2009-07-15

It Is Not Good That Man Should Be Alone: What Adam and Eve Can Teach Us About Relationships in Learning Communities

Julene Bassett
Brigham Young University - Provo

IT IS NOT GOOD THAT MAN SHOULD BE ALONE: WHAT ADAM AND EVE CAN TEACH US ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS IN LEARNING COMMUNITIES

by

Julene Bassett

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Instructional Psychology & Technology

Brigham Young University

August 2009

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a dissertation submitted by

Julene Bassett

This dissertation has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

Date	Stephen C. Yanchar, Chair
Date	James E. Faulconer
Date	David A. Wiley
Date	A. LeGrand Richards
Date	Edwin E. Gantt

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the dissertation of Julene Bassett in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

Date

Stephen C. Yanchar

Chair, Graduate Committee

Accepted for the Department

Andrew S. Gibbons

Department Chair

Accepted for the College

K. Richard Young

Dean, David O. McKay School of Education

ABSTRACT

IT IS NOT GOOD THAT MAN SHOULD BE ALONE: WHAT ADAM AND EVE CAN TEACH US ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS IN LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Julene Bassett

Department of Instructional Psychology & Technology

Doctor of Philosophy

Human existence (or be-ing) is profoundly relational. Yet educational environments often assume that learning happens individually. Though many educators are trying to rectify this problem by introducing community into the learning process, these efforts are too often simply overlaid onto a system that works through competition and rewards individual achievement. Therefore, an alternative perspective for who we are as humans and how we should be together is needed. In this dissertation, I examine what it means to be fundamentally related and show how such an understanding might impact learning.

We often think of "community" as a place, but I also use it to embody an alternative understanding of human be-ing: how we are and should be related and the process by which we can learn to embrace our ethical responsibilities. This second way

of understanding community addresses a mode of be-ing that describes how we should come together: with (or "com") unity.

I use religious narratives to explore what a non-modern understanding of relational be-ing might mean for education. Looking at community in a religious context is helpful because it offers a different framework for understanding human be-ing. Using three stories found in Genesis—(a) the Creation of the world including the introduction of Adam and Eve, (b) their Fall, and (c) their Expulsion from Eden—I argue that they reveal the importance of three aspects of community: (a) *diversity*, a deep appreciation for our and others' enduring individuality, (b) *unity*, a willingness to be responsible both to and for others in a particular, ethical way, and (c) *work*, the catalyst for coming together and making relationships purposeful.

Understanding how the aspects of diversity, unity, and work strengthen supportive relationships is an important way to understand community, including learning communities. It suggests that the purpose of education should be to help learners realize their moral responsibilities to others and teach them how to respond to that obligation. Moral learning communities can generate experiences that speak more authentically to human be-ing. They enhance education so that learning becomes not only more meaningful but truly life-changing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The people I wish to acknowledge here are the living proof in my life of the power of supportive relationships and the learning that takes place within them. For me, this is truly the most important section of this dissertation—and the most validating example of the theory I espouse. No one completes this kind of project without help from others. My case, if anything, could serve as the ultimate proof of that statement. However inadequately, I wish here to acknowledge my gratitude to several people. Each knows all that he or she has offered and the work they have contributed in laboring with me to finish this dissertation. I love the ideas I have written about. I thank each for helping me find a way to talk about them and for helping me grow in my learning. I am grateful to share what I have learned with others and hope such opportunities may continue for a long time to come.

First I would like to thank my committee members for their assistance and support in refining both my thinking and writing. Some became my teachers through this project; others have significantly shaped the way I think about learning in relationship through prolonged association. All have been important. I need especially to thank James Faulconer who taught me about community through the Adam and Eve stories in the first year of my graduate program. He agreed to help me when this project was a master's thesis as long as I finished "soon because I'm going to Europe next year and can't come back for your defense." He's been to Europe and back several times since, but always agreed to stay on my committee. His thoughtful scholarship has taught me to look more carefully at both these ideas and scripture in general; I no longer read either to "make

sure it said what it said the last time I read it." Now I almost always find something new. I'm grateful for that lesson. Jim has been a true mentor and a friend and has profoundly shaped my graduate school experience. Also, a special thanks to Steve Yanchar who stepped in this last year, despite the additional work and personal inconvenience, to allow me to finish writing this particular dissertation even though the topic had been chosen under a different committee chairman.

Thanks, of course, must go to my wonderful friends who have supported me through many long years of conversations in classes, at lunches and dinners, in laughter and tears. If they were sick of my obsession with these ideas, they never let on. Instead they encouraged me, listened thoughtfully, and challenged me to think more deeply about the theory I was trying to refine. David Wiley (who has worn many relationship hats and been wonderfully helpful in each one), Delys Snyder, Courtney Peck, Kennon Smith, Joanne Bentley, Trav Johnson, Doreen Wyman, Becky Rocque, Jo Ann Larsen, Lauri Haddock, Sheri Long, Liz Thomas, Liz Riddle, and Joe Parry have all been especially helpful as I struggled to finish. Most have read multiple drafts and offered great insight and suggestions. I can't express enough gratitude for their willingness to be in community with me, to labor and suffer for my sake. Hopefully there has been joy as well. Special thanks must go to Jane Birch who personally devoted so much time, talent, and resources to helping me bring this project to a successful close. Without her "speed-of-light" abilities and her insistence that we were "having fun," this document would not exist. Few people are willing to literally put their life on hold to help another in the way she has; she truly embodies the ideas presented here.

In the course of this project I have also lost three people who were a significant part of my graduate experience. The first was my maternal grandmother, Phyllis Cottam Peers, who unwaveringly supported any project that I felt passionately about. The second was my graduate advisor, Dillon K. Inouye, who most significantly shaped my thinking about moral education, and who was steadfast in encouraging me to pursue these ideas. He saw value in my work and devoted countless hours and unwavering support in helping me pursue them despite their unconventional nature. And lastly, Shawn T. Jordan, whose friendship and support was staggering. I miss each of them.

I also wish to thank my parents, Arthur R. and Janet P. Bassett, siblings, and extended family for their constant love and support in all my endeavors. My nieces and nephews are the reason I care so passionately about education. I hope to make a difference in their learning and growth.

And lastly, there were too many miracles in my journey not to acknowledge the help and support of my Heavenly Father, my Savior Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. All good things are gifts from them, and I have been the recipient of many. I recognize their guidance and patience as I work to understand what being in community with them might mean as well. I hope my efforts to put these ideas into practice will show my gratitude and be pleasing to them.

Table of Contents

Abstract v

Acknowledgments vii

List of Table xii

Introduction 1

Overview of the Problem 1

Proposed Solution 3

Contributions 8

Chapter 1: Human Be-ing and Community 10

The Nature of Human Be-ing 10

The Ethical Foundation of Human Relationships 12

Modernism and the “Empty” Self 14

Responding to a Call for Sociality 19

Issues Facing Educational Learning Communities 27

Problems of Rights-Based Education 34

Differences in Pre-Modern and Modern Communal Relationships 36

A Call for an Alternative Perspective 42

Chapter 2: Using Narrative to Rethink Human Be-ing 47

Background on Narrative 47

My Approach 56

A New Perspective on Learning From Genesis 60

Chapter 3: “God Saw That it was Good”—The Creation as Supportive Otherness 65

A Purposeful Creation 65

Bi-Gendered Humanity 76
Implications of the Creation Story 89
Chapter 4: "Where Art Thou?"—Man's Fall Through Disunity 97
Made in God's Image and Likeness 97
Disunity in the Fall 101
Lack of Growth in Eden 107
Chapter 5: "Cursed for Thy Sake"—The Expulsion for Work and Suffering 114
Out of Eden Into Labor and Work, Pain and Sorrow 114
Adam and Eve Defined by Work 121
Increased Opportunity for Relationship 124
The Blessings of Expulsion 128
Chapter 6: Abundant Learning Within Moral Community 131
Out of the Garden Into Community 131
Recognizing the Power of Community Relationships 135
Human Potential Within Moral Community 140
Learning Through Lived Experience in Moral Community 144
Inviting Learners Into Moral Community 150
Related Questions for Future Development 155
Educational Implications of Our Moral Relatedness 161
References 165
Appendix A: Genesis 1–3 172
Footnotes 179

List of Table

Table 1: Golden or Silver Rules……...146

Introduction

Overview of the Problem

Human be-ing,[1] as contemporary philosophers remind us, is fundamentally relational (Heidegger, 1927; Ricoeur, 1992). Those relationships, however, are not what modernism understands them to be. They are not negotiated social contracts that maintain our individual and inalienable rights, or promises that protect us one from another (Hobbes, 1991). Rather, human relationship consists of an inescapable ethical responsibility to each other (Levinas, 1969; Marion, 2008; Palmer, 1993; Ricoeur, 1992). Since our relationships define who we are, we are ultimately most human (and most fulfilled) when we embrace those responsibilities and learn to respond in ways that nurture our interconnectedness (Cushman, 1990; hooks, 2003; Noddings, 2002; Palmer, 1993).

Modern philosophy, which began roughly around the 1500s and is still very influential today, has come to view human be-ing not as an ethical relationship but as autonomous individual "selves" who are defined more by their inalienable rights and liberties than by their moral obligations (Solomon, 1988). Because of the severe consequences when rights and liberties are abused, they are undeniably important in recognizing the worth of an individual. Modernism has gone far in both recognizing those abuses and attempting to rectify them (Roberts, 1980). Nevertheless, the relative importance modernism puts on individual rights, over and above human responsibility and obligation, diminishes our understanding of ourselves as ethically-related and therefore responsible human beings.

Situated as it is within the framework of the modern world, the current educational system is understandably influenced by modern philosophical concepts in conflict with the idea that we are relationally responsible beings. Like other elements of society, many educational theories and practices are still grounded in a concept of the "self" as fundamentally separate and unencumbered, with self-evident immutable rights—a "bounded, masterful self" as Philip Cushman (1990) describes it (p. 599). In this perspective, relationships are seen as just one characteristic of be-ing rather than that which is central to our humanity (Cushman, 1990; Fowers, 2005; MacIntyre, 2007). Yet, as Cushman points out, such a life is often experienced as an "empty self" (1990). Because education is heavily influenced by the modernist framework of individuality, it is not surprising that some of its learning environments do not always honor or encourage truly nourishing relationships (hooks, 2003; Noddings, 2002; Palmer, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1994).

However, if human be-ing does consist of being deeply and profoundly connected with each other (as many contemporary philosophers, including those in education, contend) then an educational system that encourages students to see themselves as autonomous individual selves is not one that will educate towards an abundant or fulfilling life. Indeed, it is more likely to lead to competition, separation, and ultimately isolation (Fowers, 2005; hooks, 2003; Noddings, 2002; Palmer, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1994). Because human be-ing is so overwhelmingly social, without nurturing relationships as part of the educational experience, learning itself becomes lifeless and dull. Indeed, much of the very purpose of education becomes lost.

Proposed Solution

To be most powerful for the learner, learning environments should be designed to support our ultimate nature as human beings, including our fundamental sociality and inescapable obligation to one another. I argue that an educational environment that encourages and supports students in understanding and responding to their fundamental responsibility to others (while still recognizing and honoring personal rights) could be a more rewarding learning experience for all involved. By this I mean learners would not only feel greater satisfaction and find greater purpose in their education, but also that they would learn more, remember it longer, and be better able to transfer their skills to situations outside the classroom (Gong, 2002; Fink, 2003; Sutherland & Bonwell, 1996). Indeed, I argue that educational experiences which are true to the relational nature of be-ing are much more likely to be transformative in the lives of students.

This dissertation then will examine what it means for human beings to be fundamentally related to each other and show how such an understanding (somewhat at odds with the current system) might impact learning in particular and education in general. I suggest that because modern education focuses mainly on teaching the individual (even group activities are designed to make sure the individual masters the content), it does not provide the ideal framework for understanding, and thus educating, about human be-ing. An alternative perspective for exploring how we should *be* together is needed, and this perspective could be helpful in rethinking education and thus its learning environments.

In order to think about what it means for human beings to be fundamentally related, a non-modern perspective of human be-ing is needed, one less inward-looking

and egocentric than modern philosophic perspectives tend to be. This different perspective already exists. It can be found, for example, in the writings of pre-modern thinkers (for example, Confucius, Aristotle, and Plato), in important voices in contemporary philosophy (including some educational philosophers such as Parker Palmer and Nel Noddings), in some Asian cultures, and in many religious societies (including various communities found in Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam). These traditions are all very different from each other, but they share a common understanding that be-ing is constituted by our sociality—and as such it is first and foremost ethical. This moral perspective impacts both the way we understand ourselves and the types of relationships we seek to form with others. It influences the way we choose to act in the world.

For this dissertation, I have chosen to focus on religious narratives to explore what a non-modern understanding of relational be-ing might mean for education. We often think of community as a place of interaction, but I will also use the word "community" to embody this alternative understanding of who we are as human beings, how we are and should be related to each other, and the process by which we can learn to embrace our responsibilities. This second way of understanding community is not defined by physical boundaries but rather encompasses a way or mode of be-ing with others: with (com)-unity.

Looking at how community is manifest in a religious context can be helpful in two ways. First, it offers a framework for understanding human be-ing that is informed by thousands of years of responding to the question of how to create community. It is, therefore, in a unique position to offer important insights for thinking about our

relatedness. Secondly, many people have meaningful and deeply-cherished connections to religious traditions that help make this viewpoint accessible to a wide variety of readers (Noddings, 1993). Yet even people who do not identify themselves as religious can often connect to sacred stories because their backgrounds, though non-religious, have nevertheless been heavily influenced by religious thought. For example, Americans without any religious tradition will still be familiar with the narratives I am using because religion has played such an important role in America's heritage.

Storytelling, or narrative, is a well-established teaching method that has long been part of many religious traditions and has more recently become an acceptable research method for social scientists as well (Polkinghorne, 1988). Stories are rich with information; they reveal and often embrace complexities and nuances that are difficult if not impossible to explore through scientific methods that are more reductionist in nature. Religious traditions rely on stories to reveal beliefs, mores, expectations, and other community markers to their followers because stories allow people to "test" a claim's truth through personal mimesis. In other words, people can gain understanding by "trying out" a belief through their personal lived experience. Through emulating (or mimicking) the story's plot or the message it espouses, believers can make themselves part of the story as well. Also, because religious stories, as told, are often sparse—sometimes only a sketch of a story—they invite participation on the part of the reader to "finish" them and articulate their meaning. As readers begin to engage with the story and take ownership of them, readers enter into the community of believers who cherish those stories as their own and who use those stories meaningfully in their lives. Coming to understand how

their lives validate the "truths" of the story makes new adherents part of a well-established living tradition.

I will use three connected religious stories to talk about the importance of community for human be-ing. By examining these stories I suggest we can gain insight into an expanded understanding of ourselves and the importance of relationship, one that can enhance our understanding of education as well. After examining these stories as I understand them (from the text itself but, inevitably with the perspective of my own religious tradition), I will then return to the framework of today's education and ask what implications this new perspective might have for increasing the power of current educational learning communities.

The stories I have chosen to explore are the biblical stories of mankind's beginnings as found in the first three chapters of Genesis. The stories are (a) the Creation of the world and the introduction of Adam and Eve into that world, (b) their Fall, and (c) their Expulsion from the Garden of Eden. As I examine these three stories, I will argue that they reveal the importance of three important aspects of community: (a) *diversity*, or a deep respect and appreciation for our and others' enduring individuality, (b) *unity*, a moral responsibility and its consequences for learning to come together in a particular mode of be-ing (in other words, in-unity with an absolute "other"), and (c) *work*, or the effort that makes coming together purposeful and transformative.

I believe these stories have much to teach us about how to think about human be-ing and community. From them, we are offered an alternative way to understand who we are as diverse individuals that strive to be in unity with each other (and sometimes fall

short); they also show the importance of work as the catalyst for being able to respond to our ethical interdependence on each other.

There is another related reason to choose this particular set of stories. These stories are especially important because they are foundational to the culture of many communities, both sacred and secular. Because each tradition that uses these three stories has a particular way of both telling and reading them, these stories have the potential to be divisive in a conversation of meaning. Yet I have picked them hoping for the exact opposite result. Because they are foundational stories in all these traditions, they also represent the potential for beginning a conversation in which many can feel they already have a part, a conversation others might wish to contribute to as well. In this way these stories can help to establish community around the conversation of what it means to exist as related beings and its resulting implications for education.

For instance, although interpreted differently in each community, the Adam and Eve stories are important to explaining the origins of the Abrahamic religions: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Additionally, they are stories that are part of most Westerners' shared heritage (for example, art, conversations of gender, jokes about the human condition, common references to the utopian Eden and "eating the apple," etc. often reference these stories) and can therefore speak through a different, yet familiar, voice to a large audience in education today. While a careful examination of these stories provides essential insight into an alternative worldview for be-ing, and more specifically for this dissertation, into a perspective of community that is different from the commonly held notion of "place" (such as neighborhood) or "people like us" (such as ethnicity), the stories are also not totally removed from our personal understanding of our own human

be-ing. In whatever tradition we understand them, they are stories with the potential to connect us with others.

I note here at the outset that this is a theoretical dissertation. As the document regarding theory dissertations in Brigham Young University's Instructional Psychology and Technology department states,

> Theoretical dissertations are those wherein the author's theory, model, etc. is formulated and supported through well-developed critical analysis and argumentation in the absence of empirical data collection. The rationale for theoretical dissertations stems from the importance of theoretical developments in the fields of education, instructional design, and psychology that were not accompanied by data collection at the time of original publication (e.g. Dewey's reconstruction of philosophy of education; Watson's behaviorist manifesto; Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development; Gardner's multiple intelligences; Giorgi's criticisms of mainstream science; Gergen's social constructionist critique). (Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology, n.d.)

In this vein I am offering a theoretical argument for looking at how the interaction of individuality/diversity, unity, and work is imperative to understanding be-ing and asking if such an understanding of our fundamental indebtedness to others might allow education to rethink how to structure its learning environments. Might a new perspective of human be-ing and community (in other words one that sees the individual in terms of the relationships that help define him or her) allow educational learning communities to change in ways that have the potential to yield greater transformative and lasting results for students because they are more true to the social relationships we experience in be-ing? I believe they could.

Contributions

Focusing on understanding how the aspects of diversity, unity, and work strengthen supportive relationships is a meaningful way to understand community.

Though such an approach is not currently utilized in education, I believe it could be helpful for enhancing learners' educational experiences. I believe this exploration of community is a contribution to the field of education because it reveals a unique understanding of both the means (educating students about their moral responsibilities to others) as well as the end (moral communities) of education.

This dissertation, then, is an exploration of the concept of community through three seminal biblical stories that speak to who we are as human beings, how we are related to each other, and the way we grow as we learn to work with each other. I will argue that the analysis of community I will present suggests that one important purpose for education is to help students learn to relate to each other in ways that are more true to who they are as human beings and thus allows them greater opportunities to flourish. It also suggests that one way to help students do this is to encourage a move away from rights-based concerns for their own welfare and toward a more outward-looking embrace of moral obligation in the development of relationships. Relationships that embrace a sense of fundamental responsibility to each other have the power to be truly transformative for those who will engage in them.

Chapter 1: Human Be-ing and Community

The Nature of Human Be-ing

"No man is an island."

"There are no wolf-boys."

"It takes a village to raise a child."

Though some may think them trite, these aphorisms nevertheless speak to a most profound and universal aspect of human existence—its sociality. Life is not generated, will not thrive, and indeed cannot even maintain itself in total isolation. In fact, every aspect of human experience confirms that relationship is foundational to human be-ing.

Most people readily acknowledge this fact. We know, for example, that family and friends are often the most profound influences in our lives and significantly shape the people we become. We devote great effort to such relationships because they bring us joy and belonging; they help satisfy a deep-seated need to connect with others. Nel Noddings (2003), an influential educational philosopher, contends that "human relationships are perhaps the most important single ingredient in happiness" (p. 173). She goes on to say that "those who are unlucky with respect to close associations may seek community in whatever groups will have them. Young people who feel rejected at home and school may join gangs. Some may join cults, looking for something in which to believe and to which they may commit themselves" (pp. 222–223). Sometimes such associations lead to an allegiance so strong it becomes fanaticism and everything else in their lives becomes defined by that association.

Sociality, however, is not just one human characteristic among many that we can choose to experience or not. Sociality is at the very core of what it is to be human. Our own physicality testifies to the primacy of relationship. As biologists James Watson and Francis Crick discovered, there is a basic and necessary relationship found in the very strands of deoxyribonucleic acid, or DNA, which exist intertwined as related pairs of double helixes (Watson, 1969). DNA strands, the substance from which our genes are built, are then used to construct the proteins that create and maintain life. Our own DNA—that which physically makes us uniquely who we are—is given to us through the relationship of two other people. We, therefore, actually come into be-ing through a relationship, one that exists even before we do, and thereafter, our growth is dependent upon and nurtured through a whole host of interdependencies with others.

Crandall (1897), Spitz (1965), and Bowlby (1996) also speak of the importance of human association. They documented stories of hospitalized or orphaned infants whose physical needs were met but who were deprived of sociality; these infants actually failed to thrive and many eventually died. Parker Palmer (1998), educator, author, and social activist, concurs. He states, "human beings were made for relationships: without a rich and nourishing network of connections, we wither and die. I am not speaking metaphorically. It is a clinical fact that people who lack relationships get sick more often and recover more slowly than people surrounded by family and friends" (p. 65).

