Are animals moral? Taking soundings through vice, virtue, conscience and imago Dei

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Abstract
This book chapter discusses the moral status of non-human animals and the extent to which it matters to humans. It focuses on animals emotions and complex behaviour, the works of Thomas Aquinas and Alasdair MacIntyre, virtue ethics, anthropomorphism, conscience, and human distinctiveness as imago Dei.

Citation
The image of God (Latin: imago dei) refers to the immaterial part of humanity. It sets human beings apart from the animal world, fits them for the dominion God intended them to have over the earth (Genesis 1:28), and enables them to commune with their Maker. It is a likeness mentally, morally, and socially. Our conscience or “moral compass” is a vestige of that original state. Whenever someone writes a law, recoils from evil, praises good behavior, or feels guilty, he or she is confirming the fact that we are made in God’s own image. That redemption is only available by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior from the sin that separates us from God (Ephesians 2:8-9). Through Christ, we are made new creations in the likeness of God (2 Corinthians 5:17).