

AN IMMATERIAL SUBSTANCE VIEW: *IMAGO DEI*
IN CREATION AND REDEMPTIONJOSHUA R. FARRIS*
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‘At the resurrection, then, when human nature will be transformed into an immortal nature, the transformation will be in the inner quality of the human being. Both body and soul will be changed, but the change will be constituted by a divinely wrought modification of the soul.’ (Peter Burnell, *The Augustinian Person*, page 42)

‘For although God’s glory shines forth in the outer man, yet there is no doubt that the proper seat of his image is in the soul.’ (Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book I, chapter XV.3)

I will favourably describe mind-body dualism with a rich property/attribute as a persuasive accounting of the scripture’s narration of human beings as images of God. Mind-body dualism is the view that there are two kinds of things, namely body and soul/mind, and that humans are comprised of souls and bodies—a view commensurate with both Medieval and Reformation views of humans.¹

By drawing from the narrative of human beings as images I show that souls, which bear rich properties/attributes, offer one way to account for the Christian story.² I do so by considering the storyline of scripture in conjunction with analytic philosophy. As such, I am engaged in what is often called analytic theology as a methodological approach to constructing theological positions. While analytic theologians normally do not approach human nature in terms of the broader narrative of Christian theology, this kind of approach is compatible with an analytic perspective. By addressing the basic categories of the Christian meta-story (e.g., creation, fall, redemption and glory), one can assess what models of anthropology coherently account for or capture the movements of the scripture’s meta-narrative. As it pertains to human composition and the *imago Dei*, the scripture’s testimony is unsystematic; moreover, the precise nature of human constitution and the image is incidental to the direct teachings found therein. Having said this, it is not unimportant. One way to approach the biblical notion of human constitution and image, if there is such a notion, is by asking what it is that allows the scriptures to speak on its own terms, and which view provides the conditions for a coherent metaphysical story.³

I approach the topic from the perspective of holistic empiricism or phenomenal conservatism taking into account fundamental intuitions and experiential givens as the starting point.⁴ Furthermore, I assume that there is an interface between God’s special revelation and what we know internally to be true such that the most natural reading of scripture will include one’s basic perceptions of reality. In this article, I approach the broad contours of the scripture’s narration on human persons and offer a substantial view of *imago Dei* wherein persons are characterized

* Thank you to the following: University of Bristol Religious Studies and Theology Postgraduate colloquium, Oliver Crisp and Ben Arbour for suggestions and comments on previous drafts of this article.

as simple, independent, and enduring, and, furthermore, souls are capable of change—motivated by the Augustinian tradition. While Christian materialism (i.e., humans are wholly material) seems to lack the resources to account for this data, some variation of mind-body dualism seems to offer a plausible accounting. I suggest that the *imago Dei* is something like a rich property of the soul.⁵

Describing the Substantive with a Rich Property view

Souls are capable of existing as the same object and can also undergo change. First, I assume that a soul is the kind of thing that is capable of existing at different times of the individual human history. Whether one construes time as a block (4D view) or one considers time as stages (4D objects are comprised of different stages where each stage is physically distinct from the previous) or time exists in the present but proceeds out of existence (3D view), the soul is the kind of object that is capable of existing in and through the phases or times it enters in and out of. As such, the soul has an absolute kind of existence and persists through time as the same object, i.e., as a *stable* subject.

Souls are able to exist with varying physical parts, which is the second point. Souls are not essentially dependent on any obvious physical part for the soul, which carries personal identity, to persist. Souls can assume a variety of physical parts and lose physical parts, yet numerically remain the same object. There is no garden-variety of physical part of the body that describes, explains, or necessarily makes possible the person's persistence through change. Souls, on the other hand, given their being absolute and simple nature, can and do provide the conditions for personal persistence. Souls, then, have the resources to make sense of the varied scriptural portrayal of the *imago Dei*, which exists at radically different phases/stages of time in the story. As such, souls provide the metaphysical conditions for the philosophical and theological data.⁶ The benefits of articulating a substantive rich property view are two-fold. First, it has the strengths of structural views without the baggage. Second, it is able to account for the unique aspects of humans comprehensively.⁷

Additionally, the kind of substance bears what one might call teleo-functional properties. These properties are actualized in an appropriate dynamic context wherein the body and soul are properly functioning one with the other harmoniously. In this way, minds/souls exist in and/or give rise to a specified organizational structure. According to mind-body dualism or substance dualism (i.e., two property-bearers), the organizational structure of the soul/mind is properly related to a body. As such, the compound structure of mind and body naturally functions purposively and ought to function in specified ways. In other words, when souls and bodies are functioning in relation to the other toward good ends such a state brings about causal flourishing.⁸ By understanding souls and bodies according to teleo-functionalism, one can provide an explanation for the soul's *dynamic* nature.

The view I advance is able to give a metaphysical accounting of the *imago Dei* that is essentialist in nature and is grounded in an immaterial (i.e., non-material) human soul as substance (i.e., a property-bearer). By extension, this position satisfies the holistic nature of the *imago Dei* that is portrayed in scripture by affirming its *enduring* nature yet having connections to its glorified end (i.e., wherein souls bear a rich property).⁹ Relational and functional views give a story that suggests the 'image' is a fluctuating representation (as I show below), but there must be a grounding for these—an essential thing. I am inclined to read the Scriptures as implicitly yielding the view that the 'image' is present from beginning to end and is internal.¹⁰ If this is indeed the case, then a soul-view is to be preferred because the soul is metaphysically indivisible and capable of persisting through change. The soul is the kind of thing that acts as an image from creation to glory.¹¹ It must be noted that this latter position

does not entail that the ‘image’ is not also active and dynamic awaiting full actualization—in the eschaton.

In what is to follow, I make the argument that, minimally, an immaterial substance underlies the scripture’s narration on human beings, and, maximally, that the image has something to do with either a substance or an essential structural property that comprehensively describes the kind-human. I utilize the terms ‘capture’ or saving the phenomena (i.e., to adequately make sense of all the data without unnecessary variables) to ground a biblical view of humans as images in the soul.¹² To illustrate such an approach, it might be helpful to think of skillful photography. In order to take a good picture that covers all that is intended, one must skillfully use a camera, focus the lens, and aim from a proper distance. By doing this, the photographer is able to ‘capture’ all the details and features necessary to tell a story. In a similar way, the scripture’s require skillful appropriation of an adequate ontology to capture all the necessary data found in scripture—in this case concerning humans as images. The scripture’s narrate for us the notion of stable and enduring persons who persist, yet, also, experience significant changes. I tell one story of how an immaterial substance with a rich property *captures* such data. Let us now turn to the systematic data on the *imago Dei*.

