

# GOD CREATED HUMANITY

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:7,15-25



## CONTEXT

In the beginning, in Genesis 1, God created the heavens and the earth. In six days, God created the domains of sky, sea, and land and filled them with lights and living creatures. But for all the wonder of the created world around us and the universe beyond us, the Lord made human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. We were created, both male and female, uniquely in the image of God. The world was created for humanity and humanity for the world, a realm to steward together in God's name. And God declared it all to be "very good" in His sight. In Genesis 2, the Scripture zooms in on the creation of the man and woman God made in His image.

## KEY CONCEPT

**God created humanity for relationships.**

As you examine Genesis 2:7,15-25:

- Identify how we ought to relate to God and others because of how God created humanity.
- Contemplate the changes that ought to occur in your life if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity.

## TIMELINE

The Eternal God Creates (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

Day 1: Light/Day and Night

Day 3: Land and Plants

Day 5: Fish and Birds

Day 7: God Rested

Day 2: Seas and Sky

Day 4: Lights/Sun, Moon, and Stars

**SESSION STUDY: Day 6: Animals and Humans (zoom in with Genesis 2:4-25)**

## Daily Readings

Day 1: Genesis 1:1-13

Day 4: Genesis 2:4-17

Day 2: Genesis 1:14-2:3

Day 5: Genesis 2:18-25

Day 3: Psalm 8

Day 6: Psalm 148



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

### GOD CREATED HUMANITY AS SPECIAL AND WITH PURPOSE (GENESIS 2:7,15-17).

Circle the actions (verbs) performed by God in this passage.

**7** Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. . . . **15** The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.”

God created humanity in His image (Gen. 1:27), an honor bestowed upon nothing else. So we as people are unique and special amongst God’s creation. For this we should be grateful. God created us and blessed us—we exist and are alive because God has breathed in us the breath of life (1:27-28; 2:7). And so, as God declared, it is good to be alive (1:31).

**LEADER NOTE:** Having the breath of life is not unique to humanity. The living creatures on the earth share in this as well (1:30; 7:15). We all breathe in and out. But only the man was said to receive the breath of life through a direct action of God—Him breathing into the man’s nostrils (2:7). Life is shared by all living creatures, but humanity alone has the intimate connection with God of being made in His image and carrying His breath.

**What are some ways you can use your breath to honor the God who created you in His image?**

Before we let our uniquely created status go to our heads, let us consider our bodies. We aren’t made of gold, silver, or precious stones. Rather, the Lord formed humanity from the dust of the ground (2:7). From this humble beginning, a body fashioned out of the dirt, then infused with the breath of God, humanity was elevated by God, first to life and then to a responsibility.

The Lord planted a garden in a place that we know as Eden (2:8), and He took the man He had formed and placed him in that garden for two reasons. One, to provide food for the man (2:16). The Lord created this man, and all humanity, with the need for food, and the Lord provided abundantly for that need in Eden. And two, God placed the man in the garden to work it and watch over it (2:15). This was to be the perfect realm for humanity’s expanding rule as those made in God’s image (1:28).



**LEADER NOTE:** We typically view work as toil, a burden we carry to sustain ourselves with the fruit of our work, whether that be produce or pay. We only consider ourselves blessed in this regard if we have a job we love. But God intended work itself to be a joy and a privilege. God Himself worked through six days of creation (2:2-3), and He included the man in that blessing through his work in the garden.

Yet the man was to rule as a steward under the ultimate authority of his Creator and Sustainer. To ground this reality for the man, God raised up and identified one tree in Eden among all the other trees and commanded the man not to eat of that one (2:17). The consequence of disobedience would be death.

**How can our work today reflect our status as stewards under God’s ultimate authority?**

#### CHRIST CONNECTION

First Corinthians 15:45-49 quotes Genesis 2:7 and makes an explicit comparison between “the first man Adam” and “the last Adam,” or Jesus. The former is a man of dust, and we all take after his image, being descendants of Adam by birth. The latter is a man of heaven, and we will bear His perfect image through faith in Jesus crucified for our sins and raised again.

