

The Image of God

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Abbreviations

- ABP — The Apostolic Bible Polyglot
ACW — Ancient Christian Writings [Vol. # / Page #]
ANF — Ante-Nicene Fathers [Vol. # / Page #]
EOB — The Eastern/Greek Orthodox Bible: New Testament¹
FOTC — The Fathers of the Church [Vol. # / Page #]
LCL — Loeb Classical Library [Vol. # / Page #]
LES2 — *The Lexham English Septuagint 2nd. Ed.*
LXX — The Septuagint Old Testament
LXX2012 — Septuagint in American English 2012²
MT — The Masoretic Old Testament
NT — New Testament
NETS — *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*
OT — Old Testament

¹ This new translation of the 1904 Patriarchal Text (PATr) of the Greek New Testament is both scholarly and easy to read, with a number of articles, appendices, and relevant footnotes throughout the text. The Eastern/Greek Orthodox Bible: New Testament (EOB: NT) is an essential part of any library for personal study, devotion, or liturgical use in English-speaking Orthodox churches. The EOB: NT is a fresh and accessible translation created within the Orthodox community, and follows the only Greek text of the New Testament that has been approved by the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

² The Brenton translation of the Old Testament and Apocrypha/Deuterocanon from Hebrew to Greek to 19th Century British English, with some updates of spelling and word usage to contemporary American English. The original English translation was done by Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton and published by Samuel Bagster & Sons, Ltd., in London in 1851. In the process of scanning and typing the text, the original poetry and prose formatting, as well as peripheral material like introductions and notes, have been omitted.

This edition of the Septuagint has some language updates. Brenton's word order and punctuation has been mostly retained, meaning that quotation marks are not used, and sentences within quotes may not start with capital letters, as was standard usage in 1851. Names transliterated from Greek to those transliterated from Hebrew in the common English Bibles often differ. These language updates are dedicated to the Public Domain by the author of those edits, Michael Paul Johnson.

Textual Basis: Codex Vaticanus c. 325–350 CE

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Introduction

In his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul exhorts those of us who are fathers, saying:

[4] Fathers, do not drive your children to anger, but nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. — Ephesians 6:4 EOB

Now just as there are many ways to anger your children, there are many ways to instruct them in the Lord. In our home one tool that we utilize to instruct our children is family devotionals.

- Family Devotional method: We seek to implant, in our children, simple Bible stories by repetition.
 - John Chrysostom, *Address on Vainglory and the Right Way for Parents to Bring Up Their Children* 39-42.
- Surface goal:
 - For our children to learn the story, well enough that they are able to tell it themselves.
- Meta Goal:
 - For our children, from the story, to:
 1. Come to know and love God
 2. Learn the principles of the Faith, so they may learn how to live.

The way we get to the point where the children can tell us the story by themselves is by:

1. First, reading them the story over the course of one to two devotionals,
2. After this, our devotionals become less about us telling them the story, and more about asking them questions so that they can advance the plot by their answers.

For example, in the creation narrative of Genesis:

- We'll ask them:
 - "What did God create on the first day?"
 - They'll answer: "Heaven, Earth, and light."
 - "What did God create on the second day?"
 - They'll answer: "The firmament."
- When we get to the sixth day, we'll ask:
 - "What did God create on the sixth day?"
 - They'll respond: "The land animals"
- Then we ask them about the crowning jewel of creation:

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- “After the land animals, what was the last thing God created?”
 - They’ll respond: “Man” (i.e. Humans).
- Then we’ll probe them on the details of the story, so we’ll ask them:
 - “And according to whose image was Man made?”
 - They’ll reply: “God’s image.”
- And then we’ll ask them a question, that might be counterintuitive:
 - “And who is the ‘Image of God?’”

This is what I would like for us to discuss this morning;

† *The One who is the Image of God.*

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Jesus

If you ask my children this question, they’ll respond: “Jesus.”

- We have taught them to interpret Genesis 1:27 in this way.

[27] And God made man, according to the image of God he made him... —
Genesis 1:27 LXX2012

The way we’ve taught our children to understand this passage is:

1. Man was created according to God’s Image,
2. And God’s Image is a person, whose name is Jesus.

This interpretation is based on passages like 2 Corinthians 4:4, where the Apostle Paul explicitly states that “Christ...is the image of God.”

Likewise in his letter to the Hebrews Paul says concerning the Son:

[3] He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature — Hebrews 1:3 NET

Corroborating these statements are Jesus’ own words recorded in the Gospel according to John:

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[44] Jesus cried aloud, “Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in the one who sent me! [45] **Whoever sees me sees the one³ who sent me.**” — John 12:44-45 EOB

And,

[8] Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us!”

[9] Jesus answered, “I have been with you for such a long time, and still, do you not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father!** So how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ [10] Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?” — John 14:8-10 EOB

You’ve likely read these passages and understood them to mean that anyone who saw Jesus in the flesh (i.e., His human nature) saw the Father.

- And this is correct,
 - Certainly it’s the immediate context of these statements.
- But this principle also holds true on a larger scale.

In Colossians 1:15 Paul says that “**<the Son> is the image of the invisible God.**” I like this expression because it points to a major paradox in the Scriptures.

1. God is invisible
2. God has an image

The Invisible God

The principle that God is invisible is attested to throughout the Scriptures in the OT and NT. The Apostle John minces no words when he wrote:

[18] No one has seen God at any time. — John 1:18 NKJV

This passage is straightforward, but what is confusing is that the OT has several examples of people seeing God. So what gives?

³ I.e. God (aka the Father), cf. John 20:21.

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Harmonizing the Paradox

There is a critical teaching of the Church that harmonizes this paradox. This teaching was unanimously taught from the time of the earliest Christians, deep into the Post-Nicene period,⁴ and even unto today, with few exceptions.

We could cite most Pre-Nicene Christians with extant writings,⁵ but Novation of Rome does a great job summarizing both the paradox and the teaching that harmonizes it.

(1) Please note that...Moses says...that God appeared to Abraham.⁶ Yet the same Moses hears from God that no man can see God and live.⁷ If God cannot be seen, how did God appear? If He appeared, how is it that He cannot be seen? (2) For John says in like manner: “No one has ever seen God.”⁸ And the apostle Paul says: “Whom no man has seen or can see.”⁹ But certainly, Scripture does not lie; therefore, God was really seen. Accordingly, this can only mean that it was not the Father, who never has been seen, that was seen, but the Son, who is accustomed¹⁰ both to descend and to be seen... (3) In fact, He is “the image of the invisible God,”¹¹ that our limited human nature and frailty might in time grow accustomed to see God the Father in Him who is the Image of God, that is, in the Son of God. — Novation of Rome, *On the Trinity* 18.1-3¹²

In this view Jesus’ words in John 14:9, i.e. “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father,” applies not only to those who saw Jesus in the flesh, but also retroactively to anyone who saw Him prior to the incarnation.

⁴ Cf. Gregory of Nyssa — *Against Eunomius* 3.9.40.

⁵ Cf. Justin Martyr — *Dialogue with Trypho* 113, 127; Irenaeus of Gaul — *Against Heresies* 4.10.1; Theophilus of Antioch — *To Autolytus* 2.22; Clement of Alexandria — *Instructor* 1.7.56-57; *Stromateis* 6.7.55.2-57.5 (6.7¶3 ANF 2.493), Tertullian of Carthage — *Against Marcion* 4.10 (ANF 3.359); *Prescription Against Heretics* 1.13; Hippolytus of Rome — *Commentary on Daniel* 2.33.1-5 (Schmidt).

⁶ Cf. Genesis 12:7, 18:1.

⁷ Exodus 33:20.

⁸ John 1:18, 1 John 4:12.

⁹ 1 Timothy 6:16.

¹⁰ Per ANF 5.628; FOTC 67.67 — “wont.”

¹¹ Colossians 1:15.

¹² FOTC 67.67.

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Images of The Image

Now, some of us might hear these ideas and find them to be very interesting and maybe even inspiring, others might be thinking to themselves:

- “So what?”
- “What does this have to do with me?”

Fair enough; these principles are theological in nature and may be a bit esoteric or philosophical.

But, my goal for this sermon is to show us how these theological principles are not knowledge for its own sake, but instead are intended to:

1. Help us better understand our relationship to God,
2. Instruct us on how to live our lives in faithfulness to God.

So how does this concept of Jesus being the Image of God, even prior to His incarnation, impact how we understand our relationship with God?

Recall that our discussion on the Image of God started with the teaching that God made Man according to His image. So what we’re going to do is take some time to answer the question:

† *In what way is Man created according to the image of God (aka Jesus)?*

And then, based on the answers, we’ll discuss what implications this has on how we live.

