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OF THE EARTH:

HUMANITY, HUMILITY, AND THE FUNCTIONAL IMAGE OF GOD

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> A little rule, a small obedience
> That sets aside, and tills the chosen ground,
> Fruitful humility, chosen innocence,
> A binding by which freedom might be found.[2]

Malcolm Guite's short sonnet draws out a beauty which creation has known since it was formed by the hand of God. The dust from which Adam sprang brings with it both calling and memory. Its calling is to tend the earth. Its reminder is that "all came from the dust, and all return to the dust" (Eccl. 3:20). It could be argued that humility was that first virtue which humanity embodied and practiced at the beginning of all things. This connection by which the Latin *humus* sources the etymology of both humanity and humility is no argument on its own but bears witness to the truth that humility is a chiefly human virtue, perhaps even the height of what it means to be human.

This paper will argue that the virtue of humility is chiefly a human virtue and its proper place is found in the content and expression of the image of God. To demonstrate its claim, the paper will first make the case for humility's limitation as a creaturely virtue, rather than one sourced in the character of God. While there is much scholarship on the concept of divine

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[2] Malcolm Guite, "Benedict," in *The Singing Bowl* (Norwich, Canterbury Press, 2013), 84.

humility, this paper will demonstrate that the biblical picture of humility is not just a posture of service and love, but of a modesty and submission which God cannot bear except in the mission of Christ incarnate. The case will be made that modest submission is essential to the biblical concept of humility, not just in opposition to pride or vainglory, but in its fundamental nature. Second, the paper will shift to demonstrate the expression of humility through the functional image of God as participating in the humility of Christ. This paper will make its case as a development to Christian Virtue Theory's understanding of humility by connecting the creaturely virtue to the understanding and development of the image of God. In this way, the biblical anthropology must express not just structural or relational angles of the image, but functionally virtuous ones—especially in the ironic heights of the human virtue of humility.

I. THE HEIGHTS OF HUMILITY

Humility is a notoriously difficult term to define. James Kellenberger suggests humility is a polythetic term which has no less than seven definitions—all of which primarily concern contrasts with its negations of pride, self-assertion, defects, or deserts.[3] In order to arrive at an appropriate definition, a framework must first be established. Humility is understood here through Christian Virtue Theory. Taking the essential modifiers of that theory then, this definition must concern both Christianity and Virtue. It must navigate both categories of moral philosophy and applied theology. Any definition which fails to meet both criteria could not rightly be called a Christian virtue. For example, any conception of humility which rests on self-abasement as a response to the presence of sin would fail to be Christian as the sinless Jesus

[3] James Kellenberger, "Humility," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (2010): 321–324.

would be unable to be humble, let alone the archetype for humility (Phil. 2:5–8). In the same way, conceptions of divine humility fail to meet the criteria not of Christian, but of virtue.

In his work on divine humility, Matthew Wilcoxen presents humility as the eternal orientation of God to creation aimed at the proper use of strength for the sake of others.[4] Elsewhere, Katherine Sonderegger explains that, "The act of creation itself, in a quiet and indirect manner, testifies to the Humility of this omnipotent Creator"[5] that God in the act of creation offers "a token of the lordly Generosity, the Divine Humility as it bows down even to the dust and looks upon it."[6] Here and in other similar works which have developed or captured the doctrine of divine humility, the central feature is that humility is a redemptive condescension.

Yet, it is the contention here that redemptive condescension need not be essential to an understanding of biblical humility. Nor should condescension be considered a particularly rare event in the divine narrative. In some sense, every act of God outside of the trinitarian communion is an act of condescension. God must condescend to interact with all creation because all creation is beneath God's glory. This then is not the humbling act of a creator, but an essential act of one who is higher than all yet desires to commune with creation. This desire for communion reveals the better placement of God's condescension—not in the virtue of humility, but in the virtue of love. It is the love of a Father that stoops to meet the eyeline of his children

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[4] Matthew Wilcoxen, *Divine Humility: God's Morally Perfect Being* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019), 3–4.

[5] Katherine Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology: The Doctrine of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 308.