### GOD CREATED HUMAN BEINGS TO BE IN COMMUNITY WITH OTHERS (GENESIS 2:18-25).

Identify the three main scenes in this passage and briefly summarize each.

**18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." **19** The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. **21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. **22** Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man. **24** This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

The constant refrain of Genesis 1 is "And God saw that it was good," describing various stages of His creative work. God even concluded day six with the declaration that it was all "very good indeed" (1:31). But before the "very good" was accomplished, a "not good" was first identified (2:18). The man God created in His image was alone. Certainly, the Lord was with him, but God knew the man needed "a helper corresponding to him," someone like him who could be a complement to him, unlike a dog, cat, bird, or fish (2:19-20).

**LEADER NOTE:** The triune Creator God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is one God in three Persons in perfect unity and harmony. He has never been lonely nor lacking in perfect love. And from His nature of perfect community, God identified that it was not good for the man to be alone. Rather, the man should experience love and community with someone like him and yet distinct, in a way similar to the Trinity.

So God took a rib from the man and fashioned it into a woman, a companion who was like the man yet distinct and different, and she became his wife (2:21-24). For the work of tending the garden and multiplying to fill the earth, this woman would be the man's "helper" (2:18). We must not classify this role as slavish or subservient but as a role of honor and dignity, one that reflects God's image, for God Himself is called a "helper" in Exodus 18:4.

### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**MAN:** Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation.

What are some ways God's people should honor God for the good gift of gender as male and female?

The first man and woman God created set the pattern for a husband and wife to join together and become "one flesh" in a relationship of love, sacrifice, submission, and respect (Eph. 5:22-33). The fruit of marriage was expected to be a family with children and then a community obeying the Word of the Lord. As a result of Adam's sin (Gen. 3), we don't always see these intended outcomes, yet the Lord remains faithful, even through childlessness, unintentional singleness, and loneliness. Through the love and sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, God has raised up a community in the church to love and help one another. And in the church, we are united with one another and supremely with Christ.

**LEADER NOTE:** It was and is not good for human beings to be alone. But a marital relationship is not the only means God uses to address loneliness. Marriages often produce children who grow up and get married, leading to extended families. And then there are friends, especially those who share in our fundamental beliefs, like the believers in our church. Jesus had friends, and He laid down His life for His bride—the church.

### GOSPEL CONNECTION

The exclusive relationship between husband and wife pictures the plan of God for Christ and the church to be united as one through the perfect sacrificial death of Jesus to cleanse us of our sins and make us holy (Eph. 5:22-33).

How can your group help others who feel lonely and isolated?

## GROUP EXPERIENCE

### ARRIVAL

**ASK:** As people arrive for the group experience, begin by asking this ice-breaker question: What was a favorite creation of yours as a child, and why?

### CONTEXT

**SAY:** At the beginning of the Bible, in the beginning of time, God created people as male and female to be His image-bearers in the world. This is a unique gift for humanity, especially since God is a spirit and does not have a body like human beings. Part of being God's image-bearers means we have responsibilities in this world—two in particular that we'll discuss today—and both of these can be spoken of in terms of relationship.

**TRANSITION:** Today, we will learn what it means that God created us for relationships. With whom do we have our relationships? How are they to function? Based on your Bible study this past week, we are going to chart the ways we were created to relate to God and others.

### RECAP

**ASK:** What was one key idea that stood out to you as you prepared this week?

**SAY:** To prime the pump for today's study of God's creation of human beings in Genesis 2, you will remember that God formed the first man out of the ground and breathed life into him. Then the Lord placed this man in the garden of Eden, providing for him all the food he would ever need. But then God identified that the man needed something more—companionship—which resulted in the creation of the first woman from a rib the Lord took out of the man.

**TRANSITION:** From here, based on the Scriptures, let's chart out what it means to relate to God and others as we were originally created to do.



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**Key Concept:** God created humanity for relationships.

### GROUP ACTIVITY

**CHART:** Direct your group to page 7 in their Personal Study Guide (PSG), where they will find a table with the headings "GOD" and "OTHERS." Recreate this table on a board in your room so you can record the group's findings as they interact with the Scripture text.