Patristic Interpretations

I have taken a good deal of time to do a historical survey on this topic, at least for the pre-Nicene time period (i.e., prior to ~AD 325). And I’ve tried to answer the question:

- In what sense did the earliest Christians understand Man to be created according to God’s image?
 - How did the earliest Christians interpret Genesis 1:26-27?
 - And by extension, Genesis 2:7.

What I’ve found is that there were two schools of thought on the issue, with one of them being the majority position and the other being the minority position.

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Commonalities

Now, these two schools of interpretation have a lot in common.

1. They both identified Jesus Christ as the incarnation of:
 - A. God's "Λόγος" ("Logos"),^{13 14}
 - i. "Λόγος," is typically translated into English as "Word," but translating it as "Logic" or "Reason" more accurately reflects the interpretation of the Early Christians as it relates to Jesus.
 - B. God's Wisdom,¹⁵
 - i. This connection was due largely in part by Paul's words:
 - a. "...Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God." — 1 Corinthians 1:24 EOB
 - C. And God's Image,¹⁶
 - i. This connection was due largely in part by Solomon's words:
 - a. [24] For wisdom moves more freely than any movement; she pervades and penetrates all things because of her pureness.
[25] For she is a breath of the power of God and an emanation of the pure glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.
[26] **For she is a reflection of eternal light and a spotless mirror of the activity of God¹⁷ and an image of his goodness.**
— Wisdom of Solomon 7:24-26 NETS
2. They both understood Man to have been created as an image of God's Image (i.e., Jesus Christ), and
3. They both understood the "likeness" of God to mean that man's conduct and character imitates God's or is in accordance with His commandments.
 - A. Thus, they both understood the "likeness" of God to be something that could be lost and/or gained.¹⁸

¹³ Cf. John 1:1, 14; Hebrews 4:12-13; Revelation 19:13.

¹⁴ See Appendix A for an in depth discussion.

¹⁵ See Appendix B for an in depth discussion.

¹⁶ See Appendix C for an in depth discussion.

¹⁷ Cf. Hebrews 1:3.

¹⁸ Irenaeus of Gaul — *Against Heresies* 5.6.1, 5.16.2; *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 14 (cf. 5); Clement of Alexandria — *Stromatias* 2.22.131.2-6 (2.22¶1 ANF 2.375-376); Origen of Alexandria — *Commentary on Romans* 4.5.11.

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Differences

Now, where they differed is in **how** they understood man to be an image of the Image:

1. The Minority position associates the image entirely on the mind of Man to the exclusion of the body (i.e., the “inner man”¹⁹ alone).²⁰
 - A. And because of this, the Minority position is open to the idea of men being able to lose the image of God, by straying away from God in their minds.
 - B. So, at times it’s hard to distinguish the difference they drew between being according to the image of God and the likeness of God.²¹
2. The Majority position taught that the body of man is the image, or at a minimum, the key component of the image.
 - A. Which means that the proponents of this position didn’t believe that one could ever stop being an image of the Image,
 - B. Although Methodius of Olympus did think that our image was wounded by sin.²²

With that summary, let’s hear an explanation of these positions from at least one of their proponents and then consider what implications these have on our lives.

The Minority Interpretation

A strong argument can be made that the Minority position had its roots in the Catechetical School of Alexandria.

- This is because its two proponents were Clement²³ and Origen²⁴ of Alexandria.
- There is also good evidence that they were highly influenced by Philo of Alexandria’s commentaries on Genesis.
 - We know they were familiar with his writings,
 - E.g., Clement cites Philo, by name,²⁵

¹⁹ Romans 7:22; 2 Corinthians 4:16.

²⁰ See Appendix D for further discussion.

²¹ E.g. Clement of Alexandria — *Instructor* 1.12.98; *Stromaties* 7.14.86.1-2.

²² *The Symposium (The Banquet of the Ten Virgins)* 1.4-5 (Discourse 1 — *Marcella*).

²³ See *Exhortation to the Greeks* 1 (¶7 ANF 2.172, ¶9 ANF 2.173); 10 (¶5 ANF 2.199); *Stromaties* 2.19.102.2-7 (2.19¶5 ANF 2.370), 5.14.94.3-6 (5.14¶10 ANF 2.466), 6.9.71.1-72.2 (6.9¶1-3 ANF 2.496-497), 6.14.114.4-6 (6.14¶12 ANF 2.506), 6.16.136.3 (6.16¶11 ANF 2.512), 7.5.28.1-29.8 (7.5¶1-4 ANF 2.530-531)).

²⁴ See *On First Principle* 1.2.5-1.2.6, 3.6.1; *Homilies on Genesis* 1.13; *Commentary on Romans* 1.19.8, 2.13.34, 5.1.28; *Dialogue with Heraclides* 11.20-12.14, 15.28-16.11; *Against Celsus* 6.63, 8.49; *On Prayer* 27.2.

²⁵ See Clement of Alexandria — *Stromaties* 1.5.31.1 (1.5 ¶4 ANF 2.306); 2.19.100.3 (2.19 ¶4 ANF 2.369).

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- And Origen, while never explicitly referring to Philo, was the direct student of Clement,²⁶
 - But mostly, Philo's influence on both of them is observable in other areas of the interpretation of Scripture,
 - Now, this is not to say that Clement and Origen adopted Philo's position on every passage of scripture. That wasn't the case even for Genesis, and not even within the creation narrative itself. But, when it came to Genesis 1:26 & 27, they did adopt Philo's interpretation fairly closely, they just did it in a Christian way.
- Philo was a Jewish religious intellectual from Alexandria, who was born around 20 BC and is estimated to have died around AD 50.
 - Which means he was a contemporary of our Lord Jesus, and the Apostles. Although, there are no clear signs that He was aware of Jesus' ministry.
 - If he wrote his commentaries on Genesis in his mid 40's, then he would have written them around AD 25, just a few years before Jesus started his public ministry.
 - In contrast, Clement and Origen were writing about 200 years later, but you can see his strong influence in their writings on this topic.

With that backstory out of the way, let's hear Clement's commentary on Genesis 1:26-27:

[3] Rightly then Moses says, that the body...was formed of the ground, but that the logical²⁷ soul was breathed by God into man's face.²⁸ [4] For there, they say, the ruling faculty is situated; interpreting the entrance of²⁹ the senses into the first man as the addition of the soul.

[5] Wherefore also man is said "to have been made in [God's] image and likeness."^{30,31} For the image of God is the divine and royal Logic,³² ...and the image of the image is the human mind. [6] And if you wish to understand³³ the likeness³⁴ by another name, you will find it named in Moses<' writings>.

²⁶ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History* 6.6.1.

²⁷ My trans.; ANF — "rational"; Gk. "λογικὴν" (Lemma: "λογικός").

²⁸ Cf. Genesis 2:7.

²⁹ My trans.; ANF — "access by"; Gk. "εἴσοδον" (Lemma: "εἴσοδος").

³⁰ Gk. "εἰκόνα καὶ ὁμοίωσιν."

³¹ Genesis 1:26-27.

³² My trans.; ANF — "Word"; Gk. "λόγος"; sub. to accurately present patristic interpretation. Aka Jesus Christ (cf. John 1:1, 14).

³³ ANF — "apprehend"; sub. for simplicity.

³⁴ Gk. "ἐξομοίωσιν" (Lemma: "ἐξομοίωσις"); cf. "ὁμοίωσις" Genesis 1:26.

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a divine conformity.³⁵ For he says, “Walk after the Lord your God, and keep His commandments.”³⁶ — Clement of Alexandria, *Stromaties* 5.14.94.3-6³⁷

So, according to the Minority position, the mind of Man is an image of Christ, because Man was created rational (i.e., capable of exercising logic), and because of this, it resembles Christ, who is the Logic of God. Philo provides a helpful illustration:

...for the mind which exists in each individual has been created after the representation³⁸ of that one mind³⁹ which is in the universe⁴⁰ as its primitive model,⁴¹ being in some sort the God of that body which carries it about and bears its portrait⁴² within it. — Philo of Alexandria, *De Opificio Mundi* 69⁴³

Living According to God's Logic

So let's consider some implications for our lives.

Does your mind rule your body as Christ rules the universe?

Paul, speaking hypothetically as a man still enslaved to sin,⁴⁴ described the power struggle between the mind and body in his letter to the Romans:

[22] For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. [23] But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin⁴⁵ which is in my members. — Romans 7:22-23 NKJV

³⁵ My trans.; ANF — “correspondence”; Gk. “ἀκολουθίαν” (Lemma: “ἀκολουθία”).

³⁶ Deuteronomy 13:4.