SYSTEMATIC VIEWS ON THE *IMAGO*

Structural Views hold that the *imago Dei* is a faculty or a property distinguishing humans from other objects in the world.¹³ The known candidates throughout Ecclesiastical history include rationality, soul, freedom of the will, moral consciousness/conscience.¹⁴ The commonality connecting these options are that something objective and stable about the human person is emphasized and these features are not reducible to some contingent aspect of humans.

This view, however, presupposes substance ontology, defined above, and is commensurate with a simple view of personal identity.¹⁵ I take it that the *imago Dei* is a rich property/feature of the simple soul-substance, thus naturally fitting with a simple view of personal identity. The structural capacities refer to a substance, a faculty, and implicit in all of them is a property that might be predicated of human persons that uniquely distinguishes humans from other created organisms/substances, which lends itself to what I am suggesting is a substance with a rich property. This has been a common view throughout history and is similar to the ‘rational nature’ view, or, alternatively, the common set of views is made sense in light of, what I am advancing.¹⁶ It is important to note that when the scriptures speak of humans in the image of God, according to defenders of this view, the scriptures are speaking of something distinctive and intrinsic to humans unlike any other created thing. In fact, humans are like the Creator in that both are personal—yet, the Creator is infinite. Arguably, God and humans share an ontological status that undergirds everything else in scripture and the redemptive narrative.¹⁷ Mark D. Linville says it well: ‘as bearers of the *imago Dei*, they bear a significant resemblance to God in their very personhood. God and human persons share an overlap of kind membership in personhood itself, and human dignity is found precisely in membership in that kind.’¹⁸ It may be a stretch to suggest that God and humans share in the same kind-nature, but it seems appropriate, in the spirit of Linville, to say that God and humans share in a similar nature—as some broader category. The *imago Dei* is intrinsic to humans who are ontologically like God, and this is what grounds human value and dignity (cf. Genesis 9:6 which highlights human dignity as wrapped up in the image).¹⁹ However, what these structural views often lack is a worked out understanding of the link between *imago Dei* in creation, fall, and redemption, and, a common objection to

substantive or structural views is that they lack scriptural warrant and they often isolate one faculty apart from others making it difficult to choose which one best represents divinity.²⁰

A soul as substance bearing a rich property (i.e., in terms of teleo-functional properties), contrasted with structural approaches, arguably, coherently makes sense of the creational data without the need to isolate one faculty or one distinguishing feature in humans, and it has the ability to link the image at creation with the image in redemption. Instead of isolating one particular facet or feature of humanity, the image is reflected in the manifold of humanity like a prism - hence it is holistic.²¹ I contend that other views on the *imago Dei* do not *capture* this meaning or the meaning prevalent in the scriptural narrative. Instead, these views are really just predicatable of a particular kind of substance.

Contemporary systematic theologians following Karl Barth often affirm a relational approach to the *imago Dei*. Karl Barth famously defended the relational view, given human's gendered nature, of the image as theologically rooted in and tied to the Trinitarian nature of the Christian God.²² Having said this, one might take it that the relational approach is synonymous with or nearly synonymous with what is often called a functional approach. One could argue that relational and functional views are fundamentally one model or a set of views with a variety of different ways to parse them out.

Functional views are commonly advanced by Old Testament scholars as an adequate way of understanding humans as image bearers. Functionality has also taken the center stage, having a venerable tradition of support in Ecclesiastical history.²³ Kevin Corcoran is a contemporary defender of this view or what may be construed as a relational approach, given his tendency to construe the image as a functional relation to God's nature and character. In this way, Corcoran seems to merge both relational and functional approaches to the image. He articulates the image along the following lines,

First, we image God when we care for creation and contribute to the terrestrial flourishing of the created order. Second, we image God when we live in loving relation to other human beings and invest ourselves in their flourishing and well being. . . Since God is a Trinity, it is not surprising that we should image God in social and not just individual ways. The tenor of the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity is one of a harmonious and free exchange of love and joy. Therefore, engaging in acts of mercy, hospitality, love, kindness, and so on is to act like God.²⁴

According to this view, the image of God is identical to human functioning. Yet, even still, functional understandings of humans presuppose something substantial that has specified capacities in keeping with the kind of thing it is and the kind of thing it is designed to be wherein when functioning properly the parts will exist harmoniously.

I suggest that one ought to make a conceptual distinction between what a thing is and what it does, and this is where an ontological approach to the image re-emerges. Substance and its properties capture what a thing is. It seems to me that one could say that the very nature or design of a thing lends itself to its functioning. The person's design is for something and naturally functions in a certain way. If the thing does not perform those functions, the thing would be functioning improperly or outside its naturally designed boundaries. Hence, there remains a distinction between what a thing is and what it does. Functionality presupposes substantiality. This logic applies quite well to the Creation narrative in the context of discussing our task as dominion bearers (Genesis 1:28). In the creation narrative God is creating humans in his image and likeness, he gives commands in the form of imperatives connecting to his or her creation, yet there remains a conceptual distinction. In the narrative itself there seems to be an implicit

distinction between the image and the image's functioning. God designs humans with a particular function. Functionally, human persons are to obey God in fulfilling the Creation Mandate found in Genesis 1:28. Thus, on my particular variation of the substance view, we are to function with the design and nature of who we are. In what remains, I approach the relational and functional by collapsing the two as one set of views. Next, I lay out some scriptural and theological reasons in favour of the view I am advancing as having the resources to capture the creational data on the *imago Dei* in contrast to relational and functional views, although you might keep these distinct as some of the examples suggest above.

CREATIONAL *IMAGO DEI*

The creational story on God's fashioning humans in his image and likeness yields specific conclusions about the nature of the creational image. I describe the substance with rich property view and offer some reflections on how it is presupposed in the relational/functional operations of humans.

One biblical-theological objection to *mere* functional and relational views is related to the views adequacy to 'capture' or 'save the phenomena' in the Biblical text.²⁵ It seems that substance ontology and a substantive view of the 'image' captures the meaning of the text where human activity presupposes substance. The relevant texts for my purposes are Genesis 1:26a, 27a, and 27b: 'Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness. . . ' 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him.' The Genesis narrative makes distinctions between what is created and what it is created for. Humans are created in a specific fashion—in the image and likeness of God. Humans are not simply created, but humans are created and fashioned after something, namely God. First, it seems to me, very natural that this is with respect to God's creation of a thing as a 'whatness'.²⁶

Second, the capabilities or relations that ensue seem properly grounded in the thing not in other relations or events. The creation story describes humans as image bearers, holistically—not simply as divinely ordained events in motion but substances with powers. There is no sense in which the text is referring to something to emerge in the future, but the object for which God is creating he is fashioning in his image.