For the author and theologian C. S. Lewis (1946), loss of relational ties and the resultant feelings of separation actually described Hell. In *The Great Divorce,* while on a trip from Hell to Heaven, the story's protagonist learns from a fellow traveler why Hell seems so empty:

> The trouble is that they're so quarrelsome. As soon as someone arrives he settles in some street. Before he's been there twenty-four hours he quarrels with his neighbour. Before the week is over he's quarreled so badly that he decides to move. Very likely he finds the next street empty because all the people there have quarreled with *their* neighbours—and moved. . . . He's sure to have another quarrel pretty soon and then he'll move on again. Finally he'll move right out to the edge of the town. (pp. 18–19)

According to the companion, those who have come from earth long ago have been moving on and on, getting further apart until they are "millions" of miles from each other. Thus Hell is Hell because peoples' self-concern isolates them and prevents them from developing meaningful relationships with each other.

The Ethical Foundation of Human Relationships

Like others, contemporary philosophers such as Emmanuel Levinas (1969, 1985, 1987), Paul Ricoeur (1992), and Jean-Luc Marion (2008) have written about the fundamentally relational nature of human existence. But theirs is an even deeper claim. They contend that our sociality is not only primal but ethical. They argue that since the only way to experience humanity is in relationship, we are obligated to respond to others in ways that both acknowledge and respect our dependence on those relationships.

Levinas (1969), for example, claims that a person is not first and foremost an ego, autonomous and independent with inalienable rights. In this he agrees with Heidegger (1927) who argued that our very be-ing, our existence, is fundamentally social. That is, we do not (indeed cannot) exist as autonomous individuals because human be-ing is always a be-ing with others. (No man is an island.) And so, Levinas argues, because our existence depends on others, existence itself makes us profoundly indebted to them. Since this debt begins even before the moment of our own selfhood, our obligation to others is foremost before any right we can claim for ourselves. For Levinas, then, our

responsibility to one another comes before all else. As Richard Cohen explains in his introduction to *Ethics and Infinity*, "Ethics, in Levinas' view, occurs 'prior' to essence and being, conditioning them" (Levinas, 1985, p. 9). We are bound to respond to the "call of the other," (in other words, anyone, not just those we are inclined to respond to positively). To be human, therefore, is to be morally (or responsibly) related to others; thus, our interactions must be of a certain (ethical) kind.

Ricoeur (1992) also argues that relationship is ontological and foundational to the self. He writes, "With the person alone comes plurality" (p. 224). There is, in fact, no person alone—there is always plurality. In an analysis of the Golden Rule, "Treat others as you would like them to treat you" (Luke 6:31), he concludes,

> The Golden Rule and the imperative of the respect owed to persons do not simply have the same field of exercise, they also have the same aim: to establish reciprocity wherever there is a lack of reciprocity. And in the background of the Golden Rule there reappears the intuition, inherent in solicitude, of genuine otherness at the root of the plurality of persons. (p. 225)

As with Levinas, this implies a moral obligation:

> Morality exists because the person himself exists (*existiert*) as an end in himself. In other words, we have always known the difference between persons and things: we can obtain things, exchange them, use them; the manner of existing of persons consists precisely in the fact that they cannot be obtained, utilized, or exchanged. (pp. 225–226)

Unlike things, persons are not meant for an end that benefits ourselves, society, or any other. As an "end in himself" the other is radically other, both from us and from our purposes. Persons can not be used as things; their very existence demands from each of us a moral response.

In *The Erotic Phenomenon* (2008) Jean-Luc Marion writes, "I am only assured of myself beginning from elsewhere" (p. 40) meaning that self-assurance, which makes knowledge possible, begins from some other place outside of ourselves, namely another

person. We can only know something because we are related to others, others who help to validate our experiences, understandings, and indeed our very be-ing. Elsewhere he makes a similar claim by reminding us that "Loving requires an exteriority that is not provisional but effective, an exteriority that remains for long enough that one may cross it seriously. Loving requires distance and the crossing of distance" (p. 46).

Distance points to "otherness," the difference that is embodied by a person we can then love, and who can in turn love us, because that person is not us, nor can be subsumed by us. In other words, love requires someone other than ourselves, someone outside of us to whom we direct our love. When we love unselfishly, that action is directed outward, toward another. Such "being outside" isn't just happenstance; it is what brings about—makes effective—love. There must be distance between us, a space which must be crossed. We cannot love what is exactly like us; love requires difference. So, loving requires that the person whom we love be different from us (distant) and that we cross that distance. We remain different, but work to cross the distance between us. These three important thinkers, then, concur that human be-ing is relational and that we are who we are only in the face of the "other." Because of the inescapable moral responsibility we all have to the "other," relationships (which help to form our identities) are ethical obligations.

Modernism and the "Empty" Self

The importance of relationship to human be-ing becomes increasingly indisputable when on every front there is convincing evidence that relationships affect our ability to cope with stress, our mental and intellectual development, our physical

health, and our emotional stability (see for example Cozolino, 2006; Karen, 1998; Prager, 1997; Ryff & Singer, 2001; Siegel, 2001). Yet, Philip Cushman notes in his essay "Why the Self Is Empty" (1990) that our relationships have become increasingly less fulfilling and harder to maintain, leaving us feeling disconnected and adrift. In losing a profound respect for the fundamental role of relationship, he claims that today's modern society has become a "culture of the self" (p. 599). This, he says,

> is a self that has specific psychological boundaries, an internal locus of control, and a wish to manipulate the external world for its own personal ends. . . . By this I mean that our terrain has shaped a self that experiences a significant absence of community, tradition, and shared meaning. (p. 599)

In critiquing modernism, Cushman and others are not suggesting a return to a supposed idyllic past where humans lived peaceful lives in harmoniously nurturing societies filled with ethically responsible citizens. Such instances would indeed be hard to find. Additionally, the modern age has brought great good to humankind: a desire for democracy, respect for human rights, women's suffrage; emancipation of slaves, technological developments, better understanding of disease and therefore of treatment, vaccines, flush toilets, refrigerators and canned foods, etc., and the list could go on. Even the most severe critics of modernism must acknowledge modernism has brought great advancements to the human condition. Nevertheless, there is much in the thinking of the pre-modern world about human be-ing and human relationship which we have lost that could enhance the modern experience as well.

Cushman (and others) are simply pointing to the evidence of what was lost in the swing away from a pre-modern understanding of human relationship to the current focus on the "self" as the center of human be-ing. As Solomon (1988) alludes to in the subtitle of his book (the "rise and fall of the self"), the modern era introduced "an extraordinary

concept of the self . . . whose nature and ambitions were unprecedentedly arrogant [and] presumptuously cosmic" (p. 4).

Because modernism focuses on the individual as the fundamental unit of be-ing, human sociality and relationships necessarily become secondary "characteristics" or "parts" of the human experience rather than its essence. Personal autonomy and wants are inevitably privileged over responsibility and moral obligation. In thinking of the self as separate, rights and privileges become the way to preserve one's selfhood. However, as thinkers like MacIntyre (2007) contend, the individual's emancipation has come at a great cost in terms of our understanding of our related existence and our relationships to others.

The modern "bounded, masterful self" that Cushman describes as living without significant ties to others is prominently evident in much of today's political and economic greed, self-centeredness, and dishonesty. The Internet and magazines are consumed with "news" of celebrity, broken relationships, and shootings by frustrated people (including children) who are acting on their feelings of ego-centricity, isolation, and alienation from others. It's telling as well that two of the most popular literary genres today are "self-help" instruction and "do-it-yourself" guides.[2]

As Robert Putnam (2000) has documented, this trend toward isolation and a loss of "social capital" is also manifest in the decline in membership and activism in civic and community groups across the nation. We no longer support and nurture each other through participation in civic organizations, clubs, neighborhood gatherings, church socials, or even bowling leagues. We are a society that is, as captured in Putnam's title, "Bowling Alone." Many who are experiencing social isolation is are seeking to establish

relationships with "virtual friends." According to a 2007 survey given to 30,000 gamers, "Nearly 40% of men and 53% of women who play online games said their virtual friends were equal to or better than their real-life friends…More than a quarter of gamers [who responded indicated that] the emotional highlight of the past week occurred in a computer world" (Bednar, 2009 ¶ 43).

Education is not immune from the feelings of malaise associated with modern concepts of the self. Palmer (1993) observes that in too many instances the modern educational environment does not honor the students' lived experience and the need for nurturing, supportive relationships; the known is distanced from the knower, and students become competitors. "It is no wonder," he comments, "that many educated people lack the capacity to enter into and help create community in the world, that they carry the habit of competition into all their relations with life. . . . We become manipulators of each other and the world rather than mutually responsible participants and co-creators" (p. 37).

Though there have been significant, useful developments in schooling practices over the years, education's attempts to discourage the phenomenon of human sociality is still demonstrable at many levels, from sterile classroom configurations (classrooms made generic with single desks placed in rows, all of which face toward the front of the classroom so students can focus on the instructor who is often dispensing information by lecturing) to the familiar injunction that students must do their "own" work. As Palmer (1993) notes, "in many classrooms 'cooperation' among students goes by the name of 'cheating'!" (p. 37). Additionally, a common tag-line of online education promises that classes can be completed "anytime, anywhere" without the inconvenience of having to meet or coordinate with others. No mention is made, however, of the large drop-out rate

and reports of low satisfaction for classes without a social component (Berge & Clark, 2005). For several decades we have known that a lack of social interaction with peers and faculty will lead to attrition even in on-campus programs (for example see Tinto, 1975).

Part of the problem, according to Cushman (1990), is a misunderstanding of the self. He notes that many researchers in modern psychology "have treated self-contained individualism as an unquestioned value and the current concept of self—the bounded, masterful self—as an unchangeable, transhistorical entity" (p. 599). In other words, our concept of who we are has become distorted; the self has little context and no community to help define it. Consequently, Cushman notes,

> More and more the focus has come to rest on the individual. People are living ever more secluded and secular lives, … [the self is] seen as the ultimate locus of salvation. . . Personal fulfillment is seen to reside with the purview of the individual, who is supposed to be self-sufficient and self-satisfied." (p. 603)

According to Cushman then, one reason the "empty self" has become so prevalent in today's society is the "loss of community" (p. 603).

Despite the fact that our most profound learning experiences often occur within important relationships (with family, friends, or significant teachers for example, thus in community), modern educational thinking and learning strategies typically do not fully acknowledge the importance of our fundamentally social nature. Too often the social aspects of learning have been overlooked, simplified, and forgotten (at best), or seen as a hindrance to be overcome (at worst). Such a distanced approach to learning, however, is not predominately the way humans learn in informal settings, about others, or how they assign meaning to the world. Because it contradicts what is fundamental to be-ing, this kind of distanced learning approach results in formal education that becomes less and less life-enhancing or fruitful. As Palmer (1993) shares,

> Everywhere I go, I meet faculty who feel disconnected from their colleagues, from their students, and from their own hearts…..We feel deep kinship with some subject, we want to bring students into that relationship, to link them with the knowledge that is so life-giving to us; we want to work in community with colleagues who share our values and our vocation. But when institutional conditions create more combat than community, when the life of the mind alienates more than it connects, the heart goes out of things, and there is little left to sustain us. (p. x)

There is a wealth of evidence (including instructive counter-examples) that being true to our relational nature, and more importantly knowing how to create healthy, connected relationships with others, is of paramount importance in living meaningful, purposeful, and abundant lives. Yet the modern sense of identity as a self-determined individual without need of community has placed us at odds with what is most fundamental to our nature. It therefore seems prudent in the context of this dissertation to carefully look at how relationship enhances learning to see if it is possible to leverage that understanding in ways that can truly help us reconnect and create transformative learning experiences.

Responding to a Call for Sociality

There are, of course, educational thinkers who recognize the fundamentally relational nature of human be-ing. Some prominent voices in academia have led out in the assertions that sociality is significant to the human experience and therefore central to the learning experience. Educational theorists and psychologists such as Jean Piaget (1932, 1955), Lev Vygotsky (trans. 1962, trans. 1978), and Albert Bandura (1977, 1986) among others, all recognized the influence of others in how we learn and who we become. Rather than seeing learning as only the creation of discrete bits of information passed from the teacher into the mind of the student, these educators promoted learning

theories that acknowledge the deep significance of culture and society to human development. Though there have been challenges and modifications to the unilinear and universal nature of some of Piaget's claims about growth through developmental stages (see Brunner 1991), Piaget's general observations of the social aspect of childhood learning are still useful today. Both Piaget's and Vygotsky's research indicate that children learn and become part of their societies through interaction and observation of both peers and adults (Schunck, 2007; Woolfolk, 1998). Vygotsky (trans. 1978), for example, argued that the development of the mind does not occur in isolation from society but is rather a dialectical process involving both society and culture.[3] He taught that we learn best by using proximal development and scaffolding because the learning occurs in the context of what is already known. Additionally, tutelage from those who know the domain well enough to guide a student to stretch without completely overwhelming and causing failure are crucial.

Through the work of these and other researchers, the important role sociality and community play in human development is now experiencing a resurgence in a wide variety of both established and experimental practices at all levels of education (Smith, MacGregor, Matthews, & Gabelnick, 2004; Tagg, 2003). Indeed, the use of the word "community" has become common in the writings of both practitioners and theoretical authors. But what "community" means and what kind of educational practices are promoted in its name vary widely (Barab, Kling, & Gray, 2004).

While a learning community can mean a mixture of things—two or more coordinated classes; students moving together as cohorts through a specified curriculum; shared living accommodations as well as classes; or single classroom experiences with

prolonged student interaction, to name just a few—one common purpose is to provide students with a familiar, supported, and social atmosphere in which to learn. Educational communities almost always incorporate some type of active learning pedagogy and have a social or affective component. Additionally, the learning tasks are usually more complex and authentic than those assigned when students are working alone (Smith, et al., 2004). The following descriptions will outline just four of the most prominent trends.

The first kind of learning community I will address is one that was bold and comprehensive in that it attempted to restructure the educational system. The work of these early learning communities in the 1920s continues to influence many of the learning communities of today. These were proposed by educational innovators such as John Dewey (1916, 1938) and Alexander Meiklejohn (1932) who were pioneers in championing social and communal learning at the university level. Dewey was impassioned by the ideas of individualism and democracy and stressed the role of experience in education. Meiklejohn felt keenly that the current educational system was inadequately addressing the dichotomy between individual autonomy—which would allow students to take responsibility for their own learning—and a democratic society's need for the stability of institutional authority. Though different in philosophy and tactic (Dewey was a pragmatist, Meiklejohn an idealist), they both worked to create more student-centered and social learning approaches in education (Smith et al., 2004).

Both Dewey and Meiklejohn believed that creating more collaborative relationships among students and between the students and the teacher would enhance learning. This meant a different environment from traditional schooling. Each worked to establish experimental "communities of learning". Through their influence, several

universities set up experimental learning environments trying to understand how best to enhance learning through strong social networking. Founded in 1927 by Meiklejohn, the Experimental College "dispensed with courses, credit units and grades" offering an integrated, two-year program where faculty lived in the same dormitory as students (Tagg, 2003, p. 264). Students read original sources and then discussed them in seminars. They were also encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning, which was more interdisciplinary and exploratory than programmatic. Students often lived and studied all together in programs that were much more collaborative than traditional schooling (Smith, et al., 2004).

While some of these programs were unable to weather the growing pains of trying a new approach within an old system, or faltered when their charismatic leader left for one reason or another, as The Experimental College at Wisconsin did after only 5 years, they nevertheless have helped shaped the learning communities of today. However, a few, such as The University of Chicago Laboratory Schools and Washington's Evergreen State College, are still strong today. They are influential examples of learning communities that have a pedagogical approach focusing on "interdisciplinary, collaboration, personal engagement, connection theory and practice, and learning across significant differences" (Smith et al., 2004, p. 128).

Though world events, finances, problems of scale, contentions of elitism, and a resurgence of more traditional educators (among other struggles) sabotaged some of the early experiments, interest in communities of learning continued to grow through a second (1950s & 60s) and third (1990s) wave of support for implementation. Smith et al. (2004) write,

> By the year 2000, learning communities had become a national movement. More than five hundred institutions, public and independent, urban and rural, residential and commuter, two-year and four-year, had adopted the learning community approach and they are continuing to adapt it to their own purposes and needs. Learning communities are being used in a variety of curricular settings—in general education, in freshman-year initiatives, in honors, in developmental education, in study in the major, in vocational and professional programs. (p. 56)

As noted before, the types of learning communities that exist can vary on almost any feature; these, however, typically have in common the grouping of student cohorts or communities that exist across multiple courses; some are cohesive across time. Traditional structural features of institutions (time, credit, etc.) often give way in order to allow for more collaboration and interdisciplinary work (Smith et al., 2004; Tagg, 2003). Courses often are linked together so that students experience more cohesion across disciplinary subjects, as well as more interaction with teachers and with each other (Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews, & Smith, 1990).

This restructuring of traditional modes of academia is both a strength and a weakness. It can, for instance, encourage creative solutions to problems of creating community within the inherently arbitrary structures of education. On the other hand, the more creative the structure, the harder it is to sustain such practices in the face of a much larger landscape of education that may resist change and creativity. As a consequence, these learning communities are difficult to develop and sustain over time (Smith et al., 2004).

A second type of learning community, "communities of practice," is theoretically based on the common social phenomenon of people with like interests and needs joining together for learning and support. Jean Lave (1988), an anthropologist, and Etienne Wenger (1998), a social learning theorist, are credited with coining the phrase "community of practice" while studying the phenomenon of apprenticeship, or the

process of moving from a novice to mastery in some skill under the training of someone already proficient. Wenger says the phrase describes the phenomenon of people coming together who interact regularly to learn how to do what they do better (Wenger n.d.). Communities of practice can be called by several names: learning networks, thematic groups, tech clubs, etc., and exist in a variety of forms, large and small, formal and informal. Communities of practice are not restricted to academia (indeed most are not academic), but a community of practice must have three key characteristics: 1) a shared domain of interest, 2) members who work together in activities or discussions, who help each other and share information, and 3) a shared practice with a repertoire of resources such as experiences, stories, tools, ways of approaching problems, etc. (Wenger, n.d.). Farmers, chess players, computer scientists, insurance agents, etc., are examples of possible communities of practice.

The work of Lave and Wenger is grounded in the idea that humans are fundamentally relational, and that this characteristic of humans is essential to understanding learning. Like Dewey, they also note that learning is a matter of experience in the world, but they put far more value and importance in the social nature of that experience, noting that learning primarily involves "active participation in social communities" (Wenger 1998, p. 10). Like Vygotsky, who is one of their influences, they stress the dialectical relationship between individual and society. For Lave and Wenger (1991), all learning is social: the individual and society presuppose each other.

Communities of practice are powerful learning environments because members of such communities share mutual interests. They have compelling reasons to learn from each other, and their learning involves not just their relationship with each other but also

with the practice that brings them together. Thus, a class of physics students would not necessarily constitute a community of practice, but if the students were to form a persistent study group of those who wanted to help each other with their homework throughout a semester, they could become one. Their shared experiences and attention to the work of the group could help them to coalesce into a community of practice. If they did, the ways those students would interact and their motivation for interacting would then be different.

Because successful communities of practice can be such powerful learning environments, educators often attempt to incorporate elements of these communities in school environments with varying degrees of success. Some of the difficulties in the traditional school setting are that groups of students rarely persist across time, their motivations for study vary widely (indeed some may only want a passing grade while others are deeply, passionately interested), and perhaps most importantly, the reward system is almost always set up to focus on the individual, rather than the group effort. As a consequence, as Wenger (1998) notes, school-induced communities of practice are rarely as powerful as those that naturally arise out of mutual interests: “in spite of curriculum, discipline, and exhortation, the learning that is most personally transformative turns out to be the learning that involves [voluntary] membership in these communities of practice” (p. 6).

A third type of learning community is one that is a popular variation of communities of practice: on-line communities. For on-line education, community development is a major focus because organizers recognize that something is lost when

students are not meeting face to face (Preece, 2000). Moving communities online changes their nature in ways that are still being explored. As Palloff and Pratt (1999) note,

> In the past the concepts of *differentiation* and *membership* were relevant factors in the development of community. People seeking commonality and shared interests formed groups and communities in order to pursue their interests that distinguished them from other groups. In addition, communities were generally considered to be place-based. The small town or neighborhood in which you lived was your community. Adherence to the norms of that community allowed you to maintain membership. . . . Because community is no longer a place-based concept, we are redefining what community is and is not. (p. 21)

The number of virtual communities is expanding rapidly. As with off-line communities, however, those designed by educational institutions or as part of a class assignment are sometimes experienced as an artificial overlay and therefore not as cohesively strong as those formed by individuals with natural common interests and motivations for interacting with each other.

Initially, it was thought on-line accessibility would increase the scope and abilities of certain communities. But while on-line capabilities do allow for participation from a more diverse population than is typically found in a local community, the practical weaknesses of these communities for education are often compounded with the additional barrier that students do not see each other, thus making it harder to make connections. Nor do they always have established methods of norms for interaction or even, necessarily, shared expectations of the experience (Palloff & Pratt, 1999). Additionally, teachers have usually not been trained to facilitate formal student-to-student interaction or provide other than extrinsic incentive for participation.

