

READ

Genesis 2:4-25

REFLECT

Genesis 2 presents readers with a second account of creation. You may think, “What?! Two different stories of creation? I thought it was just one story told two ways!” But that isn’t quite right – notice the order of creation in this passage contrasted with the previous chapter. In chapter two we’re told that the first man was created before all the animals and plants, but that doesn’t fit with the order of Genesis 1. It isn’t because the author(s) of Genesis wanted to be contradictory. Rather, it’s to focus on different aspects of how we might understand our creator. The first story showed God as all-powerful and very orderly – God said it and it happened. This story shows God intimately engaged and interacting with creation. These are two aspects of who God is that points to a bigger whole – a whole we’ll never be able to fully understand, but certainly we should seek to view God as broadly as possible.

In the Garden of Eden God gets down into the dirt to create. We’re told that humanity is made directly from the dirt – but it wasn’t just dirt, we were formed from the richest, most fertile topsoil. Then God blew into our lungs, giving us life. It’s a beautiful image that shows the depth of love God has for us. When you’re that intimately involved in the creation of something, it’s impossible to not love it, and the same is true for God and us. God loved this first man so much that God didn’t want him to be alone, so God created animals to be its partner. They weren’t quite right – God really want the perfect fit – so God created another person, this time a woman, from the man. Since they were made from the same stuff, they were a perfect fit. God gave these two the garden of Eden to live in so that they could farm the land and be filled with all they’d ever need. Notice how interconnected everything is – humanity is made from the soil, and humanity uses the soil to farm and enjoy the fruits of God’s creation; from the first man God created the first woman; from God’s own mouth our lungs were filled with air. We’re intertwined with the earth. We’re intertwined with one another. God is intertwined with us.

REACT

- How do you view God – as the all-powerful, yet distant, creator who with just voice created the world and all that is in it, or the intimate creator who got down on hands and knees to form us from soil and blow life's breath into our lungs? How else might you view God as creative force for all that was and is and is to come? Can you begin to view God as all of these and more?
- When you create something – a garden, a meal, a painting, or whatever – how do you feel about it?
- Does our interconnectedness to the earth change the way you view how we should treat the planet we call home?

RESPOND

Create: Do something creative – bake a loaf of bread, plant flowers in a window box, make a greeting card, or anything that uses a gift you have to make something new. In the act of creating know that you are connected to the one who created you. God created us in love – use your creation to share your love with someone else.