Third, according to orthodox Christian teaching, God creates the world out of nothing. This means that he does not create out of pre-existing stuff nor is he cobbling together relations and events or previously existing substances that constitute persons, but is creating a thing that is, arguably, fashioned after himself.²⁷ The narrative highlights the product/object of God's creation not the process, hence there is reason to believe that images are present at creation. The finished product/object is the image bearer.

Fourth, the irreducible nature of persons in the Creation narrative is presupposed in the rest of scripture, and its narrative development of persons, such that discussion presupposes the nature of persons to make sense of personal teleology. Specifically, this is borne out in that we are not told until later in the creation narrative that humans were created for the purpose of occupying a particular kind of work or function. In Genesis 1:28, the function or work of a human is revealed to the reader. 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' This is a particular kind of work often explained as bearing the *imago Dei* or being in the *imago Dei*. However, a natural reading suggests that the proceeding verses are expounding (i.e., ep-exegetical) on the previous, i.e., Genesis 1:26, 27, and it provides additional information on the nature of the image. However, one need not understand image and

function to relate to the other identically. While this passage is about the ‘image’, it does not necessitate the interpretation that the *imago Dei* is to be interpreted according to a functional/relational approach.²⁸ In contrast to this interpretation, it seems natural to understand the function as the outworking of a particular kind of substance. Instead of the text yielding that the function and the ‘image’ are identical it assumes a personal teleology or filling out of the nature of the ‘image’. The language here is also commensurate with royal language used throughout Near-Eastern literature, but this, it seems can be naturally read as rooted in the nature of human creational reality. This leads to the final observation.

Finally, the relational, and functional/royal language used of humans in the Genesis narrative seems to follow on the heels of God’s creating humans in his image. One can naturally read the passage as a creational reality that undergirds the relational and functional realities. This not only finds some conceptual and theological justification, but also has some textual/exegetical warrant. When reading the creation narrative in Genesis 1 it is clear that the human is the climax of God’s creation of various entities suggesting or highlighting the nature of the ‘image’ as an object, thing or entity. When we look at the ‘image of God’ in the context of Scripture there is an emphasis upon the product and object of creation in the saying ‘in the image’ rather than on a process, as some relational views might suggest.²⁹ Thus, it seems that there is some real entity by which the creation narrative is referring, namely human beings in general. Defenders of such a view advocate a contrastive interpretation to those interpretations that articulate the image as the culmination of a process later in the human story, as tied to Christ for example. Furthermore, the title, ‘image of God’, is not primarily a functional issue as it is an ontological matter highlighting the important fact that ‘ruling is not the essence of the image itself.’³⁰ The text in Genesis 1:26 should more accurately be translated as ‘let us make man in our image so that they may rule,’ because the particular sequence with respect to the verb is an imperfect preceded by a cohortative suggesting telos or—result.³¹ Thus, I advocate that it is natural to read the Creation narrative as offering or presupposing an essentialist and creational reality of humans who relate to creation in such a way as to rule creation (e.g., functional and relational views which depend upon a substantial reality).

An individualized nature or substance seems to coherently and persuasively account for what Genesis 1:26 yields and the teachings found in other Genesis passages concerning the ‘image of God’. The author of the Genesis narrative may not explicitly teach that the particular substance or individualized nature is a soul (or human soul) as substance, but it does not preclude such a reading.³² In fact, if one understands that a material thing lacks the persistence conditions descriptive of an *imago Dei* bearer and we have reasons from other teachings in Scripture (e.g., the intermediate state) to hold that the *imago Dei* is immaterial, then we have good grounds for reading Genesis in a way that is coherent not as a generic substance but an immaterial human substance. This is not to say that the human body does not bear the ‘image’, but that it does so in a derivative, contingent, and, potentially, lesser sense.³³

Describing human persons without reference to their creation in God’s image fails to adequately account for humans. Humans are not simply substances that assume a contingent property of being in God’s image but being in God’s image is what it means to be human, which is central to God’s creative work of humans. Thus, the *imago Dei* is fundamental to the scriptural story concerning all humans. The image is fundamental to what a human is by nature. Arguably, this image is internal or intrinsic to human design because it is ‘in the image of God’ that God created the human. Instead, the image is not something accidental to human existence, but essential to who we are and who we are created to become.

Functional and relational views do not seem to *capture* this reality when articulating the *imago Dei* according to the creational narrative. Functional and relational views only describe,

in part, but fail to provide a comprehensive explanation for the creation story. Instead, according to these views, humans externally relate to the 'image'. The image is captured in our functioning similar to the role that God has, e.g., ruling the world similar to God ruling all of reality. Nonetheless, neither view seems to capture what is intrinsic to the human or what the human is by nature.

In what remains, I argue that both stable and dynamic aspects are necessary for coherently making sense of sin, redemption, and personal eschatology as developed in the scriptural narrative. Stable realities refer to those creational realities found in human persons, according to scriptural categories. Dynamic realities refer to those categories of personal redemption and personal eschatology, yet might be described as dispositional capacities and properties waiting full actualization. This is similar to the substance of an acorn, a common analogy used to illustrate substance ontology. With an acorn there are certain dispositional properties that have a teleological end of developing into a full-grown tree.³⁴ Additionally, such an analogy helps us understand how the human dynamic relates to Christ wherein humans actualize their full potential when united to Jesus Christ. Both aspects are important when constructing a theological anthropology.

IMAGO AND LIKENESS

Historically, many theologians associate the metaphysical characteristics of stability and dynamic movement with the biblical terminology of 'image' and 'likeness', as found in the Creation story of Genesis.³⁵ The philosophical notion of a stable substantial thing, on some interpretations, was captured in the Biblical term 'image' that referred to those substantial capacities in humans, namely, rationality, freedom of the will, etc. By way of contrast, the dynamic capacities referring to righteousness/holiness are thought to be captured in the Biblical term 'likeness'. However, I am inclined to see things another way.