The last type of learning community briefly described here is the various collaborative learning activities increasingly found in individual classroom settings. These are often smaller in scale than the others because they do not even necessarily

include an entire class. Here teachers attempt to leverage the power of social learning by encouraging students to work together both in and outside of the classroom setting. Collaborative or cooperative learning activities may include formal cooperative learning lessons, informal cooperative learning groups, and cooperative base groups in the college classroom (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1991; Woolfolk, 1998). Variations include problem-based learning curricula, encouraging students to form study groups, assigning students to groups, group projects, collaborative presentations, techniques for peer discussion in class, reciprocal teaching, collaborative problem solving, etc. Team-based learning is another important variation on collaborative learning (Michaelsen, Knight, & Fink, 2004). Sometimes there are service-learning components that connect the learning with the local communities as well. Whatever strategies are used, however, the primary goal of most of these approaches is to increase the level of active learning in the classroom as a means of helping students engage more deeply with the course curriculum and thus learn more quickly and retain knowledge longer; other goals include helping students learn to work in teams and learn to appreciate people with different backgrounds and perspectives (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005).

Issues Facing Educational Learning Communities

The total spectrum of community and collaborative learning environments is, of course, more varied and nuanced than the four basic types mentioned above, yet these four embody the central characteristics of most educational learning communities, namely group cohesion and team work, enhanced learning through social relationships, more engaging projects, and deeper, more challenging learning. This is a popular trend in

education, and such innovations have proven academically beneficial. Research on several educational fronts—philosophy of education, cognition, pedagogy, and social learning to name just a few—clearly shows that active learning, student collaboration, and the many varieties of social learning models being constructed can be useful in helping students engage in mastering curriculum objectives (for example, Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000 conducted a meta-analysis of 164 studies investigating eight cooperative learning methods that demonstrated 194 independent effect sizes in measured student achievement,. Techniques and methods that encourage students to work with each other tend to produce a higher level mastery of learning outcomes than more traditional learning methods (Johnson, et al., 2000). Part of what increases learning may be that students often spend more time focusing on the material and use various learning reinforcement techniques (such as rehearsal, synthesis, using multiple senses, etc.), while they are working together (Chickering & Gamson, 1991). The fact that human beings are fundamentally relational means that educational practices that draw on human sociality and the intrinsic human drive to interact are supportive of who we are as a species and how we naturally learn.

Unfortunately however, none of these learning community models are, as yet, a panacea for education. Sometimes they don't change much of the learning experience at all. Even if introducing social interaction is successful in attempts to provide a more authentic, natural, and relational learning experience, the best intentions for learning can be inhibited by students unwilling to truly engage with one another, insufficient planning, or simply unforeseen complications. Despite documented achievements, learning communities still experience varying levels of success, the same as is true with more

traditional methodologies. At the same time, learning communities introduce new and particular problems of their own for both instructor and student (Janis, 1972; Kimber, 1994; Laister & Koubek, 2001; Sheridan, Byrne, & Quina, 1989).

For instance, because learning communities are often more complex pedagogies than those they replace, their added complexity, time requirements, and less formal nature often make it hard to fit them into traditional school settings and classrooms (Smith, et al., 2004; Tagg, 2003). Questions such as what to do if the community fails to function cohesively, how to determine individual effort and learning, finding appropriate projects big enough for all participants to contribute, and determining the proper criteria for assessment (social interaction, quality of product, time spent on task, etc.) can all become complicated issues for instructors to manage (Barkley, at al., 2005).

Issues of fairness and equality are especially complicated for instructors who use community learning approaches. Because students are supposed to work together, sharing their work and their knowledge and skills, the intricacies of group interaction can cause conscientious instructors to worry about how to accurately determine whether each student has individually mastered the material, about assigning individual grades fairly, and whether they have enough objective data to support the grades they assign should anyone challenge their conclusions. Learning assessment is presently considered predominantly a measurement, or quantitative, issue. In contrast, because teaching techniques that encourage students to work together are usually much more organic and holistic, student assignments and participation are almost always intermingled with a variety of confounding factors. Thus, determining a single quantitative grade that represents the sum of achievement which can be used to rank and rate students according

to the learning they can demonstrate on a test, introduces challenging problems of assessment. Those complications make it more difficult for instructors to determine the proper way to evaluate these more holistic, collaborative experiences.

Students also have some of the same issues as instructors as they are required to work together yet receive grades that are based on individual effort and performance. They too can feel unsettled about the grading rubrics because they are not sure just what does or doesn't "count" toward determining their grade (Barkley, et al., 2005). Students also want assurances that they will not be penalized for team partners who fail to properly contribute, that they will be properly rewarded for their quality work, and that any extra effort they give will be recognized, etc. (Barkley, et al., 2005). Consequently, the focus and rewards of social learning strategies are sometimes at odds with their professed allegiance to relationship and sociality.

Influenced by what they see in the world around them, students often approach learning with a thoroughly modern sense of self that is concerned with fiercely preserving autonomy. Although community learning practices can help them learn to work better in groups, when these practices are co-mingled with contradictory reward systems and incentives, it is not surprising that students are often confused by the mixed signals. For example, when students are placed in competition with each other for the teacher's time and attention, for norm-referenced grades that impact placement in programs, or scholarships and internships, etc., students can easily determine that community learning environments undercut their efforts to get ahead (Palmer, 1993). Such a competitive environment encourages withholding vulnerabilities and weaknesses from others in the group. This creates a conflicted environment in which mistakes—which are absolutely

necessary to learning and growth—become even bigger liabilities with detrimental consequences instead of simply an aspect of the learning experience. Students quickly learn to try to avoid making them at all costs, especially in front of others. Neil Postman (1995) observes in *The End of Education,*

> At present there is very little tolerance for error in the classroom. That is one of the reasons students cheat. It is one of the reasons students are nervous. It is one of the reasons many students are reluctant to speak. It is certainly the reason why students (and the rest of us) fight so hard to justify what they think they know. In varying degrees, being wrong is a disgrace; one pays a heavy price for it. (p. 125)

Of course, this is not the only factor contributing to such behavior in the classroom. Laziness and a lack of preparation are also factors sometimes. Nevertheless, Postman is describing the educational experiences of many students.

As instructors and learners alike struggle to maintain fairness and personal rights, they can become preoccupied with a self-concern that greatly hampers the trust participants are willing to extend. Because it seems unwise to open oneself up to such vulnerability, this can disconnect them from those things that make associations fulfilling and supportive. Yet unless learners are willing to be open to the unpredictability of someone who is "other" than themselves, interaction becomes instead an experience of manipulation and control (Palmer, 1993).

Then when students are also made to compete for class rankings and grades, which can then be translated into scholarships or acceptance to particular programs, adding community components to a course without careful thought can easily just exacerbate any other non-communal pressure or incentive to withhold one's abilities and assets from others. Additionally, students are typically more familiar with educational teaching tactics that isolate them from each another, or at least discourage interaction (Palmer, 1993). In such environments sharing in ways that allows one to be vulnerable

seem imprudent; separation rather than connection is enforced. However, such consequences are at deep odds with the nurturing and support that learning communities are intended to supply to the educational experience. Sometimes the result is that students are actually less comfortable about creating at school those very same interactions that they *choose* to create away from school (Noddings, 2002).

If students are taught, however subtly or overtly, that extraneous interaction with fellow learners puts them at a disadvantage, they can come to see learning as an asset to be acquired rather than an experience made richer in the sharing; they are taught that education itself is a limited resource that can be used to give them a competitive edge over others both in and out of academia (Kohn 1992; Palmer, 1993). As Palmer (1993) suggests "the conventional pedagogy is not only noncommunal but anticommunal. Students are made to compete with one another as a hedge against error, so that only the fittest and smartest will survive" (p. 37). This undermines the stated intentions of any social components that are intended to help students build community and makes them far less likely to be successful.

When the educational environment is hostile, however unintentional, it's understandable that students may feel conflicted about participating with others. On the one hand, there may be a natural inclination to build relationship with fellow learners; on the other hand however, no matter how much interaction may seem to be encouraged, students are able to quickly assess the costs associated with such actions. In addition to the particular subject matter, inconsistency between what is asked of the students and what is rewarded teaches duplicity and encourages a cynicism that is not conducive to either student trust or truly transformative learning. Again Palmer (1993) notes, "A

business school may offer courses in team management and collective works styles, but if the culture of that school requires students to survive those courses through competition, then competition and not cooperation is the real lesson taught and learned" (p. 20). Given the lack of support and/or reward for wholehearted participation in community learning environments, students might be forgiven for "learning" that building deep relationships with fellow students is really an unwelcome complication and not connected to the learning process at all. It can therefore be difficult for students trained in such competitive practices to think deeply about how it might be different if they were to come together collaboratively, though certainly this makes the attempt all the more important.

Obviously, if these challenges had easy fixes, they would already be solved. Educational systems, lack of experience, student agency, competitive (general and educational) culture, and a host of other factors that impact education all contribute to the complexity of these problems and their solutions. Many sincere and insightful educators are and have been engaged in addressing the problem, and anecdotal stories as well as new methodologies continually being proposed have made successful inroads that have benefited students. I believe, however, that there are internal conflicts in our thinking about the nature of human be-ing and our relationships with each other that make the problems more difficult and seemingly insolvable then they might be otherwise. In the next section, I will examine one of those internal conflicts. In the final chapter of this dissertation I will suggest an antidote by proposing an alternative perspective that can offer us new insights into thinking about these issues in ways to help us address them more effectively.

Problems of Rights-Based Education

One reason that community-learning environments can fall short of their expectations is that they are, at their core, often structurally conflicted (Roth & Lee, 2006). While they claim to honor sociality, many if not most of the new strategies (even those involving learning communities) continue to be built on the foundational premise of modern individualism and personal "rights" and "advantage." As discussed earlier, respect of the individual was a necessary correction to earlier abuses that disadvantaged whole sections of people. Yet taken to its extreme (as it can be in modern education), concern over maintaining these rights can easily create situations adverse to meaningful human community. Insisting on maintaining individual rights without also addressing our mutual responsibilities to others creates environments that are often detrimental to the possibility of sustaining, truly nurturing community.

Despite the sincere respect and honor many of the community learning approaches pay to human sociality, the main focus in many if not most of these types of learning communities remains on the individual: individual learning, individual achievement, individual empowerment, individual knowledge and understanding, individual skills and abilities, self-worth, and self-esteem. As I will discuss in later chapters, the uniqueness of any individual is critically important to relationship and even necessary for community, but when focus on the rights of the individual excludes all other responsibilities it is directly antithetical to the core of meaningful and powerful human relationship. Both the group and the individual are diminished. Relationships require becoming involved and honoring, supporting, and nurturing the other before the

self. It is that level of respect for a commitment to the other which makes the social experience so rich and meaningful.

Inconsistent experiences that are created when sociality is placed merely as an overlay to a system devoted to individualism and autonomy, prevents participants from taking full advantage of the benefits that come from learning in relationship. Thus, it is not surprising then that the final results often fall short of expectations. The rights-based, competitive system in which education is situated may be one of the most important explanations for why, until fairly recently, contemporary educational culture and learning methodologies either ignored or sought to minimize sociality in the classroom. When the basic framework of modern education teaches learners to be independent, masterful selves, the result has been that community has been viewed as an unwanted distraction. There is little wonder, then, why educators continue to struggle against this problem despite their efforts to introduce sociality into the system.

Ricoeur (1992) and others have noted that any model that begins with individuals and then tries to determine how they should be interrelated is going to fail to adequately address or encourage genuine sociality. This is also true in learning environments built on foundations of individualism. Even if the attempt is made to incorporate sociality into them, such learning models will still support isolation and independence and fail to fully address the relational nature of human be-ing. I argue that makes learning less effective. The alternative to an inward-looking, rights-based foundation is one based on an acknowledgement of modern philosophers' (among others) claim of an inescapable responsibility to others. Many are now recognizing this problem. But because there are so many systemic factors working to maintain the student as a "boundless, masterful self"

(Cushman, 1990), it is more difficult to see how this might be done in many of today's educational settings. Looking to other environments where responsibility to others and supportive human interaction is paramount to the experience itself can help to provide models that education might emulate.

Many pre-modern thinkers, for example, understood our sociality to be not only fundamental, but paramount in human flourishing. Though those societies maintained their own hindrances to human growth (for example, rigid class systems privileged only the elite, and strong tribal allegiances severely inhibited interaction with "outsiders" among others) their communities nevertheless were built on the premise of one's responsibility for the other and social interdependence. Revisiting them briefly can help us better understand what the word "community" meant in non-modern contexts. Understanding the power of what we have largely lost in relationships in modernism's pursuit of the individual can be beneficial to the conversation of how education might strengthen the valuable improvements we have gained in recognizing the worth of an individual while at the same time taking advantage of the power of supportive sociality for learning.

Differences in Pre-Modern and Modern Communal Relationships

Alasdair MacIntyre, whose provocative ideas have been greatly influential in the modern discourse on morality, says in *After Virtue* that in pre-modern times, the word "community" carried a deep and rich significance (see also Dupré, 1993; Milbank, 2006; Taylor, 2007). He claims that before the 1500s (a generally accepted demarcation between the pre-modern and modern eras), there was a predominantly communal social

cohesion that informed human interaction and gave meaning to all aspects of human relationships. Indeed, such an orientation was more than physical proximity or social cohesiveness. It served to describe not only who foundationally we were, but also how we were connected to others. MacIntyre (2007) writes,

> In many pre-modern, traditional societies it is through his or her membership in a variety of social groups that the individual identifies himself or herself and is identified by others. I am brother, cousin and grandson, member of this household, that village, this tribe. These are not characteristics that belong to human being accidentally, to be stripped away in order to discover 'the real me'. They are part of my substance, defining partially at least and sometimes wholly my obligations and my duties. Individuals inherit a particular space within an interlocking set of social relationships; lacking that space, they are nobody, or at best a stranger or an outcast. (pp. 33–34)

Because people saw themselves as fundamentally belonging to a larger whole (for example, a household, a village, a tribe, etc.), rather than as isolated or solitary beings, a pre-modern person's concept of self only had meaning in the context of the larger group. Since maintaining membership in the community was vital for identity, people concerned themselves with properly fulfilling their societal responsibilities. Responding to these responsibilities helped define people by structuring their lives.

Social connections were deontological; that is through them people incurred certain commonly understood obligations to the others around them. That made their relationships ethical. People's obligations taught virtue and defined character; therefore, character was nurtured and formed by society. Also, precisely because they defined morality those social responsibilities and obligations formed the primer for be-ing with each other. It was expected that those who were respected leaders in the community would provide a living example for others to emulate. Relationships supplied purpose and meaning to life's experiences.

One pre-modern thinker, Aristotle (384–322 B.C.), was especially important in laying the philosophical foundation for ethics which continues to inform our Western understanding of be-ing even today. For him the question of ethics centered on an understanding of "virtue" (*aretê*) which "1) renders good the thing itself of which it is the excellence, and 2) causes it to perform its function well. . . . [thus] the virtue or excellence of man, too, will be a characteristic which makes him a good man, and which causes him to perform his own function well" (Aristotle, trans. 1999, p. 41).

For Aristotle, then, people were virtuous according to how well they performed their work within the community; a butcher could be virtuous—as a butcher—not because he was kind or otherwise morally upstanding, but because he was a good butcher whose services were necessary to the community. Therefore, the better he did his work the more the community benefited, the more virtuous community member he was. Of course, his moral behavior would also be relevant to how well he could do his work, but it was not what made him virtuous as a butcher. In other words, one's work for the community, in response to moral obligations to the others in that society, defined a person's virtue. The better one contributed to society, the more virtuous that person was.

As Martin Ostwald explains in the introduction to his translation of *The Nicomachean Ethics*, for Aristotle, "moral action is impossible outside human society, for actions are virtuous or not when they are performed in relation to one's fellow men; a hermit is incapable of acting virtuously" (Aristotle, trans. 1999, p. xxiv). In other words, there was no individual pursuit of happiness; the good was not pursued and could not be attained separately from one's relationships with others. Instead something was understood to be "good" to the extent that it benefited the community as a whole.

Happiness was achieved through a life dedicated to "activities in conformity with virtue" (Aristotle, trans. 1999, p. 25) as one performed his duty to others well.

Since Aristotle believed that men and women who knew what the social good was would then act accordingly (Aristotle called practical knowledge or wisdom *phronesis*), he believed teaching virtue was education's main function. Aristotle (trans. 1999) wrote, "If a man acts blindly, i.e., using his natural virtue alone, he will fail; but once he acquires intelligence [phronesis], it makes a great difference in his action" (Aristotle, trans. 1999, p. 171). For him, those who were educated incurred a responsibility to use their education in service for the good of their society. They became examples for the rest of society on how to interact. Therefore through Aristotle and similar thinkers, ethics has long been associated with education. The purpose of education was to teach people to be virtuous, to teach people how to come together in support of one another in a community. Because in pre-modern times this usually unspoken social understanding of relationship formed the basis for defining human identity and purpose, or human be-ing, education was also closely linked to a sense of community.

MacIntyre (2007) asserts that in our modern age we have experienced a radical shift in our moral understanding of human relationship. He claims this shift is so cataclysmic we have "very largely, if not entirely—lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, [of] morality" (p. 2) without even being aware of the loss. In order to explain the problem to a modern audience, he explains that it is as if a great disturbance had destroyed all sciences as they currently exist. If this were to happen, as people tried to reconstruct what was lost from the bits and fragments of scientific knowledge that remained, the new sciences might "seem" like the old: similar

terminology being used, some people having vague memories of how some parts fit together, some fragments of remaining documents being used to teach the subjects, etc. However, MacIntyre claims that the new sciences wouldn't be useful because the context and coherence that gave them meaning would be lost. In fact, he maintains, they wouldn't even be science. MacIntyre (2007) argues "that in the actual world which we inhabit the language of morality [or ethics] is in the same state of grave disorder as the language of natural science in the imaginary world which I described" (p. 2).

Such a claim rings true for many people today. The modern way of relating to each other (for example, as "self-contained monads," as Leibniz called them) has changed the way people interact. According to MacIntyre (2007), since a sense of shared morality is no longer intact, many of our human interactions, even among family and friends, seem meaningless and amoral. Without community, ethics has lost its power to provide definitive direction for human interaction.

In addition to a personal uncertainty, there is a social malaise about morality as well. MacIntyre argues that we understand values so differently that morality now divides rather than unites us. Without a social order providing direction for a mutual agreement of ethics, there is no longer societal direction for understanding relationship either. Thus, well-meaning people can passionately appeal to ethics in arguments about moral issues confronting society today and still come to completely different conclusions. This is because ethics can no longer provide guidance for even how to think about morality.

Consequently, the modern self is lost because relationships have become less fulfilling and harder to maintain. This is what Cushman (1990) referred to as the "empty self." The moral relativism of today has confused people about their most fundamental

identity, thus isolating the individual and hampering community. As a result, many modern ways of coming together are more "collectives" than they are communities. As Cushman argues, people feel adrift. Our understanding of ethics has shifted from being a framework of responsibilities that allow us to meaningfully be with and for each other, to a delineation of rules that ensure personal rights are maintained, effectively separating us from each other even in association. (The ethical issues of war, abortion, healthcare, and education that MacIntyre lists in his book are earlier are examples of this move.) Thus, the topic of ethics in education is able to easily shift from issues of be-ing to less consequential issues of propriety and personal rights.[4]

As has been addressed, however, mankind has not always lived with such a disjointed understanding of sociality. Social relations maintained by commonly-accepted responsibilities to each other were strong in many pre-modern civilizations. Those ethics defined, guided, and made society cohesive. However, as MacIntyre (2007) contends "all those various concepts which inform our moral discourse were originally at home in larger totalities of theory and practice in which they enjoyed a role and function supplied by contexts of which they have now been deprived" (p. 10).

In addition to Cushman, other writers (such as MacIntyre, Solomon, and Milbank, among others) have suggested that the loss of human connection many experience today can convincingly be linked to ideas that have taken hold since the 1500s. Ironically, by turning inward to focus heavily on the self (that is, promoting human nature, abilities, and experiences as being individual), we have broken with the pre-modern understanding of community and radically altered mankind's perceptions of identity. Presumably the unstated assumption has been that if everyone's separate experience were made better

then the experience of our be-ing together would improve, but that has not necessarily been the case as many people have acknowledged.

Perhaps the shift to individualism was a strong reaction to some pre-modern commitments to the community that sometimes justified detrimental abuses. But while we should not forget the danger of privileging the community to the neglect of the individual (I contend this, too, is a misinterpretation of community), long neglect of the understanding for how to be in community with each other has often made it difficult for people today to enter into moral discourse and relationship as a society. Thus, today's social confusion is not so much a problem of evolution as one of devolution; as larger totalities that traditionally bound and structured relationships broke down, a shift in how people thought about their social responsibilities occurred. While not denying some positive things have come from this shift (such as social mobility, acknowledgement of minority voices, and education more readily accessible to more people, it is the negative aspects that now draw attention and demand investigation.

A Call for an Alternative Perspective

Many academic writers have recognized the strong connection between supportive relationships and learning. In response, educators are trying to introduce elements of sociality into their learning environments so that they might leverage the power inherent in human relationship. However, because they fundamentally misunderstand the nature of human relationship and the purpose of community, these new learning environments are not as powerful as they might be for helping students fulfill their potential as human beings.

If, then, as Palmer (1993), Noddings (2002), and hooks (2003) have noticed, our current ways of coming together are falling short of helping learners experience the kind of relational connectedness that helps them flourish, what alternatives are there? We can't (indeed I am not suggesting that we do) go back to pre-modern times. Are there, however, community models today that are built on more cohesive foundations which foster supportive, nurturing environments that education could look to for viable examples? If so, would such models be able to effectively enhance learning in purposeful ways? What would such models look like?

