



What Does it Mean to Be Human

Genesis 1:26-28
Genesis 2:4b-24

W. DENNIS TUCKER, JR.

TRUETT SEMINARY

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Being Human; Being the Image of God

► Creation with a Purpose

And God said,

"Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness
so that they might rule over (radah) . . ."

Being Human; Being the Image of God

Gen 1:27

So God created (*bara*) humankind in his **image**,
in the **image** of God he created (*bara*) them
male and female he created (*bara*) them.

bara “create” (see Gen 1:1)

ṣelem “image, likeness,

figurine (Ezek 16:17), statue (2 Kgs 11:18)”

Genesis 2–

A “Grounded” Creation Story

► Gen 1:1

In the beginning, God (Elohim) created (*bara*) the heavens and the **earth**.

► Gen 2:4b

In the beginning, the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) formed/made (*'sa*) the **earth** and the heavens.

The Need for Divine and Human Participation in Creation

2:4b-5

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground. . .

Humans as Complex Creatures

► 2:7a

Then the LORD God formed man (*ha'adam*)
from the dust of the ground (*ha'adamah*) . . .

“No matter how urban our life, our bodies live by
farming; we come from the earth and we return to
it, and so we live in agriculture as we live in the
flesh.”
--Wendell Berry

Humans as Complex Creatures

► 2:7b

“... and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.”

The Garden as Home for Humans

- ▶ Gen 2:10-14
- ▶ Pishon and Gihon
--Unknown
- ▶ Tigris and Euphrates
--Known



The Garden as Home for Humans

- ▶ 'eden

- ▶ Ugaritic-- 'eden = “plain”

- ▶ Hebrew-- 'eden = “delight/pleasure”

Delighting in the Human Vocation

- ▶ NRSV: “The LORD God took the man and placed (nuach) him in the Garden of Eden to till it ('abad) and keep (shamar) it”
- ▶ nuach- “rest”
- ▶ 'abad
- ▶ shamar

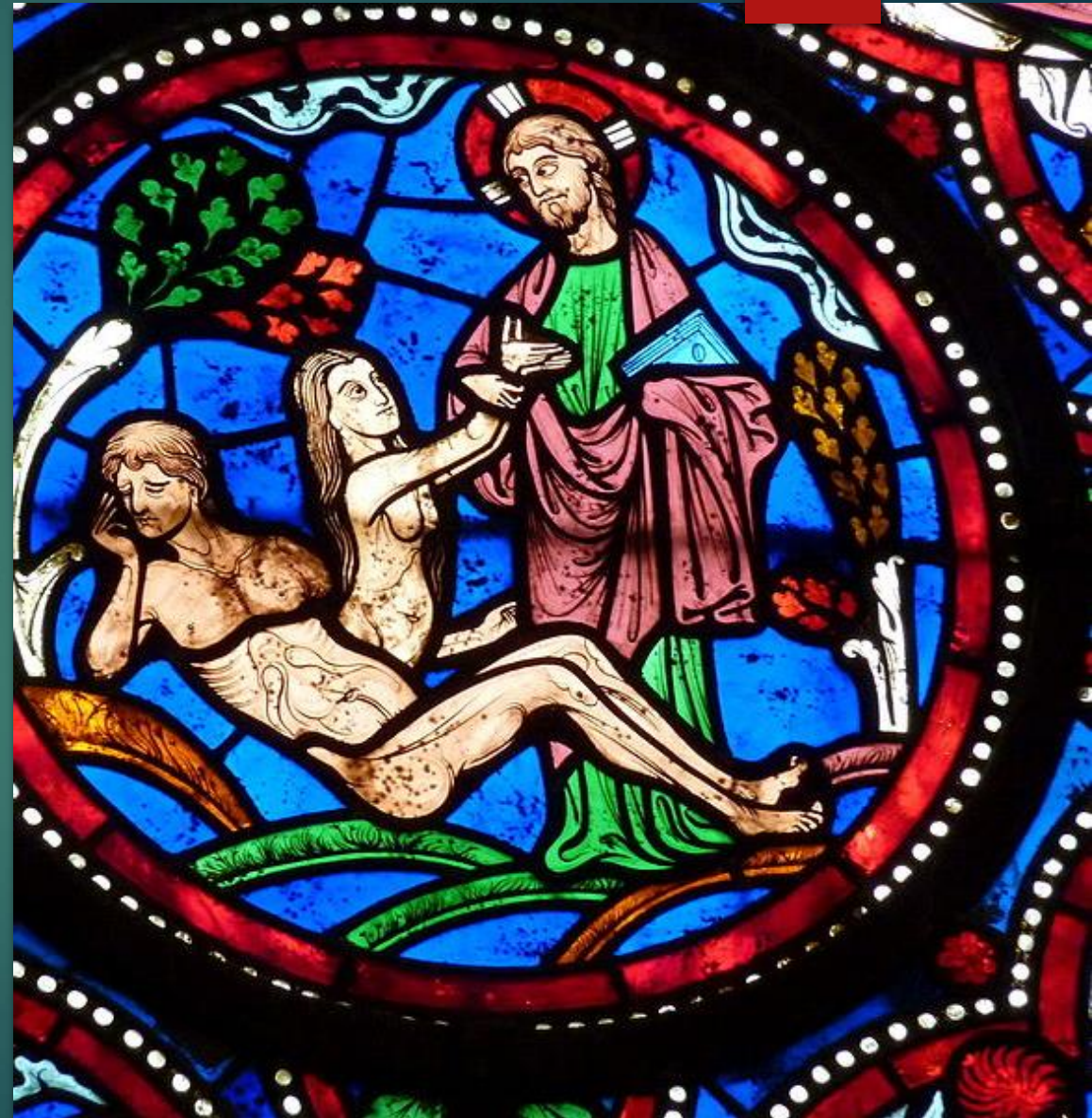
Divine Freedom and Human Agency

Two Trees . . . Two Choices



Humans are Intended for Community

- ▶ 2: 18 “not good”
- ▶ Man needs a 'ezer , ≠ “helper,” but “companion”
 - not subordination but equal/counterpart
 - psalms frequently invoke Yahweh as 'ezer , “helper”
- ▶ *kanegdo*- ≠ “partner” but “one like him”



Humans are Intended for Community

Play on words in verse 23

“Of this one, it will be said, ‘Women,’
because from man this one was taken”

Woman -- *'ishah*

Man – *'ish*

Conclusion: What Does it Mean to Be Human

1. We are called to live as God's image in the world.

Q—How can you live as God's representative in the world this week?

2. We are called to connected to creation and to God.

Q—Even as a creature of the dust, how can we join God in the care of his creation?

3. We are called to live in the delight of God's creation.

Q---How might we delight in our work as humans this coming week?

4. We are called to live within the boundaries of our existence.

Q—Am I okay not being the god of my life?

5. We are created to live in community.

Q—How might I embrace my spouse as one I need to be human?

Q--How might I embrace my community of faith as one I need to be human?