One might argue that semantically the terms are synonyms, yet there could be slight distinctions in the semantic domain of each lexical word pointing to highlighted differences. Image might denote more of a stable identity while likeness denotes a more dynamic state.³⁶ However, this kind of argument may be couching too much metaphysical speculation in the biblical terms without textual warrant. It is not my purpose here to defend or reject this view, although I am inclined to think along with Calvin that these terms are primarily explicable with reference to Hebrew parallelism.³⁷ While these philosophical distinctions may be implicit in the biblical narrative and are helpful tools for developing our understanding of human persons, it is difficult to make a strong exegetical case that these philosophical notions were in the mind of the author concerning 'image' and 'likeness'.

Connected to this, however, these conceptual distinctions are real features of human personhood and account for the truths exemplified in the biblical narrative. There may not be a metaphysical distinction explicit in the text, but there is a 'highlighted' difference. It is not uncommon in the Ancient Near Eastern context for 'image of God' to be used as a title for the king representing god(s), for the king is the son who represents god(s) in virtue of who he is. Thus, that the king bears or represents god(s) in virtue of who he is and the power he has. Likeness, on the other hand, highlights the relation of origin, sonship, and genealogy in the book of Genesis. The word emphasizes the functional and relational similarity of the son to his father. This is true of a human in relation to his earthly father as exemplified in several passages (e.g., Seth in Gen 5:3). It is also found in Genesis 1:26 where human/Adam is in the likeness of God, which is also repeated in Genesis 5:1.³⁸ The *imago Dei*, on my construal of the soul with a rich

property/attribute, seems to include the characteristic properties of an individual substance and, as such, provides the conditions for capturing the stable aspect of image bearing yet is also inclusive of dynamic functions in terms of the substance's teleology. Once again, functional and relational views presuppose *relata* (i.e., a soul that persists) i.e., a substantial thing. That thing is an individual/substance human soul or is, minimally, accounted for by a soul with a rich property.³⁹ The teaching on the image is found elsewhere in scripture when we consider humans in the Fall, in Redemption, and, finally, in Glory.

THE *IMAGO* AS STABLE-DYNAMIC

In keeping with Ecclesiastical tradition, I believe we can capture the data of scripture in a philosophically robust, complete, and comprehensive fashion. I have argued that a substantive view of personhood with a rich property, generally, and a soul view, specifically, captures the data of scripture.⁴⁰ The scriptural narrative categories include Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Glory. In view of the creation of humanity, humans were created for something. Humans were created not only for something, but also humans were created to *be* something. As stated above with respect to functional and relational views of the *imago Dei* these have a place in filling out the picture of humanity in scripture, but they do not adequately capture all of the scriptural data. Scripture portrays the human as the kind of thing that shines forth God's glory. This reflective property is more than simply an external relation (e.g., relational and functional views); rather, it is something reflected *in* the human person such that the whole of humanity bears the image as the product of God's creation. And, it seems that we see this at every point in the scriptural narrative, which I explore in more detail below. Whilst humans were created for a particular kind of work (e.g., functional view), and created to be in relationship with God and the rest of creation (e.g., relational views), s/he was created to be something. This is evident from creation. God created humans in a particular way, and this has to do with substance as tied to humanity. When this is broached at the fall, something happens to the substance of humans. In an attempt to reclaim what was lost at the fall God sends his Son Jesus Christ to die and in a sense recreates (i.e., restores) humanity at Redemption (see John 1, Hebrews 1). Finally, an individual human is something greater in glory than who s/he was in Eden, even greater than when originally created.⁴¹

The End and purpose of the Imago (Transformation)

The Westminster shorter catechism states that 'man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever', suggesting that there is a stability but also suggesting a change in human nature that is representative of God's nature eschatologically.⁴² I think there is a great deal of truth in this statement as it synthesizes the broad set of scriptural data concerning the image. Scripture speaks of this glory as a kind of end for humans through the work of Christ and in the human relationship with Jesus Christ. Romans 8:17, says, 'and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.' (ESV)⁴³ Christ came with the full intent of bringing glory to God, but in doing so Christ is being glorified (John 17:1). And, this is the glory that we participate in (see Jesus's prayer to God the Father in John 17). Humanity is created to some extent with the capabilities to do just this, but there is also a sense that humans have abilities and capabilities that have not reached their full actualization until in Christ.⁴⁴ The image of God, then, is both stable and dynamic for humans who endure as souls but come to actualise latent properties in keeping with human nature in redemption. Substances have the potential to digress, as well, seen in the

historic Fall of Adam and Eve, such that one's in-built human nature does not automatically or necessarily lead to actualisation.

Humanity, Change, and the Fall

At the fall, humans fail to fulfill their full potential. In substance ontology, this failure is called privation. The individual person is still the same person and is still in the image of God, but the person has lost being (see Genesis 3). Because privation is insubstantial being, it thus requires being/substance to exist.⁴⁵ In a sense it is a lack of being.⁴⁶ It is not a constituent, part, or property. It is a limit of being. Hoffman and Rosenkrantz define privation as an insubstantial entity under substance, and illustrate its meaning by using the analogy of an orifice. An orifice is an open space. It is not a part only metaphorically a part.⁴⁷ Such an understanding accounts for the biblical data in Genesis 1:31 where 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good' and is sensible in light of substantive ontology. All being, including human beings are good (cf. Genesis 1:25; very good after the creation of humans in 1:31). As a result, humans are in need of completion for while the being is good it has an insubstantial/privative malfunction after the fall. Theologically speaking, this insubstantial/privative existence is a result of human free will not as a result of God's creating some insubstantial thing or in terms of evil existing on its own, thus one can tell a story that affirms the stability and dynamic nature of the *imago* substance. What I have described, as a persuasive view, is a metaphysical story that makes sense of the change at the fall that is in line with the broader Plato-Augustine-Descartes tradition of the soul as substance view. What I have not argued is that this story is the only metaphysical story to tell. As a result of evil, there is a need for redemption, a new creation or a re-creation.⁴⁸ Here again, the soul with a rich property accounts for the stable picture of humans and the preconditions for the fall; namely, consciousness, free-will, rationality, and moral conscience, which also serves as a pointer to something else—Christ the complete image of God (e.g., Colossians 1).⁴⁹

