NetSafe Inc. is investigating cyber bullying complaints using beefed up powers



In November 2016 NetSafe Incorporated began its new role as the Government's "approved agency" under the Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015 ("the Act"). It is now empowered to receive, assess and investigate complaints of cyber-abuse – an area which has up until now largely been the domain of the police. NetSafe chief executive Martin Cocker said an additional 10 full-time staff have been employed to take on the task. Police are now able to prosecute in cases of "serious harm" which typically involves the use of technology "in quite a violent way" said Cocker.

The Act makes it illegal to send or post online texts, images or video that would cause serious emotional distress. Offences are punishable by up to 2 years imprisonment or a \$50,000 fine. John Parsons, an internet safety and risk assessment consultant to schools has stated that cyber-bullying has a "huge impact" on victims and their families. The Government has committed \$16.4 million over 4 Years to support this Act. A portion will be used to enable NetSafe to carry out its role. NetSafe was founded as Internet Safety Group in September 1998 and changed its name 20 years later. It was registered as a charity (CC24058) with the Charities Commission (now called Charities Services) on 8 May 2008. (Note: Like SPCS it is both an incorporated society and a registered charity).

According to the Charities Services Register, NetSafe had a gross income of \$859,000, which included a Government grant of \$722,000, over its financial year ending 31 March 2015. From this it paid out \$632,206 in salaries and wages to five full-time staff plus one part-time (total hours 220 per week). NetSafe has yet to file its financial records for the year ending 31 March 2016. By law it is required to file these returns within 6 months of the close-of each financial year (i.e. by 30/09/16). The average salary or wage paid to each of the five full-time staff according to the 2015 return was over \$120,000, comprising 70% of its total income.

The Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015 is an important piece of legislation. According to the latest Unicef Report New Zealand has the worst teen suicide rate in the developed world.⁷⁴ The link between teen suicide and cyber-bullying has been well established by researchers, so the good work carried out by NetSafe which presumably will help avert some suicides, must be commended.



SPCS investigations into cyber-bullying have revealed that the operators of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter etc.) are now taking a much tougher line against on-line perpetrators of abuse, objectionable content, harassment etc. The use of such social media by internet "pimps" to market prostitutes (via so-called escort agencies on line), porn web-cams, etc. and the aggressive and nasty "turf-wars" between competing "adult industry" agencies, involving bullying tactics, have led to their Facebook accounts being shut-down for up to 30 days. It seems obvious that promoters of hardcore porn, who have to resort to social media to market their "adult industry" products, are losers. Their social media accounts are closed down regularly due to their recidivist offending. They are desensitised by the harmful and toxic impact of porn and objectionable images they market on line.

⁷⁴ <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/93705446/unicef-releases-damning-child-welfare-report> Suicides rates of 15-19 year olds per 100,000. Source: WHO mortality database [Rates based on the latest available data between 2009-2013. Highest 20 rates shown].

What is the *Imago Dei*? Part II

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

Continued from page 9.



Stain glass window depicting St Irenaeus

Second-century Church Father St Irenaeus of Lyons (125-202 AD), the first Christian writer to discuss the concept of *imago Dei* in some detail, correctly pointed out that the true image of God is found in the Incarnate Christ and humans are *secondarily* in God's image.⁷⁵ He also acknowledged that some aspects of God's image found in man include human rationality⁷⁶ and moral freedom.

Freedom along with temporality are pre-conditions for creatures to be capable of becoming 'other' than what they were created for: for creatures to enter into communion with God, and so be transfigured.⁷⁷ The question arises: If the purpose of God in creating man was to create beings who could partake of his glory and incorruptibility, then why did he not create man as a 'god' from the outset? Irenaeus provides a lengthy and detailed analysis of this question in his work *Against the Heretics*, providing answers in the light of his exposition of relevant Scriptures.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Thomas G. Weinandy, "St. Irenaeus and the *Imago Dei*: The Importance of Being Human," in *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, 6/4 (Fall 2003) 22

⁷⁶ Early Christian scholars who discussed *imago Dei* in terms of reason or the rational mind include Clement of Alexander, Origen, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa.

