

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 6, Pauline Restoration of the Image of God, Ephesians 4:22-24

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on the Doctrines of Humanity and Sin. This is session 6, Pauline Restoration of the Image in Christ, Ephesians 4:22-24.

We continue our study of anthropology, specifically the image of God.

More specifically, Paul's doctrine of the restoration of the image. We studied Colossians 3:9, and 10 and learned that there's a restoration of the image as pertains to knowledge. Now we go to Ephesians 4:22 to 24 where we learn the image involves a restoration in holiness and righteousness.

The context is Ephesians 4:17 through 19. Now, this I say and testify in the Lord, ESV, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart.

They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity, but that is not the way you learn Christ. Paul has exhorted his readers not to live in sin as the unsaved do, verses 17 through 19. Interestingly, a similar context to the Colossians one.

The believers to whom Paul writes had not been taught to live in an ungodly manner when they learned of Christ in the gospel. 4:20 and 21 of Ephesians, but that is not the way you learned Christ, assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus. On the contrary, these Christians were taught to live a holy life.

Paul uses three infinitives in verses 22 to 24 to teach the importance of this new godly living that replaces the old sinful manner of life. These infinitives could be viewed as substantival, functioning as a compound direct object to what you were taught, or as epistemological, complementing truth. And good people disagree as to those two options.

I suppose I favor the latter one as do Zerwick, Milton in the NCB, and Bruce in the NICNT. Colossians 3:9 and 10 and Ephesians 4:22 to 24 illustrate well Herman Ridderbos' distinction between the indicative and the imperative. See Ridderbos' book *Paul, an Outline of His Theology*, pages 253 to 258, 270, 271.

Also, see Philippians 2:12 and 13. In the former passage, Colossians 3, Paul tells the Colossians believers what has already happened to them. They have taken off the old man and have put on the new.

In Ephesians 4:22 to 24, Paul exhorts his readers to take off the old man and put on the new. This is a pattern in Paul's thought. He often speaks of what God in Christ has done for his people.

He speaks in the indicative, so to speak. In another context, he will exhort the people of God to do the very things that he has already said that God has done for them. This is the imperative.

There's no contradiction here. It is Paul's effective way of teaching that the Christian life is based upon the saving work of God. The exhortations are grounded in the indicative.

And two, the people of God are actively involved in the Christian life. The Christian life is not just rejoicing in our salvation, that is the indicative. It involves the imperative.

It involves living for God based upon our rejoicing in his grace and salvation. God's free salvation becomes ours. And we experience it in light by living in the light of what God has done for them.

Ephesians 4, 22, 20. That is not the way you learn Christ, assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus. Namely, 4:23, ah, 22.

To put off, according to the former behavior, the old man is being corrupted according to the desires of deceit. And to be renewed, there's that idea again, in the spirit of your minds. And to put on the new man, which, according to God, was created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Very literally. In Ephesians 4:22, Paul tells his readers, you take off as clothing again, according to your former way of life, the old man. That's being corrupted according to your deceitful desires.

They are taking up a taste as a qualitative genitive, a so-called Hebrew genitive. The readers are told to rid themselves of their sinful pre-Christian lifestyle with its deceitful desires. Paul further teaches us to be renewed in the attitude of our mind.

In verse 23, Paul calls for a renewal in their mental attitude. The present infinitive, the others are heiress, may be interpreted as indicating progressive action. So, F.F. Bruce in his commentary on Ephesians.

They are to be continually made new in their thinking. The third infinitive is found in verse 24. They are to put on the new man, which according to God was created in true righteousness and holiness.

Aletheos is another qualitative genitive. So instead of righteousness and holiness of the truth, make it into an adjective. True righteousness and holiness.

This speaks of the new spiritual creation in Christ Jesus. Compare Ephesians 2:10, 2:15, Colossians 3:10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15. This new creation motif is all over the place. Ephesians 2:10, by grace you are saved through faith.

That salvation not of yourselves, but the gift of God. Not according to works that no one should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus.

Doesn't refer back to creation. It refers to the new creation. The meaning is recreated in Christ Jesus for good works that God ordained.

You should walk in them. This new spiritual creation motif is found in Colossians 3:10, which we just looked at in 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 6:15. This new creation is a corporate concept, which, of course, has individual applications.

Watch out for a tendency to read the Bible through American spectacles in an individualistic way. It is, first of all, a corporate book. Addressing Israel in the Old Testament and the Church in the New Testament.

Secondarily and genuinely, it speaks to us as individuals of course. I understand the words. The new man who has been created.

