



READ: Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7 (ESV)

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

...then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

ENTER THE STORY:

Every great story has a beginning that grabs your attention and stirs up your excitement for what is to come! The Christmas story has a beginning like that...and it starts *right here in Genesis*. Out of the dark, empty nothingness – God brings everything into existence by the commanding word of his mouth. For six days he filled the world with everything it would need to grow and thrive and display his glory, and yet he was not done. It's almost like he saved the best for last because when God created man, he didn't speak him into existence, he knelt down and formed him from the dust of the earth – crafting him together with a personal touch. But this dirt-man was not yet alive. In order for that to happen, God needed to breathe into him the breath of life. In the same way that God promised to bring life from a dead stump, in Genesis, he brought life from dust.

The truth is, when God created humans, he had another human in mind – his Son, Jesus. For though Jesus exists as the eternal God, the alpha and the omega, the Christmas story will require him to leave his glorious position in heaven and come to earth to be the perfect human. He will not be merely be made, "in the image of God," like us though, because he **IS** the image of God. *Colossians 1:15* says, "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation." Our beginning was always meant to point forward to his earthly beginning...when Jesus, the very Word of God, is made into flesh and dwells among us (*John 1:1, 14*).

When that fullness of time comes, we will again see God bring light out of darkness as he commands a star to shine so bright in the sky, the nations will know that "The Light of the World" has arrived.

PRAY: Jesus, we are grateful that you are the image of the invisible God, the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his nature. We are thankful that through the Holy Spirit, we can be united to you. We pray that you would shape us to look more and more like you each day. Amen.