This dissertation echoes the claim many make that human relationship is fundamental to the experience of human be-ing and that those relationships carry an obligation of responsibility towards others. Therefore, honoring the phenomenon of human connection—particularly that of individuals working ethically together to create unity—can greatly enhance the experience of learning. I suggest that there are contemporary communal models with an understanding of, and approach to, human relations and the nature of learning that differ fundamentally from modern thought. These, I propose, can be helpful to educators in making formal education more meaningful. Formed as they were before modern thoughts of individualism took hold, these alternative models are grounded in a radically alternative view of the world, which they have found useful to maintain. Because of their different perspective they are interested in and focus on measures of success not typically found in modern educational settings but which speak directly to human relatedness.

For example, some religious models that come from Abrahamic traditions, as well as many Asian cultures, focus more on learning and responding to one's responsibilities

to others than on maintaining individual rights. Changes in beliefs and behavior, even when not entirely successful, are valued over mastery of skills or knowledge. Experiencing nurturing relationship and constructing purposeful lives for participants are principal concerns over cognitive learning, especially whenever it is divorced from moral action. Where educational learning communities are attempting to harness the power of social relationships in order to enhance an individual's education (usually knowledge), many religious communities switch that emphasis. For them, education is most valuable to individuals because it can enrich their social relationships (or lived experience). For them, fruitful human interaction is paramount.

Not surprisingly, some of the communities which honor a more pre-modern perspective of humanity differ quite widely from a modern scientific view in their understanding of not only the nature of knowledge, but how it is best obtained (both the means and the ends of education). Thus while the scientific method attempts to know precisely what something is—the thing itself in isolation—many religious learning environments by contrast prize instead more holistic and inclusive experiences. For them the quality of the event itself is just as important as the quality of what is learned from it because the two are taken in tandem; in other words, be-ing (which is always experienced relationally) is the principal guiding concern.

Communities with such a strong relational emphasis are rich and complex phenomena. Their method both for teaching who they are and validating the legitimacy of their claims is often through stories. Such stories are not how-to guides in the same way that modern books on relationship are. Their proof is not shown through empirical research. Rather, these stories, which have been passed down for thousands of years

largely unaltered are usually given as incomplete packages that invite learners to "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37, King James Version). Thus, understanding a community's stories is an important educational tool for community. Stories reveal not only the values and beliefs of a community, they also define be-ing, or how people are related within community. Because they are preoccupied with moral relationship and the nature of supportive human be-ing, religious stories can also be helpful to academia in looking at the construction of their own communities and ways to make them stronger.

I propose, therefore, to examine a set of stories that many will be familiar with because they are part of all three of the Abrahamic traditions: Islam, Judaism, and my own, Christianity. I will examine the Adam and Eve stories of the Creation, the Fall, and the Expulsion from the garden. Though each tradition reads these stories a little differently (indeed those within other Christian traditions read the story differently), I believe they can be helpful in revealing another understanding of the world, of human connectedness, and of community that all who are associated with these traditions will be familiar with. Though my personal reading may differ from others', I believe the stories can provide common ground for opening up a dialogue about the nature of community and the power within them to educate. My experience with these stories point to particular aspects of community that I believe are helpful in thinking about the nature of transformative learning for education. I propose readings stories as a way to open a dialogue focused on the issue of relationship in learning. All who are within the Abrahamic traditions know these seminal stories. They teach us about the nature of relational be-ing and situate us within our more specific religious communities.

Though it is impossible to explore this alternative understanding of be-ing fully in the scope of this dissertation, an understanding of how this perspective might make the work of learning communities different is, I believe, a productive contribution to the understanding of learning communities for education. In this dissertation, then I propose exploring aspects of religious community that help shed light on human be-ing. Such an understanding can be helpful in thinking about how educators might best leverage human relationship for learning within education. In the course of this exploration, I will seek to convince the reader that three key aspects for understanding community include 1) diversity, an appreciation of each participant as uniquely valuable, 2) unity, both the actual way people interact and the goal for coming together, and 3) work, the means for coming together. I propose that these three aspects (informed by our ontological responsibility to others) are revealed through the close examination of the Adam and Eve narratives (through the expulsion from the garden) and that understanding how individuality, unity, and work help to create community can generate rewarding insights about improving educational learning communities.

Chapter 2: Using Narrative to Rethink Human Be-ing

Because I am primarily using narrative in this work (that is, the stories of the first three chapters of Genesis) to understand human be-ing, a brief examination of the use of narrative in scholarly studies is appropriate. As an applied field, a social science, education has looked to any number of methodologies to yield helpful results that aid learners. Indeed, educational researchers, though certainly heavily influenced by empirical sciences, have found methodologies from a wide variety of disciplines, including those in the hard sciences, social sciences, and also the humanities all helpful in answering their questions about learning. In the following section, I will discuss the tradition of using narratives to understand humans and human activity (a method often employed in the humanities) as a way to further understand the power of relationship in transformative learning. I will also explain more carefully why I feel using these narratives can be useful in helping us understand how learning communities might be strengthened by thinking about human relationship differently.

Background on Narrative

Aristotle and Augustine are two important pre-modern thinkers whose writings continue to influence our understanding of narrative today. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle (trans. 1996) argues that all storytelling—indeed, all art—is mimetic; it imitates life. Because the story is an imitation of life, he suggests we must look at the story itself, rather than only at its reference, to understand the meaning it conveys. According to Aristotle (trans. 1996), plot is the most important thing for understanding story, for it is in

the plot that the character of the agents of a story is revealed. Through plot, the fragmentary elements of lives are brought together in a cohesive whole.

Both Aristotle's understanding of mimesis and of plot are important influences in contemporary narrative theory (see for example, Paul Ricoeur, 1984, pp. 31–51). Aristotle argues that ethics are formed through good habit, and good habit is inculcated, first of all, by living in a society led socially (although perhaps not politically) by those with good habits. Narrative theorists use this insight combined with the insights of the *Poetics* to suggest (as does Aristotle) that story is one way of inculcating ethics. Thus, the interpretation of stories that are important to the culture is a way of understanding both oneself and one's culture.

Augustine's *Confessions* is also important in the development of narrative studies. Though Augustine doesn't discuss narrative, he essentially invents autobiography as a narrative style and uses it as a means of establishing, for himself as well as for his audience, who he is. That is, Augustine takes the elements of his life and, as Aristotle suggests, makes a whole of them through the story he tells of himself. Secondly, Augustine explicitly reflects on memory and its place in his narrative. A narrative is (to use Ricoeur's term) an emplotment of a portion of time, therefore, time is central to narrative. But few in the history of philosophy have given time much consideration. Indeed, most scientific inquiry proceeds on the assumption that what we are most interested in finding are timeless truths. For such a framework of thinking, time is inessential. Augustine contests that view, and his argument is still worth considering (see, for example, Paul Ricoeur, 1984, pp. 5–30). Augustine's reflection on memory and its place in narrative is important because it shows how story gathers together moments from

the remembered past and puts them together into a coherent whole. It "re-members," so to speak.

Eric Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1953) is one of the most influential books on literary criticism in English. Auerbach argues that the great stories of Western literature reveal the reality of the world in which they occur. That is, we learn about the world around us by reading stories, such as those of the Greek heroes and those of the Bible. Northrup Frye in the *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (1957) argues that the "mythical" mode of criticism make a whole of each of the other kinds of literary criticism. By "mythical criticism" he means the criticism of stories that have significant meaning for cultures and peoples. Frye's work has influenced the ways in which later thinkers approach narratives, particularly those of the Bible. They have taken up biblical stories as "myths" in Frye's sense—not as false stories—but as stories that are fundamental to the self-understanding of a group or community of people.

The insights and approaches of Auerbach and Frye to understanding the human world, cultures, and peoples stand in sharp contrast to modern scientific methodologies used to study the physical world. Contemporary philosophers, in particular phenomenological and hermeneutical philosophers have explored why different approaches are needed to understand the human world. Hans-Georg Gadamer is one of the most important contemporary philosophers to explore the relationship between knowledge, truth and method. In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (1989) argues that, contrary to most contemporary suppositions, scientific method cannot adequately give us the truth because the truth goes beyond the limits imposed by a methodological investigation. Instead of method, one needs hermeneutics, this is "interpretation."

Gadamer's claim is about the nature of understanding itself: understanding is ultimately hermeneutical rather than methodological. Gadamer does not explicitly discuss the place or function of narrative, but his arguments and theory have been extremely influential on those thinkers, such as Ricoeur, who have discussed such questions.

Truth and Method begins with a discussion of the way in which Western philosophy has changed its understanding of art, increasingly coming to understand its meaning as subjective, moving from an understanding of art prior to the late eighteenth century in which it was assumed that art could "say" truth, to an understanding in the twentieth century in which art is a matter of purely subjective meaning. Gadamer's argument is that this movement of aesthetic theory was a mistake: truth can be experienced in art, but the truth of art may not be recoverable by any methodological approach to understanding the art work. That mistake has come about, he says, because we have focused on the work of art only in terms of its aesthetic qualities, allowing us to think of the "pure" work of art. However, there is in reality no such thing as a "pure" work of art. Every art work is—ontologically—part of not only an aesthetic world, but also part of an historical, social, moral, etc. world; our understanding of the work of art must include those qualities as well as its aesthetic qualities.

Building on this insight, in the second part of *Truth and Method*, "The extension of the question of truth to understanding the human sciences" (p. 151), Gadamer argues that hermeneutics, in other words, "human understanding," is always historical. Understanding is always an act of historical consciousness. This does not mean that we try to reconstruct the original world of the work of art as closely as possible in order to understand that work. Rather, the understanding we have now is the result of our

historical situation. We must recognize that the original meaning no longer exists. The work of art does not have a static meaning that persists through time. Because its meaning is a part of the historical/social/cultural world, its meaning changes over time. The fact that the work of art is part of the present historical situation is part of the meaning that the work has now. Since the observer is both part of that historical situation and part of a social situation that has come about in history, he or she can only understand the work of art by understanding his or her own situation in history and culture. This means that all understanding is also self-understanding: to understand the meaning of a work of art is to understand something about myself and my part in the whole of my culture. It is to learn something about what we can understand because of who we are.

In the final part of his book, Gadamer looks at how language has meaning, arguing that it is much the same way that the work of art has meaning: We can only understand a sentence if we can anticipate its meaning. We must have a prejudice, literally a pre-judgment (a history), in order to understand at all. For example, we pre-judge that the person we hear across the room is speaking English. If we did not do that, we would hear only gibberish and not be able to understand what he says, shouting across the room to us. Thus prejudices—the aspects of the speaker, the hearer, and the sentence's historical situation—are necessary to understanding, and at the same time they can mislead our interpretations, sometimes seriously. The solution to the dilemma of using our pre-judgments without falling victim to them is, first, to recognize those prejudices and the productive role they play and, second, to place them in question, to test them against the possible truth of other claims and possible prejudices.

As applied to narrative theory, Gadamer's thinking shows us that our most important forms of understanding are outside of the kinds of understanding produced by scientific methodologies. In its appeal to scripture as one form of such understanding—an appeal made in philosophical terms and not in religious terms: scripture reading as a legitimate example of non-methodological understanding regardless of whether one accepts the claims of religion—Gadamer's work opens up the possibility of using readings of other narratives as well as scripture as means for legitimate understanding.

Paul Ricoeur (1992) following in the same tradition as Gadamer, has been very influential in contemporary discussions of narrative. Ricoeur argues that humans are anchored in the material world by bodies, and our bodies articulate that anchoring via language. Ultimately, however, the unity of human life is found not in philosophy or science—in other words, not in reflective thought—but in poetics of which narrative is the prime example. He explicitly acknowledges his indebtedness to Aristotle (see, for example, Ricoeur, 1984, pp. 31–51), borrowing from Aristotle the notion of "emplotment." To tell a story is to create a plot; it is an act of emplotment. To answer the question "Who am I?" is to find oneself emploted, able to narrate one's own defining story. Thus, as we learn to narrate that story, we learn who we are and how to take up the emplotment of the story in which we are now embedded. MacIntyre (2007) also recognized this. He states,

> ...man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal. ..I can only answer the question, 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question, 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?' We enter human society, that is, with one or more imputed characters—roles into which we have been drafted—and we have to learn what they are in order to be able to understand how others respond to us and how our responses to them are apt to be construed. (p. 216)

But this ability to take up the emplotment in which we are embedded is not, according to Ricoeur, merely the ability to repeat what has been forced on us by history and culture. For the narration of a story requires *mimesis* ("imitation" in Greek). To imitate a story is to act "as if." It is to use imagination to bring the various strands and fragments of a life into a whole (Ricoeur, 1984, pp. 54–77).

Donald Polkinghorne (1998), influential in introducing the use of narrative in contemporary social science, explains,

> Ricoeur proposes that narrative discourse is the linguistic, hermeneutically reasoned expression of the human experience of time. By telling stories and writing history, we provide a public shape for what ordinarily remains "chaotic, obscure, and mute," lying outside the daily focus on getting things done. The contents and particular references of histories and fictional stories are set in the temporal understanding of existence that is inherent in narrative structure. . . . The retrieval of the past in narrative form is an expression of our historical structure of understanding. Ricoeur concludes, "The reasons for which we tell stories are rooted in the same temporal structure that connects our 'élan' towards the future, our attention to the present, and our capacity to emphasize and to recollect the past." (pp. 134–135)

Polkinghorne's interest in narrative came about through personal experiences of his own and of his students who saw a deep disconnect between social science research and practice. Researchers often complain that practitioners do not use the research results in their practice. That led Polkinghorne to wonder what type of knowledge practitioners do use. What he discovered was that, by and large, practitioners relied on narrative knowledge—stories.

In *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, Polkinghorne (1988) argues that humans are unique and that human knowledge and understanding are also unique. Because of our capacity for consciousness and language, we experience the world through "culture and meaning" (p. 3). For humans "experience is meaningful" and narrative is the "primary form by which human experience is made meaningful" (p. 1).

Of course, research into meaning is not unique to narrative inquiry. In fact, Polkinghorne argues,

> research into meaning is the most basic of all inquiry…the whole scientific enterprise is grounded ultimately in the perceptual and meaning-making operations of human consciousness…The study of the realm of meaning precedes an understanding of the manner in which human beings create knowledge, and thus informs the operations of science itself. (p. 9)

Hence, because the "realm of meaning" is different from the "material realm," different strategies must be used to explore it. If the same type of approach is used it requires the "translations of the aspects of one reality into incommensurate categories drawn from another realm" (pp. 9–10). He argues,

> Although the material realm might best be studied by the use of quantifying procedures and statistical estimates, the realm of meaning is best captured through the qualitative nuances of expression in ordinary language. The human disciplines will need to look to those disciplines, rather than to the physical sciences, for a scientific model for inquiry of the region of consciousness. (p. 10)

Thus, for Polkinghorne, narrative "is the primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful" (p. 11). He recommends that the human sciences should study human beings by focusing on meaning, and particularly on narrative meaning.

Since Polkinghorne's publication of his important study in 1988, the use of narrative inquiry has literally exploded across the social sciences, including education. Jerome Bruner's work in narrative (1986, 1991, 2002) has been particularly influential in education. In a critique of modernism, Bruner (1991) notes that at least since the Enlightenment,

> the study of the mind has centered principally on how man achieves 'true' knowledge of the world…the objective…has been to discover how we achieve 'reality,' that is to say, how we get a reliable fix on the world that is, as it were, assumed to be immutable and, as it were, 'there to be observed." (p. 1)

But, as Bruner points out, we know now that our understanding of the world, our growth in knowledge and education is not a matter of the mind logically grasping the objective world (p. 2) because "knowledge is never 'point-of-viewless'" (p. 3). As a consequence, many knowledge domains are "not organized by logical principles or associative connections, particularly those that have to do with man's knowledge of himself, his social world, his culture" (p. 4). As a consequence, we can not understand the human world in the same way that we understand the physical world and the world of causes. According to Bruner, "we organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative—stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on" (p. 4). Though this is a radically different approach to understanding the world, narratives have their own standards for credibility. Narratives are "governed by convention and 'narrative necessity' rather than by empirical verification and logical requiredness" (p. 4).

Michael Connelly and Jean Clandinin (1990, 2000) are important current narrative theorists and researchers in the field of education. Over years of experience with narrative inquiry, they have witnessed the slow but steady evolution of this methodology as the use of narrative has become increasingly widespread across many different disciplines:

> Narrative is a way of characterizing the phenomena of human experience and its study which is appropriate to many social science fields….literary theory, history, anthropology, drama, art, film, theology, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, education, and even aspects of evolutionary biological science. (1990, p. 2)

They note in *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (2000) that narrative inquiry was once considered a marginal aspect of educational research, but it is now very much a part of the education discourse, just as it is in many other social science

disciplines, as well as in the humanities (for an example in philosophy, see Martha Nussbaum, 1990). While narrative is featured most prominently in qualitative research, it has also made inroads into quantitative research as well (see Jane Elliott, 2005).

For researchers who use narrative, “what counts as stories, the kind of stories they choose to study, or the methods they use for study vary” (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, pp. 4–5). Pinnegar and Daynes do not “assume that there should be unanimity among narrative practitioners on key points of philosophy, method, or argument” (p. 28). This is a strength in that “multiple views make for closer attention to a wider variety of human experience" (p. 28).

My Approach

Given, then, the power of story and narrative inquiry for understanding ourselves and the world, I will use a hermeneutic approach to narrative analysis as a way of exploring three Biblical stories and what they reveal about human be-ing and about community, particularly as it affects an environment of learning. As Aristotle, Auerbach, Frye (and others) argue, stories are a very important part of any culture, and they play a critical role in helping us to understand ourselves and one another. The scientific method is useful for understanding the world and certain aspects of human experience. But to understand human be-ing, which is to explore meaning, narratives are essential, for human meaning (as Polkinghorne and Bruner suggest) is largely narrative meaning. These stories, I believe, are one way to explore human meaning because they can reveal important aspects of our world to us.

As mentioned earlier, the stories of the creation and of Adam and Eve are not randomly-selected stories. These particular stories have been handed down through centuries of time. They have been read, interpreted, taught and re-taught (as well as explored through every artistic medium) by wise and educated people throughout recorded history. As part of the great stories of Western literature, they are able, as Auerbach notes in *Mimesis*, to reveal the reality of the world. Or as Frye would put it, they are fundamental to our self-understanding as a people. These stories continue to capture people's interest, to invite them into an exploration of understanding.

As narratives that three of the major religious traditions (Islam, Judaism, and Christianity) all share, a follower of any of these traditions can recognize the elements of the story and be able to enter a dialogue of its meaning, even when their interpretations may be different from each other, and from my own, Robert Alter (1981) demonstrated that the stories of the Bible turn out to be inherently insightful into the human condition—whether or not one is a believer. For Walter Brueggemann (1999) and others, the Bible demands us to read and understand how the world might be different. It "is an offer that the world may be 'taken' differently" (p. 16). As Aristotle and Ricoeur argue, reading stories like these is an act of emplotment, of finding ourselves in the story and answering the question, "Who am I?" These stories and the resultant conversations around them allow us to know more than we know as individuals as we enter a dialogue of discussion for what they teach us.

In analyzing these stories, I bring who I am to the conversation I am attempting to open with others. My culture and background (especially my belief in God and membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) play an inevitable role in

my interpretation of the text. But as Gadamer points out, prejudice (or pre-judgment) is not an obstacle to human inquiry; in fact, it is what makes it possible for us to understand anything in the first place. Having prejudices (being a human with language and culture) are the conditions for all understanding and action, and therefore for all knowing, including scientific knowing. Prejudice is not a problem in that it makes it impossible to get to the "true" or "objective" meaning of a text, since no such meaning exists. But that does not mean it is all subjective meaning, either.

According to Gadamer (1989), human knowing is genuine knowledge, not emotion. It is the foundation for all other knowledge. Nevertheless, not all meanings are equally valid. Arguments must communicate clearly and be persuasive. Social standards must be respected. The hermeneutic tradition opens a space where one's prejudices can be challenged. In dialogue and persuasion, one's ideas can be offered up and changed according to new evidence as new learning occurs and new meaning is revealed.

My approach, following Hans Frei (1974) will be to examine what the story itself tells us. My prejudices can be challenged, first and foremost, by what the text itself says. Frei argues that the nineteenth- and twentieth-century focus on uncovering the historicity of the documents which make up the New Testament has led to our no longer understanding its narrative structure. We have, he contends, shifted from a situation in which the interpretation of the Bible meant understanding how the patterns and stories of its narratives exemplify both the lives we live and the lives we could live, to a situation in which we are concerned only with the external references of those narratives. According to Frei (1974), prior to the eighteenth century, meaning was in the text; now it is outside the text, whether that "outside" is doctrine or historical events. In my analysis of these

stories, I will presume that the meaning is found primarily in the text itself. I am reading these stories as "stories," and not as historical documents or predominantly scripture.

As stories, then, focusing on a careful reading of the parts of the text will help define the meaning of the story as a whole. At the same time, the meaning as a whole can help in understanding particular parts, or verses, of the text. In this manner each part can contribute to a deeper understanding of a long-cherished story whose insights have been significant in many generations of lives. The end result will not be a definitive list of "facts" or "principles." that I can claim to have discovered or even "prove" are true. Even the particular aspects of community that I assert are key—individuality, unity, and work—to understanding community are those that became important to me as I read the text with particular questions in mind: First, "what can these seminal stories teach me about the nature of be-ing, particularly in relation to an other?" and second, "How can they help me understand purposeful community?"

