

# ONE

## **How it all began**

Genesis 1:26-27 (*The Message*):

*God spoke:*

*'Let us make human beings in our image,  
make them reflecting our nature . . .'*

*God created human beings; he created them godlike,  
Reflecting God's nature.  
He created them male and female.*

### **Creation**

If we want to discover God's plan for humanity, we must look at creation. Here we immediately see that God created human beings very different from the other creatures. The creation of animals looks somewhat of a common or impersonal nature. The creation of man, however, has very personal and distinct characteristics. Moreover, there is something very important that distinguishes man from everything else in creation: the ability to live in *intimacy* with God.

God created man with the intention of them being the crown of His creation. Not simply as a created being separate from Himself, but in true intimacy: He wants to be one with man. He wants to share His life with man, and He desires to enjoy the Fatherhood He has for His children to the fullest.

Genesis 2:7:

*Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

## **The image of God**

Where was Eve when God created humankind? He created Adam, the human, containing both male *and* female. Eve was, as it were, still hidden in Adam. For this reason, it is important to see that *together* they formed the image of God. The man and the woman together form the image of God.

Genesis 1:27-28:

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'*

Genesis 2:15-18:

*The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.' The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'*

It is wonderful that here we first see a perfect unity displaying the image of God. Mankind, male *and* female in

complete unity. Created in the image of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, all three forming a perfect union. We then see that He takes the woman, as it were, out of the man, and says: 'Look, mankind first existing in complete oneness, has now become two individuals, man and woman'. And the beautiful thing is that now, through love, they can become one again, after the image of their Maker.

By the way, did you know that the Hebrew language has characters that at the same time also represent numbers? When you add up the numeric value of the text 'the Lord our God, the Lord is one' (Deuteronomy 6:4), you get the number 111. This is a beautiful depiction of the Trinity.

## **Be fruitful and increase in number**

Have you ever considered why God only created Adam and Eve this way? Why didn't He create all human beings in the same manner? He could create ten every week, or even 100. But no, He gave mankind the ability to procreate. Why? I think His reason was that He didn't want to keep us from the wonderful experience of parenthood. What an incredible moment it is, when you bring a son or daughter into the world and you realise that part of yourself is now being represented in a new creation, one that you can cherish and brings you love! This is the same experience the Father had when he created Adam and Eve, His children. He wants to share this with us.

## **The Fall**

Genesis 2:21-23:

*So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then*

*the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called "woman", for she was taken out of man.'*

Now Eve is walking through the garden and suddenly she hears a voice speaking to her (Genesis 3:1-7). Looking up she sees a snake in the trees. This snake says to her: 'God probably told you that you're not allowed to eat from the fruit of the trees, didn't He?' 'No', says Eve. 'He didn't say that at all. We can eat of every fruit of the trees. However, what a coincidence, there is one exception, and that's the tree you're in; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.'

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**God probably told you that you're not allowed to eat from the fruit of the trees, didn't He?**

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'Well, I know why you're not allowed to eat from this tree because it will make you like God!' answers the snake. At this point, Eve could have easily said: 'Now, listen here, we are in Genesis 3, but if you come back with me to Genesis 1, you will see clearly that God created mankind in His image and likeness. I don't have to do anything to become like God, I already am!'

How can it be that the snake was able to tempt Eve with these words? What does this temptation consist of? It is utterly important that you understand this, because the snake tried the very same thing on Jesus and he is still trying to tempt us today in this same way. His only goal is to disrupt the unity between God the Father and His creation; His children. Of course, Satan knows that God created man 'in his own image', but what he

in essence is saying to Eve is this: 'You can become like God without being dependent on Him!'

Independence is the root of all sin. It has become deeply ingrained in our entire existence. Many people find it difficult to desire dependency. This is understandable. All of us have had bad experiences when it comes to trusting and being dependent on other people. That's why it is important to understand that there is an unhealthy and a healthy type of dependence. With unhealthy dependence, the other person is trying to benefit from the relationship at your cost. Control and manipulation often play a part in this. With healthy dependence, your safety, development and well-being are central. In your dependence upon God the Father, He makes it possible for you to enter the fullness of your destiny.

