

God's Masterpieces
Twenty Things About God's Creation of Human
Beings in Genesis 1 and 2 that Make People Special

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On that sixth day when God created the first man and the first woman, many significant things happened. This list refers to those things the Lord did in relation to creating Adam and Eve, even though in some instances God did similar things with regard to other members of the created order. The point is that we do well to note those things He did in bringing the first man and woman into existence.

1. God didn't bring the man into being in exactly the same way He moved to create the other elements and creatures He had made. He first deliberated within the Godhead about what He was going to do. We assume these all-important words were spoken within the Godhead, among the members of the Trinity. Furthermore, it is reasonable to believe that the Father is speaking to the Son and the Holy Spirit: "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (1:26).
2. God made man "in His image" and "according to His likeness" (1:26). The Latin term for "image of God" is *imago Dei*.
3. God gave "them" — male and female human beings — "dominion" or authority "over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (1:26). This indicates both the man and woman both had responsibilities to fulfill and work to accomplish.
4. God created both male and female human beings, and He did so separately (see 1:27; 2:7,21-22).
5. "God blessed them" (1:28).
6. God instructed them to "[b]e fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth (1:28)." Charles Colson and Nancey Pearcey call this the "cultural commission" and boldly declare it "is inseparable from the great commission" [Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1999), 295.]
7. God offered the two sustenance and directed them regarding the food that would be theirs (see 1:29).
8. After creating the man and the woman, God saw all that He had made, and declared it to be "very good" (1:31). Background: During the first day of the six days of creation, God created light. Genesis 1:4 reports God's assessment of His work: "And God saw the light, that it was good." A similar phrase appears six more times in Genesis 1, occurring
 - on day 3 and referring to the dry land and the seas (see 1:10),
 - on day 3 and referring to plant life (see 1:12),
 - on day 4 and referring to the heavenly bodies of light and their rule over the day and night (see 1:18),
 - on day 5 and referring to sea creatures and birds (see 1:21),
 - on day 6 and referring to land animals (see 1:25), and finally

- on day 6 at the end of God’s creative work, assessing all that God had created (see 1:31). In this last statement of evaluation, the Hebrew word for *very* is added: “God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.”
9. Genesis 2:5 tells us that “the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground.” Here we see an indication of the productive work God would assign the man. Note carefully that God assigned work *before the fall*. In verse 15 we see God’s placing the man in the garden “to tend and keep it.”
 10. God didn’t just “speak” the man into existence as He had other items in His creation but He “formed man of the dust of the ground, and *breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*; and *man became a living being*” (2:7, emphasis added).
 11. In Genesis 2:16-17 we see God’s placing the man in the position of eventually having to make a moral choice, and a choice that would reveal his ultimate allegiance: ¹⁶“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”
 12. God stated explicitly that it was “not good that man should be alone” and that He would “make him a helper comparable to him” (2:18).
 13. God not only gave Adam constructive work to do when He had him name the animals; He also gave him an experiential lesson that taught him no existing creature could serve as “a helper comparable to him” (2:20). Man (including both men and women, of course) is capable of learning, reasoning, and engaging in intellectual creativity.
 14. The creation of the woman was special: God put Adam to sleep, took one of his ribs, and “made [it] into a woman, and He brought her to the man” (2:21-22).
 15. Interestingly, a different word is used to refer to God’s creating the man (“the Lord God formed (<https://bit.ly/3vNcNfQ>) man of the dust of the ground” [2:7]) and His creating the woman (“the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made (<https://bit.ly/3KuS0l9>) into a woman” [2:22]). We might say that God formed the man, or created him, as a potter would fashion a clay pot on a wheel; but He “built” or constructed the woman. Apparently creating the woman involved divine planning and deliberation not employed in His creating the man.
 16. Adam received the woman as a partner comparable to him, as one “taken out of” him (v. 23). Eve was like Adam in that she was human, but she was different from him in that she was a woman and he was a man.
 17. Marriage, which is unique to the human family, is designed by God and occurs between one man and one woman (see v. 24).
 18. These are the elements of marriage according to Genesis 2:24: 1) a man’s leaving his father and mother, 2) a man’s being joined to his wife, and 3) the union of the man and his wife into a “one flesh” relationship. This includes but is not limited to the reproduction of children and the formation of a multi-generational family.
 19. While parents and their children are families, a husband and his wife by themselves are a family as well. Like marriage, families are unique to human beings.
 20. The nakedness of the man and the woman in Genesis 2:25 related to their union but also to their own relationship with God, which was still intact and unhindered before the fall. In other words, the man and the woman didn’t just have a special, intimate relationship between themselves, but each had an intimate relationship with God.