
THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE IMAGE OF GOD

Doctrine of Man
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IMAGE CONFORMITY FROM AGE TO AGE

- Identity in the Covenant
 - Adam and Christ are the representatives of the two basic covenants. All people are either “in Adam” or “in Christ” (cf. Rom 5:1–12; 1 Cor 15:35ff).
 - A great distinction is made between fallen people in Adam and regenerated people in Christ. Reformed theologians often call this distinction the *antithesis*.
- The Image and Covenant Representation
 - After the Fall into sin, this worldly age is characterized by the first Adam, the disobedient son. The age to come is characterized by the last Adam, the obedient son. Each of these representatives embodies the wisdom or spirit of his particular age (Rom 5:12–15; 1 Cor 15:45).
 - We may use Eph 1:3 as a paradigm for understanding what it means to be “united” to either Adam or Christ (see Table 1). From this we can draw out three aspects of our life in Christ. It is 1) personal, spiritual, and eschatological.
 - We come to bear the image and exhibit the characteristics of the covenantal head of the “age” to which we belong (cf. Col 2–3; Eph 4:17ff).
 - The purpose of predestination is so that God’s people would be conformed to the image of Christ in order that he would be the firstborn among many brothers (Rom 8:16–17, 29).

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

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

- The apostle Paul draws an important lesson from man’s origin by developing it in 1 Corinthians 15:47–49.
 - God created man’s body of the dust and his soul of nothing—a new substance. He breathed life into the body and it became a “living soul.”
 - Christ, however, became “life-giving Spirit.”
- In verses 42–44 Paul compares and contrasts the distinguishing characteristics of the body of death to the body of resurrection.
 - The body of death is *sown* perishable (v. 42), in dishonor (v. 43), and in weakness (v. 43). It is a physical body (v. 44a).
 - The resurrected body is *raised* imperishable (v. 42), in glory (v. 43), and in power (v. 43). It will be a spiritual body (v. 44a).
- In verse 44b–45, Paul argues that the same distinctions that we make between the body of death and the resurrection body can also be made (in some sense) between the resurrection body and Adam’s pre-fall body.
 - Paul’s argument turns on an eschatological point. The natural body presupposes the existence and offer of the Spiritual body.
 - How do we know the pre-fall body is similar to the body of death?
 - The same qualifiers that were used to describe the body of death are used and apply in some sense to the pre-fall body.
 - And in verse 45, Paul appeals to the creation of Adam, which of course refers to his body *before the Fall*. “The first man Adam became a living being/creature” (cf. Gen 2:7).
 - Though Adam’s pre-fall body was “natural,” this cannot be likened to anything as a result of sin. We must be very careful to protect the integrity of the prelapsarian order.
 - The body of death was characterized as sown perishable, in dishonor, and weak. Those qualities come to full expression through the Fall. Yet in general, these qualities still apply to the pre-fall body though *without sin*.
- Adam and Christ are representative figures who embody what they represent (vv. 47–49).
 - Verse 48—As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.
 - Adam was not merely a man formed from the dust, he represented an order of humanity that likewise was “of the dust.”
 - Christ is the man of heaven, who represents “those who are of heaven.”
 - Christ facilitates the transition from dust to glory (cf. Phil 2:5–11).
 - The heavenly and Spiritual form of existence Christ receives through his resurrection what his people receive in salvation.
 - The salvation accomplished by Christ and applied by the Spirit does not merely restore a pre-fall natural body, it forms the glorious Spiritual body after the image of the resurrected Christ (cf. Rom 8:29).