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**God the Father creates Adam and Eve out of an intense desire to share His love.**

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## **Sonship**

We now see the following happen to Adam and Eve: living in a secure environment, safe in the presence and intimacy of God the Father, they make the decision to walk away from this place. Let's pause for a moment and take a look at what's really happening here. God the *Father* creates Adam and Eve out of an intense desire to share His love. His intention is that it doesn't stop with these two children, but that they will multiply. God's plan is that He will be a Father to all. He will care for them. In unity with Him, they will come into the fullness of their destiny which is kept for them.

Adam is not merely a creature of God, he receives sonship! I believe this is one of the most important truths we are

receiving revelation on today. Our salvation has been the central theme for a long time. We give our lives to Jesus; our sins are forgiven and we move from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. You become a child of God. Next, we try to grow as Christians through good biblical teaching and by being involved with a church or community.

But when God created Adam, He didn't start with teaching or work. He started with intimacy, with building a relationship. God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils and he opened his eyes for the first time. Can you imagine? This is no routine job for God the Father, He has reached the final crescendo, 'The Grand Finale', the crown of His creation . . . mankind! From the dust He has formed him, and there he lies, motionless, until He breathes the breath of life into Adam's nostrils. Then God holds His breath and waits until Adam opens his eyes. Everything in God rejoices; He is delighted, proud, happy. His heart almost bursts of love and compassion.

And Adam? From the moment he opens his eyes, he looks straight into the eyes of the Father. In these eyes, he sees the love of a Father who loves him with everything that is in Him. And he drinks it in; he is not only a child of God, here he receives sonship, completely!

## **The sixth day**

Have you ever considered the order in which God created the world? I once heard a man – Paul Nedoszytko from Bath – speak on this. It was only at the end of creation, the sixth day, that God created man. Why not the first day, so that man would have been involved with everything that God does? But no, God decides to create man on the sixth day and after this comes the seventh day, the day of rest.

Does God need this day because He is tired and exhausted? I can't imagine that. Did He do it, then, for man? Man hadn't done anything yet, for him it is only the first day after his creation. Man starts off with a day of rest!

This way God ensures that man doesn't associate Him primarily with work. On the day of rest, the Father focuses on relationship and intimacy with His children.

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**Man starts  
off with a  
day of rest!**

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### **Conversion and then, moving forward . . .**

You can draw a comparison between the moment we are converted and the moment Adam was created. He is a child of God from the moment he is created, but he only receives the identity of sonship through experiencing the intimacy and love of the Father, by drinking it in.

When we come to Jesus and kneel at His feet, we receive the forgiveness of sins through the finished work of the cross. We become a new creation. We are then born again of the Spirit. Many Christians believe that with this experience they have reached their final destination. This is not true. What in fact has happened, is that now we have been given *the ability* to reach our destination!

John 10:9:

*I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.  
They will come in and go out, and find pasture.*

It's important to know that when you get born again, it happens more or less automatically. Just like a natural birth, which doesn't come about by any effort of the baby. In like manner, we also receive new life by being born again.

But this is not our destination. Jesus says: 'I am the gate.' We can adore the gate, and tell others how wonderful the gate is. We can even promise to never leave the gate. But a gate is something you travel through, it gives you access to something you otherwise would never be able to reach! And Jesus continues.

John 14:6:

*Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**'*

This tells us that there are different stages. First, we hear the gospel. It tells us of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Romans 10:14:

*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

Then comes believing . . .

Ephesians 2:8:

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, **it is the gift of God** . . .*

This is how we find Jesus who gives us new life. But he gives it with a purpose.

John 3:5-6:

*Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and*



*the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, **but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.***

Because we are now born of the Spirit, it is once again possible for us to come into relationship with God the Father, He who is also Spirit.

John 4:24:

***God is spirit**, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.*

Now we have arrived at our true destination: the arms of the Father, who welcomes us gladly. Welcome home!

Matthew 10:39:

*Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.*

### **Time to reflect:**

Let's take some time to reflect on our faith journey and see if we recognise the moment we came home to the Father. Are you still at the gate? Why don't you step on through? Jesus also says He is 'the way' (John 14:6). He loves to journey with you and to introduce you to His Father.

### **To listen:**

John Nuttall, 'Welcome Home'

### **Additional reading:**

Barry Adams, 'Father's Love Letter', <http://www.fathersloveletter.com/>

Jack Winter, *The Homecoming* (Edmonds, WA: YWAM Publishing, 1999)

**Space for notes/reflections:**