

READ

Genesis 1:1 – 2:3

REFLECT

God's creation of all things is spectacular – God simply spoke everything we know of into existence. At first everything was in a kind of chaos, there was no shape to anything and it was very dark, so God brought order into the chaos. It was an orderly process, too: on the first day God brought light into existence, on the second day God created the sky, on the third day God separated sea from the dry land and then filled the earth with every kind of plant. Then God created the moon and stars, and thus seasons. Then God began to fill the earth with life, creating animals flying in the sky and swimming in the ocean. The sixth day began with the creation of animals to fill the land and then God decided to make humankind, and in God's image, no less. It was because humanity was made in God's image that we'd be charged with ruling over the whole earth and every life on the earth. God blessed humanity, commanding us to fill the earth and take charge of God's creation, giving us plant life to eat as our nourishment and the grasses as the animals' food. After each day of creation God proclaimed it good, but after the sixth it wasn't just good, it was *supremely* good. And then God rested, marking the seventh day holy.

When our lives get hectic and overwhelming, when we feel lost and alone, when it doesn't seem like we have any control over anything in our lives – we can remember the order into which God brought about life. Into what was a void, without shape or color or life, God brought order, light, and life. It was thoughtfully and slowly planned out; certainly God could have done it all in an instant, but God chose to spend each day on a single task and to bask in that work and the victory found in each day. God added to the work of creation every day, making something better and better until, finally, it was finished. But God didn't get right back to work, God took time to rest. These are patterns for success that are too often ignored in our own lives. We see chaos and we become chaotic trying to fix it. We see darkness and we become gloomy and demoralized. But God has shown us another way – approach disorder with order, focus on one task at a time, enjoy the small victories, and take time to rest. This pattern makes even the biggest mess much more

manageable, and we know we can do it because God created us to be able to manage it – we’re made in the image of the one who created everything!

REACT

- Where is the chaos in your life?
- How can the order and method God used to create life from chaos be a blueprint for your own ordering of chaos?
- How can you encourage celebrating the small victories?
- When do you allow yourself rest so that you can build the energy to keep moving forward?
- How do you recognize the image of God in yourself?

RESPOND

Pray: Creator God – you not only brought order into existence when there was only chaos, you have also given us life and the chance to live abundantly through your order. When we feel overwhelmed by the chaos of the world around us or the chaos of our own making, help us to recognize your fingerprints in our own lives so that we, too, can bring order. May your Spirit sweep over us and guide us. Help us to pause, take inventory over what we face, and take small steps to accomplish big goals, celebrating each small victory along the way. And help us do it through the same love you created us so that we may have true rest. Amen.