My purpose here is to present a reading of these stories in a careful manner so as to help others see why my interpretation, given the text, is a reasonable one and to be careful enough that such analysis can be a useful way to think about community. Lastly and maybe even most importantly, in offering my reading of the text I wish to invite others into a shared study of the text that will show with enough persuasion why these stories have become so powerful to me that readers will be drawn in and wish to experience the stories for themselves as well. As has been noted elsewhere, the power of education happens within associations that engage: "We feel deep kinship with some subject; we want to bring students into that relationship, to link them with the knowledge that is so life-giving to us (Palmer, 1993, p. x). I feel that about these stories. Each

reader's own interpretations (both those that support my reading and others that may contrast, contradict, or add further dimensions to it) increases the "truth" of the story in two ways. First, it adds to the ever increasing understanding of what the stories mean; secondly it increases the "truth" of what the stories say about relationship in the form of our shared lived experiences.

A New Perspective on Learning From Genesis

In the next three chapters, I will tell the story of Adam's and Eve's experiences of learning to form community as they are told in the first three chapters of Genesis in the Old Testament. These stories encompass three major experiences (the Creation, the Fall, and the Expulsion from the Garden) that I find particularly helpful in thinking about the nature of relationship within community. In the Creation story, God takes individual elements, which at the beginning are inert and powerless to create a living world. Alone, they are simply unorganized elements, but they are each unique. As God brings them and his other creations together in supportive relationships with each other that do not diminish their diversity but rather open up new possibilities for their unique abilities, they become able not only to support life, but also to create it. This is not because they are morphed into something new, but because each creation, working together, is able to bring strengths and abilities that together allow the community to do what alone the elements could not. God then repeats the process by bringing mankind, Adam and Eve, together. Thus, the Creation story speaks to new possibilities and more meaningful life as separate entities and people are organized and learn to work together in community.

Secondly, during the story of the Fall, Adam and Eve experience the consequences of separation. When God calls both to account for their rebellious actions, Adam and Eve attempt to distance themselves from each other when accepting the penalty of their disobedience. In the moment that they become alienated from each other, they learn they will experience a profound loss of association with God. Death, the ultimate experience of human loss and separation, is also introduced into their existence. Yet, I will argue, because they now know the devastation of alienation, they can better appreciate (and work harder to establish and maintain) a unity. In other words, because they now know of the separation best exemplified by death, they can now also experience a connected life much more abundantly.

Thirdly, as they are expelled from the garden, God explains to Adam and Eve what each of them will uniquely contribute to the human community. He also tells them that their environment has been altered in order to give them particular experiences. Their environment will then contribute to (and intensify) the learning they will experience as they work together to build community. Therefore, the story of Adam and Eve is informative in looking at the implications for the role of work in a community.

Almost all of us have experienced the keen loneliness that occurs from realizing our own abilities are not enough for particular tasks we need to accomplish. It is extremely powerful to be reminded not only that others can supply that which we lack, but that we also possess unique abilities needed by others at one time or another. Learning how to compliment the strengths and weaknesses of each other can reinforce the importance of coming together in relationship and in honoring the unique characteristics we, as well as others, possess. Additionally, it honors our responsibility to

others, a duty inextricable from be-ing. These stories show us how individuals can come together in unity.

Thus, the stories of Adam and Eve's creation, fall, and expulsion can be read as representative stories or types that help to define our understanding of how to form and then "be" in community. According to the stories, as Adam and Eve live in Eden, they only know they are to be (exist) with each other, but how and even the reasons why this is important are not made clear. At the expulsion, however, God explains how they are to come together. Though their experiences will be different, those unique experiences will allow them to bring enhanced understanding and diversity to the experience of working together in order to maintain their very existence. There is now a very compelling reason for be-ing together and each can bring a unique perspective to the experience that the other cannot provide. Interestingly, it is actually outside of Eden rather than in it that community not only becomes possible but also purposeful and rich. Outside the garden, Adam and Eve can fulfill the commandments God has given them to learn how to create fruitful increase, how to multiply, and how to nurture each other. In these experiences, only possible now that community is possible, Adam and Eve can experience growth and learn of their potential. Thus, these stories of beginning, the first orderings that bring mankind out of chaos, are meaningful stories to look at for trying to understand the phenomenon of community, particularly how the elements of diversity, unity, and work can come together in powerful ways.

Finally, the last chapter will explore what implications the Adam and Eve stories might have for our understanding of both relationship in general and educational learning communities specifically. I suggest that learning experiences might change if educational

communities were to switch the paradigm used in education to more holistic, responsibility-based orientations from those commonly used today. If we approached education with a different understanding of relationship, responsibility, and community, could learning become a deeper, more inclusive learning experience, for all, as well as more nurturing to the growth of the whole self? Would they, or the learning itself, become more moral? Would we learn differently if our be-ing together were fundamentally different? Also, because they emphasize the importance of human relationship for learning, could new types of learning communities also be more successful in positively transforming the lives of those who experience them?

If so, could learning communities become more successful in increasing the amount of learning retention that occurs for those who participate in them? How might students learn to see each other and what might their experience be in doing so if they are encouraged to reach out for connection, both with each other and with the subject matter? These are all questions that arise from a different understanding of relationship and learning. I believe the Adam and Eve stories can help us think about these questions in new and exciting ways.

Theoretical discussions yield these types of questions and provide a place to think through their resulting implications; they do not attempt to decisively answer them. The stories themselves indicate that the answers will come differently for everyone through their own lived experience. Therefore, I am clearly pointing to further development of these ideas, not focusing on specific solutions to the types of learning problems enumerated throughout this dissertation.

I believe that showing the view of human be-ing as revealed in the Genesis narratives allows important, and hopefully exciting, possibilities for an alternative framework to think about the challenges present in today's educational learning communities. Using stories can also open a discussion that invites participation from others also willing to join in an exploration of such questions together. Helping to illuminate the theoretical foundations of how to be together in learning can allow a new perspective of education to emerge. I believe such a journey will be fruitful in yielding new approaches for facing new problems in the future. In the final chapter I will suggest related studies that might be conducted to further explore and study the concept of community in creating learning environments that work to truly enhance human be-ing, human relationship, and human potential.

Chapter 3: "God Saw That it was Good"—The Creation as Supportive Otherness

A Purposeful Creation

> 1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6 ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9 ¶ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was* good. (Genesis 1:1–10)[5]

The first story of the Bible is a story of beginnings, of ordered creation. Comprising the first two chapters of Genesis, it is essentially one story that is told twice. As the story starts, we read that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (1:1) and the earth is "without form, and void" (1:2). Where there is darkness (1:2), God creates light (1:3), an opposite, and sees that it is "good" (1:4). Using light as an opposing element, God then divides the light from the darkness and creates the day and the night, the evening and the morning (1:4–5). By relating one thing to another, God has begun to establish an order that makes those elements meaningful; in relationship to each other, light and darkness now determine the day (1:5). However, neither the light nor the darkness alone constitute a "day;" nor do light and dark cease to maintain their otherness and meld into a new element called "day." Each element remains though now they exist in association with each other. Coming from the relationship between light and darkness, a "day" is created. Since it is called the "first day" we can assume it did not exist before.

Now precisely because of light's and dark's relationship there is something more; light and dark together begin to mark time. There are days.

God then continues to divide the universe's elements. Where there is darkness and water, he creates light and firmament (1:6). The firmament (or heaven) divides the waters above and below the heavens; the dry land, or earth, divides the waters below (1:6–10). Now instead of being chaotic, the elements are ordered. They stand in complimentary relation to one another, and God sees that this is "good" (1:10). The Hebrew word for "good" primarily draws attention to an object's quality and fitness for its purpose; it can also indicate "fruitfulness" (Jenni & Westermann, 1997, p. 489). Thus this suggests that when God establishes these relationships he has a particular purpose in mind and that these particular associations are good for their specific purpose. They are good because they are productive.

In these verses we can see a couple of things. First, none of God's creations stands alone or is self-determined. God creates each and immediately places them in relationship (1:4, 6, 9). Also because God sees his creations are good only after being placed in relationship, it indicates that none of them are fully created (their purpose is not established) until they are placed in that relationship to something else. Second, though their relationships help to define them, each entity is unique. Because their relationships constitute the organization of the universe, the absence of any one element would alter some part of the universe. And because as the relationships are organized things are good (in other words, fit for a purpose and fruitful), it is also likely that the whole would be less good for its purpose if any of the elements were missing from the ensemble. Thus

each element is important; each serves a purpose with the others as they form an ordered whole.

In these ten verses of Genesis, I believe it is possible to see God following a pattern as he organizes. When he creates, God does not produce an abundance of just one thing. Instead it is because he organizes several elements together (light, dark, firmament, seas, etc.) that there is abundance. After dividing the elements God leverages each element's diversity by bringing it into relationship with the other elements. The associations of various elements consist of entities often considered to be contrasts (light/darkness, firmament/water, earth/seas). They might even be considered opposites. But opposing elements are put in supporting partnerships, and because they are different from each other, each has something unique to add. These relationships will allow the elements to do some very powerful things. Though one element or another may be more dominant at any given time (for example, the light of the day or the darkness of the night), they are placed in relationship. They exist in conjunction with each other. These verses illustrate that nothing exists outside of relationship, or without at least one "other." And it is from the relationship that their function seems to be derived; at least it is not until they are in relationship that God pronounces them "good" (1:10).[6]

By lending support, each element's difference also helps to define the other[s] with which it is in relation. What is the light? In addition to whatever other characteristics light possesses, it is now also not the darkness. As we see from the story, darkness is its own entity and not merely the absence of light (1:4). The firmament is not simply the empty space that is not filled by the earth or the seas (1:6–10) as we might think of it

today. Moreover, the seas are not the firmament, nor the earth. Thus, it is through their relationships that each becomes more defined as itself.

The world as described in these verses is not constituted by scarcity, in other words "things" and the "absence of things." According to this story, the cosmos is defined by abundance, by elements in relation to other things that create even more things. As described by the Creation story, there is no empty space; the world is full.

> 11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. (Genesis 1:11–12)

Before the elements were organized purposefully, there was only chaotic matter. The formless earth was void without anything on it (1:2). Now organized into relationships, the earth begins to bring forth seed, to be fruitful. In its relationships with the other creations, the earth can now sustain life. In response to God's commandment, it produces grass, herbs, and fruit trees "yielding seed after his kind" (1:12). Having seed means they can reproduce or perpetuate themselves and thus maintain increase. And again, God sees it is good (1:12).

> 14 ¶ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good. (Genesis 1:14–18)

In relation to the firmament, light not only divides the day and night (as earlier); now lights also act as signs, for seasons, for days, and years (1:14). Again, within productive relationships, the different lights have varied responsibilities to perform

specific tasks. Within those relationships God gives some elements particular responsibilities. For example, the greater light does not rule everything, it rules the day (1:16); likewise the lesser light rules the night (1:16). But even here, these powers work for the creation as a whole; in their ebb and flow, they are signs and time markers (1:14). Light acts in a particular sphere of influence (either morning or Day), but this still must be done in conjunction with the other elements; its contribution does not overpower the other elements in fulfilling its commandment. As each element is put into relationship with other things and they begin to work harmoniously, each new step of ordering appears to accomplish its purpose because God continues to see it is good (or fit for its purpose, Jenni & Westermann, 1997) and because the relationships allow their participants to become fruitful (1:22, 24).

Within their relationships, God's creations stand in supporting contrast to, rather than in antagonism against, one another. Functionally, they seem to complement rather than compete. Though this is not always true of opposing forces, within these specific relationships, the elements can work together while still maintaining each element's particularity. In each step the cosmos produces more life, thus making the whole more productive and fruitful.

As the elements and now the flora begin to work in harmony, God then creates the animals. Within the relationships God has organized, more environments than just the dry land can generate and sustain life:

> 20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the

> earth. 23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 24 ¶ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. (Genesis 1:20–25).

As the firmament, earth, and seas work in relationship to each other, together they provide more than one specific kind of space able to support one particular type of existence. The dry land becomes the primary dwelling for cattle, creeping things, and other "beast[s] of the earth" (1:25). However the waters favor other creatures. Though the King James Version references only "great whales" the New International Version indicates there is great abundance in the environment hosted by the waters: "And God said, 'Let the water *teem with living creatures. . . '* So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds. . . . And God saw that it was good" (NIV 1:20–21, italics added). Interestingly, the fowl seem able to participate in all three environments: they come forth abundantly from the waters (1:20) and multiply in the earth (1:22). They also fly "in the open firmament of heaven" (1:20).[7] Because the elements are in relationship, no single one sustains any principal kind of life without all the other elements that are supporting and defining them; yet because they work in conjunction (rather than antagonistically) with each other, their diversity provides three different environments: "the open firmament in heaven" (1:20), "the waters" (1:21), and the "earth" (1:24). More than one kind of living environment nurtures and sustains life. This allows a greater variety of different animals to exist and flourish. The harmony seems purposeful; as commanded it brings forth and nurtures an abundant range of life. God produces. His creations now imitate their creator by re-producing.

Like the relationships that maintain their environs, the species presumably also have responsibilities to others through some function, or work, they perform. Though gender is not mentioned in this story until later in conjunction with man (see verse 27), the animals must also experience "other-ness" (supplied in this story primarily by the difference of gender) because the water creatures and fowl are blessed by God and specifically commanded to "be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth" (1:22). For the other animals God says, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind" (1:24–25). Yet because God sees that these creations are also "good" (1:25), it is another indication the creation of the animals follows the pattern that has been consistent throughout the story.

> 26 ¶ And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (Genesis 1:26–31)

As with his other creations, God creates Man not as a solitary being (as a solitary man), but in this case, as a bi-gendered pair: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; *male and female created he them*" (1:27, italics added).

Like light and dark, heaven and earth, land and sea, God creates male and female and places them in relationship to each other. In the same pattern as when the evening and the morning create a day, so the male and female create "man."[8] The diversity makes possible the unity, and the unity includes their diversity.

For no other of God's creations does he indicate as close a relationship with himself as when God says of Man, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (1:26). I will explore the implications of what "our image" and "our likeness" might mean for understanding Man's nature in the next chapter. For this discussion, however, it seems important to note that such a statement in connection with the whole creation process might provide some insight into God's purpose for creating the world, its environs, and everything living on it. Following his proposal to make Man like himself, God gives Man the following authority: "let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (1:28). Furthermore, God says he has also given Man "every herb bearing seed," and the "fruit of [every] tree yielding seed…for meat" (1:29). Thus, all things seem to have been made for Man.

These verses point out that as they are situated in the world (that is, connected to all of God's creations), Man enjoy particularly abundant relationships. First, as mentioned, their relationship to God is stronger than any other creation: only Man are made "like" God, in "his *own* image" (1:26–27). Additionally, Man are not only commanded to be fruitful and multiply like all of God's other creations, they also mimic God's work by being made responsible for all of God's other creations. About this responsibility James Faulconer (2003) writes,

> Human beings are the queens and kings of creation. However, contrary to some common ideas of what it means to be a king or queen, the Israelite king was not merely a willful tyrant. The king was the representative of the people before God. His righteousness brought blessing on the nation, and his unrighteousness brought them to ruin. The use of royal language shows not only the human position with regard to the rest of creation as its ruler, but also that in ruling over the world, humans are its gods, those through whom creation is either condemned or destroyed. In this, humans are like God: we and the world are judged through our dominion; God and the world are justified by his. Genesis 2.15 underscores this point, for it says that Man is put into the Garden of Eden to serve (*dress* or *till* in most translations) and preserve it. (p. 3)

Man's role does indeed give them power that is more like God's than any of the other creations. But that role also comes with more responsibility. Their unique creation ("in our image, after our likeness," 1:26) and increased responsibilities indicate that their purpose is somewhat different from all others of God's creations. In apparent similitude of God's sovereignty, where as ruler God has dominion and nurtures his creations, Man are given the responsibility of doing the same. They are told to "multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (1:28). Through those experiences they will no doubt become more familiar with all creation. Thus, Man will enjoy a close familiarity with all living things and in doing so be like God. By doing this work, Man can begin, like God's other creations, to fulfill God's purpose for their creation.

> 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. (Genesis 2:1–2)

Once Man are created, the work of the creation is complete. Because particular relationships are fruitful, God's organization creates an abundance of life that has seed and can perpetuate (1:11–12). Thus, as the creation concludes, the heaven and earth are

filled with “all the host of them. The New International Version translates this “all their vast array” (2:1), and the Geneva Study Bible indicates this refers to “the innumerable abundance of creatures in heaven and earth” (Online Parallel Bible Project, 2004–2009). Presumably this abundance will sustain Man and give him work as he learns to “replenish,” “subdue,” and “have dominion” (1:28). In the process of generating life, the potential of each of God’s creations has life or existence that is meaningful. Each of those relationships nurtures and sustains life uniquely; this gives life variety. God appears to have fulfilled his purposes for the creation as well, for he formally concludes it (2:1). Other creations and other relationships would probably support other purposes. If God’s purposes for the creation were different, this particular configuration of elements and species would also probably not be as good. But in this instance, God indicates that his creation supports its intended purpose because he has noted throughout that what has happened is good (verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31).

I propose that this story also suggests the beginning and potential of community by showing not only the power in the supportive relationships God organizes, (in these relationships, things become fruitful), but also how those relationships provide both work and the space in which to accomplish the work. This story of creation is important not only as a story of the beginnings of life, but also as an illustration of the potential of relationships where diversity appropriately comes together in unity (or wholeness) for a purpose (in other words, work). The environment in which God places Man is a powerful, if simplified, model of the kind of supportive relationship that (as we will later see) is important for Man’s ability to flourish. How are Man to be together? In (with)

unity, or com-unity (com = with), in the kind of supportive relationships that allow participants in all their diversity to flourish.

As a simplified model, the story of the Creation can help us understand how three fundamental aspects of fruitful relationships (diversity, unity, work) function together in what I am calling "community," even among God's non-human creations. According to God's organization, the diverse elements of the cosmos function in supportive relationships (in unity), to bring forth (through work) abundant life. Although this is not human community, the word "community" is a valuable way to describe how the earth (including Man in the ensemble of God's creations) function together. All around them, God's heaven and earth demonstrate the power and growth that becomes possible in these kinds of relationships.

There are many ways of unifying, some that expand capabilities and others that inhibit them. However, the model shown us at the creation seems to indicate a way to come together in relationship so as to allow both the individuals and the group as a whole to be enhanced by the experience. As members come together in this way, I find the literal word community (or, "with" unity) an apt description of what is happening. Because the example of the Creation story is simplified, these features of diversity, unity, and work are more easily identifiable. Thus I find this example a powerful way to begin to understand the nature of such important relationships. However, I will argue in succeeding chapters that although such a simplified model works for the cosmos; it is not sufficient for all that is necessary for the man and the woman to fully experience human community. As we will later see, though these three aspects of supportive relationship are still important for Man's interaction, their learning experience must be altered some to

give them the learning and growth they need to more completely fulfill their potential to be like God.

At the end of chapter one then, the earth and its environs have successfully been organized so as to be able to afford Man the experiences they currently need. As an ensemble, the earth can act as an example of how community functions, showing Man the benefits of such an existence. Additionally, it is a place wherein Man can learn how to live in community themselves; it is a place that begins to support their growth toward their potential. The earth's environment is now capable of providing a wonderfully abundant life for its participants and God is, therefore, able to determine that as organized this creation is not just "good," but instead "*very* good" (1:31, italics added). As the earth's community begins to work together to accomplish its purpose, God can, and does, rest from his labors (2:2–3).

Bi-Gendered Humanity

The second account of the creation is found in chapter two of Genesis. We read again the story of how the earth and all living things begin by becoming ordered. Though the pattern for developing relationship remains the same, this version shows more clearly why the world as created provides an environment in which Man, like the elements and other species, can learn how to participate in community. Here, however, we will begin to see (and it will become more pronounced as the story progresses through the Fall and Expulsion from the Garden) how mankind is fundamentally different from God's other creations. In chapter two of Genesis, there is particular detail regarding Man's experiences, both together and separately, concerning the creation. More emphasis is

placed on Man's roles and responsibilities in building and maintaining their society. This chapter follows Man as they are organized through relationship to be able to respond to God's commandments.

> 4 ¶ These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, 5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground. 6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. 7 And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:4–7)

In this version the connection between Man and the earth is more intricately established: Man are more than one of God's creations made at the same time as the earth; he is actually integral to the completion of the earth's creation. His order in the creation process is reversed. He is created earlier, and alone. The story records that God created "every plant…and every herb…before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground" (2:5). There seems to be an important connection between the fact that there is no "man to till the ground" and the fact that God "had not caused it to rain upon the earth." One reading might suggest that the man was needed to take care of the earth, but it might also be read as saying that Man are integral to the earth's purpose. In other words, the earth can not fulfill its purpose without Man because it was made for them. "But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (2:5–7). Seemingly these two events are also connected. There is no rain to begin the earth's growing cycle because there is as yet no man to care for that growth, and the mist God finally sends plays a role in the man's creation as well.

It is interesting to note here also that the man's mortal body is often referred to as "clay," in other words dust (or dirt) and water. Although the story actually uses the word "dust" (2:7), (we will also see in the Expulsion chapter the importance of "dust" in regards to the man), the man's creation, nonetheless, establishes a connection between him and the earth. The same mist that allows the earth to begin to be fruitful is also that which forms the man's body. But the earth does not receive that water until the man is created to care for it, "to till the ground" (2:5). The man's creation, therefore, becomes an interesting connection between God and his earthly creations. The man is made both from the elements of the earth but also in the likeness of God. As later chapters will show, as man becomes "as one of [the gods]," the connection between the man and the earth will become even more pronounced; Man's role in the synergism of the earth aids in their growth to be like God.