Creational Image, Endurance, and Change

Thus, we can affirm and capture the data of Scripture that says that human persons are in the image of God from beginning to end. Human persons are in the image of God at creation, according to Genesis 1:26 and Genesis 9:6: 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image'. (ESV) Human persons are the image of God after the fall, according to a variety of passages (e.g., Genesis 5:1 and Genesis 9:6 refer to humans as images in their Fallen state). One New Testament example supporting this is 1 Corinthians 11:7 referring to the creational image, presuming the fallen state; 'For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God', which seems to presuppose an essentialist understanding of the 'image'. Additionally James 3:9 may offer an essentialist definition, from creation, whereby even fallen individuals are in the 'image,' stating, 'With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God'. (ESV) Change occurs in humans whereby humans become perfected as images, according to Romans 8:29: 'For those whom he predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son'. (ESV) Human persons are also tied to Christ as the exemplar of the human race as seen in 1 John 3:2, where it states, 'but we know that when he [Christ] appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is'. (ESV)

In and through this change something substantial exists that endures bearing the *imago Dei*. I suggest the enduring 'image' is best explained in terms of a soul as substance, given the soul's ability to exist causally connected at different spatial locations in the body and through differing phases/stages of time. There is a need for re-creation as a result of sin.⁵⁰ Scriptures speak of humans after the fall as lost, dead, and rebellious toward God. One could argue that the core

of the scriptural teaching, or one way of telling it, on rebellion and corruption is privation of substance.

Human Change as both Restoration and Transformation of the Imago

It seems apparent from scripture that there is a two-fold process in redemption of the image. First, there is the process of setting us aright and making us whole beings. Christ is in effect restoring humanity. Second, we experience a process of change wherein Christ is taking us beyond the Edenic state. We experience a kind of stepping up or transformative process, ontologically speaking, wherein Christ elevates the state of the individual human person. The biblical category of salvation and sanctification is preparation for this. So, while there is an enduring 'I' that is conscious, free, and rational, there is a sense of transformation and transcendence at this stage of development.⁵¹ Theologically, this is a movement from knowledge to wisdom (see Romans 12), from morality to holiness (Romans 1-5) and from goodness to glory (see John 17). Other corresponding analogues are present to illustrate a human transcendence and the ability to change in significant ways. Aquinas's distinction between natural and supernatural are coherent with the story advanced here. With respect to natural revelation, there are truths known about God from the created order, but this knowledge is incomplete. Supernatural/special revelation completes natural knowledge. The scriptures do not merely speak of bringing humans back to a state of goodness in Eden, but something more.⁵²

The final category in the narrative of scripture speaks of glorification.⁵³ This category is predicable upon a metaphysical ground (i.e., a soul) accounting for human transformation. Above I suggested that the soul has an overlap in his being with the Divine nature by bearing a property that is both intrinsic and mind-independent, which provides the ground for transformation, arguably.⁵⁴ The state of glorification is linked to Christology. It may be notable that my Christological presuppositions include a high Christology, where in the historical person Jesus is a Divine person with a human nature who is the savior of humans as he brings humans into glory. It is in virtue of our union with Jesus Christ that we are saved and glorified. John 1 speaks of Christ as the Logos and the Light who brings knowledge of God to humans. Colossians 1:15, provides additional information to the image when saying, 'He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation.' Related to this, Colossians 1:14, says: 'in whom we have redemption'. Therefore, it is in virtue of this union that we are redeemed and glorified, and, as Paul proceeds to discuss the redemptive image in Colossians 3, we achieve such a state in union with Christ.

What is the nature of this union? It could be interpreted as a mystical union, a contractual relationship, or a *substantial* relationship (construed along the lines of a compound structure). There seems to be something deeper in mind than a mere contract. In 2 Peter 1:3-4 there is a kind of participation in God:

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature. . .

In virtue of our union with Christ, we participate in God. The heart of this participation is something that penetrates one holistically. In contrast to some views, where persons can mystically converge in the Divine, there is still an enduring 'I' or soul presupposed in scripture.⁵⁵ It may be best to posit a substantial relation (i.e., compound structure) that unites the individual to Christ thereby allowing participation in the divine nature *via* his humanity.⁵⁶ In this way, one could suggest that individual human souls become parts of Christ like connecting beams

comprising a house. In the same way that a person may add an additional room onto a house by fusing new material to the previously existing house, so it is with the ‘saints’ that are now parts of Christ’s body having been fused to his body as one larger compound structure.

My point in all of this is that substance ontology with a rich property, specifically an immaterial substance, is able to capture the data in Scripture regarding humanity’s stable and dynamic capacities, and this is motivated by Ecclesiastical tradition.⁵⁷ I do not believe a material substance can capture the data because I do not believe material things have first-person consciousness, free-will, mental action, intrinsic causal power, thus the reason I contend for a soul as substance. More importantly, material entities lack the ability to persist through significant change and the ability to transcend that which is natural or creational. What is it that happens to humans substantively? The answer is glory in virtue of our relationship with Christ. This is a new state and mode of existence.

With the rise of relational ontology and relational theories of the *imago Dei* the discussion has been refreshed on the *imago Dei* and personhood. Relations certainly do have a place in Scripture and understanding ourselves but the heart of the matter is substantial rather than relational. Relations require and philosophically presuppose substances—albeit substances that have a telos toward Christological union.⁵⁸ As we have seen according to the scriptural narrative and the plan of redemption, there are necessary preconditions pertaining to stable aspects of humans and dynamic aspects that are actualized in glory through our union with Christ. Romans 8:29-30 sums up and is made sense of in light of the story I advance in the present article,

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the *image* of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also *glorified* (emphasis mine).⁵⁹

I have argued in favour of a substantive view of the *imago Dei* as ‘holistic’ and encompassing all of Scripture’s description of the human. I have argued this because humans fundamentally bear an immaterial nature that persists through change and bears a rich property. The relational and functional views of the *imago Dei* presuppose the substantive view. Therefore, substance is fundamental to matters of the *imago Dei*. If we are to explain the data of Scripture metaphysically, then we need a holistic view and an immaterial substance. I have argued that a substance view (specifically, an immaterial substance) provides a satisfying and persuasive accounting of the data.

My objective here is modest. I describe a rich property soul view and show how it persuasively and coherently accounts for the scriptural story of humans. Such a view is analogous to a skilful photographer’s work, which is capable of telling a coherent story. Having said that, my objective is not to advance an exegetical case in favour of this view. Additionally, I have not attempted to show that the rich property soul view is the only ‘kid on the block’, but it is a plausible option. Finally, it is a view that theologians should take seriously in the contemporary philosophical and theological discussions on the *imago Dei*.