To be very similar to the new man according to the image of the one who created him in Colossians 3:10. Although the imago dei is not specifically mentioned in Ephesians 4:24. I understand the verse to speak of that concept for the following reasons. One is the close parallelism to Colossians 3:10. Two, the use of I create, katizo, in both passages to refer to the new creation. The phrase according to God, which approximates according to the image of God.

Note the similarities between Genesis 1:27 in the Septuagint and Colossians 3:10 in Ephesians 4:24. C. L. Mitton agrees, New Century Bible is his commentary on Ephesians. Mitton agrees, quote, the wording here in Ephesians differs from that of Colossians 3:10. But clearly, the meaning is intended to be the same, close quote. Bruce adds, quote, the phrase according to God means in the image of God.

I thus understand Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:10 to speak of the same topic. The recreation of human beings in Christ Jesus according to the original image of God in

humankind. In Ephesians 4:24 we learn that the new man was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.

Since the restoration of human beings that accords with God in Christ involves true righteousness and holiness, the original *imago Dei* must have included the same. Here we learn of a moral aspect of the original image of God in man. Adam was made, and Eve was like God in original purity.

This comports with Genesis, in which Adam and Eve lived in fellowship with God before the fall. Only holy beings could live in fellowship with a holy God. We've seen the fact of human beings' creation in the image of God in Genesis 1. We studied the Pauline doctrine of the recreation of the image of God in believers by virtue of union with Christ.

In Colossians 3:9 and 10, we see that our minds are being put to the obedience and service of God. We see it in Ephesians 4:22-24 where the renewal of the image means a renewal in righteousness and holiness. Once again, here's the reasoning.

The renewal of the image involves righteousness and holiness. Therefore, the original image must have involved the same things. To summarize in light of the historical theology as well and lead towards systematics, this renewal in knowledge and righteousness, and holiness are aspects of the substantive or structural view of the image.

Adam and Eve came from their maker with this makeup. They were holy beings in fellowship with a holy God. And God had endowed them with knowledge, with the ability to think, that they might understand his words, that they might obey him and love him and do his will and serve him all their days.

The third heading is the fact of the image in Genesis 1, Paul's doctrine of the restoration of the image in Christ. The third is the Pauline doctrine of Christ as the image of God. This is greatly neglected in discussions of the image of God and it ought not to be.

It should be emphasized, in fact. Paul, in his epistles, teaches that Christ is the image of God. In 2 Corinthians 4:4, Paul deals with the fact that some believe and others reject the apostolic preaching.

2 Corinthians 4:4. His opponents, and boy, they're sure evident in the Corinthian correspondence. His opponents are saying, Paul, you are a false, you're a cultist, you're a false prophet. You claim that this gospel is so luminous, and people don't believe it.

Everybody's not just automatically believing in this message about Jesus. You're in the dark, your message is untrue, you're a faker. Poor Paul has to defend himself in the Corinthian letters in order to defend the gospel.

And he does it. He takes the hits, but he will not let the gospel be dragged in the mud: the gospel and Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 bears our attention. Therefore, having this ministry in context means that it's the ministry of the new covenant. Preaching the gospel, which is more glorious than the ministry of the old covenant.

With Moses coming down from Mount Sinai and his face so aglow with the glory of God, he had to put a veil on. The people couldn't take it. Compared to the glory of the new covenant in Christ, that glory in Moses' face, which was substantial, Paul says, was no glory.

It's one of those so-called oriental comparisons. Yes, there was glory. But the glory of the New Testament is so much greater.

It eclipses that glory. Therefore, 2 Corinthians 4:1, Therefore, having this new covenant ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways, contrary to what his opponents say.

We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, contrary to what his enemies say. But by the open statement of the truth, we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, he admits it's veiled. It is veiled to those who are perishing.

In their case, the God of this world, a reference to Satan, has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. God, who said, let the light shine out of darkness, has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

In this text, Paul deals with the fact that some believe and others reject the apostolic preaching. He speaks of the light of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, shining upon sinners in the proclamation of the word. It is the glorious Christ who is the subject of the gospel.

God, the creator, recreates sinners by illuminating them through the saving message. Christ is the image of God in this text in that he reflects the glory of God when the gospel is preached. Ah, the passage is so marvelous.

I don't have time to do it justice. It speaks of the terrible plight of unsaved persons. The devil, who is smarter and stronger than we are, has blinded the minds of unbelievers, and the purpose clause shows why: to keep them from believing the gospel.

To keep them from seeing the light of the gospel and the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. But God, who said, let the light shine out of the darkness in Genesis 1, and it did, has sovereignly caused his light to shine in the hearts of his people when they hear the gospel by the Holy Spirit's powerful working, and he defeats the strong man, the devil, and frees those who are bound by him. He overcomes the devil's blinding and grants the God who created light in the first place to give supernatural spiritual light to those in the darkness of sin and satanic blindness and saves them by divine illumination.