[6] Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology*, 309.

and to restore what was broken. This is to say that from the perspective of Christian Virtue Theory, what has often been described as divine humility would be more accurately sourced in the virtue of divine love. This is true both by the content and hinge of God's economy of love, and by the necessary absence of the divine in the biblical description of humility.

At one point, in the development of the ideas presented in this paper, a fair friend and faithful interlocutor, Marc Cortez, appropriately asked the significance of a humility which is chiefly a human virtue. What is lost if God is humble? The necessity of this definition of humility as a submissive modesty is essential not only to rightly understand humility, but in order to rightly practice it. If we do not know what it is to have the mind of Christ, or define it solely by its selflessness and miss its modest submission, it is possible that we miss humility all together.

In order to offer a definition of humility which is consistent then with both Christianity and virtue, we must turn to a biblical account of humility. Beyond the implicit connections and picture of humility in the creation account noted above, there is much to explore surrounding the explicit mentions of humility in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. While many in the ancient world would have considered humility to be a vice opposed to the vision of the magnanimous man,[7] it is clear that among the people of Israel it was regarded to be virtuous.

A. Humility in the Hebrew Bible

In its noun form, עֲנָוָה (*ănāwâ*), humility only appears six times in the Hebrew Bible. Five of these speak to the reward of humility as a keeping of the law and a fear of the Lord which is

[7] This according to Alasdair MacIntyre's understanding of Aristotle's magnanimous man. See, Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd edition (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 176.

met with riches, honor, and life (Zeph. 2:3; Ps. 45:4; Prov. 15:33, 18:12, 22:4). The last two occurrences describes the humble as the oppressed or poor in Daniel 4:27, and in a play on words in Psalm 18:35 to indicate God's condescension as uplifting. This final occurrence (Ps. 18:35) offers an apparent foil to the argument maintained here in that עֲנָוָה (*ănāwâ*) is used in a description of God's work, seemingly making God capable of humility. However, no major English translation favors translating this as humility, most following the King James' "gentleness." Further evidence that this is a poetic choice, rather than systematic category, is that the LXX ties it not to humility (ταπεινὸς), but to knowledge (παιδεία) translating it as "your insruction teaches me." (καὶ ἡ παιδεία σου αὐτή με διδάξει. LXX, Ps. 17:36). Taken together, it is not believed that this exception breaks the pattern established by the argument presented here.[8] Moving to its verbal form, עָנָה (*ănā*), humility follows the pattern of virtue formation eighteen times. This is seen negatively in the failure to humble oneself, as in the case of Pharaoh, who is met by judgement (Ex. 10:3), as well as positively in the ready submission to God as a responsive purpose of the Sabbath (Lev. 16:29–31). It is used both as a willful decision of the self (Ps. 35:13), and the instructive work of God upon his people (Deut. 8:16). This construction also has a significant usage—fifty-seven occurrences—in the negative construction of humiliation. These instances are usually translated as "afflicted" or "oppressed"—most often by enemies (Ex. 1:11), but also on occasion as a judgment from the Lord (Ps. 119:75). It is also translated as "ravished" or "violated" in the cases of rape in Judges 19–20 and 2 Samuel 13. Klaus Wengst suggests humility's connotative link to humiliation as suffering and oppression should seem similar to the promised result of pride, in which the theme of God's judgment

[8] See also the discussion in Stephen B. Dawes, "'ănāwâ in Translation and Tradition," *Vetus Testamentum* 41, no. 1 (January 1991): 44–48.

subverts the expectations of the world—those who lift themselves up will be made low, and those who humble themselves will be lifted up before God. Wengst suggests it is the "experience of humiliation [which] makes people cry out for righteousness."[9] The cumulative weight of these occurrences is that humility can be found when circumstances compel the lowly to submit themselves to God.

Numbers 12:3 famously asserts Moses as more humble than any other on earth and demonstrates this point. Ronald Green writes, "To be humble (*Zenua*) or meek (*Anav*) in the eyes of Jewish piety is to recognize one's subordinate position before God and His Law. The humble man is necessarily God-fearing."[10] As such, Moses was humble not because of his hesitance to stand and speak before Pharaoh in Exodus 4:13, but because of his eagerness to stand beneath the glory of the Lord in Exodus 33:18. A modest submission to God then is the primary characteristic of the Old Testament conception of humility and must be present in its definition here.[11]

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[9] Klaus Wengst, *Humility: Solidarity of the Humiliated: The Transformation of an Attitude and Its Social Relevance in Graeco-Roman Old Testament-Jewish and Early Christian Tradition* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988), 22.