> 8 ¶ And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil….[verses 10–14 describe four rivers in Eden]…15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Genesis 2:8–17)

As soon as the man is formed, God isolates the man's interaction with the earth by placing him in a small part of it somewhere "eastward" in a garden in Eden (2:8). Here the man's responsibilities concerning the earth's flora seem to be somewhat reduced in scope as well. Rather than being commanded to "be fruitful, and multiply," "replenish and subdue the earth," and "have dominion over the fish, fowl and every living thing that moveth" (1:26), he is instead told only "to dress and keep" (2:15) the garden. In Eden the man's tasks seem to have been those of maintenance (in a garden traditionally thought to

have been quite self-sustaining) rather than responsibilities of fruitful dominion. In the garden he is asked to tend a portion of the earth rather than rule over the entirety of it. Additionally he is told that there is one tree—the tree of knowledge of good and evil—that he is *not* to deal with. The man is told that he must not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil or he shall "surely die" (2:17).

This commandment of negative relationship seems to be a significant change from any other part of the story so far. In contrast to all other commandments encouraging relationship, fruitfulness, and abundance, this is a negative commandment: "thou shalt *not* eat of it" (2:17, italics added). Additionally this seems different because God has commanded all of his creations to work, but none of those commandments have come with a consequence for disobedience. Concerning this one tree, however, the man is told the result of disobedience, and it is a serious one. If he eats, he will "surely die" (2:17).

> 18 ¶ And the Lord God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone….
> (Genesis 2:18)

This announcement from God also stands out in stark relief in the story because so far the story has all been about relationships. Those relationships have been fruitful, and the man seemingly has enjoyed particularly close relationships, not only with all of God's creations but with God himself. His body has come from the earth, and he has been given the specific responsibility to dress and keep Eden. Of all God's creations, the man appears to enjoy the closest relationship with the Creator. We are told Man have been made in God's "own image" and "likeness" (1:26, 27).

God then points out something else that separates the man from all other of God's creations. God declares that the man is alone. What's more, as opposed to all of God's

other pronouncements, he says of this situation, "it is *not* good" (2:18).[9] For the first time in this story, something in the creation is "not good," which must mean, at least in its current state, it cannot fulfill the purpose for which it is created. The man is out of sync with the rest of creation.

> 18 ¶ And the Lord God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. (Genesis 2:19–20)

When God determines that "it is not good that the man should be alone" (2:18), God also proposes a solution, which points to why it is not good for the man to be alone. He declares, "I will make him an help meet for him" (2:18). Thus, as a solitary individual, man's situation is "not good;" he is not complete, or whole. According to the *Word Biblical Commentary*, "help meet" means "helper matching him…the compound prepositional phrase 'matching him,'…literally, 'like opposite him' is found only here. It seems to express the notion of complementarity rather than identity" (Wenham, 2002, p. 68). Like the other creations, the man needs an appropriate "other," one who complements him rather than is identical to him.

Yet, immediately after determining that the man needs "an help meet for him," God "formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof" (2:19). If God wishes to create a help meet for Adam, why does he first bring the animals to him? Certainly this delay in creating a help meet emphasizes Adam's aloneness. It also helps situate Adam in the hierarchy of the creation. To name is to "differentiate, to structure, and to order….The bestowal of names initiates

the human ordering of creation" (Freedman, 1996, p. 1002). Thus, Adam is participating in some way with God in the creation. This work emphasizes that Adam is more like God and not like the animals. In the naming it seems a particular relationship of responsibility is forged; because he had helped to name them, Adam is now responsible for the animals. (This responsibility is verified by God's commandment in chapter one when he commands Adam to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" 1:28).

But in naming the animals Adam also learns a very important lesson about himself. He is to care for the earth which has seed and can therefore produce (1:12); now he has seen the animals who multiply abundantly after their kind (1:20–22). But for Adam, "there was [still] not found an help meet for him" (2:20). Though Adam has relationship with God (2:7–8), with the earth and all its plants (1:26; 2:5–7), and with the animals (1:28; 2:20), still his situation is "not good." God says he is alone. In naming the animals Adam, presumably, realizes the help "meet" (appropriate or suitable) for him—is absent. As Faulconer (2003) also points out, "Though the phrase he uses to describe her is often translated 'help meet' or 'appropriate helper' (Genesis 2.18), it means, literally, a 'helper over against' or 'another who helps,' emphasizing the necessity to human being of the other" (pp. 7–8).

When Adam has seen all the animals it becomes readily apparent that unlike them (or the rest of his surroundings), Adam is without an "other" to stand "over-against" him, to pair with him. Adam, it is apparent, does not have an appropriate companion. Adam's relationship with God is very productive for Adam; it has given him life, purpose through (if limited) responsibility, allowed Adam to work with God, and a supportive

environment in which to live. But it is still, apparently, not enough to overcome a deficient existence because God himself declares both that the man is alone and, in contrast to all of his other creations, that such a state "is not good" (2:18).

Contrary to everything else in the Creation story—the elements have their counterparts which both help to define them and allow them to sustain life; the plants and animals have others like them with whom they bear seed; even God seems to have at least one other with whom he labors and creates ("Let *us* make man after *our* likeness,"1:26, italics added)—the text is explicit that "for Adam there was not found an help meet for him" (2:20). Apparently, the problem is that Adam has no one with whom to experience the kind of productive union God has provided for every other of his creations (Faulconer, 2003).

In this initial state Adam is experiencing the opposite of relation. Adam is without an other who by contrast and comparison would serve not only to help determine his identity but would help him exist, to be. He is in a very important sense unlike and alienated from everything around him. Since God's solution to this problem is to provide someone for Adam to be with, it is reasonable to conclude that like all of God's other creations Adam also needs an other to stand opposite him, to give him contrast, in order for him to truly experience his fullness and purpose. In his estrangement it seems he is not yet fully formed nor can he fully progress because he needs both the difference and the relationship that another human being offers to help define who he is and to help him learn to fulfill God's commandments.

Since Adam does not have an other like him, he cannot multiply and replenish after his own kind (something even the plants and animals can do). Because he does not

yet enjoy the necessary relationship to participate in such activities, he cannot yet fully experience life as God has created it. In this sense Adam is made "un-like" God and everything else in his world. His isolation is "not good" because it does not allow him to participate in some very important experiences it is apparent from the first chapter that God would give him. Arguably most importantly, Adam cannot "be fruitful and multiply" (1:28) alone.

The Creation story indicates that, to be whole, Adam needs another human being with whom he can build a relationship that will enable his growth as a human being. He needs an "other" in order to experience be-ing man. For this purpose, as God has already indicated, God will not do as that other (2:18). Though God clearly has a closer relationship with the man than any of his other creations, and Adam talks and helps with the creation in some way, it does not appear to be the same kind of relationship God has with those with whom God counsels before he creates (and with whom God is, presumably, in some kind of community). In the first Creation story, God says, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness…so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; *male and female* created he them" (1:26–27, italics added). God apparently has an "other," (or others) and within that community there is both male and female. Together they can create life (they have produced Adam), but Adam cannot yet produce life. He helps in the creation process by naming the animals, but they are brought to Adam after God has formed them (2:19). Whatever this may actually mean, it seems that what Adam does to help God is different from the work that God does.[10]

At this point in the story there is also great disparity between God and Adam in their knowledge and experience. Afterwards, God commands Adam to do work that

imitates God's work, but it is different, at least in scale. Also, God can distinguish between what is "good" and "not good" in his creations. He can also presumably distinguish between good and evil because he has created the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God also understands death since Adam is told that death is the consequence of disobedience (2:17). Adam, however, has been denied access to the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and therefore lacks the knowledge God has (2:17). Additionally, after their creation, God does not bring Adam into full fellowship with "the gods"; he places him in a small part of his created world—in a garden (2:15). At this stage of his existence Adam's labor with the earth also appears to be less than God has commanded: he cannot multiply, replenish, or subdue the earth; instead he tends a portion of it in the garden (2:15).

Thus, God and Adam—at least at this stage of Adam's development—are apparently too un-like for their relationship to solve Adam's problem of isolation.[11] There is too much disparity between God and the man for them to be a help "meet" for each other. Nor can Adam's relationships with the earth or the animals fulfill this particular need to learn and grow; he already enjoys these relationships and God has declared it is *not* good; it does not fulfill the purpose of Adam's creation. Therefore, both God ("it is not good for man to be alone," 2:18) and Adam ("there was not an help meet for him," 2:20) recognize Adam's isolation. Adam is made in God's "likeness" (1:26), but as the story later declares, is not yet "as [God]" (3:22).

In order to be fruitful and progress—to be able to respond to the greater commandments God will give them both—Adam needs a partner more "meet" or suitable to himself than God is. Adam needs a more appropriate companion with whom to share

the learning process, with whom to work, and with whom to achieve the purpose of their creation together. Adam needs an "other" like him with whom he can experience human community and the powerful learning that can take place in such an environment. And, as we will see at the expulsion, an other can provide (and Adam can reciprocate) the diversity to create the necessary learning opportunities for both to mature.

> 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:21–25)

Therefore, after Adam has been able to recognize his state, God responds to the problem by creating woman: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam,…And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" (2:21–22). However, Adam's new companion cannot be just a second Adam. As the narrative suggests, such lack of diversity would thwart the potential of community. In proof, God creates another human, but he does not clone Adam although she is taken from his body (2:21). This time he creates a female—one who is made from the same elements (Adam acknowledges she is "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," 2:23), but who is at the same time decidedly different. (Note that she is not even given life in the same way.) The fact that a bi-gendered humanity was always God's purpose is evidenced in the chapter one, at the time that God first announces his intention to create Man: "...and let *them* have dominion…So God created man in his own image. . . *male and female* created he *them*" (1:26, emphases added).

With each having a help who is meet, the man and the woman now have the proper relationship to experience an existence in which the most abundant, whole, and creative life is possible. (Indeed, the subsequent stories of the Fall and the Expulsion indicate how living this kind of life is part of what they learn through being in community.) Only with an other does it make sense for "a man to leave his father and his mother" (in this case God) and to "be one flesh" with the woman (2:24), to be fruitful, and to imitate God's creative activities. God creates; Man are commanded to pro-create. Only now is Man like the other creations in their productive power. With the creation of the woman, Adam, like everything else in the earthly community now shares a relationship with one who is "other" yet appropriately enough like him to share in his learning experiences. Adam thus needs the woman and she likewise needs him. Now Man can fully participate in the earth's community because they are paired with an other who both shares (and later complements) their particular work. Thus the woman is a suitable partner to answer Adam's isolation in ways that neither God nor his other creations are.

This suggests that the help-meet (or as Faulconer suggests "helper over against," 2003, p. 7). God provides is not some sort of subordinate assistant, but rather one created on an equal par to the man—regardless of which one was made first, from whom, or given which role. Any of the measurements by which people are placed in hierarchical relationship to one another are meaningless here. God has made both male and female genders. Now Adam and the woman, qua Man, are no longer alone. Together as Man they can participate more fully in the earth's community as God has organized it. They are complimenting contrasts; each helps to define the other. Following the pattern

established by the earth's other entities in Genesis 1, Adam and the woman are united together as beings who stand opposite or across from the other. Each is necessary for the work God commands them to do. Neither one can accomplish their directives without the difference the other provides; they must, in fact, learn to work in tandem. Because of their mutual need for one another, and because they are both made from the same elements, each can also stand "over against" the other. Adam may have had his first experiences (such as naming the animals) in isolation in order to help him realize his need for a companion, but the narrative indicates that God had already foreseen the problem. Now, together, Man belong with the world.

However, though they are man and woman, the story at this point records little else to distinguish them, their responsibilities, or their work from each other. Since the woman is created to be "a help meet" for Adam (2:18), it is reasonable to assume that she is given the same directives concerning her work and purpose in the garden. For example, we know that the woman has been given the same injunction towards the tree of knowledge of good and evil because she tells the serpent, "*We* may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden…But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it" (3:2–3, italics added). (Presumably, this is not the only joint commandment, God has issued.) So without much to distinguish the one from the other there is still less variety and, therefore, less abundance to their existence than we will see is possible later in the narrative.

When the woman is brought to Adam to relieve his alienation, it seems that Adam (and most likely she as well) understands they have some responsibility to be "for" the other. The woman is important in the fulfillment of Adam's identity because he notes that

because of her “a man [shall] leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife” (2:24), to begin human relationship. Their differences (as we will later see), however will also ensure that they will have their own uniquely personal experiences and identity which they can then bring to their relationship together. And he knows that together they are trying to build a harmonious relationship. Though she was “taken from man” (in other words, made from the same materials), they are commanded to work to overcome that separation—to reestablish unity—through “cleaving” to one another, and in a new way becoming “one flesh” (2:23–24).

Obviously, such a statement has reference to their sexual union and being fruitful by begetting children. But the Hebrew word for “flesh” can also denote one’s whole be-ing, both body and soul (Faulconer, 2003). In this sense God’s commandments call Adam and the woman to be directed towards each other in every sense. Who they each are as individuals will now also be formed through their experiences of relationship—who they are together. Together it is also possible now for them to establish their own creative relationship from which life can be generated and, like the earth’s experience, life in its greater variety can be lived. They are directed towards each other because they need each other in order to fully *be* and in order to accomplish the tasks God gives them. Thus, establishing this relationship is a crucial change in their “be-ing” that affects both their abilities and their possibilities.

It is not apparent at this juncture that either Adam or the woman fully understand just how to achieve their potential, however. Adam obviously recognizes some sort of kinship (2:23), but their particular roles within their relationship have not as yet been as well-defined as they will be in succeeding stories. Their experiences together will both

teach them the contrasts in their individual identities and how to bring their differences together into a productive unity. But they have not yet had those defining experiences.

Like their garden responsibilities their present knowledge also appears to be quite limited. For instance, their lack of shame at their nakedness (2:25) seems to indicate an innocence regarding their sexuality. Without that understanding their relationship to each other cannot be fully formed and they are, therefore, unable either to become all that it is possible for them to be individually, or experience their mature relationship together in its full abundance. As the following stories will show, there are as yet several things that Man must learn before they are capable of the kind of life God seems to envision for them, the kind of life that would make them more like God.

Implications of the Creation Story

I see in the Creation story a model showing how and why relationships, especially those that strengthen and support others, are so fundamentally important to existence. According to the narrative, life's fullest potential—its greatest opportunities for meaning and abundance—become possible in the relationships which order all existence. (The significance of those relationships can be evidenced in the fact that the sciences, humanities, and social sciences are still exploring them today.) The Creation story also suggests that when all the diversity of earthly life is living together in purposeful unity, God's work is more than the good it has been before. As a complete ensemble with all his creations ordered and existing in community, God pronounces his work "very good" (1:31).

As mentioned earlier, I believe the Creation story helps us understand three aspects of community that have very important implications for education: diversity (or individuality), unity, and work. Following, is a summary of how the Creation story demonstrates these three concepts. The next two chapters will add additional dimensions that develop these concepts further. The concluding chapter will discuss their implications for education.

Diversity/Individuality. Many relationships are established as part of the Creation story: those between the elements that form the cosmos (light and dark, heaven and earth, land and seas 1:1–10), between the flora (producing seed after its kind,1:12, 29) and fauna (in abundance and showing Adam his isolation, 1:21–22; 19–20), between mankind and the earth (replenishing the earth 1:28; tilling the ground 2:5), Adam's relationship to the animals (when Adam gives names to the animals, 2:20), with Eve (as a help meet for Adam 2:18, 20; and as a spouse 2:23–24), and both of their connections to God in likeness and image (1:26–28) and work (2:19–20). But because each relationship consists of different pairings, each seems to have a particular purpose and offer different potential. The nature of each relationship is unique. None are interchangeable, nor identically fruitful. For example, some relationships although important, even necessary to life (such as Adam's to the animals or the earth), do not seem to produce the same creative possibilities for Adam as others (such as Adam's with the woman where they are commanded to multiply and have dominion over the earth, or with God in whose image and likeness they have been made). But although particular relationships can vary in importance and creative potential (especially for Man for whom all the creation seems to have been organized), this story illustrates that all are important in the growth of those

who participate in them because God pronounces them good and because they are fruitful.

In both creation stories, each of the elements is and remains distinct; none are lost either through conquest or mixing; none lose their identity by becoming something else. For example, light and darkness work in varying degrees of interaction to distinguish days, months, and seasons, but though it may sometimes be difficult to distinguish between them, light never ceases to be light, darkness is always darkness. Similarly, the seas can separate the land because the seas and land remain distinct; the two do not combine to become some other, new environment. And though each sustains life, the waters, the firmament and the land each host a different variety of life: the firmament is the place where the "fowl…fly above the earth" (1:20), the "waters [bring] forth abundantly, after their kind" (1:21), and the "earth [brings] forth the living creatures" (1:24). All these creations are distinct from each other, and can bring forth new life only after "their kind." Last, even as the creation most like God, Adam is not God; he is also not the elements, or the plants, or the animals. He is even not the woman. Though she is taken from Adam, they are distinct from each other, and those differences are vital to who they are. To destroy or deny that difference would be to not take full advantage of the creative order established, for without difference, abundance can only mean abundance of quantity. Thus, I believe the Creation story illustrates that differences (or diversity) must not only be recognized but also respected. An "other" (someone/something standing in contrast to oneself) is both unique and irreducible and must be embraced as such in order for relationships to experience their greatest abundance.

As each of God's creations are placed in a synergistic relationship with something else, new things are created from those relationships (the morning and evening create a day, the differentiation of the elements creates habitats for living things, and so forth). More life can also be produced, as God can command his creations to, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (1:28).

Although differences can be (and often are) the cause of contention and destruction, they can also be a significant source of the potential power that exists in relationships of community. It does not, however, guarantee a communal environment. Since the possibility for destruction and chaos are also present within diversity (as we will see in the next chapter), the existence of difference alone cannot guarantee community. As the narrative will show, other aspects of community must be also be present—in relation to diversity, acting as something "over against" it—as well. Yet when individuality and difference are welcomed and respected, the diversity created can actually enhance experiences that themselves generate something in excess of what was previously available. Otherness opens up a space where variety can exist. Through that variety, life's learning experiences become abundant; new opportunities emerge and new options present themselves. Those new opportunities allow for and encourage positive change and growth.

Unity. As the story unfolds, each new entity that is introduced to the earth establishes another relationship of interactive co-dependence. First the diverse elements (light/dark, heaven/earth, land/seas) form the cosmos (1–10). Because of those relationships the earth can then produce fruits and herbs having seed after their kind (1:12); because there is food from the plants ("to every beast of the earth. . . I *have given*

every green herb for meat" 1:30), animals can multiply after their kind in abundance (1:20–22). Though each newly-developed relationship is unique, the general procedure for organizing them remains quite similar for all creation. A pattern for establishing fruitful relationships begins to emerge: diverse entities (complementary elements or genders) come together in supporting relationships and begin to fulfill God's commandments for them within the sphere God has placed them. Such mixing produces experiences that enhance and give meaningful purpose to life. The Creation story can therefore be instructive in showing what basic characteristics must be present, and how they must be related, in order to form an environment where life, most significantly but by no means exclusively human be-ing, can experience its promise.

A second characteristic operating in the Creation story, then, one that helps to enhance the difference/diversity, is unity. In order to be productive, participants must be related in particular ways; that is, they must enter into relationship and work "with-unity." As each entity in the creation comes into be-ing, their purpose is revealed by being placed into relationships that allow them to experience abundance they could not generate on their own. Additionally, in unity differences can combine to create more than the sum of the parts. In coming together, however, unity and difference are revealed to be two aspects of relationship. Without difference, there is nothing to unify; there is only identity—or sameness. In unification, however, difference can be better identified and used productively. In unity, identity is better defined; then there is more to bring together, to unify. As an ensemble, all are more powerful, just as symphonic music is more complex than one instrument playing a simple melody.

In creation, the heaven, earth, land, and sea provide place; the light and dark supply seasons (1:14,), and differences within particular species all combine to create new life. The earth begins to bring forth grass, herbs, and trees each yielding fruit after its kind (1:12) and the fish, fowl, cattle, and other beasts begin to multiply (1:20, 24). In this account, as the elements are brought together, each separate component plays a particular role in the generation and sustenance of life. Though each still maintains its difference or otherness, their capabilities increase as God organizes them into specific relationships that unite them. In their new relationships the elements can now be productive in ways they were not before, yet both the environments and the various life that each environment sustains is unique. They are able not only to support life but actually to generate it in all its variety. This new ability relies upon cooperative relationships.

Man, too, are given dominion over the earth; they are told to replenish and subdue it (1:28). But neither the man nor the woman can accomplish their purpose singly (thus, is it not "good"—does not fit the purpose—for man to be alone). Nor can Man together accomplish these tasks without the cooperation of the earth and animals who have been created for them. (Man cannot exercise dominion over the earth, for example, unless there is an earth to accept that dominion.) The earth is brought to life only as Adam needs it there for him to care for it (2:5), and the animals are brought to Adam to teach him that he needs the woman (2:18–20). To be successful, Man's work must be accomplished in a place where differences productively co-exist—within relationships that come together in unity, in other words, within communities seeking to find the correct harmony that preserves unique difference.