⁷⁷ John Behr, *Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement* (Oxford Early Christian Studies) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 44.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 43. See *Against the Heretics* 4. 37-9; 3:20. 1-2. Theologians have admitted at least implicitly that God had the freedom and capability, given His omnipotence, to make participated being arise in any state of perfection and association at all. A saying of Irenaeus was "God of Himself could have created man 'done' (*teleion*), but man's nature is incapable of such an operation."

Irenaeus was one of the first early theologians to argue that the image is present in man's material body, and consequently reveals the archetypal significance of Jesus Christ.⁷⁹

This view which finds some critical support today⁸⁰ and has been described as the "physicalist interpretation"⁸¹ of *imago Dei*, derives in part from interpretations of Scripture stressing Christ's humanity, the marvellous design of the human body,⁸² and the fact that Scripture teaches that a human body was prepared for Christ by Deity from before the foundation of the world.⁸³ This interpretation rests on the view that there is something about the human body which is uniquely suitable to God's manifestation of Himself, and since God knows all His works from the beginning of the world,⁸⁴ he must have designed man's body with this in mind. However the notion that humans were created to be literally in the likeness and image of God, physically, cannot be correct for a number of reasons, the first being that God is spirit⁸⁵ and unlike humans is ubiquitous.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ In his *Against Heresies*, he writes "For by the hands of the Father, that is by the Son and the Holy Spirit, man, and not a part of man, was made in the likeness of God. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.6.1. For Irenaeus, our actual physical body is evident of the image of God. Furthermore, because the Son is modeled after the Father, humans are likewise modeled after the Son and therefore bear a physical likeness to the Son. This implies that humans' likeness to God is revealed through embodied acts. Humans do not currently just exist in the pure image of God, because of the reality of sin. For a detailed discussion of the *imago Dei* in Irenaeus see: Jacques Fantino, *L'homme Image de Dieu chez Saint Irenée de Lyon* (Paris: Cerf, 1986).

⁸⁰ E.g. J. Maxwell Miller, "In the 'image' and 'Likeness' of God. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91/3 (September 1972): 291-293.

⁸¹ A strictly physicalist interpretation of *imago Dei* is the predominate understanding of Israel's Near Eastern neighbours. Israel's understanding of the nature Yahweh is in conflict with such a view and would seem to rule it out.

⁸² Phil. 2:7-8: "...[Christ] being made in the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man". Psalm 139:14-16: "For thou didst form my inward parts. Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Thy works, and my soul knows it very well"

⁸³ Hebrews 10:5; 2:17; Revelation 13:8.

⁸⁴ Acts 15:18

⁸⁵ John 4:24; Is. 31:3

⁸⁶ 1 Kings 8:27

A human person is a psychosomatic unity and it is the whole person – both physical and spiritual – who is in some sense like his Maker. Even as sinners human beings bear God’s image. When “reflecting on the marvel of man’s physical appearance” in relation to the *imago Dei*, theologian Gerhard Von Rad wrote: “...one will do well to split the physical from the physical *as little as possible*: the *whole man* is created in God’s image.”⁸⁷

The Enlightenment equation of *the imago Dei* with reason was opposed by a few scholars who equated it with man’s physical appearance, a view first expressed as noted, by Saint Irenaeus. Applying a correct Christological framework to our interpretation of the creation account, one that focuses on the Primacy of Christ,⁸⁸ leads to the biblical and balanced view that the goal of creation is not the unique features of humanity’s anatomy; thereby avoiding a simple conflation of creation into a theistic interpretation of evolution. The goal of creation and God’s purpose in making man in the Divine image is to honour Jesus,⁸⁹ not humanity, even though humanity has the potential through God’s grace of being made to be like Jesus. God had humans in mind *eternally* – that is from ‘before’ the very beginning of creation, because God chose to enflesh the Word, His Son. As St John wrote: “And the Word [Jesus] became flesh and dwelt [lit. tabernacled] among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”⁹⁰

The Apostle Paul teaches that when we bear the image of the “man of dust”⁹¹ – a clear reference in context to the fallen earthly man Adam through whom death entered the world⁹² – we act dishonourably or immorally.