It's not the language of regeneration. It's the image of light overpowering darkness. It's salvation as divine, efficacious illumination.

And all of this has to do with the gospel, which has to do with the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. Christ is the image of God in that he reflects the glory of God when the gospel is preached. This actually has important ramifications for the preaching of the gospel.

The gospel is about Jesus. Yes, we can give our testimony, and that is appropriate. It's biblical to do so.

But the gospel that God uses, the word of God unto salvation is a word about Jesus. And God takes the word supernaturally and glorifies his glorified son, who died for sinners and was raised again on the third day. He does saving work in people's lives. It gives us confidence in sharing the gospel because our doing so glorifies Christ.

And as God works, our purpose is to have more glorifiers of Christ join the kingdom and join us in worshipping this great Lord Jesus. In Colossians 1:15, Christ is called the image of God. Colossians 1. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

For by him all things were created in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, dominions, rulers, or authorities, all things were created through him and for him. And he's before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he's the head of the body, the church.

He's the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might have, he might be preeminent. For it was pleased, for in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

This is a fantastic context that shows Christ is preeminent in all things over creation because he was God's agent in creation. And he does the work of providence in maintaining that creation. And that creation was not only made by him but for him.

He's the heir. He'll receive everything in the end. So, he is Lord of creation and thereby preeminent in that sphere.

He's also Lord in the recreation, which speaks of his body, the church. In Colossians 1:15, in the context of creation, Paul calls Christ the image of the invisible God. He means that Jesus incarnate, the Son of God, the eternal Son incarnate, known as Jesus, is the visible representation of God who is invisible.

Jesus is God incarnate. The invisible God has become visible in Christ Jesus. Philip, why do you say, show us the Father, John 14? Don't you understand? I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.

When you see Jesus, you see the Father. He is the image of God. I didn't intend to use tennis illustrations, but here's another one.

During my doctoral studies, my wife worked as a friendly waitress at a friendly restaurant. Actually, she is so friendly that she got in trouble. If you knew my wife, Mary Pat, you would understand, and you would laugh because she worked at this... She helped put me through doctoral studies at the Graduate School of Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, studying historical theology.

She worked as a friendly waitress, and she didn't even know there was such a thing as the silver dollar award, but a higher-up secretly visited different stores, and if he saw unusual service, he gave the silver dollar award. It was not even always given, but you know how the story goes. She won it, and she had been there working for less than a year and other people who worked there a long time didn't get it and they weren't so happy, but on the other hand, my wife's whole persona, they couldn't be mad at her.

In any case, she worked with a young man named Randy, and he was a tennis player. I was still not too far out of the game that I could beat him, and thereby, he wanted to play with me. He was a nominal Jewish fellow and I agreed to hit tennis with him and even help him a little bit on his strokes and teach him some strategy if he would read the Gospel of Mark with me. That's what we did and I'd like to tell you he was wonderfully saved, but I can't, but one day the Holy Spirit worked and he got it.

I forget what chapter we were on, four or five or something of Mark and we did a chapter of time. We didn't spend, you know, hours studying, but we would read the passage and talk about it, and then we'd go play tennis, and as long as I beat him, he

was interested in keeping doing this anyway. It was a lot of fun, and he was a good fellow.

We actually had good friendship going on there rooted in my wife's contact with him at the friendly restaurant. So one day we're doing this, and I'm talking, and he says, wait a minute, he says, wait a minute, I think I got it. I said, what did you get? Because we're reading through Mark.

He says I think I got it. If we want to see what God would say if he spoke, we should see what Jesus says. I'm like, and if we would want to see what God would do if he acted in this world, we should do what Jesus did, see what Jesus did.

I said, hallelujah, hallelujah. I was excited at this because he had an insight, and it seems to me that the Lord gave him that insight. I don't know what happened.

After a while, I guess we petered out. I even forgot. It was a blessing being his friend and playing tennis.

Boy, it was exciting to me to see the Lord work in his life and illumine him, at least partially, to the truth. I hope he indeed came to know the Lord. Colossians 1:15 calls Christ the image, the icon of the invisible God.

The next words, the firstborn of all creation, means the highest one, the preeminent one over the whole creation because, or for, is the conjunction, all things were made by him. Jesus deserves first place in creation because he was the Father's agent in creation. That use of firstborn, of course, comes from places like Jacob being the secondborn but becoming the firstborn, having the rights of primogeniture as he superseded Esau, and Psalm 89, speaking of the Messiah, I have made him my firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

Thus, in 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Colossians 1:15, Jesus is the image of God. In two other passages, Paul does not expressly call Christ the image of God but regards the Savior as the image to which believers will conform. In Romans 8:29, Paul presents the goal of salvation as believers' glorification or, said differently, conformity to Christ's image.