Created for Relationships	
Based on Genesis 2:7,15-25, how should we relate to God? How should we relate to others?	
GOD	OTHERS

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 2:7,15-17.

**ANALYZE:** Call for the group participants to identify ways we ought to relate to God based on this passage. Encourage the participants to ground their responses in the text. Record the group's conclusions along with the appropriate verse number in the table on the board throughout this activity. Encourage participants to record these in their PSG as well.

**DISCUSS:** As necessary, prompt your group to discuss the following: What are some implications for the way we should relate to God based on the breath of life in verse 7? (*gratitude for our life*) Because we were made from the dirt in verse 7? (*humility*) Based on the mention of work in verse 15? (*faithfulness in our work to honor our Creator*) Based on the provision of food for the man in verse 16? (*remember our dependence upon God; thankfulness for His care*) Based on the presence of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in verse 17? (*faith-filled obedience to God's commands*)

**TRANSITION:** Briefly summarize the group's conclusions regarding our relationship with our Creator God.

## GROUP EXPERIENCE

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 2:18-25.

**ANALYZE:** Call for the group to identify ways we ought to relate to others based on this passage from Genesis 2, encouraging them to ground their responses in the text. For example: provide community for others (v. 18), honor the uniqueness and fundamental equality shared by all humanity (v. 23), honor the sanctity of marriage (vv. 24-25).

**SAY:** The primary human relationship in focus in this passage is that of marriage between man and woman, but that is not the sum total of our relationships with other human beings, which include children, family, and friends, to name a few. Some people do not get married, yet they were created by God not to be alone either. We all have a responsibility to contribute to community with others.

### DEBRIEF

**What insight did you learn from the input of others in this activity?**


**How does our relationship with God impact our relationships with others, and vice versa?**

### SUMMARIZE


Lead the group to review the key concept, inviting them to share ways today's group experience helped them better understand the relationships for which God created His image-bearers.

### HEAD, HEART, HANDS

Walk the group through the Head, Heart, Hands section in the PSG (p. 8). If running short on time, specifically highlight the **Head** section in this week's study, inviting volunteers to share their responses to the question in this section.

 **HEAD:** Some people read the first chapters of Genesis and dismiss them as meaningless. Some read them as an influential legend or myth. But Christians and the church should read these as true history that grounds some of our most foundational beliefs. We were created for relationships with God and others, and how we enter and maintain those relationships will depend on what we believe about the creation of humanity in the beginning.


**What are some ways your life should change if you believe in the Bible's account of the creation of humanity?**

 **HEART:** We've all experienced a sense of loneliness at times in our lives, and some have felt this more pronounced than others. So we can all testify to the truth of God's words that it is not good for human beings to be alone. But there are ways that we may intentionally isolate ourselves. In our sin, we can prefer the isolation of darkness. We may also fear the light of God and

## Key Concept: God created humanity for relationships.

fellowship with others for the potential shame and guilt we may feel because of our sin. Yet God sent Jesus and raised up His church for a community of believers to find forgiveness, grace, and the joy of fellowship together.

**What in your life leads to isolation? How can the community of Jesus in the church help you to resist temptation? To enjoy fellowship?**

 **HANDS:** God created human beings in His image to reflect His character in the world. We do this in part through our relationships and our work. God Himself set the precedent for both of these, being the triune God in perfect unity who did good work throughout the days of creation. How we work and how we relate should honor our Creator; these also become opportunities to point wayward human beings to our good God and to His Son who saves and restores us to His image.

**How will you reflect God's image in your work and relationships with others this week?**

### NEXT STEPS

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this week's session.

- Read Psalm 148, noticing how every aspect of God's creation should praise their Creator. Pray through Psalm 148 focusing on praising God for His work of creation.
- Reflect on your relationships and work to see how they align with God's design for humanity.
- Share with a friend how the gospel helps us fulfill our purpose as God's created image-bearers.

Invite volunteers to share praises for answered prayer in the past week and prayer needs for this week. Encourage them to record these in the space on page 8 in their PSG so they can pray for others throughout the week.

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

**CLOSE:** Pray with your group through Psalm 148:7-14 as you close.