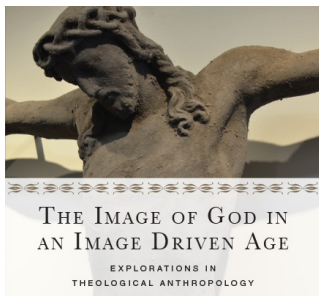


*The Image of God in an Image Driven Age: Explorations in Theological Anthropology*  
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The essays collected in *The Image of God in an Image Driven Age* explore the intersection of theology and culture. With topics ranging across biblical exegesis, the art gallery, Cormac McCarthy, racism, sexuality and *theosis*, the contributors to this volume offer a unified vision—ecumenical in nature and catholic in spirit—of what it means to be truly human and created in the divine image in the world today.



## Perspectives on “Image” from the 2015 Wheaton Theology Conference

“Image,” so the saying goes, “is everything.” Look in any magazine, turn on the nearest television, or open an app on any smartphone: images abound. Colors, words, pictures, videos, advertisements reveal a world of intricate complexity, unveil sights from the farthest corners of the world and the outer reaches of space and give humanity shared access to what could once only be imagined. Public images are constructed through symbols of power or representations of beauty. Visual images in film or photography memorialize decisive moments in history—moments of celebration and discovery no less than those of war and famine—and shape our collective interpretation of major events. Individually, too, memories indelibly shape our sense of self in relationship with others. The mind’s eye stores images that together construct the narrative of a life: a memory of a parent, an instant of tragedy, a moment of romantic love, a mental snapshot of the newborn child.

Still, for all the ways that images help to shape our understanding of the self and the world in which we live, images often lead us astray and distort our relationships. Christians confess that humans have been created in the image of the living God, yet human beings chose to rebel against that God and so became unfaithful bearers of God’s image...

Part of the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ is that Jesus, who is the image of God, restores the divine image in us, partially now and fully in that day to come when “this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality” (1 Cor 15:54). Paul contrasts human beginnings with the human future, Adam with Jesus: “The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven” (1 Cor 15:47). Paul makes it clear that, just as we have shared in Adam’s fallen image, we are meant to share in all that belongs to Christ: “Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor 15:49). The image on the cover of this book might lead us to meditate on this seemingly unfathomable promise. The cover shows a photograph of sculptor David Hooker’s *Corpus*, in which he has covered a crucifix in literal dust, including the skin cells and the hair of those who “have borne the image of the man of dust.” Jesus Christ shares all that is ours, including our mortality, so that we may share all that is his.

Beginning with the conviction that the doctrine of the image of God (often written using the Latin *imago Dei*) offers truth and health in a culture inundated with images, we invited Christian scholars from a variety of backgrounds to speak to these questions: How, in our time and place, might our understanding of what it means to be created in the divine image be challenged or distorted? In dealing with this situation, what corrective and constructive resources are available in the Christian faith? How can the Christian doctrine of the image of God inform and strengthen Christian witness in this image-driven age?

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Too often the temptation is to respond to such questions in a negative tone. There is much about the present image-driven age that concerns Christians, and it would have been too easy to spend all the words of this volume articulating what wrongs have distorted this world. We need, of course, to tell the truth about the world's brokenness, and the essays in this volume do careful work in diagnosing our present disorder, but we are happy to report that the overall project avoids wallowing in the negative. In all cases, these essays also point to the hope and healing that are real in Jesus Christ, and they offer positive direction for witnessing to the goodness of God.

*The Image of God in an Image Driven Age: Explorations in Theological Anthropology* thereby offers a unified collection of essays—ecumenical in nature and catholic in spirit—exploring what it means to be truly human and created in the divine image in the world today. We have designed the volume for the use of a variety of audiences, including theologians who wish to learn from the conversation among colleagues recorded here as well as pastors and other church and parachurch workers who are interested in faithful witness. It also remains accessible for students who are learning about Christian doctrine in general and the doctrine of the human person in particular—the “theological anthropology” of the subtitle. No essay in this volume is a standard introduction to theological anthropology, but students who have a chance to read the whole will find something even more interesting: a variety of voices engaging with the heart of the Christian understanding of what it means to be human and conversing with one another and with the greater Christian tradition.

In all, *The Image of God in an Image Driven Age* offers diverse perspectives on the relationship between humans and the divine, the world and the future. Drawing on biblical, theological and cultural resources, these authors reveal the central place of theological anthropology in contemporary reflection on Christian faith and practice. The authors speak from different social, ecclesial and political backgrounds, but each uncovers new resources for new patterns of reflection and life in the world. We pray that God might use it to continue to shape his people.

-Adapted from the introduction

This collection from the 2015 Wheaton Theology Conference includes contributions by Daniela C. Augustine, Craig L. Blomberg, William A. Dyrness, Timothy R. Gaines and Shawna Songer Gaines, Phillip Jenkins, Beth Felker Jones, Christina Bieber Lake, Catherine McDowell, Ian A. McFarland, Matthew J. Milliner, Soong-Chan Rah and Janet Soskice, as well as original poems by Jill Peláez Baumgaertner and Brett Foster.