[10] Ronald M. Green, "Jewish Ethics and the Virtue of Humility," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1 (1973): 54.

[11] Dickson and Rosner make the case that the pro-social nature of humility, which is central to the New Testament definition of humility, is apparently lacking in the Hebrew Bible. Saying for example of Zephaniah 2:15, that "'Pride' here is thus cast as a 'theological sin' rather than a social one, though there were undoubtedly social expressions of this arrogance." John P. Dickson, and Brian S. Rosner, "Humility as a Social Virtue in the Hebrew Bible?" *Vetus Testamentum* 54, no. 4 (2004): 464.

B. Humility as a Creaturely Virtue

Before moving to the New Testament, this then raises the question of humility as unfitting of God. While the present author has explored this question elsewhere in greater depth as it relates to humility's function as both modest and selfless,[12] it is sufficient here to say that because the biblical conception of humility is connected to a submission of the will, the Triune God is incapable of humility. It is only in the incarnation that the Son possesses a human nature and will and is thus capable of submitting to the Father. Aquinas explains that "although the virtue of humility was not fitting to Christ in His divine nature, it was fitting to Him in His human nature, and His humility was rendered the more praiseworthy by His divinity. … Hence, the humility of the God-man was praiseworthy in the extreme when He bore those abject things which He was called on to suffer for the salvation of men."[13]

If humility then, as the Hebrew Bible frames it, is a theological category rather than a social posture, it should be seen in in the former commands of the decalogue before the latter ones. Humility sets the believer to have no other Gods, to flee idols, to fear the name of the Lord, and to humbly rest in him. This is not to the negation of humility towards others, which the New Testament witness undoubtedly develops as the mind of Christ in Philippians 2 (which will be explored more below), but it is to demonstrate its priority as a creaturely virtue. To this end, Jonathan Edwards is a helpful interlocutor.

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[12] Paul J. Morrison, "Human From the Essence: Humility as a Uniquely Human Virtue," *Center for Pastor Theologians Journal* 11.1 (June 2024).

[13] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 4.55.20, on 355.

Unlike true virtues, which Edwards seats in the triune nature of God, Edwards regards humility to be a "proper excellency only of a created nature."[14] This excellency is the defining virtue of creatureliness. Humanity is, of course, not the only creature before God. It is not unheard of to use humble in a colloquial sense to describe the small or unimpressive, or to consider the submission of all of creation to the Lord, be it the angel or stone. Yet, humans are able to bear this virtue more than other created things in their unique place as those which bear the image of God. Edwards continues,

> For though the divine nature be infinitely abhorrent to pride, yet humility is not properly predicable of God the Father, and the Holy Ghost, that exists only in the divine nature; because it is proper excellency only of a created nature; for it consists radically in a sense of a comparative lowness and littleness before God, or the great distance between God and the subject of this virtue; but it would be a contradiction to suppose any such thing in God.[15]

As such, humility's chief perfection is not found in the godhead, but in the divine mission of the incarnation. In Christ's visible mission, "the subsistent relation that is the Son encompasses and permeates a human nature that retains all its properties and operations."[16] This must necessarily include not simply its potential for virtue, but the perfection of it in the person of Jesus. The type of humility in the exemplar Moses is replaced by the archetype of humility in Jesus Christ. What then makes Christ befitting of ultimate humility? It must be that height from which he made himself low. That all dignity, honor, and glory belonged to him being in the form

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[14] Jonathan Edwards, "The Excellency of Christ," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 567.

[15] Edwards, "The Excellency of Christ," 568.

[16] Adonis Vidu, *The Divine Missions: An Introduction* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021), 60.

of God,[17] and yet he chose to submit his will to the Father in a lowly life and a humiliating death—to pray "not my will, but yours be done" in sweat meeting blood (Luke 22:42–44).