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

⁸⁷ Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. by John M. Marks, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: The Westminster Pres, 1961) 56. Von Rod points out that the meanings and usage of the Hebrew words *selem* (likeness) and *d’mût* (image) is strong evidence that *imago dei* could be seen to include the physical likeness of man to the Divine or in the abstract sense of resemblance. Although the abstract sense is there, *d’mût*, which has greater flexibility in meaning than *salem*, is used uniformly in connection to a tangible or visual representation of something else.

⁸⁸ See Alan B. Wolter, “John Duns Scotus on the Primacy and Personality of Christ,” in Damian McElrath ed. *Franciscan Christology*, Franciscan Sources, no. 1, ed. George Marcil, 1980 (New York: Franciscan Institute, 1980), 139-82.

⁸⁹ Colossians 1:17-18: “He is before all things... so that He [Jesus] might come to have first place in everything”

⁹⁰ John 1:14

⁹¹ 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 49

⁹² 1 Cor. 15:56 “The sting of death is sin...”.

When we bear the image⁹³ of the heavenly man, Jesus Christ, we act honourably and morally.

The context of Paul’s reference to the “images” here is the Christian’s eschatological hope in the completed redemption of man in Christ⁹⁴: “Just as we have borne the likeness of the man who was made from dust, we will also bear the likeness of the man from heaven.”⁹⁵ The supremacy of Christ in all things is affirmed by Paul when he states the eschatological hope thus: “For whom he foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the *image of His son*, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.”⁹⁶ ... so that He himself will come to have first place in everything.”⁹⁷ “When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to him, *so that God may be all in all*.”⁹⁸

What the New Testament affirms and stresses is that the God-man Jesus Christ is the only true image of the invisible God, and those who are regenerated and born again and found “in Christ by faith”, are granted the grace and power to “put on the new self [Lit. man] who is being renewed [Lit. renovated] to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”⁹⁹

⁹³ For a wide-ranging discussion of what it means to “bear the image of God” see: Beth Felker Jones and Jeffrey W. Barbeau eds., *The Image of God in an Image Driven Age: Explorations in Theological Anthropology* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2016). The book includes contributions from the 24th Annual Wheaton Theology Conference, Wheaton College, Illinois. Also see “Reflecting God’s image: Theological Anthropology,” in Beth Felker Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014).

⁹⁴ 1 Cor. 15:50-55; Rom. 3:20-23; 5:12-15

⁹⁵ 1 Cor. 15:49: International Standard Version

⁹⁶ Romans 8:29

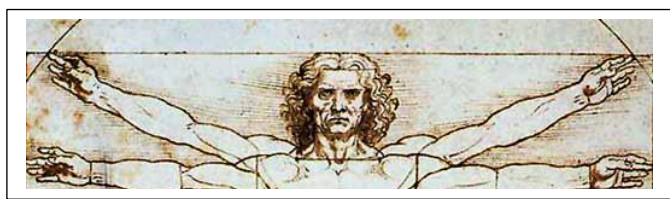
⁹⁷ Col. 1:18

⁹⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:28

⁹⁹ Col 3:10. Traditionally this passage has been quoted to advance a structural view of the *imago*, making the renewal related to a human faculty that Christ possesses in perfection that we need to have perfected. He is already the *imago dei* and he already has dominion. Therefore the growth in the *imago* for Christians cannot mean growth in dominion; our dominion will only come when Christ returns. David H. Johnson, “The Image of God in Colossians,” *Didaskalia* 3/2 (April 1992): 10-11. Cited in Klassen, “As the Image: A Functional Understanding of Imago Dei.”

The Christian is therefore exhorted to “put on” by faith that “new [spiritual] man” (Christ), and begin to reflect that perfect image through His indwelling Spirit. By the act of beholding and reflecting that image (Christ) believers are transformed into that true image of God (Christ) from one degree of glory to another by means of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁰ St Paul informed the Ephesian Christians: “For we are His workmanship, created *in Christ Jesus* for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”¹⁰¹

Man is created in the image of God - not just first man but mankind, the human race, every man, woman and child. Individual man is made in God's image so far as he is the member of the human kind. Christ, as George Herbert put it, is the “heart's heart of every one of us by the fact of God's creation of every one of us is in the image of God.”¹⁰² Man is made in the “image of God” not just because he possesses a spiritual “soul,”¹⁰³ but because The Man, Christ Jesus is His perfect likeness of the Divine Being - the eternal Triune God.



