

III. LIFE IN A "VERY GOOD" WORLD (GENESIS 2).

When God completed His creative activity on the sixth day, He concluded that what He had made was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). Everything was made exactly the way God intended with no mess ups or mistakes. The crowning point of His creation was man because God created Adam and Eve in His image bearing His likeness (Gen. 1:26-27).

Adam originally resided in the Garden, which God planted in the land of Eden. There, he enjoyed a perfect relationship with God. The Scripture indicates that Adam was brought to the garden to tend it and work the ground (Gen. 2:5, 15). God also gave him the responsibility to name all the animals of creation (Gen. 2:19-20). One by one, the animals were brought to Adam and the man determined what they would be called.

God also created a partner for Adam in Eve. As each animal was brought to Adam to be named, it became patently clear that there was no suitable counterpart for him. God thus caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, and taking one of Adam's ribs, made the first woman.

1. How does the Bible describe the creation of Adam (Gen. 2:7)? In what ways is this creation unique in light of Genesis 1?

2. Read Genesis 2:8-9. Notice that God planted the Garden of Eden and brought Adam to it. What does this demonstrate about God's relationship with Adam?

3. Some geographical indicators are given in Genesis 2:10-14 about the location of the Garden of Eden, but why is it futile to try and guess its exact location today (cf. Gen. 3:17-19; 6:17)?

4. What were Adam's responsibilities in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15, 16-17, 19-20)? Why do you think it is significant that the Lord commanded Adam and determined Adam's responsibilities?

John Sailhamer: "The inference of God's commands in 2:16-17 is that only God knows what is good (*tob*) for humanity and only God knows what is not good (*ra*) for them. To enjoy the 'good,' humankind must trust God and obey him. If they disobey, they will be left to decide for themselves what is good (*tob*) and what is not good (*ra*). While to our modern age such a prospect may seem desirable, to the author of Genesis it is the worst fate that could have befallen humankind, for only God knows what is good (*tob*) for humanity."[[1]](#footnote-1)

5. Read Genesis 2:16-17. What was the content of God's command to Adam?

One specific way God demonstrated His knowledge of what is good and not good was by providing a helper for Adam (Gen 2:18-25). God's conclusion was that it was not good for man to be alone. This was not in response to Adam's loneliness. Since sin had not yet entered the world, Adam was perfectly content and satisfied in his relationship with the Lord God. For all Adam knew, he was simply obeying God's instructions to name the animals. God determined that Adam would be better off with a wife for a helper, so God instituted and designed marriage (Gen. 2:24).

When God determined that it was not good for man to be alone, this is not pointing out a mistake in God's creation plan. It was not that God created everything, saw something wrong, and fixed it. God's perfect plan always involved creating man as male and female (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). Genesis 2 simply offers a more detailed account about the creation of man specifically.

There are a couple reasons given for the way God created Adam and Eve. Genesis 2:19-20 help demonstrate that the woman served as a counterpart to man in a way that no other animal on earth could. As she was taken out of man, Adam recognized her as bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh (Gen. 2:23). As his partner, she would help him in his responsibilities to obey God, work the land, and bear children.

The Apostle Paul would also later explain that God was deliberate in creating Adam first. In the order of creation, God established the foundation for the roles of men and women (1 Tim. 2:13). One of the reasons Paul did not permit women to teach or exercise authority over men in the context of public worship was because God had established a pattern of headship and submission between men and women. By pointing to the order of creation, Paul makes it clear that this was part of God's perfect plan for men and women from even before their fall into sin. Sin did not make women subordinate to men. Even though God created man and woman equally as His image bearers (Gen. 1:26-27), He also established an order in creation determining how His created beings ought to function (cf. 1 Cor. 14:33).

**"More Love to Thee"**

More love to Thee, O Christ, More love to Thee!

Hear Thou the prayer I make, On bended knee;

This is my earnest plea: More love, O Christ to Thee,

More love to Thee, More love to Thee!

Once earthly joy I craved, Sought peace and rest;

Now Thee alone I seek, Give what is best;

This all my prayer shall be: Move love, O Christ to Thee,

More love to Thee, More love to Thee!

Then shall my latest breath Whisper Thy praise;

This be the parting cry My heart shall raise;

This still my prayer shall be: More love, O Christ to Thee,

More love to Thee, More love to Thee!

Thoughts for Application:

1. In Genesis 1:26-27, God created man and woman in His image. This is the greatest privilege for man recorded in the creation account. At the same time, in Genesis 2, God formed man from the dust of the ground making it clear that man is a created being and not divine. What reflections do you take away from these truths about how you ought to view yourself?

2. In Genesis 2, God demonstrates His understanding of what is good and not good by providing a helper for Adam. This was not in response to a complaint from Adam or Adam's feeling of loneliness. In other words, it has more to do with God's estimation of things than their circumstances. How does this help you in your understanding of what is good and not good in your life?

3. Even before Adam and Eve fell into sin, God commanded them so that they could understand what they were supposed to do and not do. In what ways similarly are you dependent on the commands of God?

4. How would you respond to someone who argues that headship and submission between men and women is only brought about by the fall of man into sin?

5. How does this study of Genesis 2 cause you to love God more and appreciate what He has done for you?

1. John Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., vol. 1, ed. by Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)