It is not simply that humility requires a right knowledge of the self as some might define it, but that true humility is a right knowledge of the God in whose image humanity is formed and to whom they should be subordinate. It is in the unfolding of the virtue in the moment of incarnation which radically shifts the centrality of this virtue as a Christian one through its perfection in the life of Christ. This is seen in the development in usage of humility in the New Testament.

C. Humility in the New Testament

Humility continues the trajectory of the Hebrew עֲנָוָה (*ănāwâ*) in the New Testament ταπεινὸς (*tapeinos*). This is seen in the familiar quotations of Proverbs 3, that "God gives grace to the humble" in James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5, but also in 14 additional forms of the noun in virtue lists (Col. 3:12), descriptions of God honoring the oppressed (2 Cor. 7:6), and the self-description of Jesus as one who is gentle and humble (Mt. 11:29). Additionally, in eleven instances, the verbal form, ταπεινόω (*tapeinoô*), echoes the willful submission of those who submit themselves before the Lord (Luke 18:14). It is among these instances that the virtue is heightened most in the declarative hymn within Philippians 2:3–11. First, the consistent usage of humility to note Christ's submission to God in his refusal to grasp at equality with God as well as his obedience to even a humiliating death. Second, the unfolding height of this virtue in light of

[17] The question of the participle ὑπάρχων as either concessive (although) or causative (because) in Phil. 2:6 is not one lost on the present writer. Both readings seem to be both regarded as legitimate interpretations and lack compelling consensus. The present work (humbly) favors the concessive due to the theological arguments herein rather than primarily linguistic ones. See Glenn R. Kreider, "God's Humility: Reflections on an Unappreciated Attribute of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," *Criswell Theological Review* 9, no. 1 (Fall 2011): 38–39.

Christ. The mind of Christ, as Paul conceives it, is not simply to submit oneself beneath the Lord, but to further consider others as more important than oneself. This is the ironic height of humility—those made from the dust are simultaneously called to live far above it in the dignity and flourishing of those who bear the image of God, and yet to do this as God intends is to place oneself back into that very dust. What remains is a humbled humanity which readily submits to God and neighbor as a testament to its created end. Finally, we arrive at our definition. Biblical humility is a virtue of modest selflessness in which the self is known, vain glory is not sought, but instead, in lowly submission, one seeks the good of others even at the cost of great suffering and humiliation. Only in this vein of humility can humanity navigate its calling.

II. FUNCTIONAL HUMILITY

Having defined humility as submissive, modest, and selfless, we are able to now return to the dust to ask what hath humility to do with the *imago Dei*? Historically, the image of God has been interpreted along three primary conceptions: structural, relational, and functional.[18] This paper will assume an integrated interpretation of the image which upholds the doctrine's anthropology of dignity, flourishing, and purpose. Together, these components contend for a universal anthropology. The structural image gives dignity to every image bearer, not just those in Christ. In the structural, the weak and strong, rich and poor, healthy and infirm are each created in that same image. Relationally, flourishing is found in community and pursuit of wholeness before one's Creator. Even those who do not recognize themselves in the story of

[18] These three positions were categorized first by Millard Erickson in his classic, *Christian Theology*, but have essentially been ascribed to in one form or another for millennia. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1983), 498–510. Noted as the first proponent by Stanley Grenz in *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

faith grapple with these same desires for communion. Functionally, it is a human question to seek and cling to purpose over and above simple living. Each of these facets has broad and narrow applications, but it is the narrow application of function to which we must turn.

The functional image has implications upon everything from creation care to evangelism,[19] but of particular emphasis here, is its effect upon the characterological facets of imaging God. Christian virtue is more than any disposition of personality or cultural value. Virtue is the character of the incarnate Christ. This is captured in every communicable attribute, every virtue list, and every perfection of act and being in the god-man Jesus. As such, its imitation is only possible by those conformed to his image. The fullness of virtue is perfected in Christ and imitated by the people of God. Virtue in its truest sense must be measured by its correspondence to the incarnate Christ—the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15). It is in this incarnation that Christ demonstrates humility. To be fully human is to participate in the humility of Jesus.