³⁷ Alt. ref: *Stromata* 5.14 (¶10 ANF 2.466).

³⁸ My trans.; Yonge — “likeness”; Gk. “ἀπεικονίσθη” (Lemma: “ἀπεικόνισμα”); cf. Clement of Alexandria — *Stromateis* 6.18.163.1 (6.18 ¶5 ANF 2.519), 7.5.29.6 (7.5 ¶5 ANF 2.530).

³⁹ I.e. God's Logic (Gk. “λόγος”); cf. *De Opificio Mundi* 17-24

⁴⁰ Gk. “τῶν ὅλων” (Lemma: “ὅλος”).

⁴¹ Gk. “ἀρχέτυπον.”

⁴² My trans.; Yonge — “bears its image”; Gk. “ἀγαλματοφοροῦντος” (Lemma: “ἀγαλματοφορέω”); Liddell Scott Entry: ἀγαλματο-φορέω; cf. “ἀγάλματα” in Clement of Alexandria — *Stromateis* 6.18.136.1 (¶5 ANF 2.519), 7.5.28.4 (¶2 ANF 2.530), 7.5.29.6.

⁴³ Alt. ref.: *On the Creation* 23; (trans. by Charles Duke Yonge).

⁴⁴ See Romans 7:14-24 (esp. vv14, 23); cf. Romans 6:16-18, 20-22, 8:2-9.

⁴⁵ Cf. Romans 6:16-18, 20-22, 8:2.

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There is an idea or attitude that is common enough among Christians which believes there to be a dichotomy between Logic and Faith, or being Logical and being Spiritual. This attitude can manifest itself in various ways and degrees.

Our Relationship with God

For instance, it may come out as someone's relationship with God being overly reliant on emotions.

- If they're feeling good the assumption is that their relationship with God is good,
- But if they're feeling bad, then their relationship with God is assumed to be poor.
 - And this is done without considering if their emotional state is rational or in any way reflective of reality.

Which is not to say that emotions play no role in our relationship with God, but it does mean that the estimation of our relationship with God needs to be based on the truth of God's promises.

Which should comfort those who are suffering, as Paul said:

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. — 2 Corinthians 4:16 NKJV

On the flip side God's promises should caution those who are feeling good, as Paul says:

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. — 1 Corinthians 10:12 NKJV

Iron Sharpening Iron

I'm also not saying that our emotions can't accurately reflect reality.

- A lot of times our emotions are a response to something that happened and are therefore completely logical.
- But I am saying that our minds need to keep our emotions "in check."
 - At times our emotions can be irrational (i.e., not justified by reality).

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- But most often our emotions are rational; they just become disproportionate to the situation.
- It's like a campfire that grows out of control and causes a forest fire.

I think this concept speaks to the necessity of having righteous brothers or sisters in our lives who we trust, and who have the wisdom to tell us when we're being irrational or our emotions have grown out of control.

The emotion that is most likely to grow out of control varies from person to person.

Spiritual Discernment

Another way in which the false dichotomy between Logic and Faith can manifest itself is the area of Spiritual Discernment.

There are extreme versions of this issue, like when “Joseph Smith’s study of the Old Testament in 1831”⁴⁶ resulted in him having a “revelation on plural marriage,”⁴⁷ i.e., multiple simultaneous marriages. Because of this “revelation,” “Joseph Smith married additional wives and authorized other Latter-day Saints to practice plural marriage.”⁴⁸

Now that’s an extreme example, but there are also lighter versions, like the good ol’: “The Lord put it on my heart...,” commonly followed by something questionable.

Are supernatural revelations possible? Yes, but because this is the case, we must be careful and use logic:

[20] Do not despise prophecies. [21] Test all things; hold fast <to> what is good. — 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 NKJV

[1] Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. — 1 John 4:1 NKJV

⁴⁶ *Plural Marriage in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/plural-marriage-in-the-church-of-jesus-christ-of-latter-day-saints?lang=eng>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

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Spoiler alert: testing prophecies is going to require some type of logical framework for you to be able to discern if it's from God or not.

Conforming to the Image of Christ

Now, if the battle, as Paul described in Romans 7:22-23, is between our mind and our body, how is our mind doing?

If your mind is an “image of *the Image*,” and *the Image* is Christ, then where is your mind?

And by that I mean: Where do you allow your thoughts to stray?

[20] <Jesus> said, “What comes out of a man, that <is what> defiles a man.
[21] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, [22] thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. [23] All these evil things come from within and defile a man.” — Mark 7:20-23 NKJV

Are your thoughts evil? What about:

- When you're hurt?
- Or, when you're angry?
- Or, when you're in a rush?
- Or, when you're bored?

Let our minds, which *should* be ruling our bodies, fear **The Mind** that rules all creation, for the Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the Hebrews:

[12] For the Logic⁴⁹ of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the

⁴⁹ My trans.; NKJV — “word”; Gk. “λόγος.”; i.e. Jesus Christ; cf. John 1:1, 14, 10:35; Revelation 19:13; Clement of Alexandria — *Stromateis* 7.6.34.4 (ANF 2.532); Origen — *Commentary on John* 1.228-229 (alt. ref.: 1.36, ANF 9.316), 6.122 (alt. ref.: 6.13, ANF 9.362), 6.297 (alt. ref.: 6.37, ANF 9.379); Augustine of Hippo — *City of God* 20.21; John Chrysostom — *Letters to Theodore* 2.2; *Homilies on 1 Corinthians*, Hom. 11.6; *Homilies on Ephesians*, Hom. 24 (Eph. 6:18-20); *Homilies on Philipians*, Hom. 6, Hom. 8; *Homilies on Colossians*, Hom. 2 (Col. 1:15); *Homilies on Hebrews*, Hom. 7.2; Athanasius of Alexandria — *On the Incarnation* 31.3; *Discourses Against the Arians* 2.18.35f, 2.21.72; Gregory Nazianzen — *Oration* 39.15; Basil of Caesarea — *Letter* 260.9; Ambros of Milan — *On the Holy Spirit* 2.11.128; *Exposition Of The Christian Faith* 4.7.73-75..

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heart. [13] And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. — Hebrews 4:12-13 NKJV (ed.)

And in his letter to the Romans he wrote:

[13] (... [14] for when Gentiles, who do not have the law <i.e. of Moses>, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, [15] who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) [16] in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. — Romans 2:14-16 NKJV

This is a call to self-control,...and self-control is a violent affair, at least according to Origen:

It is in this sense...that the righteous destroy everything remaining alive of the enemies which originate from evil, so that there is left not even an infant sin which has only just become implanted. Thus...we understand the saying in the 136th⁵⁰ Psalm which reads as follows: ‘O daughter of Babylon, thou wretched one, blessed is he who shall repay thee...; blessed is he who shall take hold of thy infants and dash them against the rock.’⁵¹ The infants of Babylon, which means confusion, are the confused thoughts caused by evil which have just been implanted and are growing up in the soul. The man who takes hold of them, so that he breaks their heads by the firmness and solid strength⁵² of the Logic,⁵³ is dashing the infants of Babylon against the rock; and on this account he becomes blessed. — Origen of Alexandria, *Contra Celsum* 7.22⁵⁴

You know,

- You can’t commit adultery if you grab its infant, i.e. lust, and dash it against the rock,
- You can’t steal if you grab covetousness and dash it against the rock,

⁵⁰ Gk. “ἐκατοστῷ καὶ τριακοστῷ καὶ ἕκτῳ” per LXX; ANF changed to “137th” in order to match the MT.

⁵¹ Psalm 136:8-9 LXX (137:8-9 MT).

⁵² Per ANF; Chadwick p.413 — “solidity”; Gk. “εὐτόνοϛ” (Lemma: “εὐτονοϛ”).

⁵³ Chadwick p.413 — “Word”; Gk. “λόγου” (Lemma: “λόγου”).

⁵⁴ Chadwick p.413; Alt. ref: ANF 4.619-620.

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- You can't murder your brother if you grab your anger and dash it against the rock,
- You can't be jealous if you grab your pride and dash it against the rock,
- You can't lie to others if you grab the lies you tell yourself and dash them against the rock,
- And you can't complain if you grab ingratitude and dash it against the rock,
- And as Paul has told us "that Rock <is> Christ"⁵⁵

Now, our mind may be an "image of the Image," but are we like Him? Clement called being "like God" a "divine conformity." Which begs the question: what are we conforming to?

[1] I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable⁵⁶ service. [2] And do not be conformed to this age,⁵⁷ but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. — Romans 12:1-2 NKJV (ed.)

Are we conforming to the image of God's Son⁵⁸ or are we conforming to "this present evil age"⁵⁹?