¹⁰⁰ 2 Corinthians 3:18. “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.” Christ through the Incarnation has taken on a representative role of Mediator between God and fallen humanity and as “firstborn of all creation” (Col. 1:15) is its representative.

¹⁰¹ Eph. 2:10. C.f. Eph. 1:4.

¹⁰² Cited in W. Merlin Davies, *F.D. Maurice: A Prophet for Today* (New Zealand: ColCom Press, 1992) 122-23.

¹⁰³ The Old Testament writings in the original Hebrew, know of no such word as *soul* or its equivalent. The *nephesh* (often translated as “soul”) designates simply the living being in its entirety - the *bashar* or flesh that has been given life by the *ruach* or spirit “breath of God”. Consequently, although in the New Testament the Greek word *psyche* is often used, especially by St Paul, it generally refers to the mental (as well as often the emotional and volitional) functions of the human body. The notion of an “immortal soul” is thoroughly biblical, but it must be recognised that real life after death is the result of the granting of the “spirit” or Holy Spirit, the *pneuma* (the Greek New Testament word corresponding to the Hebrew *ruach*). Western religions even today tend rather strongly to a “platonic” idea of the soul - the general idea of the soul as a kind of substance that is imprisoned in the body, to be released from its earthly existence at death. Three words which over time developed the meaning of “soul” are present in the Hebrew Bible (*The Tanakh*): *Neshamah*, *Nefesh*, and *Ruah*.

¹⁰⁴ The key to the whole life of Frederick Denison Maurice as a major Victorian of wide influence and as one of the most original and creative Anglican theologians, lies in his long and intense experience of conversion. On his passage from Unitarianism to Anglicanism he arrived at a vision of Jesus Christ as the disclosure of all meaning for man. See Olive J. Brose, *Frederick Denison Maurice: Rebellious Conformist* (Ohio University Press, 1971).

(We are) not to think that the world was created in Adam, or stood in his obedience; for the scriptures of the New Testament illustrating those of the Old Testament, teach us that it stood and stands in the obedience of God's well-beloved Son, the real image of the Father, the real bond of human society and of the whole universe, Who was to be manifested in the fulness of time, as that which He had always been.¹⁰⁵

So we arrive at the Man Who is the image of God by going straight to Christ. It is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, Who is the Head of Mankind from the beginning. He is the archetype of man for “in Him” and “through Him” and for Him we were created.¹⁰⁶

Maurice states:

Men are told that they are made in the image of God: how it could be they know not. Here is His express image, not shown in the heavens above or in the earth beneath but in a Man. *In Him* creation has subsisted, in spite of all the elements of confusion and discord within it. He has upholden it by the Word of His power. *In Him* we find how humanity has been a holy [i.e. sacred] thing, though each man felt himself unholy.¹⁰⁷

Man was created in “original righteousness” also referred to as “knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.”¹⁰⁸ This original righteousness and holiness was lost through the Fall but is restored *in Christ*.

The Apostle Paul urged the Christian believers in Ephesus to “be renewed in the spirit of your mind and “put on the new self, which in the *likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ F.D. Maurice, *Patriarchs and Lawgivers*, 53. Cited in W. Merlin Davies, *F.D. Maurice: A Prophet for Today* (New Zealand: ColCom Press, 1992) 63.

¹⁰⁶ Colossians. 1:16

¹⁰⁷ F.D. Maurice, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, 29. Cited in Davies, *F.D. Maurice: A Prophet for Today*, 63. Here the term “holy” is best understood as “sacred”.

¹⁰⁸ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938) 204; and Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:99.