Thus in the earth's "community" setting, all of God's creations are organized so as to be able to fulfill the commandments he has given them, but each responsibility can only be fulfilled in relationship with others. As all of creation works synergistically to fulfill those commandments, their lives fulfill their purpose, new opportunities become available, and they experience greater abundance. Where there previously was chaos, now there is a world that not only nurtures life, but is capable of generating it in abundance as well. Only at the end of the creative period where all his disparate creations have been symbiotically organized and order has replaced chaos—when they are all living in supportive relationships—does God declare that all he has done is "very good" (1:31). His purposes for the creation have been realized (2:1), and he can rest from his labors (2:2–3). As put in place, the relationships unify life and generate promise; I also suggest they create a community (a "with-unity") environment where God's creations can experience their greatest fulfillment.

Work. God's creations testify that his work is to endow purposeful life because the work he commands them to do imitates his own. For instance, God works; he produces life—both the earth and all life on it, including Man. In turn each of his creations is commanded to "re-produce" that work, to bring forth additional life "after [their] kind" (1:11–25). As stated earlier, the earth responds by bringing forth grass and herbs and fruit (1:12). The animals also presumably comply according to the pattern we have seen throughout the story by multiplying after their own kind (1:21–22). Like God, they can also engender life, although each is limited in this ability to its own kind. In being fruitful and multiplying, the earth's community echoes God's divinely creative work. And again God sees that "it [is] very good" (1:31).

The necessity of working, then, is a third necessary feature of community that I believe is taught by the Creation story. Communities have a directed purpose; they provide an environment for people to work together. As this story illustrates, God has a purpose for establishing the related order that he does. The different elements are brought together in a particular way for a specific reason: together they support a world that both generates and nurtures life. (Remember that as the relationships emerge, God pronounces each ensemble good). As his work progresses toward its presumed design, it is organized so as to function as a self-sustaining community, and God can see that the earth is capable of fulfilling its purpose. In their specific relations the various elements and species are obedient to God's commandments concerning them; they are given seed and they multiply (work) in abundance as he has told them to. In their obedience to the work they are given, they experience fruitful life. Within that environment Man have many opportunities to experience growth as well. They have been commanded to "multiply," "replenish," "subdue," and "have dominion" (1:28). As we will see in the succeeding chapters, as they learn to do that work, they grow both as individuals and in their relationship to each other. Work helps them be with each other in purposeful and abundant relationships of community.

Chapter 4: “Where Art Thou?”—Man’s Fall Through Disunity

Made in God’s Image and Likeness

> Genesis 2:6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. 7 And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. 8 ¶ And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:6–9)

At the end of the Creation story, we see that Adam and the woman have been placed in a garden eastward in Eden (2:8). We are told it is beautiful for “out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food” (2:9). God has also made “both the tree of life” and “the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (2:9). As the earth is created (in Genesis 1) and again in the garden (in Genesis 2), God’s diverse creations work together in unity: their differences support each other and sustain all the varieties of life. Adam’s environment seems to be a place of great harmony.

> 18 ¶ And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:18–24)

We also know that Adam has participated in naming the animals (2:19–20) and in doing so has learned that among them, "there was not found an help meet for him" (2:20). Thus, in order to be a help "meet for [Adam]" God "made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" (2:22). The text indicates that Adam recognizes the woman both as first, "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (2:22), and second, the one for whom he is responsible: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (2:24). He does not yet, however, know her as his wife in the fullest sense because the text says, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (2:25). Thus according to the text, both Adam and the woman seem to be innocent of themselves, each other, and their potential.

At this point in the story, Adam and the woman appear to be well-situated in terms of their environment, and the serenity of their existence. However, this situation does not align well with what we know about Man's potential from Genesis' first chapter. There we have read the following:

> 1:26 ¶ And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. (Genesis 1:26–31)

Only in regard to Man, does God say they are created, "in our [God's] own image, after our likeness" (1:26). It is possible to read "image" and "likeness" as synonyms of each other. Yet because they are used together in describing Man's creation, it is also likely that in this passage they are meant to convey important and distinguishing information about Man's unique characteristics and their potential. James Faulconer (2003) notes that,

> The word *zelem* [image] is seldom used in the Bible, but when it is used, it seems to suggest visual representation (as in Numbers 33.52 and Amos 5.26). In fact, the Septuagint translates *zelem* (image) by the Greek word for the kinds of images and likenesses one finds in pictures or statuary (*eikon*). . . . Thus, the word *image* is less ambiguous than is *likeness*, and it suggests more than mere similarity. It emphasizes God's duplication in humans, including visually. (p. 4)

The use of the word "likeness" (*dumuth*) however, is more vague. As Faulconer (2003) also points out, "*likeness* can refer broadly to anything from a vague similarity (as in Ezekiel 1.5 and 26), to a mode, or to an exact copy (as in Isaiah 40.18)" (p. 4). Though the specific text is not precise in its meaning, it can certainly suggest not only that Man's bodies somehow physically resemble God's, but that at least some of God's nature is apparent in Man's nature as well. It is possible that the terms "image" and "likeness" may thus refer both to Man's beginning state of creation (wherein they are endowed with a godlike nature) and to the potential their godlike nature makes possible. Because in their creation Man's nature is "godlike" (1:26), their potential for growth and learning also seems greater than any other creation. (As I will argue in this chapter and the next, the earth seems to have been created for Man; they alone are given opportunities that allow them to continue to grow to become even more like God.) Thus, both their beings (physical make-up) and their be-ing (life experiences) more closely resemble God's than any other of his creations.

Because God is sovereign over the earth, he is responsible for all life. Man also have been given the responsibility, by commandment, to exercise dominion over the earth and everything on it (1:28–30). Man, are called to nurture and sustain all life, not just their "kind" as the other creations do. Like God's work, Mans' are therefore directed towards the support of others. Because of Man's differences from the other creations and as well as their similarities with God, it seems likely that Man's purpose are different from the other creations as well. In other words, because of their stated likeness (or "*dumuth,"* whatever that might actually mean), they can have experiences that are more like God's, so they alone have the potential to be in the "mode of God," to "copy" him.

Another way Man are able to copy God is in language, which also seems to be an indication of their elevated status. God uses language powerfully; he speaks and creations are brought into be-ing, organized, and given commandments (Genesis 1–2). Adam also speaks, he names the animals, and he speaks with God. In response to God's bringing the woman to him, Adam says, "This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (2:23–24).

Interestingly, though the text records that the serpent also speaks, it does not speak to God, only to Man (3:1–5). When God questions Adam and the woman, however, they converse with God (3:9–13). Additionally, God does not ask the serpent to report on its actions; when God imposes sanction for its behavior, there is no indication that there has been any kind of conversation with God.

Disunity in the Fall

> 1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. (Genesis 3:1–7)

The serpent enters the story while Man are in the garden and in their innocent state. The narrative records that the serpent is "more subtil than any beast of the field" (3:1); it asks the woman, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (3:1). Of all the good things God has provided for Man in the garden, the serpent, whose whole work seems to be to create disunity, singles out the one thing that, when put in such a light, must have looked restrictive to them. The woman replies affirmatively, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (3:3).

The serpent then plays on both the woman's naiveté and her desire to gain knowledge and assures the woman, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (3:4–5). Thus the serpent, whose whole work seems to be to create disunity, slyly insinuates that God has been less than forthright in his dealings with Man concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The woman has told the serpent that the penalty for eating the fruit is serious. It is death. In an attempt to entice the

woman into disobedience, the serpent discounts this implication and rejects the idea that consequences accompany her choice. Or if there are consequences, the serpent denies that Man will be subject to them through their disobedience.

God's directive and the serpent's words present the woman with a dilemma. She and the man have been created in God's image and likeness. For all the reasons mentioned before, the woman probably realizes that she is more like God than any of the other creations. But she must also know that there are many ways she is not like God as well. Here, the serpent is suggesting that she may become more like God by eating the fruit of the one tree God has expressly forbidden them to touch (3:3). Yet, in order to know good and evil (and the more abundant life that knowledge may give her), she must first accept being subject to the consequence of death (eating the fruit of the tree). According to the pattern we have seen in the creation, without death, life does not have an opposite and therefore lacks an appropriate other; thus, it seems apparent that life, in its present state, cannot be as meaningful. Yet the consequences for disobedience to God are serious: if she eats, she will die (3:3).

The narrative states that the woman chooses to ignore God's counsel and eat the only fruit that is forbidden because several things are appealing to her: 1) the tree was good for food, 2) it was pleasant to the eyes, and 3) it was a tree to be desired to make one wise (3:6). Instead of counseling with God about the dilemma she has, the woman instead focuses inward on her own desires and "took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (3:6).

The story records, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (3:7).

Immediately realizing the differences between their bodies, Adam and the woman create a covering for themselves. In addition to a newfound sense of shame, the fig leaves also act as a symbolic barrier between the two of them. The unique abilities of each of their bodies, which when brought together can generate life, are covered and therefore withheld from their "other."

> 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. (Genesis1:8–13)

The effect of their actions distresses even more than just their relationship with each other. It causes an estrangement in their relationship with God as well; their shame causes them to avoid his presence (3:8). Although the experience of her disobedience does teach her something of the knowledge of good and evil, their actions separate themselves from God, the source of life. While what the serpent has told the woman can be read as literally true—neither she nor Adam immediately experience physical death, and they do gain some knowledge like the gods (such as some consequences between good and evil)—the serpent misrepresents the reality of the situation. Where God's organization within the creation leads toward unifying and fulfilling relationships, the serpent seeks to persuade the woman that she has the power to realize for herself the potential God has promised but presently withheld. What the serpent neglects to explain is that because the motives determining her actions are self-directed and focused inward, they will lead to alienation and emptiness. They will damage her relationships and cause

isolation. With the desirability of be-ing in community (particularly in unity with God) called into question, the woman begins to think, and act, selfishly. Adam and the woman have their first experience with death and decay as their relationships become less unified and they become more alienated from both each other and from God. This is indeed a kind of death, as only fruitful relationship can produce life and abundance.

In Eden God has forbidden them to partake of particular experiences, such as eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, experiences which could potentially help them realize the possibilities given them at their creation. Instead of acknowledging that God is working together with Man for their benefit, the serpent represents God as being at cross purposes with Man's efforts to learn and grow. Here the serpent has successfully used difference, not to create abundance, but to cause rancor. The serpent insinuates that God and Man are not working together for a common goal; they are not unified in purpose. It therefore implies that the woman's heretofore obedient relationship with God is detrimental to her personal progress and that she can learn and grow best on her own.

Isolation, in a very real sense a kind of death or separation from life given Man's sociality, is in fact an immediate consequence of Man's disobedience. In their transgression of God's laws, Adam and the woman suffer not only a distance between each other in their own relationship (3:7), but a spiritual death that separates them from God as well, demonstrated by the fact that when they hear God walking in the garden, they try to hide from him (3:8). Their actions have thereby altered the relationship both had previously enjoyed with God. As James Faulconer (2003) explains, "The serpent's lie is his implication that God does not want Man and Woman to establish community

among themselves and between themselves and God" (p. 9). The serpent's actions work to destroy community by using diversity (the difference between God and Man) to foster destruction and distancing.

On hearing God's approach, "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden" (3:8). Thus, God must call out to them, and he does so with a question, "Where art thou?" (3:9). Dennis Rasmussen (1985) points out that:

> There is an old tradition that views man as the being who asks questions. . . .From this point of view man is distinguished by his power to discover. . . . [Questions] lead to knowledge, and knowledge is power. There is another tradition even older that makes a different claim. . . . On this view man is not primarily a being who questions but a being who is questioned. The question addressed to man persists, harder than stone, softer than snow, more insistent than the warmth of the sun. "Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9.). . . Man's fundamental need is not to ask a question but to respond to one. Only by responding do I learn to be responsible; only by responding do I learn to care about something beyond myself.. . . Adam, where art thou? Does God not know? . . . finally there are just two places, with him or without him, and just two ways, toward him or not toward him. (pp. 3–4)

In this moment of truth, God, who must surely know where Adam and the woman are, seems to be asking a more fundamental question than their physical location in the garden. Within the second tradition described by Rasmussen, God seems to be asking Man about relationship. Are they still unified with him through obedience to his commandments or have they strained that relationship?

Rather than standing before God together to accept the consequences of their actions, both the man and the woman in turn look for some way to shift responsibility away from themselves. God asks Adam two questions: "Who told thee that thou was naked?" and "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" (3:11). Adam avoids answering either one. Instead, seeking to deflect the responsibility for his actions, he attempts to place the blame elsewhere and shift God's

attention onto someone else. Adam answers God by saying, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (3:12). Here, before accepting responsibility for his own actions ("I did eat"), he seems to be trying to place the blame—and thus the responsibility—onto first God, "the woman whom *thou* gavest to be with me," and secondly the woman, "*she* gave me of the tree" (3:9–12, italics added).

Then, when the Lord asks the woman, "What is this that thou hast done?" she does the same by replying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (3:14). She doesn't want to take responsibility either. In their very acts of distancing themselves from each other (what Adam and the woman say verbally is echoed in their coverings), they isolate themselves, both physically and symbolically, from each other and from God. In their answers they are already beginning to experience the rupture that comes from the absence of community.

In thinking about what might be most helpful to Adam's and the woman's progression, the problem does not seem to be that the serpent brings opposition or even contention into the garden. (Though it may oppose the rules that govern Eden, contention is not the problem for either Man or God's intentions for them. As proof, God is able to make the experience beneficial for Man (as the Expulsion story will show). Additionally, for Adam and the woman, the act of choosing, regardless of which choice is made, is an opportunity for growth because it occasions new experience and understanding. Therefore, providing the woman with alternate choices actually aids in her learning. The problem with the serpent's action thus seems to be that the serpent insinuates that the only solution to obtaining what she desires is for the woman to act in her own self-

interest—and that God is doing the same. In doing so, the serpent suggests that the woman's relationships are detrimental to her personal growth. In this way the serpent succeeds in getting Man to damage their relationships and thwart (however temporarily) the very things they are attempting to accomplish. It does this by convincing them to act on their own for themselves.

> 14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:14, 15)

Though the serpent succeeds in convincing the woman to be disobedient, its attempt to damage her relationships brings about its own alienation. God puts "enmity between [the serpent] and the woman, and between [his] seed and her seed; it shall bruise [the serpent's] head, and [the serpent] shalt bruise his heel" (3:15). Though this passage is generally accepted by Christians as a symbolic foreshadowing of Christ's triumph over evil, it is also a literal fulfillment of the serpent's present behavior. Because it has sought to destroy relationships, it will reap the consequences—the serpent will be brought low and live estranged from Man, its masters.

Lack of Growth in Eden

Through their choices, Adam and the woman, who alone have been made in the image and likeness of God, have acted to become estranged from God. They have distanced themselves from each other, the "help meets" God had provided to alleviate their alienation (3:18). In their disobedience, they have also become estranged from the environs of the garden.

Eden's environment, though extremely inviting (2:9), restricts Man's possibilities in at least three ways. First, since they don't understand the full nature of their diversity, even as it exists in the garden (and they will have more after their expulsion), they also don't know how to "be" together (2:25). This is evidenced by the fact that they do not yet know how to be fruitful and multiply in their endeavors. (Again, they will be given opportunities to learn this at their expulsion from the garden,). Second, because apparently the garden of Eden already works in great unity, and because they have not yet been given diverse responsibilities that would teach them how to come together in unity, they cannot as yet fully appreciate the consequences of diversity nor use it to create abundance. And third, Adam and the woman have been commanded not to partake of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (2:17) so they do not have the opportunity to learn to distinguish good from evil. Lack of such knowledge restricts their relationships since they do not therefore have the moral understanding that is an essential part of human be-ing. Without such understanding, they cannot become like God; they can't fully appreciate their responsibility to each other. Since while in the garden their opportunities for growth are limited, it follows that Man's full potential as pronounced in chapter one (of having dominion over all the earth, and over every creeping thing, 1:26) is also significantly diminished. In effect, Adam and the woman are hampered in even their understanding of either their potential or their prospects.

Eden, in fact, shares several characteristics with the idyllic island described in Sir Thomas More's 1516 book *Utopia*, which describes a fictional place where a perfect social, political, and legal system exists, where peace reigns, and its citizens are generally passive. Existence in Utopia is represented as being without problems, tension, or

disunity, and the term has become a generic way to describe seemingly idyllic living arrangements. The actual word "utopia" however, comes from two Greek words (*ou* meaning not or no, and *topos*, meaning place). It literally means "not a place." As I will argue, the description for Eden as a utopia is appropriate because the Biblical narrative also suggests that Eden is "not a place" which supports the growth or learning God has indicated is possible for Man (1:26) and which he provides for them outside the garden, in the story of their expulsion from Eden. Therefore Eden cannot be the best environment for Man to achieve the potential given to them at their creation in chapter one.

In Eden, it appears that Adam's and the woman's needs are supplied. The garden contains every tree that is "pleasant to the sight and good for food" (2:9), as well as rivers (2:10–14), a variety of precious minerals (2:12), and "every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air" (2:19). (Chapter one even indicates that since God's creations were herbivores (1:29–30) there was not the threat from other species of being used for food.) In the first chapter of Genesis, Man were told to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (1:28). In the garden, Man's work is reduced in scope: their responsibility is "to dress and keep" the garden (2:15). Additionally, Adam and the woman, have been told that, "Of every tree of the garden [save one] thou mayest freely eat" (2:16–17). For that one tree, their work is simply not to even touch it (3:3).

> 2:21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they

> shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:21–25)

Adam has named the animals alone. Now, however, the woman has also been created, and Adam notes that they are to "cleave unto [each other]: and they shall be one flesh" (2:24). While this is obviously a reference of sexual union between a husband and wife, it can also be understood as an indication of their responsibility for each other; the man will leave other supportive relationships (his father and mother for example) in order to be alongside his spouse. The woman has been created to alleviate Adam's isolation. They are supposed to be together; their purpose is to be directed towards each other. When the woman speaks with the serpent she also indicates they share the commandments God has given Adam because she says, "*We* may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden" (3:3, italics added) even though the story only tells us the commandment was given to Adam, before the woman was made (2:17). Therefore, the text does not indicate any differentiation in the tasks Adam and she have been given.

Since Adam and the woman don't yet understand the full nature of their diversity, it also appears they don't fully know how to unify or "be" together. At the beginning of their relationship, Man do not even appear to know how to create the kind of relationship that would generate new life. Though Adam appears to understand that the woman is "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" and states that "a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (2:23–24), still the narrative indicates they are innocent as to what that might actually mean: "they were naked together…and were not ashamed" (2:25). In emulation of his own productive powers God has commanded his creations to "pro-create" after their own kind. Yet, although God distinctly sets Man above all others by making them in his image (1:27),

the fact that “they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (2:25) seems to indicate an innocence preventing them from meeting these expectations.

While the absence of shame is almost surely a sign of their current inexperience in general (in other words, for all their husbandry), it can also be read as an indication of their ignorance specifically concerning the commandment to be fruitful and multiply (as husband and wife). In their innocence it appears that they might not yet know how to obey because they do not yet have enough knowledge, of either themselves, their new bodies, or their responsibilities, to understand the implications of God’s command. Thus while in Eden, Man, among all of God’s creations it seems, is most deficient in knowing how to follow God’s most significant directive.

Adam and the woman are additionally hampered in their ability to learn because they are forbidden to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Obviously this puts Man at a distinct disadvantage. While everything else in the garden is at their disposal, God tells Adam that “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (2:17). God does know good and evil. He has created the tree that contains the knowledge of good and evil (2:9). Also, during the creation process he distinguishes between what is “good,” “not good,” and “very good.” As those who are eventually given the responsibility to replenish and subdue all other creations, the knowledge of good and evil would certainly be helpful, if not essential, for the pair to successfully accomplish those tasks. Man would then also have knowledge for how to school their behavior and a guide for judging their actions. Having the ability to distinguish between good and evil would also help to make their existence more meaningful. Thus, knowing good and evil would make them more

like God. Yet in Eden's environment God has expressly forbidden Man to take advantage of this opportunity. Without the knowledge to make the same distinctions, the man and the woman appear more childlike than godlike.

Whatever the reason is that they are forbidden to eat of the fruit—the serpent insinuates that God jealously wants to keep the ability to distinguish good from evil for himself—it is certain that this injunction denies Man access to an important facet in making their lives purposeful and facilitating their growth as human beings. Since God has already made Man in his likeness, it is more probable that the stipulation against eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil comes for reasons other than jealousy. Among other probable answers, it could be that such knowledge can only be acquired as Man take responsibility for their actions (in this particular case by eventually determining to go against God's directive and eating the fruit of the tree, 3:6), or that such information is not helpful in a garden where only good exists, or that they are not ready to be given such knowledge without any of the accompanying experiences that would give meaning to that knowledge, etc.

The narrative does not give a specific reason for God's directive; as written it is just part of the limited commandments God has given Man concerning their life in the garden. According to the woman, God has been even more explicit about this commandment than he has been about any of the others. All of God's other commandments have been issued and obeyed. For this commandment, however, God has stipulated what the cost of disobedience will be: "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, *lest ye die*" (3:3, italics added). In the context of their learning it seems

important to note that because specific consequences have been attached to disobeying this commandment, this ban allows Man to assume responsibility for their actions.

Whereas the Creation story shows that supportive relationships can generate great abundance and purpose, the story of the Fall stands as an example of the power of difference and diversity (both positive and negative) within those relationships, especially for human relationships. In the Fall story, the woman is persuaded she can do better for herself by acting alone and disobeys the rules that govern her community. She quickly learns however, that even when she thinks she is acting alone, her actions have damaging consequences not only for herself but also for all that are in relationship with her. (In the story of their expulsion we will see that her actions have consequences even for the earth, 3:17.)