All of these lofty theological concepts are very practical for our day-to-day.

- What, or who, are we thinking of throughout the day?
- What, or who, are we exposing our mind to?
- What, or who, are we looking at throughout the day?
- The media we take in, whether music, or video, or books, is it conforming us to Christ or this evil age?
- We're in election season in the USA, and the reality-T.V. show that is American politics is, honestly quite entertaining. Now, I'm not arguing that we must be uninformed, but if our "our citizenship is in heaven,"⁶⁰ how are we doing in obeying the Apostles' admonition to "[s]et your mind on things above, not on things on the earth"⁶¹?

Now, these theological principles do not only speak to what we must keep our mind's away from, but what we should be engaged in.

⁵⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:4.

⁵⁶ Lit. "rational" or "logical"; Gk. "λογικὴν" (Lemma: "λογικός").

⁵⁷ My trans.; NKJV — "world"; Gk. "αἰῶνι" (Lemma: "αἰών").

⁵⁸ Cf. Romans 8:29.

⁵⁹ Galatians 1:4.

⁶⁰ Philippians 3:20.

⁶¹ Colossians 3:2.

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How are we doing with the Apostolic instruction to: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, & in everything give thanks”⁶²?

Are you always rejoicing, or are you clouded with negative thoughts?

Are you praying throughout the day?

- It has been the practice of the Church since its earliest days to pray the Lord’s prayer at the 3rd (9:00 AM), 6th (12:00 PM), and 9th (3:00 PM) hour of the day.⁶³
 - I highly recommend adopting this spiritual discipline.
 - It’s a good first step towards praying continually.

Lastly, “do[ing] all things without complaining and disputing”⁶⁴ feels like an impossible task for me, I’m a New Yorker. But you know what helps?

“Giving thanks” “in everything.”

The Majority Position

Now while we could glean many more points from the Minority interpretation of Genesis 1:26-27, I would like to pivot our attention to the Majority position. This interpretive model could be called the Cross-regional interpretation, because it was taught by Christians throughout various regions of the Roman Empire. Proponents of this position include:

- Justin Martyr,⁶⁵
 - Who was from Samaria, but also lived in and died in Rome.
- Irenaeus of Gaul,⁶⁶
 - Overseer in Gaul (modern-day Lyon, France), but spent his early life in Smyrna (within modern-day Turkey)
- Tertullian of Carthage,⁶⁷
 - Who was well-traveled.

⁶² 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

⁶³ See *Didache* 8.2-3; Tertullian of Carthage — *On Prayer* 25; *On Fasting (Against the Psychics)* 10; Cyprian of Carthage — *On the Lord’s Prayer (Treatise 4)* 34.

⁶⁴ Philippians 2:14-16.

⁶⁵ Frag. *On the Resurrection* 7.

⁶⁶ *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 5, 11; *Against Heresies* 5.6.1, 5.16.2.

⁶⁷ *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 6

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- Octavious (per Minucius Felix),⁶⁸
 - Debate took place on a beach on the west coast of central Italy.
- Methodius of Olympus,⁶⁹
 - Bishop of ancient Lycia (south west coast of modern day Turkey)
- and Lactantius of Sicca,⁷⁰
 - Sicca Veneria was a city further inland than Carthage.

So it was a position held by influential brethren spread throughout the Roman Empire, in contrast to the Minority position, which was concentrated in the Catechetical School of Alexandria. Because of this I find the Majority interpretation to have a stronger pedigree.

Now, while doing the historical survey for this topic I found there to be a lot of beauty in the Alexandrian position, but at the same time I was off-put by the low view of the body expressed by its proponents. Now, to be fair, this was done in an effort to defend God's transcendence, but still I think the Majority position presents a more complete picture.

So, with that being said, I would like to present one quotation from Tertullian explaining the Majority position:

Let me therefore pursue the subject before me—if I can but succeed in vindicating for the flesh as much as was conferred on it by Him who made it, glorying as it even then was, because that poor paltry material, clay, found its way into the hands of God,...happy enough at merely being touched by them <i.e. God's hands>. But why this glorying? Was it that, without any further labour, the clay had instantly assumed its form at the touch of God? <No!> The truth is, a great matter was in progress, out of which the creature under consideration was being fashioned. So often then does it receive honour, as often as it experiences the hands of God, when it is touched by them, and pulled, and drawn out, and moulded into shape. Imagine God wholly employed and absorbed in it—in His hand, His eye, His labour, His purpose, His wisdom, His providence, and above all, in His love, which was dictating the outline⁷¹ (of this creature). For, whatever was the form and expression which was then given to the clay (by the Creator)

⁶⁸ Minucius Felix, *The Octavius* 32.1

⁶⁹ *The Symposium (The Banquet of the Ten Virgins)* 1.4-5 (Discourse 1 — *Marcella*).

⁷⁰ *Divine Institutes* 2.2.

⁷¹ My trans.; ANF — “lineaments”; Lat. “liniamenta” (Lemma: “lineamentum”); sub. for clarity.

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Christ was in His thoughts as one day to become man, because the Word,⁷² too, was to be both clay and flesh, even as the earth was then. For so did the Father previously say to the Son: “Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.” And God made man, that is to say, the creature which He moulded and fashioned; after the image of God (in other words, of Christ)...Thus, that clay which was even then putting on the image of Christ, who was to come in the flesh, was not only the work, but also the pledge <and surety, of God>⁷³. — Tertullian of Carthage, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 6

So in contrast to the Minority position, which denied that the body (in any way) contained the image, the Majority position taught that the body of man is the image of The Image (i.e. Jesus).

This understanding results in a paradox; where the Word of God became man and thus looked like man,⁷⁴ but it was man that was created to look like the Word of God. It's kind of like asking:

- Was Jesus of Nazareth (the son of God) named after Jesus the son of Nun (aka Joshua),⁷⁵ Or was Jesus the son of Nun named after Jesus the son of God⁷⁶?

The Value of the Outer Man

So, let's consider some implications for our lives.

Where the Minority position is concerned with the condition of the “inner man,”⁷⁷ the Majority position emphasizes the value of the “outer man.”⁷⁸

But you might say: “Isn't the inner man more important?”

Not really! Man is important. And if you only have the “inner man,” then you don't have the man. As Irenaeus explains:

⁷² Aka the “Logos” or “Logic”; Lat. “sermo,” which is one possible Lat. trans. for the Gk. “λόγος,” cf. John 1:1 Lat. Vul. — “Verbum.”

⁷³ <...> indicates words not present in the original language, and where the trans. failed to demarcate them as additions.

⁷⁴ Cf. Philippians 2:8.

⁷⁵ “Ἰησοῦς” is the Gk. transliteration of the Aramaic “ישוע” (“Yeshua”) which is the shortened form of the Hb. “יהושוע” (“Yehoshua”).

⁷⁶ Cf. Numbers 13:17 LXX (13:16 MT).

⁷⁷ Romans 7:22; 2 Corinthians 4:16.

⁷⁸ 2 Corinthians 4:16.

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Now the soul and the spirit are certainly a part of the man, but certainly not the man; for the complete⁷⁹ man consists in the commingling and the union of the soul receiving the spirit of the Father, and the admixture of that fleshly nature which was moulded after the image of God. — Irenaeus of Gaul, *Against Heresies* 5.6.1

Plus, recall that one of the goals of the fight, to keep the inner man free from sin, is to prevent worse sins committed by the outer man.

Sexual Immorality

We see this principle explained by Paul:

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God...? — 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 NKJV

We could also ask the question:

- “Do you not know that your body is an image of the Word of God?”

The Rationale Behind the Commandment

I think the Majority position’s high view of the body can also help us better understand Apostolic teaching. It can be appealed to as a rationale for commandments where a rationale is not provided.

Adornment

Consider the Apostles teaching on adornments:

8 I desire... 9 ...that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. — 1 Timothy 2:8-10 NKJV

⁷⁹ My trans; ANF “perfect.”

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Clement of Alexandria comments on this passage saying:

As a matter of fact, there is sound reasoning in his command that such adornments be left alone, for either a woman is already beautiful, and then nature is sufficient (and let art not contend with nature, that is, let deception not vie with the truth), or else she is naturally ugly, and then she proves what she does not have by attiring herself with all these things. — Clement of Alexandria, *Christ the Educator* 2.12.127⁸⁰

Now, to be clear Clement is not saying that there are any women who are naturally ugly. He's actually saying the opposite. Speaking of women who dye their hair and use makeup, he says:

Unawares the poor wretches destroy their own beauty, by the introduction of what is spurious. At the dawn of day, mangling, racking, and plastering themselves over with certain compositions, they chill the skin, furrow the flesh with poisons, and with curiously prepared washes, thus blighting their own beauty. Wherefore they are seen to be yellow from the use of cosmetics, and susceptible to disease, their flesh, which has been shaded with poisons, being now in a melting state. So they dishonour the Creator of men, as if the beauty given by Him were nothing <of> worth. — Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor* 3.2⁸¹

Imagine someone looking at the Mona Lisa, “the best known, the most visited, the most written about, [and] the most sung about...work of art in the world,”⁸² painted by Leonardo da Vinci, the master artist, and then thinking to themselves: “there is enough color.” And then proceeded to ruin the painting with their additions.