¹⁰⁹ Ephesians 4:24

To the Colossian believers he wrote: "put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the *image of the One who created him*, a renewal in which ... Christ is all, and in all"¹¹⁰: a reference to the *imago Dei* of Genesis 1:26.¹¹¹

When Christ came in the flesh, He came not as an alien intruder into the world and to men, but as *Redeemer of His own creation*.¹¹² While Christ brings the utterly new gift of redemption, **He does not extricate us from the race, but restores us to our true life as men created in His image**. As Maurice declared:

In the person of a man, our humanity has been redeemed ... has been carried through death ... [and] has been glorified. He is the Head and Lord of our race, the only bond of fellowship among men, the only source of all life and power and gifts to men.¹¹³

In brief, Christ the Absolute man makes us fully human again. God desires that every human should reflect the goodness and love of God lovingly for others through the power and indwelling of the Spirit of Christ. The destiny of Man lies in his relationship with the One who loves (the Father) perfectly and who completely obeyed the Father's will, even to the point of death on the Cross,¹¹⁴ his Beloved Son - the God-man, Jesus Christ. The Son is, as the writer of the Hebrews stated, "the radiance of His [God's] glory and the exact representation of His nature."¹¹⁵ St John declares that it is the Father's will "that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Furthermore, he adds "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him."¹¹⁶

Imago Dei

¹¹⁰ Colossians 3:10-11

¹¹¹ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989) 305.

¹¹² John the apostle declares: "He was in the world and the world was made through Him and the world did not know Him. He came to His own and those who were His own did not receive Him" (Jn. 1:10-11).

¹¹³ F.D. Maurice, *The Kingdom of Christ*, III, 162-6. Cited in Davies, *F.D. Maurice - A Prophet for Today*, 70. The words "animal nature" have been left out of the quote as this unfortunately suggests an evolutionary origin of man from animals. The full quote reads: "In the person of a man, our humanity has been redeemed out of the animal nature ..." Christ has redeemed us out of our fallen nature or lower nature (i.e. that part of our nature that opposes the spiritual man created in the likeness of Jesus Christ).

¹¹⁴ Luke 22:42; John 15:13; Heb. 4:15; 5:8; 10:7; Phil. 2:8.

¹¹⁵ Hebrews 1:3

¹¹⁶ John 5:23 (NASB). C.f. Lk. 10:16; 1 John 2:23; Acts 4:12.

For Russian religious and political philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev (1874-1948) God's image is at the centre of anthropology - "Through spirit man becomes a divine image and likeness ... and through it man can ascend to the highest spheres of the Godhead."¹¹⁷ As a living organism, man is a "microcosm" revealing the whole universe, for he belongs to "a higher sphere in the hierarchy of nature."¹¹⁸ At death, as Scripture states, "man goes to his eternal home ... the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it."¹¹⁹ God's infinite spirit, is conferred on man at creation¹²⁰ and man is a contingent being.¹²¹ "If He [God] should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath, all flesh would perish and man would return to dust".¹²²

Berdyaev argued that "Man's infinite spirit claims an absolute super-natural anthropocentrism: he knows himself to be the absolute centre - not of a given, closed planetary system but of all planes of being, of all worlds."¹²³ If microcosmic man is indeed the intermediary between God and the cosmos it is "because the absolute nature of the God-man ... man's higher consciousness of himself as a microcosm is a Christological consciousness. And the Christological consciousness of the new Adam surpasses the self-consciousness of the first Adam: it marks a new phase in the creation of the world."¹²⁴ Just like Adam and Eve living in the Garden of Eden enjoyed intimate fellowship with God,¹²⁵ ...



¹¹⁷ Nicolas Berdyaev, *Spirit and Reality* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939) 33.

¹¹⁸ Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Meaning of the Creative Act* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1955) 70.

¹¹⁹ Eccl. 12:7; cf. Ps. 104:29-30; Eccl. 3:21

¹²⁰ Genesis. 2:7

¹²¹ Acts 17:28.

¹²² Job. 34:14-15.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 78. C.f. 2 Cor. 5:17 "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

¹²⁵ Genesis 3:8. C.f. Gen. 5:24.