Notes

1 I say this realizing that most would affirm some sort of Aristotelian or Thomistically motivated dualism, barring, for example, John Calvin who was a Platonist with respect to the human being.

2 For an example of narrative ‘use’ in Christian theology see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1981). Having said this, MacIntyre is critical of analytic approaches. See Eleonore Stump, *Wandering in Darkness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). In her book length treatment of suffering, Stump approaches theology by drawing from analytic literature and a narrative method.

3 It is important to note that I am not explicitly interested in biblical exegesis in the present article. I am interested in constructive theology through a particular theological reading of scripture. That said, I will make some relevant textual and exegetical comments that buttress the argument made.

4 See Kai-Man Kwan, *The Rainbow of Experiences, Critical Trust and God: A Defense of Holistic Empiricism* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011). Also see Chris Tucker (ed.), *Seemings and Justification: New Essays on Dogmatism and Phenomenal Conservatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

5 Thomas Morris referring to Mann describes rich properties as: ‘a conjunctive property having as its conjuncts all and only properties which hold true of a particular individual.’ See ‘On God and Mann’ in *Anselmian Explorations* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 103. These may include essential and accidental properties. Rich properties are universally exemplifiable in substances/concrete particulars that serve as a comprehensive description of a thing. Finally, something like this may account for a common Reformation view where the soul is considered an image, in an Augustinian sense, yet the soul is an image at the varying phases/stages of human history and the body too has some role in the image. John Calvin is one example of the latter in Reformation history, which could be explained by a rich property. Additionally, J.P. Moreland in his recent work could be construed as affirming something like this, however, he does not explicitly state this so far as I have read. Instead, he highlights substantial capacities as reflecting the image, which is a common structural approach as we will see below. See J.P. Moreland, *The Recalcitrant Imago Dei: Human Persons and the Failure of Naturalism* (London: SCM Press, 2009).

6 See Joshua R. Farris, ‘Substance Dualism and Theological Anthropology: A Theological Argument for a Simple view of Persons,’ in *Philosophy and Theology* vol. 27 issue 1 (Spring 2015). Herein, I make a distinct argument from the present article for a simple and/or soul view of personal identity and argue that it not only provides one of the conditions for theology but also has some important implications for theology.

7 Here I am drawing from what is commonly referred to as the ‘uniqueness intuition’ for the *imago Dei*.

8 William G. Lycan, *Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1987), and *Consciousness and Experience* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996). Also see Thomas Ploger and Owen Flanagan, ‘A Decade of Teleofunctionalism: Lycan’s Consciousness and Consciousness and Experience’, *Minds and Machines* 11 (2001), 113-26. I realize these are materialists, but how they construe teleo-functionalism helps to make sense of souls and bodies in an organizational or mereological relationship. For a dualist use of teleo-functionalism known through its effects, see Robert Koons, *Realism Regained: An Exact Theory of Causation, Teleology and the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), see especially chapter 12. He advances a non-retrospective account that does not require the necessity of causal, i.e., evolutionary, history but is spelled out in terms of the natural-kind objects and their effects.

9 This is not to say that there are not variations including internal with latent properties actualized later in history, as seen in eschatological views.

10 Thus, out ruling a Barthian view wherein humans are images ‘externally’ wherein God arbitrarily elects humans to act as his representatives.

11 In this way, minimally, the soul carries the image along from creation to glory. As such, the human soul bears the image under ordinary conditions, but the full manifold expression is only seen or experienced under extraordinary conditions (eschatologically).

12 ‘Saving the phenomena’ is a principle often used in scientific methodology, which often includes the principle of ‘parsimony’, ‘simplicity’, and Ockham’s razor. In this case, I am taking our natural and normal ‘experiences’ of the self and showing that this intuitive view of the self adequately captures all the data of scripture in terms of the broader narrative. In this way, I take it that an immaterial (e.g. a simple and enduring self) self adequately accounts for one’s phenomenal experience of ‘self’ and the Scriptural data from creation, fall, redemption and glory.

13 Arguably, the substantive or structural view of the *imago Dei* is the most prominent view throughout history. Grenz in his *The Social God and the Relational Self* says there are two predominant positions throughout history: the structuralist (substance) and relational, see 142. Grenz seems to think that the structural view is the most prominent view historically, see 142 and 173. The great divine Calvin held to a substantive view. Alister McGrath says this about Calvin: ‘Christ is to be seen as the perfect *imago Dei*, Calvin was able to forge a theological link between creation and redemption using the *imago Dei* as a theological *Leitmotif*, which is how I am using it here. Calvin’s affirmation of the legitimacy of a natural theology, subject to certain limits, rests on his fundamental belief that humanity, as the bearer of God’s image, possesses at least some capability of discerning the presence and character of God from reflecting on the external order of the world, and the internal *sensus divinitatis*.’ See Calvin’s Institutes I.xv.3. Cited from Alister E. McGrath, *An Open Secret: A*

New Vision of A Natural Theology (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 192. Thomas Aquinas held to a substantive view see his *Summa Theologiae*, Iq. 93, aa.2, 6. Augustine did as well, see his *De Trinitate*, III.iv.10.

14 It is important to note that at times the ‘soul’ is used as a term in reference to an additional part of the person as is the mind. It is used as if it is an additional faculty, but this is not technically how I am using it here.

15 A Simple view is the view that there is a foundational entity or substance that is one and indivisible that we identify a person not a composition of parts, properties, or relations. See Richard Swinburne in *The Evolution of the Soul*. Once again, see Joshua R. Farris, ‘Substance Dualism and Theological Anthropology: A Theological Argument for a Simple View of Persons.’

16 Throughout the medieval ages for example there was a common association of the ‘rational nature’ of man with the image of God: Aquinas, Boethius, Augustine and Anselm to name a few. Descartes held to something like this, when commenting on the image and likeness of God: ‘it is innate in me, just as the idea of myself is innate in me’ (see his ‘Third meditation’). Someone could hold to a material substance and hold to a substantive view of the image of God, yet it would be difficult to account for an enduring kind of subject that does not yield two or more numerical objects. This term is properly identified with the medieval Boethius. It is also affirmed by J.P. Moreland and Scott B. Rae in *Body and Soul* (Grand Rapids: IVP, 2000), 25 and 157. It has been critiqued as not sufficient for defining personhood or offering a ground for what Zagzebski has called ‘irreplaceable’ uniqueness or dignity. Kant emphasized that persons are essentially teleological creatures that act toward ends. Others have emphasized that persons act on the behalf of others. See Linda Zagzebski, ‘The Uniqueness of Persons,’ in *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Fall, 2001), 401-423. I suggest that the above positions are not mutually exclusive, but are inclusive to a distinct kind of substance that is a personal being. Souls, as I am laying them out, are the kinds of beings that mentally act, toward ends, have potential properties that are designed to be actualized by a being with the pre-requisites (i.e. rationality, volitional states, and a moral compass) in relation to and on behalf of others.