You wouldn't stand for it: “This is the work of the master artist. Leave it alone.”

Do not paint thy face, which is God's workmanship; for there is no part of thee which lacks⁸³ ornamentation,⁸⁴ inasmuch as all things which God has made are very good. — *Apostolic Constitutions* 1.8⁸⁵

⁸⁰ FOTC 23.197; alt. ref. *The Instructor* 2.13 (¶12, ANF 2.269).

⁸¹ ¶4, ANF 2.272; alt. ref.: *Christ the Educator* 3.2.6 (FOTC 23.204).

⁸² Lichfield, John (1 April 2005). “The Moving of the Mona Lisa”. *The Independent*. London.

⁸³ My trans.; ANF — “wants.”

⁸⁴ My trans.; ANF — “ornament.”

⁸⁵ ANF 7.394.

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Idolatry

Another commandment that can be better understood by knowing that our bodies are images of God's Image is the condemnation of idolatry.

Minucius Felix recorded a great debate between a Christian and a pagan, which took place around the early second century. The pagan Caecilius made the following accusation against the Christians:

2. Why else should they <i.e., the Christians> go to such pains to hide and conceal whatever it is they worship? One is always happy for honorable actions to be made public; crimes are kept secret. Why do they have no altars, no temples, no known⁸⁶ images? Why do they never speak in the open, why do they always assemble in stealth? It must be that whatever it is they worship—and suppress—is deserving either of punishment or of shame. — Minucius Felix, *The Octavius* 10.2⁸⁷

To this accusation of worshiping and concealing shameful images, Octavius responds:

1. “Now you think that if we have neither temples nor altars we are concealing the object of our worship? And⁸⁸ what image would I fashion for God, seeing that man can be rightly considered as himself the image of God? — Minucius Felix, *The Octavius* 32.1⁸⁹

We don't need to create images of God to worship Him, for we worship God Himself through Jesus, the One who is His Image.

Head Covering and Uncovering

Now, while it was helpful to appeal to the Majority position in order to better understand the last two commandments, for the following commandments, we're explicitly told that these principles are the rationale behind the commandment.

⁸⁶ Lit. trans.; ACW 39.66 — “publicly-known”; Lat. “nota.”

⁸⁷ ACW 39.66.

⁸⁸ Per ANF; ACW 39.111 — “But.”

⁸⁹ ACW 39.111.

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The first teaching we're going to look at is the apostolic tradition⁹⁰ of women covering their heads and men uncovering their heads, while praying and prophesying.:

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. — 1 Corinthians 11:7 NKJV

Now, Genesis 1:27 is clear that “male and female” are created “according to the image of God,” but there is a manner in which the male body more closely reflects God’s image. This makes sense if you take into account the fact that God’s image is a person, i.e., Jesus (the Word and Wisdom of God), and when He became flesh, He took on the male body and not the female body.

Paul’s instruction, in 1 Corinthians 11:7, along with his reasoning behind it supports the Majority position over the Minority position, as far as the latter denies that the body shares in the image of God.

- Because, if only our mind (i.e., our capacity to reason) was an image of God’s Image, it wouldn’t make a difference if our head was covered or uncovered.⁹¹

Shedding the Blood of Man

Lastly,

- Why is shedding the blood of man wrong?
- Why do we love our enemies?
- Why do we not resist an evil person, returning evil for evil?
- Why do we not live by the sword?

You know there is no prohibition for Christians against killing animals. I’m not saying we should be torturing them, but Paul did tell us that he “fought with animals at Ephesus” (1 Corinthians 15:32). Why is that if we fight men, it violates the law of Christ?

5 <God said to Noah> “...I will require the life of man at the hand of his brother... 6 He that sheds man’s blood, instead of that blood shall his own be shed, for in the image of God I made man.” — Genesis 9:5b-6⁹²

⁹⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:2.

⁹¹ See Appendix E for a further discussion.

⁹² See Appendix E for a discussion on how this passage supports the Majority position and complicates the Minority position.

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The Crucified Image of God

With this in mind I want us to turn our attention from us to the Word of God Himself.

- Because it was not an image of the Image that was nailed to the cross, but the Image Himself.
- He died on Friday, the sixth day, the same day man was created according to the Image.
- And He slept in the grave on the seventh day, just as God rested on the seventh day of creation.
- But by His resurrection, He restarted the sequence,
 - Bringing in a new First Day for a “new creation,”⁹³
 - Healing the wounds of sin that scared us, the images of Him,⁹⁴
 - And showing us the hope we have for the “redemption of our body”⁹⁵ and “the salvation of <our> soul.”⁹⁶

⁹³ 2 Corinthians 5:17.

⁹⁴ Isaiah 53:5.

⁹⁵ Romans 8:23.

⁹⁶ 1 Peter 1:9.

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Appendix

The Image of God

A: God's "Λόγος" ("Logos")

While "Λόγος," is typically translated into English as "Word," translating it as "Logic" or "Reason" more accurately reflects the interpretation of the Early Christians as it relates to Jesus. As a matter of fact, English derives the word "logic" from the Greek "λόγος."

This means that familiar passages like:

- John 1:1 — "In the beginning was the Word..." can be translated as:
 - "In the beginning was the Logic..."
- John 1:14 — "And the Word became flesh..." can be translated as:
 - "And the Logic became flesh..."
- Hebrews 4:12 — "For the Word⁹⁷ of God is living and powerful..." can be translated as:
 - "For the Logic of God is living and powerful..."
- Revelation 19:13 — "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God," can be rendered as:
 - "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Logic of God."

There is a long list of patristic excerpts to choose from to support this interpretation of "Λόγος."⁹⁸ Four exemplary quotations, two from advocates of the Majority and Minority position respectively, are presented below as attestation for this interpretation.

Additionally, a quotation from Philo of Alexandria is provided. He was not a Christian, but his writings (dating around the time Christ lived on the Earth) in general influenced Clement and Origen of Alexandria. This is most evident with regard to Philo's commentaries on Genesis 1:26-27. Philo's interpretation of "Λόγος" is valuable because it shows how Greek-speaking Jews interpreted the term around the time of Jesus. Please note that although Philo's statements concerning God's "Λόγος" will be familiar to

⁹⁷ NKJV — "word"; lowercase or uppercase is a trans.' decision, not based on Gk. ms.

⁹⁸ See Justin Martyr — *1 Apology* 5, 46; *2 Apology* 8, 10, 13; *Dialogue with Trypho* 61.1; Tatian the Syrian — *Address to the Greeks* 5; Theophilus of Antioch — *To Autolytus* 2.10, 22; Irenaeus of Gaul — *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 5; Clement of Alexandria — *Instructor* 1.13; *Exhortation to the Greeks* 1 (¶9 ANF 2.173 [LCL 92.17], ¶11 ANF 2.173 [LCL 92.21], ¶14 ANF 2.174 [LCL 92.27]); 10 (¶5 ANF 2.199 [LCL 92.215]); *Stromateis* 2.2.4.1 (2.2¶1 ANF 2.348), 2.2.9.4 (2.2¶2 ANF 2.349), 2.7.32.4 (2.7¶3 ANF 2.354), 2.19.102.6-7 (2.19¶5 ANF 2.370); 2.20.122.1 (2.20¶14 ANF 2.373), 2.23.143.1 (2.23¶4 ANF 2.378), 5.14.94.3-5 (5.14¶9-10 ANF 2.466), 6.16.136.3 (6.16¶11 ANF 2.512); Tertullian of Carthage — *Against Praxeas* 5; Origen of Alexandria — *On First Principles* 1.2.4; *Commentary on John* 1.266-275 (1.41-42 ANF 9.319-320), 2.21-23 (1.3 ANF 9.323-324); Dionysius of Rome — *Against the Sabellians* (frag. from Athanasius of Alexandria — *Defence of the Nicene Definition* 26); Athanasius of Alexandria — *Deposition of Arius* 2.

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Christian readers, He did not identify God's "Λόγος" with Jesus, because he most likely did not know who Jesus was.

