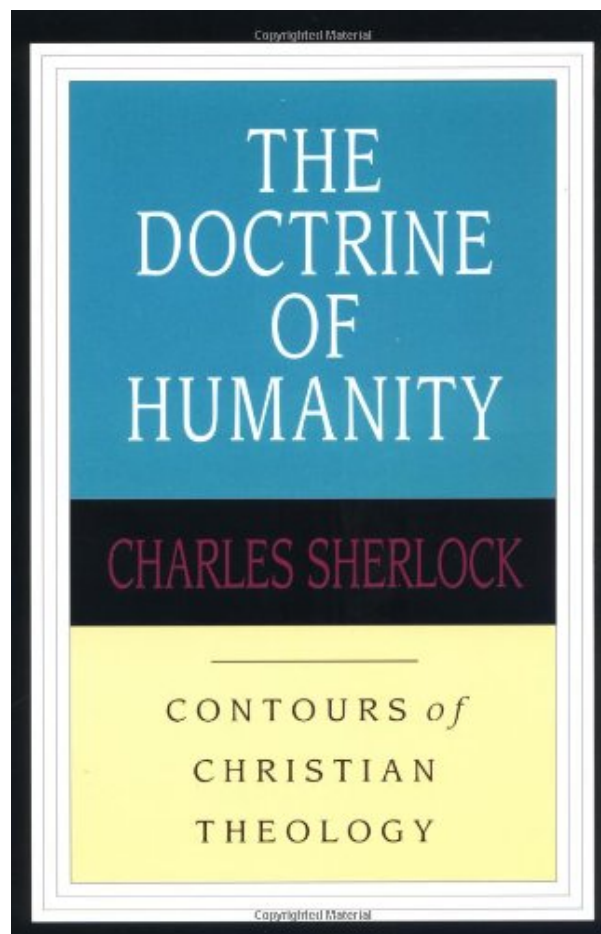
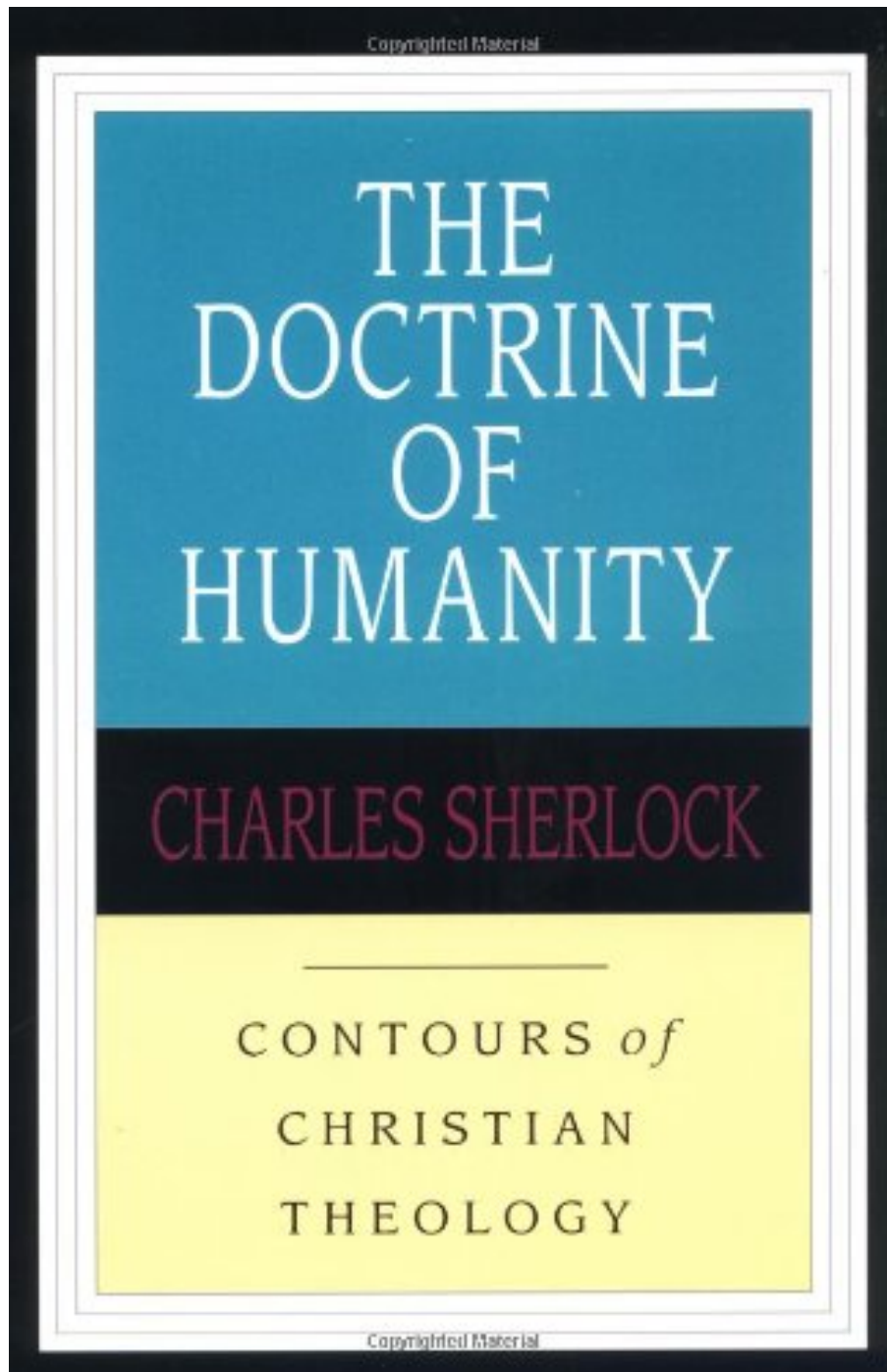