A. Humility in the Second Adam

Philippians 2:3–11 captures this humility in Christ's service, submission, and suffering. In service, Christ humbles himself not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45), looking to the interests of others. To do otherwise is not simply self-sufficiency but sin. David Elliot captures the significance of community as opposed to "Magnanimity's fantasy of self-sufficiency [which] denies one's dependence on others. Humility, by contrast, gratefully acknowledges the sources

[19] For a taxonomy of the image concerning dominion, ethical action, ethical being, and functional representation see, Paul J. Morrison, "The Chief Beginning of Man: Finding an Ethic of the *Imago Dei* through Biblical Theology," Presented at the 74th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, November 16, 2022.

on which we do depend, and therefore gives a more accurate insight into the human condition."[20] In imitation of Christ, Paul responds to the critiques of his detractors in 2 Corinthians 10, that his meekness in person—a seemingly derogatory use of ταπεινὸς (*tapeinos*)—is subversively for their good and building up. His argument is that the warfare of the kingdom is not waged by the weapons of flesh and blood (2 Cor. 10:4), nor its confidence found in what the world deems impressive (2 Cor. 10:7,10). The ironic virtue of humility means that the meekness which Paul's enemies mock only identifies him the more with the Jesus by whom Paul urges them—one who is meek and gentle (2 Cor. 10:1). As such, Paul's appeal in Philippians 2 to have the mind of Christ is to serve others. It is to return to the garden to see that where Adam failed to serve Eve, Christ does not fail to serve his bride. Christ crushes the head of the enemy who was cursed to eat the dust.

In submission, Christ does not count equality with God, but becomes obedient. In Ephesians 5:1–2, Paul argues that to imitate God is to walk in love as Christ loved, sacrificing himself as an offering to God. Christ's sacrifice is only sufficient because of the sinless life he led leading to it. The weight of the victory and atonement which came in Christ's death was only such because of the humility and grace of Christ's life. This submission does not end with a sacrifice and submission before God, but rather as Paul builds his argument, it is towards a mutual submission out of the fear of Christ (Eph. 5:21). For the sinner, this requires the humble submission of repentance. Kierkegaard explains, "Only when he himself becomes nothing, only then can God illuminate him so that he resembles God. However great he is, he cannot manifest

[20] David Michael Elliot, "The Turn to Classification in Virtue Ethics: A Review Essay," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 29, no. 4 (November 2016): 482.

God's likeness; God can imprint himself in him only when he himself has become nothing."[21] The mind of Christ submits in obedience to the Father. It trusts the word and wisdom of the God who commands which trees are good to eat and which are cursed to hang upon.

In suffering, Christ is humiliated not simply by death, but by the excruciating death of a criminal and outcast. Hebrews 5:5–10 says that Christ did not glorify himself but through loud crying and tears he learned obedience in suffering. It is often the case that humiliation and suffering is not the judgement of God, but God's power being perfected in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9). The mind of Christ willfully accepts suffering as a cup which cannot pass, but is poured out—first upon him, and then out of him to establish a new covenant in his blood. It was from this suffering that Christ was raised. Like Adam from the dust, Christ drew breath from that which was lifeless.

Nathan Change writes that "Humanity's origin is a story of dignity rising from the dust of utter humility."[22] "And that is the counterbalance to keep intruding pride in check: humans—dignified and distinct images of God—were not narrated to be made from gold, silver, or any other precious materials as one might expect of royal images in the ancient Near East, but from dust."[23] This origin is not simply a check to pride. It is a reminder of the service, submission, and suffering required to participate in the humility of Christ.

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[21] Søren Kierkegaard, "One Who Prays Aright Struggles with God and is Victorious—In that God is Victorious," in *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses,* trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990): 399.

[22] Nathan W. Chang, "On the Origin of Human Dignity and Humility: Considering the Imago Dei and Dust in Human Origins," *Bulletin of Ecclesial Theology* 6.2 (2019): 34.

[23] Chang, "On the Origin of Human Dignity and Humility," 35.

B. Humility in the Habit

Virtue is often tied to the practices of habit and disciplines, and in what remains of our consideration of humility, we would do well to consider which habits and disciplines might foster our participation in the mind of Christ. To this end, we may consider those habits which form humility in our heads, our hearts, and our hands.