17 I argue that this is ground for redeeming humans. This is not to say that God is required to redeem on the basis of what is internal, but this blocks an entirely ad-hoc and arbitrary reason for God’s redemption of humans.

18 Linville, Mark D. ‘The Moral Argument’ in *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* Ed. By William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell; 2009), 444-445.

19 John F. Kilner, *Dignity and Destiny: Humanity in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), see part II and III. Kilner contributes the most comprehensive historical and biblical treatment of the *imago Dei* in evangelical literature to date. He argues that there are two distinctive characteristics of the image, namely, dignity and destiny which are fulfilled in Christ.

20 See Marc Cortez, *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 18-21. Cortez is generally critical of structural views in his treatment, but he does not highlight the benefits offered by a structural view that I have already mentioned. Furthermore, he does not consider a substantive view, as I am construing it here that can, arguably, accommodate the worries he advances against structural approaches.

21 J. Richard Middleton, ‘The Liberating Image: Interpreting the Imago Dei in Context,’ *Christian Scholars Review* 24.1 (1994), 24-25. I draw this useful symbol from Middleton.

22 See Marc Cortez, *Theological Anthropology*, 24-27. In it, Cortez offers a thoughtful survey of supporting reasons in favour of the relational approach. His analysis of the relational approach is generally positive, but he notes several lines of criticism.

23 J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2005), 25-29. Gerhard von Rad is usually associated with this interpretation. See Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, rev. ed., trans. John H. Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 60 ff.; and *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. ‘eikon,’ by Gerhard von Rad, et al., ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 2:381-397.

24 Kevin J. Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature: A Christian Materialist Alternative to the Soul* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2006), 81.

25 All I am trying to say here is that we need a philosophical system that adequately accounts for and make sense of the Biblical data/phenomena. ‘Save the phenomena’ is a term that attempts to make sense of the whole event or of all the phenomena in the event.

26 In other words, I am assuming theological realism not simply that the propositions contained in the scriptures are story dependent.

27 On a Cartesian view of persons the ‘whatness’ is intimately tied to persons. Persons are persons essentially, barring the incarnation where the soul and body are not individualized—yet are assumed by a person.

28 For a helpful summary of some of the scholarship and a critique of this interpretation see J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image? Interpreting the Imago Dei in Context*. *Christian Scholars Review* 24.1 (1994) 8-25; especially pages 8 and 9.

29 See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton: Crossway Publishing, 2012), 186. See also Old Testament scholar Wenham in his commentary *Genesis 1-15* vol. 1, *Word Biblical Commentary series* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 31.

30 Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*, 200-201.

31 *Ibid.* 188.

32 For an alternative reading see Joel Green, 'Why the Imago Dei Should Not Be Identified with the Soul,' in the *Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology* ed. by Joshua R. Farris and Charles Taliaferro (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015).

33 Many have pointed out that the 'image' generally refers to a physical statue, but depending upon how much merit this has for humans as the *imago Dei* it would not preclude what I am arguing for here if the soul and body have a robust unity relation when the human person is embodied such that the body really is a part of the human. This is in agreement with an Augustinian and Calvinian view of human nature wherein the soul is the primary referent for the image yet with a place for the body. Furthermore, it seems appropriate to apply a 'transcendental' criterion wherein this passage is moving beyond the Ancient Near East context. Matthew Levering mentions something like this criterion and hermeneutical principle in *Jesus and the Demise of Death: Resurrection, Afterlife, and the Fate of the Christian* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2012), see for example 10. This is not an uncommon interpretation in the history of Christian thought. See George H. Van Kooten, *Paul's Anthropology in Context* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

34 Moreland helpfully uses this common analogy in his work in *Body and Soul* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP; 2000), 74.

35 Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.16.2, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, revised by A. Cleveland (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1.5444. The Patristics in general held to these distinctions. Grenz says, 'The position Irenaeus articulated is representative of the anthropology of the patristic era.' *The Social God and the Relational Self*, 149. This is taught in Aquinas, at least conceptually. Aquinas taught that the image is seen in three ways: at creation in all, at salvation and at glory. See *Summa Theologica*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1948), 477 (1.93.4 and 9, 1:471-472). This is taught in Origen, Irenaeus, Gregory of Nyssa. For an exposition of some of the historical views on this see the discussion in Nonna Verna Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), chapter 2. Historically, the universal Church seems to be in favour of this understanding that humans were created with the idea that they could grow toward maturity even if it is not couched in the terms image and likeness alone.

36 A recent advocate of this view is Nonna Verna Harrison, *God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation*, Introduction. Harrison is influenced by Eastern Orthodoxy and Platonic notions that are pervasive in Eastern Orthodoxy, for instance in Origen. Throughout history many in the Catholic tradition held to this distinction as well, including: Thomas Aquinas, John of Damascene and others. Luther held likeness as a part of the image. See Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*: Vol. 1 Pt. 1 Q. 93, ninth Article 'Whether 'Likeness' Is Properly Distinguished from Image', trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. (Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1948), 477.

37 John Calvin, *Institutes: Book 1* trans. by John T. McNeil (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1948), pp. 187-189 (chapter XV.3). James Leo Garrett, *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 1:393; Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3 vols. in 1 vol. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1987), 500-501.

38 It is not a coincidence that the author of Genesis speaks of Genesis 5:1 concerning the likeness of Adam to God in close proximity to the author speaking of the birth of Seth. Seth being in the genealogy from Adam is a way of saying, in Ancient Near East literature, that Seth is in relation to Adam and in Adam's likeness. See the helpful comments of Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton: Crossway Publishing, 2012), 199.

39 This may be clear in the term 'image' although the term more broadly encompasses aspects of persons rather than simply a property, a faculty, or a substance frozen outside of time.

40 I do think this is conceptually in line with Ecclesiastical history even if I am not couching the philosophical distinction in the terms image and likeness. I also believe that historically hylomorphism was predominantly presupposed by many divines and by the framers of many of the creeds (i.e. Chalcedon) throughout history. Even though this may be true, I believe Cartesianism (as a term of art) does all the work necessary for

articulating doctrine and is compatible with the Church's teachings. Furthermore, I am convinced on philosophical grounds that Cartesianism is true and that it fits with the teachings of Scripture.