Attestation from the Majority Position

Irenaeus of Gaul

...there is declared one God, the Father, uncreated, invisible, maker of all things, above whom is no other God whatsoever,⁹⁹ and after whom there is no other God.¹⁰⁰ And God is logical,¹⁰¹ and therefore produced creatures by His Logic,¹⁰² ¹⁰³ and God is a spirit, and so fashioned everything by His Spirit, as the prophet also says: *by the Logic¹⁰⁴ of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the power of them by His Spirit.*¹⁰⁵ — Irenaeus of Gaul, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 5¹⁰⁶

Tertullian of Carthage

[2] For before all things God was alone—being in Himself and for Himself universe,¹⁰⁷ and space, and all things. Moreover, He was alone, because there was nothing external to Him but Himself. Yet even not then was He alone; for He had with Him that which He possessed in Himself, that is to say, His own Logic.¹⁰⁸ For God is logical,¹⁰⁹ and Logic¹¹⁰ was first in Him;

⁹⁹ ACW 16.50 — “whatever”; sub. for clarity.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Gregory Thaumaturgus — *A Declaration of Faith*; Novation of Rome — *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 1, 9; Basil of Caesarea — *Homily against the Sabellians, Anomoians, and Pneumatomachians* ¶3; Nicene Creed (AD 325 & 381).

¹⁰¹ ACW 16.50 — “rational”; Armenian “banawor,” the Arm. trans. of Gk. “λογικός”; sub. to preserve etymological argument and play-on-word with the Arm. “ban,” (Gk. “λόγος”); see ACW16.138 fn. 31.

¹⁰² ACW 16.50 — “Word”; Armenian “ban,” the Arm. trans. of Gk. “λόγος”; sub. to preserve etymological argument and play-on-word with the Arm. “banawor,” (Gk. “λογικός”); see ACW16.138 fn. 31.

¹⁰³ ACW 16.138 fn.31 — “The English equivalent would be ‘God is reasonable, and therefore produced creatures by His Reason.’”

¹⁰⁴ ACW 16.50 — “word”; Armenian “ban,” the Arm. trans. of Gk. “λόγος”; sub. to preserve etymological argument and play-on-word.

¹⁰⁵ Psalm 32:6 LXX (33:6 MT).

¹⁰⁶ ACW 16.50 (ed. per my fns.).

¹⁰⁷ Or “world”; Lat. “mundus.”

¹⁰⁸ ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “rationem” (Lemma: “ratiō,” “ratiōnis”), the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος.”

¹⁰⁹ ANF — “rational”; Lat. “rationalis” (Lemma: “ratiōnālis,” “ratiōnāle”), the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λογικός.”

¹¹⁰ ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “ratio,” the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος.”

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and so all things were from Himself.¹¹¹ This Logic¹¹² is His own Thought¹¹³ <(or Consciousness)>¹¹⁴ [3] which the Greeks call λόγος, by which term we also designate Word¹¹⁵ <or Discourse>¹¹⁶ and therefore it is now usual with our people, owing to the mere simple interpretation of the term, to say that the Word¹¹⁷ was in the beginning with God,¹¹⁸ although it would be more suitable to regard Logic¹¹⁹ as the more ancient; because God had not Word¹²⁰ from the beginning, but He had Logic¹²¹ even before the beginning; because also Word¹²² itself consists of Logic,¹²³ which it thus proves to have been the prior existence as being its own substance.¹²⁴ — Tertullian of Carthage, *Against Praxeas* 5.2-3

Attestation from the Minority Position

Clement of Alexandria

The disciples of the philosophers define knowledge as a state which logic¹²⁵ cannot shake.¹²⁶ So is there any other genuine firm establishment except

¹¹¹ Cf. John 1:2-3.

¹¹² ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “ratio,” the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος.”

¹¹³ Lat. “sensus;” ANF trans. provides an alt. trans. within (...).

¹¹⁴ <...> indicates words not present in the original language, and where the trans. failed to demarcate them as additions.

¹¹⁵ Lat. “sermonem” (Lemma: “sermō,” “sermōnis”); ANF trans. provides an alt. trans. in *italics*. Cf. John 1:1, 14; Revelation 19:13 in the Lat. Vulg. where “λόγος” is trans. as “Verbum,” although Hebrews 4:12 uses “sermo.” Tertullian is consistent in trans. “λόγος” as “Sermo” instead of “Verbum” in this treatise. Erasmus does likewise in his trans. of the NT.

¹¹⁶ <...> indicates words not present in the original language, and where the trans. failed to demarcate them as additions.

¹¹⁷ Or “Discourse”; Lat. “sermonem” (Lemma: “sermō,” “sermōnis”).

¹¹⁸ Lat. “sermonem...in primordio apud deum fuisse”; cf. John 1:1 Lat. Vulg. “in principio...Verbum erat apud Deum.”

¹¹⁹ ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “rationem” (Lemma: “ratiō,” “ratiōnis”), the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος.”

¹²⁰ Or “Discourse”; Lat. “sermonalis” (Lemma: “sermō,” “sermōnis”).

¹²¹ ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “rationalis” (Lemma: “ratiō,” “ratiōnis”), the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος.”

¹²² Or “Discourse”; Lat. “sermo.”

¹²³ ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “ratione” (Lemma: “ratiō,” “ratiōnis”), the Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος.”

¹²⁴ i.e., “Reason is manifestly prior to the Word, which it dictates” (Bp. Kaye, p. 501).

¹²⁵ FOTC 85.163 — “reason”; Gk. “λόγου” (Lemma: “λόγος”); sub. for clarity of argument; see FOTC 85.163 fn.27.

¹²⁶ FOTC 85.163 fn. 27 — “this is a Stoic definition (see Chrysippus *SVF* 2.93-5; cf. Philo, *On the Preliminary Studies* 140).”

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that of an actual religion¹²⁷ whose sole instructor is the Logic¹²⁸? Not in my view!¹²⁹ — Clement of Alexandria, *Stromaties* 2.2.9.4¹³⁰

Origen of Alexandria

This Son, therefore, is also the truth and the life of all things which exist,¹³¹ and rightly so. For how could things that were created live, except by life? Or how could those things that are truly exist, unless they were derived from the truth? Or how could logical¹³² beings exist, unless the Word¹³³ or Logic¹³⁴ ¹³⁵ preceded them? Or how could they be wise, unless there was Wisdom? — Origen of Alexandria, *On First Principles* 1.2.4¹³⁶

Attestation from Philo

[139] And that he¹³⁷ is superior <to all these animals>¹³⁸ in regard of his soul, is plain. For the Creator, we know, employed for its making no pattern taken from among created things, but solely, as I have said, His own Word¹³⁹ (or Reason)¹⁴⁰.¹⁴¹ On which account, Moses affirms that this man

¹²⁷ ANF — “piety”; Gk. “θεοσεβείας” (Lemma: “θεοσεβεία”).

¹²⁸ I.e. Jesus. FOTC 85.163, ANF 2.349 — “Word”; Gk. “λόγος”; sub. for clarity of argument; see FOTC 85.163 fn.27.

¹²⁹ Cf. Clement of Alexandria — *Instructor* 1.1.1; *Exhortation to the Greeks* 1 (¶10 ANF 2.173).

¹³⁰ FOTC 85.163; alt. ref: *Stromata* 2.2 (¶2 ANF 2.349).

¹³¹ Cf. John 14:6.

¹³² Behr, ANF — “rational.” Lat. “rationabiles,” Rufinus’ Lat. trans. of Gk. “λογικός”; sub. to preserve Origen’s play-on-word in Gk.

¹³³ Lat. “verbum”; cf. John 1:1, 14; Revelation 19:13 Lat. Vulg.

¹³⁴ Behr, ANF — “Reason”; Lat. “ratio,” Rufinus’ Lat. trans. of Gk. “λόγος”; sub. to preserve Origen’s play-on-word in Gk.

¹³⁵ “...Word or Reason <alt. trans. Logic>” (Lat. “...verbum vel ratio”); Rufinus trans. “λόγος” using the term familiar to his Lat. readers (i.e. “verbum”), but in order to make sense of Origen’s argument he adds an alt. trans. (i.e. “ratio”).

¹³⁶ Trans. by Behr p. 23.

¹³⁷ I.e. man of body and soul.

¹³⁸ <...> indicates words not present in the original language, and where the trans. failed to demarcate them as additions.

¹³⁹ Gk. “λόγῳ” (Lemma: “λόγος”).

¹⁴⁰ Alt. trans. in (...) provided by the trans. for clarity. Another alt. trans. “logic.”

¹⁴¹ Per LCL 226.111; Yonge — “For God does not seem to have availed himself of any other animal existing in creation as his model in the formation of man; but to have been guided, as I have said before, by his own reason alone.” Sub. for clarity.