Romans 8:28 is one of the most familiar verses in all of Scripture. We know that for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose.

For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined. Those he predestined, skipping some there in 29, he also called. Those whom he called, he also justified.

Those whom he justified, he also glorified. We know that God works all things for the good of his people, verse 28 of Romans 8 because the next two verses show God has worked for the greatest good for them. He has planned and accomplished their salvation from beginning to end.

Paul uses five past tense verbs and five aorist verbs: God foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified his people. You say, wait a second, glorification is future. It is, but it's the same simple past-tense verb.

Hence, what Paul is saying is believers are as good as glorified. God's work will not be frustrated in spite of his people's recalcitrance, sins, and struggles. He will preserve them for final salvation.

By way of biblical balance, I should say that those who are God's people do confess their sins, live for God, and grow in grace. I skipped a section because of those five verbs. Those whom God foreknew, which I understand to mean foreloved, predestined, chose beforehand for salvation, called, which means effectively summoned to himself through the gospel, justified, declared righteous before his divine heavenly tribunal, based upon the righteousness of Christ, and glorified, that is, he will share the glory of Christ with them.

It is only in the second one that Paul expands. We know that for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined, and here Paul amplifies, he predestined those to be conformed to the image of his son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

In Romans 8:29, Paul presents the goal of salvation as the believer's conformity to Christ's image. Christ is the preeminent Son of God, capital S, to whom the children of God eschatologically will conform because God will cause us to conform. He will transform us, 1 Corinthians 15.

Christ is our older brother, capital B, and by virtue of family resemblance by the grace and spirit of God, they will be like him in glory. So, the words the image of God aren't used, but the idea is there because the word image is sufficient to conjure that idea up, because it speaks of our being conformed to his image, as the sons and daughters of God by grace were conformed to the image of him who is Son of God eternally by nature. In the context of recreation, we've seen that in these passages, haven't we? Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:49 teaches that believers will bear the image of Christ, the second Adam, in immortality even as they have borne the image of Adam in mortality.

1 Corinthians 15 starts with verse 45. The first man, Adam, became a living being. We saw that in our first lecture in this course. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Is that denying the physical resurrection of Jesus? Is it denying the physical resurrection of Jesus in the resurrection chapter? No, of course not. What it's saying is that Jesus is so identified with the Holy Spirit that, economically speaking, he could be called the Holy Spirit. But it's not the spiritual that came first, but the natural, and then the spiritual.

The first man, Adam, whose name means dusty, something like that, was from the earth. A man of dust. The second man is from heaven.

That is his origin. He's a divine son who came from heaven to earth. In the incarnation, as was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust.

We will die and return to dust if we die before Jesus returns. And as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, Adam, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will be made like him. God will conform us to the likeness of Christ. In the context of recreation, in 1 Corinthians 15:49, Paul teaches that believers will bear the image of Christ, the second Adam, in immortality and life and resurrection, even as they have borne the image of Adam in mortality, death, and sin.

Here, it is conformity to Christ's glorified body, which is the goal of our salvation. What do these four passages contribute to our study of the image of God in man? What are these passages in Paul that speak of Christ as the image of God? How does that help us understand the anthropological idea that human beings are created in God's image? 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Colossians 1:15, the first two passages we studied, teach that the Lord Jesus is the image of God. He images God's glory in the preaching of the gospel, 2 Corinthians 4. In his incarnation, he reveals the invisible God, Colossians 1:15.

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God. As a man, Jesus Christ is the image of God. The incarnate Christ is a visible example of what human beings are to be.

He perfectly, changing image from noun to verb, he perfectly mirrors God in human flesh. This implies we ought to read about the life of Jesus in the gospels to learn more about the image of God. The other two Pauline passages that present Christ as image, Romans 8:29 and 1 Corinthians 15:49 make an additional contribution to our study of God's image in humankind.

Here, Christ is the eschatological goal to which redeemed men and women will conform. The children of God will share the glory of the firstborn son, Romans 8:29.

The image bearers of Adam will be the image bearers of the second and last Adam when they are clothed with immortality.

1 Corinthians 15:49. Christ Jesus thus is both model, 2 Corinthians 4, Colossians 1, and the eschatological goal, Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 15, of the image of God in human beings. In our next lecture, we'll continue the study of the image of God by looking at the work of retired professor Robert C. Newman.

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