41 Although, I believe scripture intimates that God intended this process for human development. Thus, humans are designed for union with Christ (possibly some sort of ontic union) to fully actualize God's created potential in man. This is a qualitative distinction that is almost a magnification of what man already is at creation in contrast to the dampening effects of sin on man's glory. There is still numerical identity between the soul as substance from creation, fall, redemption and glory.

42 Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster shorter catechism* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of publication, 1861), question 1 and answer 1. Also see Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), see especially 110-119. It is important to note that the approach I take to humans as images, in the context of creation and eschatology, is helpfully distinct from Kathryn Tanner's approach. Tanner approaches human nature at creation and in the eschaton from the sole perspective of God's action where you might say that humans at creation and at eschaton are really discrete effects of one act and humans are corporately, externally, and dynamically identified in Christ. The end of humans is defined solely in Christ, as the space for human nature, but not construed so much temporally. Instead, I approach the creational story of humans from a common sense perspective as a pre-condition for the scripture's developing story of humans.

43 The New International Version actually says: 'we may also share in his glory'. The original says: *ἐπερ συνπάρομεν ἵνα κἀσυνδοξασθῶμεν*. This literally means something upon suffering with him in order that we might (subjunctive) share his glory. The Latin vulgate uses the word 'conglorificemur'. There is a glory that is participated in by the new humanity. This is quite fascinating and demonstrates the point that humanity's end is something beyond the natural created order.

44 This line of logic has been used to develop more of an eschatological view of human persons and the *imago Dei* where the focus, it is argued, is on the eschatological end/purpose of man as he is defined in Christ. What I am suggesting here takes on a different character than a Christocentric and narrative view of the *imago Dei*. An eschatological view is insufficient though, by itself, because it misses the important emphasis in scripture whereby man is the image of God from creation.

45 Joshua Hoffman and Gary Rosenkrantz, *Substance: Its Nature and Existence* (New York: Routledge Publishing, 1997), 63.

46 Ibid. 69.

47 Ibid. 68-69.

48 I do not mean re-creation in a strict literal sense.

49 This does not mean as some have suggested that Christ is literally the image and we are not, but that Christ is the Archetype of man, the exemplar, the perfection and the logical completion of humanity's end/purpose. Some have argued for a relational ontology with respect to man's identity and the image that is tied to Jesus who is literally the image. This is intriguing but I believe it is difficult to make this case exegetically in Scripture. It seems that individual human persons have the image as a part of their essential natures not that they are simply related to the image-Christ. Thus, the Scripture's can literally say and mean that man is the image of God and is the glory of God's creation and redemption. See Kathryn Tanner for an intriguing defence of the view that Christ is the image and we are related to that image in our union with Christ. She develops this view in *Christ the Key* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chapter 1. Tanner's view is intriguing and I believe she makes a persuasive theological case for this view, but I think that it is missing the substantive nature of the image in man at creation that is represented and referred to in various places throughout Scripture.

50 The image of God is something essential to the existence of human beings, thus philosophically it does not make sense for persons to have lost the image. Metaphorically one could speak of this image as lost as it corresponds to man's lack or malfunctioning. If the image of God is essential to human existence, then to the extent that an individual human has being he can be said to be in the image of God. Furthermore, the scriptures never speak of the human having lost his image. In fact, scripture still speaks of man in his fallen state as being in the image of God (see James 3:9).

51 This might fit with Irenaean soul-making theodicy. Human beings were created with the intent that a greater good would transpire through the fall. The process of soul-making is a process of making persons better and preparing them to see God. See John Hick, 'An Irenaean Theodicy', in *Encountering Evil*, ed. by Steven T. Davis (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 39. The answer to this question as to whether God would create man with the intent of bringing good through the fall is a question that comes down to God's decrees. This would require a supralapsarian view within God's decrees wherein he decreed the fall in order that humans might ultimately be 'glorified'. It is possible on another understanding of God's decrees. God could have not intended the

fall but decreed salvation as a result of the fall. God still may have had a plan of bringing Christ for the purpose of bringing man to a more perfected state.

52 Ralph McInerny discusses this in his *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* revised edition (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997), chapter 8. McInerny discusses Aquinas's distinction between natural and special revelation as they pertain to Thomas's understanding of moral philosophy. He also so speaks of this as a matter of cognition and existential reality. Aquinas taught that the image is seen in three ways: at creation in all, at salvation and at glory. *Summa Theologica*, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols (Westminster: Christian Classics, 1948), 1.93.4 and 9, 1:471-472, 477. Aquinas here has a focus on the substantial human person. The manner in which the Scriptures and Christian tradition speak of human personhood and the image of God is a substantive matter.

53 Here I am drawing from what may be considered an 'eschatological' view of the image of God. The eschatological view is closely aligned with relational views and many times seems to assume a relational ontology. Here I am not assuming this view because I believe substance captures something prior to the eschatological self as seen in the creational self. For an example of an eschatological view, see Stanley Grenz's useful book, *The Social God and the Relational Self*.

54 If it were intrinsic but mind-dependent this could be articulated along the lines of a Neo-Platonic ontology.

55 Presupposing biblical tradition, as I do, there is a clear Creator and creature distinction. However, one could explain the unity of God and man as something like a compound structure where the parts (namely human persons) become parts of Christ's body by fusing and/or melding as one compound unity. This also fits with our common sense intuitions and with the Protestant Reformed tradition with which I align.

56 I posit a Compositional Christology whereby enduring souls become parts of Christ's human nature, thus filling out a larger composite whole/substance.

57 For a philosophical case in favor of substance/subject as foundational to event ontology/causality see E.J. Lowe, *A Survey of Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), chapter 13. Here Lowe argues for a reductive account of event causation to substance causation. This is applicable to my understanding of substance and relations. Even if there is an irreducible role for event-relations it still seems that substance is fundamental to matters relational. Substance is not reducible to an event.

58 Ontologically speaking two substances are required for relations to exist, generally. One could speak of having a relation to oneself. Relations supervene on substances in interaction.

59 Romans 8 also speaks of this life not comparing to the life to come. This may imply a kind of stepping up, as well, wherein there is not an exact parallel between the creation and new creation. There is an imperfect parallel between the fallen Adam as the head of the human race and Christ as the glorified Adam and the new head of the human race. The new heavens and new earth are better than Eden.