

## FOUNDATION FOR BEGINNING

Being born in the 50's allows me to have travelled through many a thought, many a journey, and a growing faith. We are given two creation stories in Genesis (1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-8). The first story is the newer of the two written around 500 BCE, the second almost a hundred years earlier.

The first chapter and story is the one which I grew up with, and is the source of the "*it's all about us*" theology that we particularly hear from those who believe we are not in an environmental crisis. I am not sure when I began to journey away from that, but I spent a fair bit of my life in natural surroundings. It is in that second creation story where it shows the interdependence of one up the other, nature and human. I don't want to get so caught up in discussions about how we should interpret Genesis that we miss the revealing glory of God. But the second story is the beginning of a much larger vision of the covenant relationship that we humans have with God.

God creates one thing/category in a time period. When we think about God taking the time to create something, it shows care and intentionality. We read about amazing things being made out of nothingness. It allows me to imagine that in every interval of time something amazing is created, and God declares it good.

In the first story, on the last day, humankind is created, and it is very good. God took his time creating a beautiful world for human to have dominion over. And thus despite all the incredible things, we as human are the pinnacle of creation. But what responsibility does humankind have. In my early days it was that these things were to be used, for us: Trees for houses, oil for cars, etc. exploitation would be the word.

Now, I realize that I (we) have been made in the image of God not to have dominion, but to watch over, cry over and safeguard creation. Genesis 2:15 (*The LORD God took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to farm it and to take care of it. CEB*) firmly places the responsibility in our hands. It is intended to be seen as a handmade gift for us from the love of God, each and every ingredient added with that love. God is love itself. Our existence hinges on that love. That calls us to the responsibility to do what we can to preserve all aspects of our

earth. *“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won’t perish but will have eternal life. (John 3:16 CEB)* Please notice the word is world not people. The biblical imperative is for stewardship on behalf of God’s creation no matter what the condition of creation. Christian environmental stewardship is not crisis management but a way of life. God’s call to serve and keep the garden is our calling whether it is our vegetable garden or the whole of creation, and no matter if it is being degraded, staying the same, or improving. We do not need all the data, but we must be dedicated to imaging God’s love for the world in our lives and landscapes.

I believe there is a spiritual yearning to our environment. People are looking for the way, the truth, the life, and the living water that comes as an expression of God’s love. I, for one, am wrestling with the issues about what creation reveals about God. My response to my own, my country’s and my world’s destruction of creation will be a testimony to my faith journey. As with all parts of that journey it is action that speaks loudest.

*Scripture references from the Common English Bible ©2011*