Humility has an obvious connection to the intellect as much of the commands concern the calling to have this mind or think this way. Richard Mouw tells us that "We know that only the Creator has a clear and comprehensive knowledge of all things; thus we are humble. But God has also promised eventually to lead us into that mode of perfect knowing that is proper to us as human creatures; thus we hope. These attitudes can give us a patience that can enable us to accept complexities and live with seemingly unconnected particularities without giving in to despair or cynicism."[24] Thus the finitude of our minds before the mind of God calls us to be humble. Aquinas taught that humility was "a twofold virtue is necessary with regard to the difficult good: one, to temper and restrain the mind, lest it tend to high things immoderately; and this belongs to the virtue of humility: and another to strengthen the mind against despair, and urge it on to the pursuit of great things according to right reason; and this is magnanimity."[25] By redefining the height of humility not as a sinful elevation of the self, but a right usage of one's gifts and capacities, the good doctor redeems Aristotle's height of man through the ironic heights of humility. In practice, this means that humility does not shirk its station in pursuit of obscurity

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[24] Richard J. Mouw, "Humility, Hope and the Divine Slowness," *The Christian Century* 107, no. 12 (April 11, 1990): 367.

[25] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* trans. Laurence Shapcote (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018): II.II, q. 161, a. 1.

for the sake of putting off glory. Christ never rejected a crowd out of a sense of self-abasement. Rather, the humble mind recognizes the scope of its wisdom and purpose and stewards its gifts to the glory of God. In this way, the humble mind would do well to avoid the prison of the moment and the deceptions of media which give a platform to comment on everything under the sun. Instead, it would do well to seek how it might serve and submit to others with its gifts.

Concerning the heart, humility calls us to plumb our souls for selfishness and empty conceits and to find purpose in community. Norman Wirzba writes that "Humility is central to human life because it is through a humble attitude that we most fully approximate our true condition as creatures dependent on others, daily implicated in the life and death-wielding ways of creation, all together sustained by the gifts of our Creator."[26] Choosing community, namely the community of faith—even over family ties and other friendships—offers a unique authority and ability to speak into life as corrective and encouragement. This unity of spirit is the preceding cause for Paul to draw the Philippians to behold the humble Christ. The humble heart invites accountability to weigh and measure the degree to which it participates in the humility of Jesus. It is the submission of the self before God in right repentance and worship, and in restoration of brokenness. In this way, humility can function as a hinge to contentment and modesty and bear fruit beyond itself. It is fitting then to consider humility as cardinal given its place among the virtues historically. In the Middle Ages, ecclesial artists would frequently illustrate vice and virtue as fruits of their corresponding trees.[27] In each case, the roots being

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[26] Norman Wirzba, "The Touch of Humility: An Invitation to Creatureliness." *Modern Theology* 24, no. 2 (April 2008): 226.

[27] María Elvira Mocholí Martínez, and María Montesinos Castañeda, "Humility: Virgin or Virtue?" *Religions* 12, 1019 (2021): 2.

planted either in humility or pride gave fruit to other virtues or vices. The humble heart is one poised for greater love, patience, and all the fruit of a life planted in Christ.

Finally in action, hands which seek to foster humility must do the work of the functional image. This is the mission to fulfill the callings and purposes of God as his ambassadors in the places to which he has called us. Micah 6:8's call to do "what is good; … to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" is not divorced from the context of the prophets' concern for the oppressed and lowly. As such Paul's call is not for the Philippians to simply think humble thoughts, but for that consideration to watch closely over each other, and even sends Timothy and Epaphroditus to them to meet their needs rather than his won (Phil. 2:19,25). Nothing so humbles our hands than to genuinely give up what we have for the sake of others. Less this seem allegorical, or a doubling down of the mind or heart, allow me to speak to that idol which so often builds pride's kingdom, you cannot serve God and mammon (Luke 16:13). The humble hand will give not just freely, but perhaps even humiliatingly, recognizing that it is the Lord that commends.

III. CONCLUSION

Humility is the chief virtue of creatureliness. It speaks to the dust from which we were formed and to which we will return. It is modeled in the perfection of Christ to the glory of God and for the good of God's creation. This paper has made the case that the virtue of humility is presented in Scripture as submissive and sacrificial. It is befitting the image of God as the representative nature of Christ as well as the right standing before its creator. Man should seek to embody love because God is love. Man should seek to embody humility because God is God.

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