**THE DOCTRINE OF HUMANITY  
(CONTOURS OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY)  
BY CHARLES SHERLOCK**



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## Review

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## About the Author

Charles Sherlock, an Australian theologian, is Executive Officer of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools, Executive Officer for the Board of Ministry of the Anglican Diocese of Bendigo and Regional Coordinator (Oceania) for the Anglican Communion's "Bible in the Life of the Church" project. He has also written *The God Who Fights: The War Tradition in Holy Scripture* (Edwin Mellen).

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At the end of the twentieth century the forces of race, gender, ethnicity, culture, social status, life-style and sexual preference threaten to disassemble any notion of universal "human nature" or "human condition." In light of this historical moment, the Christian doctrine of human nature is ripe for rethinking and reformulation. Charles Sherlock sees this theological task as demanding a "double focus." To reflect on the subject of human nature, he says, is like "moving around the different areas of an ellipse with two focal points": humans as made in the image of God and the particular realities of human existence. Both must be brought into sharper, more detailed focus in our quest to understand human nature. The result of Sherlock's "double focus" is *The Doctrine of Humanity*. Sherlock notably engages the communal dimension of humanity in its social, creational and cultural aspects before examining the human person as individual, as male and female, and as whole being. He offers a timely and engaging look at what it means to be human on the continuum between our creation in the divine image and our recreation in the image of Christ.

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- 303 pages

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## Most helpful customer reviews

11 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Helpful, but not great

By Brett M. Sweet

Well, let's see. I originally picked up this book with fascination that a book written after Hoekema's *Created in God's Image* (One of my all time favorites!) could write a book on Biblical anthropology and not reference Hoekema once in the end notes. And in comparison, this certainly is not nearly as good as Hoekema. With that being said, Sherlock makes some excellent observations on culture and the way we should think about people made in the image of God. He is outstanding in the issue of constantly addressing the effect of sin on mankind- it is our greatest problem, and he is right to spend time on that. He critiques some outside viewpoints well including Marxism, and also critiques prevailing Evangelical problems like excessive individualism and a lack of tithing. The weaknesses are several however. First and foremost, although he seems clear on sin and person of Christ, he never engages on how the gospel is applied to us. Is it by faith and repentance? He references them, but leaves no clarity on whether we must trust Christ to be saved. One could be Barthian (Neo-Orthodox views of Universalism) and read this book and come away without Jesus claims to exclusivity. I understand that this isn't on soteriology but the gospel must be proclaimed in some measure- this is of first importance (I Cor. 15). Second, his egalitarian views of men's and women's roles is an axe that he grinds on at every available chance. While being sensitive to my brothers and sisters who disagree, political correctness when applied to Scripture has never historically ended well and tends to arrive in liberalism. My suggestion: read Hoekema first, it's more in depth theologically but still easy to understand. Read Piper and Grudem on *Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, and then read this book with a discerning eye and keep the good observations that Dr. Sherlock makes.

10 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

The stinker from an otherwise excellent series

By MikeCabe

It is baffling how out of place this book is in this series of otherwise excellent, solid books, not unlike the book on revelation in Berkouwers "Studies in Theology". While not claiming that this book is without some value, and I appreciate his choice of topics, his almost complete failure to discuss sin, human depravity, and the freedom/bondage of the will as specific topics makes this volume no little disappointment. In light of both the historic importance of the doctrine and the extravagant expressions of depravity and sin in the the last 100 years, it is hard to take this book too seriously when it fails to look at the center of these issues: the human heart. Another complaint is the failure of the author to take a stand for the Biblical principles regarding the roles of men and women in the family and church (not surprising since, as the preface mentions, his wife is also and ordained minister in the Anglican church). Sadly, it is ALMOST appropriate to retitile this book "The Doctrine of Humanism."

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Don't waste your time with this book

By Andrew Morisseau

I had to read this book for a seminary class. I was very disappointed. I really enjoyed the rest of the series, but this book just didn't cut it. While Sherlock had some interesting things to say in the first half, the second half fell apart. The author came close to comparing the blood of Jesus with a woman's period at one point in the book. Very disappointing.

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