God desires to come and make His home with every man right where he is.¹²⁶ The Apostle Paul expressed the "Christological consciousness" (to use Berdyaev's words) that he sought and hungered for, when he wrote:

"[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly].¹²⁷ "...I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ."¹²⁸

King David expressed the same passion to know God intimately in his many Psalms, for he desired: "To behold the beauty of the LORD And to meditate in His temple."¹²⁹

The drama of the love between God and man, in Berdyaev's view, takes practical shape through the presence of the divine image - in "the birth of God in man and of man in God." "The coming of Christ, the God-man, is a perfect union of these two movements, the realisation of unity in duality, of the divine-human mystery."¹³⁰ Man (body and soul) exemplifies the primordial duality, and exists by the interpenetration of spirit and matter. This interpenetration occurs without mixture or confusion and we can come to know the effect of this enigmatic union - the human person - because we too as persons are created for relationship. Matter reflects the spiritual light, sourced from the One who bestows spirit to man.

In Berdyaev's view, **"the only theory that is eternal and unsurpassed is the Jewish-Christian view of man as being created by God in His own image and likeness."**¹³¹ He emphasises that no system of pantheism, monism or dualism belonging to theological rationalism grasps the divine-human mystery. He has also written:

"The image of the human personality is not only a human image, it is also the image of God. In that fact lie hidden all the enigmas and mysteries of man. It is the mystery of divine-humanity, which is a paradox that cannot be expressed in rational terms.

"Personality is only human personality when it is divine-human personality. The freedom and independence of human personality from the world of objects is its divine-humanity. This means that personality is not formulated by the world of objects but by subjectivity, in which is hidden the image of God."¹³²

True human-ness is likeness to God; it is the divine in man. The divine in man is not the "supernatural" and it is not a special act of Grace; it is the spiritual principle which is in man as a particular reality. In this lies the paradox of the relations between the human and the divine. In order to be completely like man it is necessary to be like God. It is necessary to have the divine image in order to have the human image. Man as we know him is to but a small extent human; he is even inhuman.... It is God who requires of man that he should be human.¹³³



In this context, sin can be seen as self-willed isolation from the true constitution of man *as created and redeemed by Christ*. (However, from *man's* perspective the order of God's activity is creation-fall-redemption). Sin is man's refusal to acknowledge his true centre *in Christ*, and his desperate effort to establish a false independence. Each one wants to be a god, and is not content to be only an image of God.

¹²⁶ John 14:20-23; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rev. 3:20..

¹²⁷ Philippians 3:10a (AMP)

¹²⁸ Phil. 3:8 NASB.

¹²⁹ Psalm 27:4.

¹³⁰ Nicolas Berdyaev, *Freedom and the Spirit* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1935) 189.

¹³¹ Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, transl. (from Russian) by Natalie Duddington (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1937) 49.

¹³² Nicolas Berdyaev, *Slavery and Freedom* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1943) 44. He argues that only through the divine image man becomes man. "The expression of this mystery presupposes a dualistic moment, an experience of the process of transcendence, of falling into an abyss and escaping from that abyss. The divine is that which transcends man, and the divine is mysteriously united with the human in the divine-human image. It is for this reason only that the appearance in the world of personality which is not a slave to the world is possible" (p. 45).

¹³³ Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Divine and the Human* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1949) 110.

Formal Notice

SPCS AGM 2017

The Society's 2017 (Members Only) AGM will be held on 30 June Friday night from 7.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. Central Baptist Church, (Lower Hall), 46 Boulcott Street, Wellington. Following the AGM a presentation will be given by guest speaker on the subject of Voluntary Euthanasia – Assisted Suicide dealt with in the proposed the End-of-Life Choice Bill, sponsored by ACT MP David Seymour.

AGM 2017 Date: Friday 30th June

Venue: Central Baptist Church, 46 Boulcott St, Wellington #

Members' Only AGM: 7.30 – 8.00 pm

**Followed by Free Public Address
(All welcome)**

8 pm to 8.45 pm approx.

**Lecture topic: "Voluntary
Euthanasia – Assisted Suicide"**

Speaker: Dr John Kleinsman

**Director of The Nathaniel Centre,
Wellington**

Followed by questions & discussion

**Concluding with supper: 9 p.m. –
9.30 p.m. approx.**

Note: Free Parking available across the road from church in the Tournament car park (see sign marker on roadway).

For Background reading on AGM Lecture topic see: <http://www.lifechoice.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 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.

(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 visit SPCS website:

www.spcs.org.nz/objectives/

Note: Membership is by way of donation (tax deductible) to the Society and by making a commitment to support its Objectives as set out in its Constitution.