The Image of God

was an image¹⁴² and imitation¹⁴³ <of God,¹⁴⁴>¹⁴⁵ being breathed into in his face in which is the place of the sensations, by which the Creator endowed the body with a soul. Then, having placed Reason¹⁴⁶ in the dominant part as king, he gave him as a body of satellites, the different powers calculated to perceive colours and sounds, and flavours and odours, and other things of similar kinds, which man could never have distinguished by his own resources without the sensations. And it follows of necessity that an imitation of a perfectly beautiful model must itself be perfectly beautiful, for the Word¹⁴⁷ of God surpasses even that beauty which exists in the nature which is perceptible only by the external senses, not being embellished by any adventitious beauty, but being itself, if one must speak the truth, its most exquisite embellishment. — Philo of Alexandria, *De Opificio Mundi* 139¹⁴⁸

Argument from Reason

Now, even in English, connecting the concept of “logic” with the concept of “word” is logical. For instance:

A child, in the early stages of learning how to read and write, might scribble down a random sequence of letters in an attempt to write a word, without having any specific word in mind. If they bring what they wrote to a literate person and request them to read it, the literate person will have to reply to the child: “I’m sorry, this isn’t a word, what you wrote down doesn’t make sense (i.e., is illogical).”

You see, a sequence of letters or sounds don’t form a word without logic. There has to be a logical pattern for either the sequence of letters or sounds to constitute a word.

¹⁴² Gk. “ἀπεικόνισμα.”

¹⁴³ Gk. “μίμημα.”

¹⁴⁴ LCL 226.111 — “Word.”

¹⁴⁵ <...> indicates words not present in the original language, and where the trans. failed to demarcate them as additions.

¹⁴⁶ Per LCL 226.111; alt. trans. “Logic”; ANF — “the mind”; sub. for accuracy.

¹⁴⁷ Cap. per LCL 226.111; ANF lowercase; alt. trans. “Logic” or “Reason.”

¹⁴⁸ Alt. ref.: *On the Creation* 48; (trans. by Charles Duke Yonge).

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B: God's Wisdom

Biblical Interpretation

This connection was due largely in part by Paul's words:

“...Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.” — 1 Corinthians 1:24 EOB

This meant that passages throughout the OT which speak of Wisdom as God's agent in creation were assumed to be about God's Logic (aka Word),¹⁴⁹ who was incarnated into man and given the name Jesus.

The connection between God's Wisdom and Logic (λόγος) is not made word-for-word in the OT, but it is made conceptually:

God in wisdom founded the earth; and he prepared the havens in intelligence.¹⁵⁰ — Proverbs 3:19 ABP

Patristic Attestation

There is a long list of patristic excerpts to choose from to support this interpretation of God's Wisdom.¹⁵¹ Two exemplary quotations, one per advocate of the Majority and Minority position respectively, are presented below as attestation for this interpretation.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Proverbs 3:19, 8:22-31; Psalm 103:24 LXX (104:24 MT).

¹⁵⁰ LES2 — “insight”; NETS, LXX2012 — “prudence”; Gk. “φρονήσει” (Lemma: “φρόνησις”).

¹⁵¹ See *Letter of Barnabas* 16.8-9; Justin Martyr — *Dialogue with Trypho* 61.1-3, 100.4; Theophilus of Antioch — *To Autolycus* 2.10, 22 (cf. 1.7, 2.15); Clement of Alexandria — *Exhortation to the Greeks* 1 (¶7 ANF 2.172 [LCL 92.15]); *Stromateis* 2.2.4.1 (2.2¶1 ANF 2.348), 2.20.122.1 (2.20¶14 ANF 2.373), 4.25.156.1 (4.25¶2 ANF 2.438); Origen of Alexandria — *On First Principles* 1.2.1-4; *Commentary on John* 6.188 (6.22 ANF 9.369); Hippolytus of Rome — *Commentary on Proverbs 9:1* (Frag.; ANF 5.175); Cyprian of Carthage — *Against the Jews* 2.1-2; Novation of Rome — *On the Trinity* 31.12-13 (ANF 5.643-644); Dionysius of Rome — *Against the Sabellians* (frag. from Athanasius of Alexandria — *Defence of the Nicene Definition* 26); Athanasius of Alexandria — *Deposition of Arius* 2.

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Attestation from the Majority Position

Justin Martyr

[1] Yet another testimony from the Scriptures will I give you, my Friends, I said, namely that God has begotten as a Beginning before all His creatures a kind of Reasonable¹⁵² Power from Himself, which is also called by the Holy Spirit the Glory of the Lord,¹⁵³ and sometimes Son,¹⁵⁴ and sometimes Wisdom,¹⁵⁵ and sometimes Angel, and sometimes God, and sometimes Lord¹⁵⁶ and Word. Sometimes also He speaks of Himself as Chief Commander, when He appeared in the form of a man to Joshua the son of Nun.¹⁵⁷ For He can have all these names, from the fact that He ministers to the Father's purpose; and has been born of the Father of His own will. [2] But do we not see that this is much the same as takes place within ourselves? For when we put forth any word,¹⁵⁸ we beget a word,¹⁵⁹ not putting it forth by scission, as though the word¹⁶⁰ within us was diminished. And as we see in the case of fire another fire comes into being, without that one from which the kindling was made being diminished, but remaining the same, while that which is kindled from it appears as itself existing, without diminishing that from which it was kindled.¹⁶¹ [3] But the Word of wisdom¹⁶² will act as witness for me, being Himself this God begotten of the Father of the universe, and being all the time the Word and Wisdom and Power¹⁶³ and Glory¹⁶⁴ of Him who begat and spake as follows by Solomon: <Proverbs 8:22-36 LXX> — Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 61.1-5¹⁶⁵

¹⁵² Or "Logical"; Gk. "λογικὴν."

¹⁵³ Cf. Exodus 16:7.

¹⁵⁴ Psalm 2:7.

¹⁵⁵ Proverbs 8:12.

¹⁵⁶ For the Son called "Angel," "God," and "Lord" see Genesis 16:7-13, 48:15-16 esp. Alexandrian text — "God, whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac were pleasing before him, the Lord who nourishes me from youth to this day, the angel who rescues me from all evils, may he bless these children..." (LES2).

¹⁵⁷ Joshua (Jesus) 5:13-15.

¹⁵⁸ Gk. "λόγον" (Lemma: "λόγος").

¹⁵⁹ Gk. "λόγον" (Lemma: "λόγος").

¹⁶⁰ Gk. "ὁ λόγος τῆς σοφίας".

¹⁶¹ Cf. Tatian the Syrian — *Address to the Greeks* 5.

¹⁶² Gk. "λόγον" (Lemma: "λόγος").

¹⁶³ Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:24.

¹⁶⁴ Gk. "λόγος καὶ σοφία καὶ δύναμις καὶ δόξα."

¹⁶⁵ Trans. By Williams p. 127-128.

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Attestation from the Minority Position

Origen of Alexandria

[1] In the first place, we must note that the nature of that deity which is in Christ in respect of His being the only-begotten Son of God is one thing, and that human nature which He assumed in these last times for the purposes of the dispensation (of grace) is another. And therefore we have first to ascertain what the only-begotten Son of God is, seeing He is called by many different names, according to the circumstances and views of individuals. For He is termed Wisdom, according to the expression of Solomon: “The Lord created me—the beginning of His ways, and among His works, before He made any other thing; He founded me before the ages. In the beginning, before He formed the earth, before He brought forth the fountains of waters, before the mountains were made strong, before all the hills, He brought me forth.”¹⁶⁶ He is also styled First-born, as the apostle has declared: “who is the first-born of every creature.”¹⁶⁷ The first-born, however, is not by nature a different person from the Wisdom, but one and the same. Finally, the Apostle Paul says that “Christ (is) the power of God and the wisdom of God.”¹⁶⁸ — Origen of Alexandria, *On First Principles* 1.2.1¹⁶⁹

Notable Exceptions

The only clear exception among the early Christians prior to the council of Nicea was Irenaeus (who taught the Majority position). He identified the Holy Spirit with the Wisdom of God,¹⁷⁰ yet he still taught that the Λόγος/Logic of God and the Image of God were the same person; i.e., Jesus Christ.¹⁷¹

The other possible exception is Theophilus of Antioch (who likely held the Majority position, although it's not 100% clear¹⁷²). At times he appears to make a distinction between God's Λόγος/Logic and Wisdom,¹⁷³ presumably identifying God's Wisdom with

¹⁶⁶ Proverbs 8:22-25 LXX.

