

Q & A



Being God's Image *Why Creation Still Matters*

June 6, 2023 | \$22, 240 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0020-5

"Beautifully written and clearly presented, Being God's Image takes the reader on a wonderful journey through Scripture. Carmen Imes clearly displays the wonder of being the creatures called to be God's image and bear his name, reminding us throughout what an amazing thing it is to be made in the image of God."

Marc Cortez, professor of theology at Wheaton College and Graduate School

The Practical Meaning of the *Imago Dei*

Being God's Image can be read on its own, but it also can be read in conjunction with your previous book, *Bearing God's Name*. Tell us a little bit about the connection between the two books.

Carmen Joy Imes: *Bearing God's Name* explores the identity and vocation of God's covenant people from Exodus to the end of the Bible. However, it leaves unanswered the broader questions about human identity and vocation. *Being God's Image* addresses these questions, tracing this theme from Genesis until Revelation. The two themes unite in the person of Jesus, the ultimate human who models for us how to bear God's name well. When read together, the books explore two of the most prominent themes in biblical theology: creation and covenant.

Who would benefit from reading this book and why?

Imes: *Being God's Image* reaches past well-worn assumptions about the *imago Dei* to re-examine what the Bible says about what it means to be human. The church desperately needs to recover God's vision for human dignity as the basis for ethics and human vocation. I hope this book will equip students and laypeople to see how theology informs Christian practice. *Bearing God's Name* has been read and appreciated by teens, college and seminary students, and adults of all ages in a wide range of contexts. *Being God's Image* was written in the same style to reach as many people as possible. I'm hoping that together, *Bearing God's Name* and *Being God's Image* can function as a robust introduction to biblical theology for college or seminary Bible courses.

You make the distinction between being created in God's image versus being made as God's image. Expound on that a bit. Why is that distinction important?

Imes: Language is important. Many of the ways we are accustomed to talking about the image of God implies that it is a capacity or function that can be lost or damaged. While there are implications for our behavior, the *imago Dei* is not something we do, it's who we are. No one has more of the image of God than anyone else, and because it's our human identity we cannot lose it. When we realize that human identity is grounded in our kinship with God and in what he declares to be true of us, it provides a stronger foundation for ethics in all sorts of areas.

In your research for this book, what was the most surprising/unexpected outcome for you as an author?

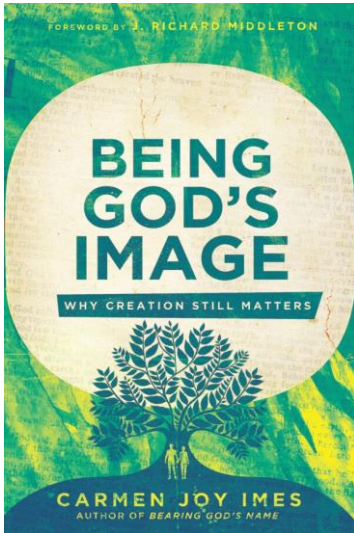
Imes: I probably learned the most from my exploration of disability and gender studies. I knew from the beginning that I needed to talk about the *imago Dei* in a way that included every human, no matter their ability. I learned so much reading Bethany McKinney Fox's book, *Disability and the Way of Jesus* and Matthew Thiessen's *Jesus and the Forces of Death*. Both books helped me to reexamine the reasons Jesus heals people's bodies and interrogate my own assumptions about able-bodied normativity both now and in the new creation.



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On gender, a book that helped me immensely was Amy Peeler's *Women and the Gender of God* as well as an essay by Christa McKirland in *Discovering Biblical Equality* (3rd ed). McKirland helped to sharpen my explanation of how the *imago Dei* relates to our sexed embodiment. Peeler helped me to see more fully the significance of the incarnation of Jesus through the body of Mary. I'm challenged by the need for the church to fully embrace both women and men as the *imago Dei*, empowered by the Spirit for gospel ministry.

What are some of the most important concepts that you hope people will take away from this book?

Imes: Our gospel-proclamation often misses the Bible's essential teaching on creation. Creation care is an essential component of our human vocation, but instead of inviting people to surrender themselves to be reconciled to the Creator God who is making all things new, we tell them that if they ask Jesus into their "hearts" they will go to heaven when they die. Christians imagine a disembodied future somewhere in another dimension. I'm hoping to help people re-discover the significance of resurrection--not just Jesus', but ours!--and our destiny as residents of the new creation. Our embodiment is not temporary or incidental, but the enduring way in which God has designed us as "very good."



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Being God's Image
Why Creation Still Matters

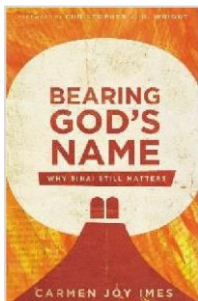
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What does it mean to be human? For this timeless question, the Bible offers truths for the flourishing of all creation. Carmen Joy Imes recovers the theologically rich creation narratives and explores the implication of our kinship relationship with God, considering what it means for our work, gender relations, creation care, and eternal destiny.

New from the Author of *Bearing God's Name*

Carmen Joy Imes (PhD, Wheaton College) is associate professor of Old Testament at Biola University. She is the author of *Bearing God's Name: Why Sinai Still Matters* and *Praying the Psalms with Augustine and Friends*. Carmen loves helping Christians discover God's grace in the Old Testament by writing, speaking, and creating videos.

Also by Carmen Joy Imes:



Bearing God's Name: Why Sinai Still Matters

December 10, 2019 | \$22, 240 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-5269-7

What does the Old Testament—especially the law—have to do with your Christian life? In this warm, accessible volume, Carmen Joy Imes takes readers back to Sinai, arguing that we've misunderstood the command about "taking the Lord's name in vain." Instead, Imes says that this command is really about "bearing God's name," a theme that continues throughout the rest of Scripture.



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