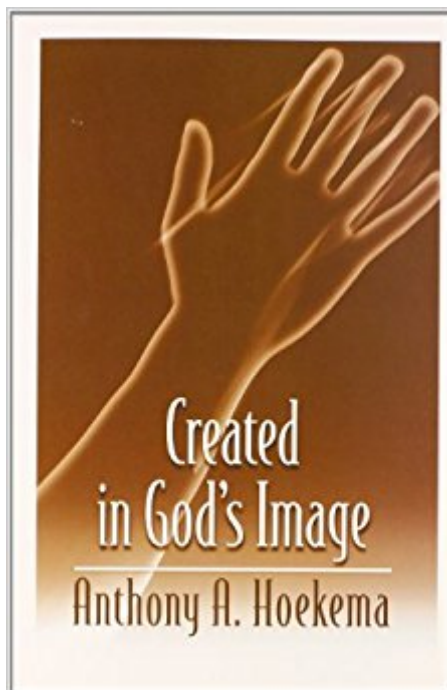


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# Created In God's Image



## Synopsis

According to Scripture, humankind was created in the image of God. Hoekema discusses the implications of this theme, devoting several chapters to the biblical teaching on God's image, the teaching of philosophers and theologians through the ages, and his own theological analysis. Suitable for seminary-level anthropology courses, yet accessible to educated laypeople. Extensive bibliography, fully indexed.

## Book Information

Paperback: 275 pages

Publisher: Eerdmans; Reprint edition (September 6, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802808506

ISBN-13: 978-0802808509

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 32 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #44,189 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Anthropology #739 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Theology

## Customer Reviews

Anthony A. Hoekema (1913–1988) was professor of systematic theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. His other widely read works include *The Christian Looks at Himself* and *The Four Major Cults*.

Anthony Hoeksema offers a very competent and thorough presentation on humanity in this work. He does a great job of explaining his (i.e. Reformed) position well, contrasting it with opposing views, and supporting his view from Scripture. I especially appreciated his extended portion on what it means that man is created in God's image and likeness. This is important because sometimes there may be a tendency to think that man was created in God's image before the Fall, but that the image was lost in the Fall. Hoekema's contributions have big implications for apologetics and evangelism, since even fallen man bears the image of God, deformed as it may be. Human life still has immense dignity and value. This is perhaps the main thrust of book. Hoekema appeals to and interacts with many scholars, using primary sources and fairly credits their individual contributions. Hoekema

allows for those with whom he may disagree on some points to offer a helpful contribution to his view. Hoekema also spends a great deal of time explaining how Adam's fall affects his posterity. Traditionally, this is known as "original sin" and this is probably my favorite portion of the book. The chapter is entitled, "The Spread of Sin", and Hoekema does a great job defending the orthodox position against objections. Perhaps this is only my preference, but I wish that Hoekema would have referenced historical confessional statements more often. I prefer references to creeds, confessions, catechisms, and canons to establish the school of thought of a particular group. Hoekema prefers to engage directly with contemporaries like G.C. Berkouwer. He quotes Barth more than the Three Forms of Unity. Nevertheless, this is a robust book on biblical anthropology. I heartily recommend it to all.

Good book! A very thorough look at the image of God.

A thoroughly Biblical view of what it means to be a human and the implications of bearing God's image. Mr. Hoekema makes it clear that the Bible doesn't speak of self-esteem as the major problem in our culture. The problem we have is really an image problem. Because of sin, our self-image has been corrupted and distorted. He continues and makes the case that essence of the Gospel, is to restore the true image of God in us, through the person of Jesus Christ.

This 220 page book deals primarily with the doctrine of anthropology, or rather the position and place of man in God's creation. The language is not heavily technical, so its suitable for the average reader, and not just for those who are steeped in theological thought. Dr. Hoekema begins his book with an explanation of why the doctrine of man is important. He cites the focus on self centered, or man centered, questions being asked in our culture, and that studying the doctrine of man can bring us to God through the door of self. While older cultures focused on more ultimate questions, and hence could approach God through those avenues, today's inward focus on the state of man provides us with another approach. The author then moves into the doctrine of man itself, dealing first with man's status as a created person. In the next chapter, he shows how man goes beyond created person, and into the image and likeness of God. He focuses first on the question of whether or not man still bears the image of God. By surveying the Tanakh and the New Testament, he comes to the conclusion that man does, in fact, still bear the image of God. Once past this point, Dr. Hoekema begins to come to grips with what the image of God means. He provides a historical survey of the idea, working through Irenaeus, John Calvin, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, and various

others. The author then works through a theological summary of the image of God, dealing with structural and functional aspects, Christ as the true image of God, man's threefold relationship, the original image, the perverted image, the restored image, and the perfected image. The result of this investigation is that this image is a holistic attribute, rather than being centered in any particular part of faculty of man, or even men and women. The most helpful chapter in the book follows, a chapter on the relationship between the self-image and the image of God. This is followed by several chapters on sin, including the origin of sin, the spread of sin, the nature of sin, and the restraint of sin. The book concludes with one chapter titled The Whole Person, followed by a chapter on The Question of Freedom. There are some points where the logic falls through. For instance, the author claims the current age is uniquely man centered, but seems to miss the entire episode of Diogenes using his lantern to search for a human being, showing the Greeks were often just as man-centered as we are. Dr. Hoekema uses Romans 9 for the common proof of predestination, although it is easily shown this particular Scripture has nothing to do with salvation. The section on the unpardonable sin is completely missing the Hebrew cultural context.

great

An outstanding read. Hoekema offers some great insight.

This book was purchased as a textbook for a course I was taking. It is now part of my library. Great instruction on what it means for a human being to bear the image of God. Written from a biblical world view.

Firstly, I agreed with nearly everything Hoekema said, so I feel no obligation to refute it. However, one reviewer said that it was "well-researched," and that will just not stand. For an average lay-reader, it is well-researched; for the scholarly, they will notice an egregious handling of support from the original languages--the near complete omission of word/phrase usages with either that author (e.g., Paul) or any other corpus. Hoekema merely cites the BDAG's occurrences, then skips to the context (p. 166). This is incomplete exegesis--there should be occurrences/usages in the N.T./LXX/Particular Corpus. That is a very important middle step. The author's historical research was better but not impressive either. I still learned some good things, it was readable, clear, the author repeats himself at times which you may like/not like. Hoekema seeks to be fair and does not malign his brothers who disagree with his views. Overall, it's a good work. Nevertheless, if you are

seeking rock-solid exegesis to base your own views of Hamartiology and Anthropology, I would start here and then move on to an author more acquainted with Hebrew and Greek.

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