¹⁶⁷ Colossians 1:15.

¹⁶⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:24.

¹⁶⁹ ANF 4.245-246.

¹⁷⁰ See *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 5; *Against Heresies* 4.20.1, 4.20.3.

¹⁷¹ See *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 22.

¹⁷² See *To Autolytus* 1.4.

¹⁷³ See *To Autolytus* 1.7, 2.15.

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His Holy Spirit as Irenaeus does. That being said, at other instances in his writing he equates God's Λόγος/Logic and Wisdom.¹⁷⁴

C: God's Image

Biblical Interpretation

The passage below, from the Wisdom of Solomon, connects God's Wisdom with God's Image, and by extension God's Logic/Logos also:

[24] For wisdom moves more freely than any movement;
she pervades and penetrates all things because of her pureness.
[25] For she is a breath of the power of God
and an emanation of the pure glory of the Almighty;
therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.
[26] For she is a reflection of eternal light
and a spotless mirror of the activity of God¹⁷⁵
and an image of his goodness. — Wisdom of Solomon 7:24-26 NETS

Commenting on Wisdom of Solomon 7:25-26 Origen wrote:

Now we hold...that the Wisdom of God has her subsistence nowhere else but in him <i.e., God> who is the beginning of all things, from whom also she is born. Since this Wisdom is the one who alone is Son by nature, she is therefore called the only-begotten. — Origen of Alexandria, *On First Principles* 1.2.5¹⁷⁶

Patristic Attestation

There is a long list of patristic excerpts to choose from to support this interpretation of God's Image. Two exemplary quotations, one per advocate of the Majority and Minority position respectively, are presented below as attestation for this interpretation.

¹⁷⁴ See *To Autolytus* 2.10, 22.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Hebrews 1:3.

¹⁷⁶ Trans. by Behr p. 24.

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Attestation from the Majority Position

Irenaeus of Gaul

...the “image”¹⁷⁷ is the Son of God,¹⁷⁸ in whose image man was made. And therefore, He was “manifested in the last times,”¹⁷⁹ to show the image like unto Himself. — Irenaeus of Gaul, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 22

Attestation from the Minority Position

Clement of Alexandria

For the image of God is His Word, the genuine Son of Mind, the Divine Word, the archetypal light of light; and the image of the Word is the true man, the mind which is in man, who is therefore said to have been made “in the image and likeness of God,” assimilated to the Divine Word in the affections of the soul, and therefore rational... — Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks* 10¹⁸⁰

D: Minority Position View of the Body

The Minority position associates the image entirely on the mind of Man to the exclusion of the body (i.e. the “inner man”¹⁸¹ alone).

Philo’s Interpretation

In his commentaries, Philo explained his interpretation of Genesis 1:26 and 27 as follows:

[69] ...Moses says that man was made in the image and likeness of God.¹⁸²
¹⁸³ And he says well; for nothing that is born on the earth is more resembling¹⁸⁴ God than man. And let no one think that he is able to judge of

¹⁷⁷ Genesis 9:6.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Colossians 1:12-15; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Hebrews 1:1-3.

¹⁷⁹ 1 Peter 1:20.

¹⁸⁰ ¶5 ANF 2.199; LCL 92.210-215.

¹⁸¹ Romans 7:22; 2 Corinthians 4:16.

¹⁸² Gk. “κατ’ εικόνα θεοῦ καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν.”

¹⁸³ Genesis 1:26.

¹⁸⁴ Gk. “ἐμφορέστερον” (Lemma: “ἐμφορής”).

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this likeness¹⁸⁵ from the characters of the body¹⁸⁶: for neither is God a being with the form of a man,¹⁸⁷ nor is the human body¹⁸⁸ Godlike¹⁸⁹; but the image¹⁹⁰ is spoken of with reference to the most important part of the soul,¹⁹¹ namely, the mind¹⁹²... — Philo of Alexandria, *De Opificio Mundi* 69¹⁹³

Philo disassociated the “image and likeness of God” from the body of man completely. Which, as we will see, is its major difference to the majority position. Instead, he attributed the “image” (“εἰκών”) entirely onto “the most important part of the soul, namely, the mind.” He then goes on to support this position by drawing a parallel between the mind of man, as the ruler of the body, and God, as the ruler, or the mind, of all creation.

Patristic Attestation

Now, this interpretation of Man being created according to God’s image, along with the subsequent arguments made by Philo to defend it, are reiterated, on multiple occasions, by both Clement and Origen. Below are examples from each:

Clement of Alexandria

[6.16.136.3] Is not man, then, rightly said “to have been made in the image of God?”¹⁹⁴—not in the form of his [corporeal] structure; but inasmuch as God creates all things by the Word,¹⁹⁵ and the man who has become a Gnostic performs good actions by the faculty of reason,¹⁹⁶ ¹⁹⁷ [6.16.136.4] properly therefore the two tables are also said to mean the commandments that were given to the twofold spirits,—those communicated before the law to that which was created, and to the ruling faculty; ¹⁹⁸ [6.16.136.5] and the

¹⁸⁵ Gk. “ἐμφέρειαν” (Lemma: “ἐμφέρεια”).

¹⁸⁶ Gk. “σώματος” (Lemma: “σῶμα”).

¹⁸⁷ Gk. “ἀνθρωπόμορφος.”

¹⁸⁸ Gk. “ἀνθρώπειον σῶμα.”

¹⁸⁹ My trans.; Yonge — “like the form of God”; Gk. “θεοειδής” (Lemma: “θεοειδής”); compound of “θεο” and “ειδής.”

¹⁹⁰ My trans; Yonge — “resemblance”; Gk. “εἰκών.”

¹⁹¹ Gk. “ψυχῆς” (Lemma: “ψυχή”).

¹⁹² Gk. “νοῦν” (Lemma: “νόος”).

¹⁹³ Alt. ref.: *On the Creation* 23; (trans. by Charles Duke Yonge).

¹⁹⁴ Genesis 1:27.

¹⁹⁵ Gk. “λόγῳ” (Lemma: “λόγος”).

¹⁹⁶ Gk. “τῷ λογικῷ.”

¹⁹⁷ Copy IoG x-refs.

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movements of the senses are both copied in the mind, and manifested in the activity which proceeds from the body. For apprehension results from both combined. ^[6.16.137.1] Again, as sensation is related to the world of sense, so is thought to that of intellect. And actions are twofold—those of thought, those of act. — Clement of Alexandria, *Stromaties* 6.16.136.3-137.1¹⁹⁸

Origen of Alexandria

Celsus, however, misrepresents us when he asserts that we¹⁹⁹ hold that in our constitution there is nothing better or more precious than the body. We maintain that the soul, and especially the rational soul, is more precious than any body, since the soul contains that which is ‘after the image of the Creator’²⁰⁰ whereas this is in no sense true of the body. In our opinion also God is not a material substance. We would not fall into the absurd ideas held by the philosophers who follow the doctrines of Zeno and Chrysippus. — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* 8.49²⁰¹

E: Biblical Attestation for the Majority Position

The reasoning provided for the prohibition against killing men, given in Genesis 9:5b-6, further supports the Majority position over the Minority position, as far as the latter denies that the body shares in the image of God.

Jesus taught us to “not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.”^{202,203} Therefore we know that man is not able to kill the soul of man. The teaching that man’s soul was created to be immortal and lives on after the death of the body is also attested to by the parable of the “The Rich Man and Lazarus,” among other passages in scripture,²⁰⁴ and the unanimous witness of the early Church.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁸ Alt. ref.: *Stromata* 6.16¶11 ANF 2.512.

¹⁹⁹ I.e. Christians.

²⁰⁰ Colossians 3:10.

²⁰¹ Trans. by Chadwick p. 488.

²⁰² Gk. “γεέννη” (Lemma: “γέννη”); “Gehenna” is the transliteration of the Gk. “γέεννα”; NKJV — “hell”; sub. to avoid confusion with Gk. “ἄδης.”

²⁰³ Matthew 10:28 NKJV (ed.).

²⁰⁴ Revelation 6:9–11.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Athenagoras of Athens — *A Plea For The Christians* 31; Irenaeus of Gaul — *Against Heresies* 2.34.1, 5.4.1, 5.7.1; Justin Martyr — *First Apology* 8, 18, 52; *Dialogue with Trypho* 5.3, 130.2; Minucius Felix —

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Therefore, the fact that “Man” was “made” “in the image of God” can only be appealed to as a rationale for the prohibition of killing a man, if the image of God is attributed to the body, since this is the only part of man that can be killed by man.

Octavius 34.12; Tertullian of Carthage — *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 25; Lactantius of Sicca — *Divine Institutes* 3.19.