The consequences of the woman's rebellion against her existence in Eden highlights the sometimes ironic relationship between diversity and unity. For example, in an effort to be more like God, Man find themselves more distanced from him. In order to have the richer life more understanding (such as knowing good and evil) would bring them, Man must first accept being subject to death (eating the fruit of the tree). And, as their expulsion will show, in order for Adam and his wife to learn to come together in unity, God separates them from himself and places them in an environment where their personal struggles become more individualized. Realizing that both diversity and unity stand "over-against" each other in virtually all aspects of human experiences can help us to better understand how best to use both to strengthen relationships of responsibility in order to foster deeper learning and growth.

Chapter 5: "Cursed for Thy Sake"—The Expulsion for Work and Suffering

When Adam and the woman choose to disobey God, the consequences include new (albeit painful) learning experiences: their eyes are opened, they realize they are naked, and they feel shame and fear before God. At this point, God calls Adam out of hiding to account for their actions: "Where art thou?…Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" (3:9, 11). As the last chapter discussed, both Adam's answer ("The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree," 3:12) and the woman's answer ("The serpent beguiled me," 3:13) reveal where they stand in their relationships both with each other and with God. They do not stand together; they are not in unity. They have alienated themselves from each other and from God.

Out of Eden Into Labor and Work, Pain and Sorrow

> 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art,* and unto dust shalt thou return. (Genesis 3:16–19)

In response to their choices, God teaches Adam and the woman that there are repercussions for transgressing the laws of the garden. He tells the woman, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (3:16). To Adam God says,

"Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, … in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; …In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (3:17–19). As Faulconer (2003) points out,

> Woman is told that the consequence of her knowledge of good and evil is pain, and Man is told that the consequences of his knowledge is labor. But these are not as distinct as they might at first seem to be. . . . God does not say essentially different things to Man and Woman. What he says to one he says to both. (p. 12)

Eve will experience her sorrow as she labors to bring forth children. Adam will also experience sorrow for participating with the woman in rebelling against God, but his will be related to his labor in the fields.[12] Both Adam and the woman are subject to essentially the same consequences for participating in the same disobedience. Both will know pain and sorrow, both will labor in difficult circumstances, and each will gain personal knowledge through their different experiences.

While the pronouncement of pain, sorrow, and labor as the consequence for the transgression of his laws may sound like vindictive punishments on God's part, the text indicates that these consequences are given with a purpose, that the cursing comes "for [man's] sake" (3:17). Up to this point in the story, I have argued, everything God has done has been a blessing to Man, the male and female he has created in his "own image" (1:27): the creation of the earth, plants, and animals; the man and woman being given to each other, the Garden with its abundance. Immediately after creating them, he "blesse[s] them" and instructs them (1:28). Even the directive to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is given as an instructive warning that serious consequences will occur for disobedience. Once Adam and the woman have transgressed the word of God, it seems in keeping with the story that God would find another way to work with the creatures he has made to be like him. Thus, he tells Adam, "cursed is the ground *for thy*

sake" (3:17, italics added). Such a phrase may be read "cursed is the ground *because of you*," but in the context of this story, I believe it can also be argued that the ground is cursed for the sake (benefit) of Man. That is, God curses the ground as a blessing to Adam and his wife. Note that earlier the snake was cursed and now the ground is cursed. However, neither Adam nor the woman are cursed. Through this cursing, God changes Man's environment, but as I have argued that the environment in the garden was not the best one for Man's growth, the opportunity to be in an environment that will allow them to grow by being challenged is better. Out of Eden the man and woman can learn to come together in unity through work (she in bringing forth children and he in providing for the family). Thus, the punishments God pronounces are beneficial. They are also the foundation for human community.

The woman is told she will "in sorrow…bring forth children," and she will be directed toward Adam, who will "rule over" her (3:16). While Adam will obviously also contribute to the building of the family, the woman especially will be preoccupied with this work, and she will experience the specific sorrow and pain that comes with laboring for and having relationship with her family.[13] Thus the blessing of gaining knowledge and experience, for her, will primarily come through fulfilling the commandment to be fruitful and multiply, as a wife and mother, through tending to their human community.

Conversely, Adam is told he will experience sorrow and pain through his labor with the earth in providing a livelihood. Adam especially is reminded of his connection to the earth—"for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (3:19)—and of his responsibility towards it. Where before the narrative indicates the earth has been functioning in great harmony (God caused "to grow every tree…good

for food." 2:9), Adam is now told that the earth's synergistic relationships will be altered "for his sake" (3:17). Thus censured (again I argue in order to help Adam), the earth will produce "thorns and thistles" for him so that in contending with them he will grow (3:18). Adam will be able to provide sustenance for himself and his family only through his toil and sweat in relation to the earth. Like his wife, his work will be hard. God tells Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (3:19). None of what the narrative tells of Man while in the garden indicates this kind of prolonged labor was required of them there. Though we don't know all that was involved, even in the job of naming the animals the text indicates God brought the animals to Adam to name (2:19). Thus, he worked with God and was supported. At the expulsion, however, God now tells Adam, that difficulty in labor (work) will be an essential component to human be-ing, "all the days of thy life" (3:17). This edict will not be rescinded.

God gives specific opportunities—with resulting individual responsibilities—separately, first to the woman and then to the man. We see that both the woman and Adam are given chances to grow through work, yet their specific labors are now different. What they experience, and thus what they learn from those experiences, have now been personalized by God's decree. Before the fall, Adam and the woman existed alongside each other; it appears they basically participated similarly in their experiences. Because they were separate individuals, obviously they experienced even the same events uniquely. Their knowledge as well, even about the same experiences, would have been somewhat individualized. Now, however, their separate responsibilities will add a new dimension to their individualized growth and what they can uniquely bring to a

relationship. Their new labors will teach them to be outwardly focused—focused on the needs of the community rather than on their personal wants and desires. These new responsibilities will cause them to embody different experiences, different understanding, and different be-ing. Their individuality, the "otherness" without which neither can be fully human, will thus become more defined. In this way, they become even more human. Even as they are learning to be outwardly focused, as their experiences teach them particularly personal lessons, each can truly become even more their own unique self.

If Eve were simply a copy of Adam they could only share with the other what the other already had. There could only be an increase in quantity, not in variety or ability, of the resources available to them and their community. Because they are different, however, each can truly be "other" in what they bring to each of their relationships. At the same time their unique efforts to fulfill their particular responsibilities can only be realized within the parameters of their various relationships. They must learn to labor for and with others; their work cannot be accomplished otherwise. As they each contribute unique assets to their relationship, those things will also enhance what they are together. As Faulconer (2003) writes, "True labor is done only in relation to another (and it must include the otherness and depth of the other). . . . The Hebrew word for work, *avodah*…can equally well be translated service. Labor is both concomitant with creation and required by relation" (p. 12). As they take responsibility for each other, their diversity will work to strengthen and enhance their unity. Reciprocally however, their communal interaction will also cause their individuality to become more defined; what they are together will enhance each personally. Thus their individuality makes community possible, but their community also shapes their individuality.

Man are thus sent out into a world where they must struggle in order to survive and multiply. But because the text states that this toil is "*for [their] sake*" (3:17, italics added), there is an implied reason for their struggle and pain, regardless of whether this was a blessing or a curse. Though sorrow and sweat will be a continual part of their labor and work, Adam and Eve will still gain knowledge through their experiences. Additionally, both because their relationship together becomes more necessary to their growth and because they have eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, how they choose to accomplish their individualized labors will have moral implications and consequences, and these consequences will shape their knowledge. The importance of God causing both Adam and the woman to acquire knowledge through their unique responsibilities becomes even more significant when one understands that:

> In the Hebrew Bible knowledge…is a matter of relating to others and to the world, in experience and acquaintance. . . . Man and Woman will not learn, in an academic sense, the characteristics of good and evil so that they can give a rational account of the two….Instead, they will come to that knowledge by encounter and acquaintance. (Faulconer, 2003, p. 6–7)

God is not just giving the knowledge of work to Man as an academic exercise. He is also giving both Adam and his wife opportunities that will help them gain an intimate knowledge of good and evil, of ethical responsibilities. And this knowledge is to become a part of their be-ing. Through their experiences of bringing forth children and working the ground in sorrow and in sweat, both the man and the woman will embody their knowledge.

One important reason for these experiences may be to help them learn to live in community. Both Adam and the woman are given specific work from which they can gain the necessary experiences and understanding that will make their coming together more abundant. Their work provides opportunities for Man to learn how to be helpers

mete for each other, to begin to understand about be-ing together. The tensions caused by pain and labor that will exist in their new environment can help them to grow, both separately and together in their shared relationship. Each has responsibility for different work; each of their labors is necessary to maintain their community and their environment. But they must work together to bring forth and raise children, and to provide care for their family and all other living things. These tasks can only be performed in conjunction with each other. Because their work will bring both of them sorrow and will be hard, the struggles provide them an opportunity to learn to support each other, to stand by each other as they were not willing to do at the time of their fall.

By giving them diverse opportunities for growth and learning, Adam's and the woman's reproach will give them experiences to help them fulfill their potential to be like God. These experiences provide the very kind of growth Man were seeking in eating the fruit: the realization of knowing good and evil and becoming wise (3:5–6). Note that these are the very experiences that God, in wrath, might withhold, but in concern for their welfare might extend. If, as argued, the environment in the garden is not the best one for Man, existence in an environment that allows challenges for growth is a blessing. Their growth will inevitably include much more than pain and suffering. The Creation story indicates that all creations have companion elements that stand "over-against" them, opposites that exist in creative relationship with each other. Thus sorrow and pain must have their counterparts as well. Adam and the woman will therefore presumably come to know not just of pain and sorrow, but pleasure and joy as well. And those various experiences will help them learn to distinguish good and evil. In all these experiences, Adam and Eve can learn to become more like God: creative, productive, and nurturing.

Adam and Eve Defined by Work

> 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 ¶ And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

The important role that work will play in forming the man's and the woman's identity is emphasized in their names. Throughout the creation story the man has been called "Adam." [14] Though there can be several translations of this name, one that is indicative of Adam's experiences is "dirt" This name is appropriate since in the creation we read, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground" (2:7). Now God tells him, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (3:19). Now, however, his labors to care for the earth will also be part of his development. Thus, Adam not only comes physically from dirt and will eventually return there, but his very be-ing will be defined through his labor and pain with the earth. Since "Adam" defines both who he is and what he does, his name has become doubly descriptive.

The woman's name is tied to her labor as well. With her identity established, this time through her responsibilities and painful labor, Adam gives her a name that reflects her contribution to the community. Adam calls her Eve "because she was the mother of *all* living" (3:20, italics added). In one sense, she has already given birth to Adam in the sense that it is her existence that makes it possible for him to be fully human. Now that the possibility for childbearing can be realized, her legacy in the community is even more apparent. She will give life to all others; she will be the progenitor of every other human being on earth. In other words, all humanity will come through her. With Adam she also

has been given responsibility to tend and care for all the living creatures and creations on earth.

Additionally however, though the woman is the catalyst for the continuation of human life, it is her actions that also bring death (life's complement) into the world. In a system where opposing forces sustain each other's strengths, death now serves to create more possibility, more life, for Man. Faulconer (2003) explains:

> [When] he is not yet subject to death, Man is incomplete. He is not yet wholly Man. We might suppose that in *not* dying Man would be most like God. But, the text suggests that if he were to remain immortal, he would remain in the Garden, alone (even if alongside Woman) and unfruitful. Immortal Man would be unable to create and act in any full sense. He would be most *un*-like God. Paradoxical as it may seem, the text suggests that to be like God, Man must become mortal. (Notice that it is only after Man and Woman eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and become subject to death that God says Man "has become as one of us," Genesis 3:22). Knowledge is inextricably bound to death. One can only have the knowledge–ethical knowledge–that makes creation and action as a human being possible if one is subject to death. Thus, it is death that defines human being, for death makes it possible for humans to become most like God. (p. 6)

Because death now exists, life can be lost; because life needs more attention, it becomes more precious. In this sense, the woman can also be called Eve "because she was the mother of all *living*" (3:20, italics added). In other words she also provides the possibility for the whole spectrum of life's experiences: life, death, pain, growth, etc. The woman not only brings about physical life, she has also given her posterity the potential of full, abundant, productive life as well. Thus the woman brings about the possibility for—she is the "mother of"—this more abundant type of living (or be-ing) as well.

Now that Adam and the woman have eaten the fruit and their eyes have been opened and God has taught them the consequences of their actions, God clothes them with "coats of skins" (3:21). The Hebrew word for "clothed them" suggests a more formal, almost sacred ceremony (Wenham, 2002). This suggests God's act is one of

mercy and blessing and is yet another indication that the punishments God decreed were not done in anger at being disobeyed. And though their clothing may also symbolize, as the aprons did earlier, their now physical separation from God, it is also an act of mercy in protecting them from the harshness of the world they are being sent out into.

It is at this point, that God declares, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil" (3:22). Here is more evidence that eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and receiving their resultant consequences is something that will help Adam and Eve fulfill their potential, for God declares that in so doing, they have "become as one of us" (3:22). That is, they have become as the gods: they not only know good and evil (3:22), they are now in a position to "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it and have dominion . . . over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (1:28). Additionally, their dressing, which is reminiscent "either of kings' clothing honored subjects (e.g., Gen 41:42; 1 Sam 17:38), or for the dressing of priests in their sacred vestments" (Wenham, 2002, p. 84) adds to the other indications that they are growing to become more like God.

At the conclusion of chapter 3, Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden and God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life" (3:22–24). God therefore seems to connect the fact that Adam and Eve have become as the gods with the necessity of keeping them from the tree of life. The tree of life would allow them to live for ever (3:22). Because God prevents access to the tree of life, the death Eve introduces into the world is now a significant part of God's plan. Although Adam and Eve must toil in pain and sorrow, preventing their access to the Tree of Life means that Man will not struggle

in this difficult learning environment forever. Death makes finite the difficulty of mortal life; being subject to death now carries with it the promise that mortal challenges will have an end. In this way, God's denying them access to the tree of life can also be read as a merciful blessing.

Increased Opportunity for Relationship

Throughout the narrative there are several signs that as Adam and the woman are placed in the garden they know that they have been created for each other and that God intends their destinies to be intertwined (2:23–24).[15] Yet it seems apparent in the story that until they experience the effects of their disobedience—the estrangement that happens in the fall—they do not really begin to understand the significance of each being for the other. In the garden, their understanding of relationship is limited.

Man's actions in the Fall damage their relationships with the earth, with each other, and with God. Because they have transgressed the laws of the garden, they are expelled from it. Outside the garden the earth has begun to bring forth "thorns and thistles" in relationship to Adam (3:18) and Eve has been told she will experience painful labor as well (3:16). At the fall they have also distanced themselves from each other, as is symbolized by the aprons they begin to wear (3:7). Additionally, they have become estranged from God who drives them out of the garden and from his physical presence (3:24).[16] In their alienation, their eyes are finally open, and they being to understand something about the importance of their relationships. Yet although all of their current relationships have been altered, their punishments provide the opportunity both for their

current relationship to be strengthened and for new and increased relationship with others.

I argue that in suffering the consequences of disunity, Adam and the woman are taught several things about themselves that help them to realize why relationship with the other is so important: they come to know more intimately who they are (God says, "Behold man is become as one of us" 3:22), they learn how they uniquely contribute to their relationships (through their particular labors, 3:16–19), and they find out that the only way for them to successfully achieve their goals is to work in concert with each other (Eve is subject to Adam and will bear and raise children; Adam will till the ground to care for their family, 3:16–19). They also learn of death. Thus the resultant "disunity" between the two of them and between them and God brings about significant opportunities for growth and new relationships.

In response to her actions, God tells Eve, "thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (3:16). Again as noted, this decree may appear punitive, especially since she is told her husband will "rule" over her. Scholars have suggested it refers to a woman's desire for her husband or an injunction against her desire to rule (Wenham, 2002, p. 81). Yet this also provides opportunity for Eve as she fulfills her complementary role in the pattern of supportive relationship demonstrated by the greater and lesser lights during the earth's creation (1:14–18). From that perspective, Adam's responsibility to rule over her must work only for the relationship as a whole and in conjunction with the others involved. Thus Eve, using her difference as other to balance and temper his rule, can work together with Adam to realize the potential of their relationship. Though her actions have separated her from

God's presence, she is told she will learn to be redirected toward her husband (3:16), the one who is meet for her and for whom her creation ends his isolation (2:18). Their experiences together will give them opportunities to work to overcome their current separation from each other, both physically and socially. The observation Adam made in the Garden, "Therefore shall a man . . . cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (2:24) can now be realized, but only in tandem with her. Thus, he too will be directed toward her. The Hebrew word for "flesh," suggests something more than a biological or sexual oneness, it indicates also "one's very being, one's identity, both body and soul" (Faulconer, 2003, p. 8). Thus, Adam and Eve are to create community by coming together in unity, and be-ing for each other in every sense of the word.

God's declaration of consequences also tells Eve that she will be given other relationships to enhance her life. This offers her more opportunity to participate in and learn from those relationships as well. Thus, given in the context of the opportunity to expand her community, this can be understood as a promise of potential for her. Like God, Eve will be responsible for the creation of new relationships as she too brings forth children onto the earth. This statement is a promise of fruitfulness and an ability to respond to God's command. Especially in her particular case where she and Adam currently exist alone, she can greatly extend the parameters of her social interaction. By expanding her community through children she can thereby increase and enhance the relationships through which she learns. In her new circumstance of family, Eve will have more opportunities to begin to realize her godlike potential of multiplying, by means of procreation. And while every relationship is an encounter with an other who is different from oneself, who exercises their own agency, and therefore introduces tensions and

challenges, it is only within the supportive tensions of Eve's relationships with others that she will grow in purpose and meaning in her life.

As mentioned earlier, Adam will participate with his wife in her work; so too, the woman will necessarily be part of Adam's work. As they labor together, their relationship will be strengthened as well. Their individuality can teach them how to use those differences to be in productive relation with each; at the same time, their relationship will help each to understand (and distinguish) their own individuality. It thus becomes more apparent that diversity and unity are really opposing aspects of the same phenomenon. Though Eve is "taken from man" 2:21 (and therefore made from the same materials), as each of their personal experiences help to nurture their unique identities, it will be their newly-defined difference that will make community a more powerful learning environment for them. Their differences bring more variety to each of their separate lives, but it also means that both can be a greater strength to their union as well.

Additionally, their increased individuality makes them able to contribute more to the earth's community. In endeavoring to increase the abundance of the world ("replenish [or fill] the earth" 1:28, and by cultivating herbs and harvesting "bread" or food, 3:19), they help to nurture an environment to be more productive—where what is produced multiples and becomes more than what previously existed. In this they imitate God's work. But the earth's community will also help them begin to experience life's abundance. Only in that now altered environment, can Adam and Eve multiply, labor, and experience pain. Thus, as they work to strengthen the earth's community, it will help them strengthen their more complex human community (or their relationship as a family) as well.

The Blessings of Expulsion

Although not entirely apparent as it begins, Man's expulsion from the Garden in Eden is a story of possibility and learning. In the garden, their projects were limited. Though apparently not subject to mortal death in the garden, one might argue their limited work and responsibility in the garden (as compared to outside the garden) was itself a form of death. As Emmanuel Levinas (1987) contends, "Death is the impossibility of having a project" (p. 74). Now they have projects (and purpose) given by decree from God that can fully engage them, and which give them new responsibility and opportunity to make their lives full. Man's struggles in exercising their newly-given responsibilities seem meant to stretch them toward their godlike potential and thereby make their life not only more productive but more meaningful as well. Ironically, being subject to mortal death places Adam and Eve in a position for their lives to flourish. As Faulconer (2003) states, "Human being is to act, and the story of Man and Woman in the garden leads us to the full human ability to act" (p. 14). Thus it is in leaving the garden that Man gains their "full human ability to act" because now they can have those experiences that will allow them to become most like God.

Outside of the garden Adam and Eve must nurture their relationship together; they must each *be* for-the-other in order to survive. Though in order to accomplish that work they will have to labor in pain, through their struggles, through tension and diversity, their relationships will produce an excess, both in producing life and in making it more abundant and fulfilling. They can grow in experience and knowledge. Outside the garden, the quality and possibility of their lives have changed. I argue it is better for them.

Neither Adam nor Eve can build or maintain such an environment entirely of their own volition. These three Genesis stories emphasize that each individual's unique participation is integral to their community's success. As the creation narrative suggests, unity of those individual entities is also essential to the formation of community. When each unique part comes together in labor that is both demanding and outwardly directed, community can successfully exist. The Genesis stories as an ensemble show how all of these elements initially come together to help build an environment where meaningful, abundant life begins to be possible. As the differences of manhood and womanhood are first differentiated and then brought together, such a relationship becomes capable of creating independent life "after their kind" (2:24–26), like God and like everything else in the earth's community.

At the end of Genesis 3, God has provided Man with the possibility for godlike life for he says, "man is become as one of us" (3:22). Thus leaving their utopian existence for the earthly community affords greater opportunities to respond to God's more challenging commandments—those given at the end of chapter one. If one reads the first chapter of Genesis as a general summary of all of Adam and Eve's experiences in these three stories—from the creation through the expulsion (many of the details of Adam and Eve's experiences are not recorded there, but the gist of their circumstances are), it is possible to understand the more expansive commandment to ("be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" 1:28) as one given to Adam and Eve after they have left the garden. Otherwise it seems a bit odd that God would command Man to be fruitful and multiply, have dominion over every

living thing "upon the earth," and replenish and subdue the earth if his intent was for them to live in only a small part of it, in a garden. These commandments seem much more appropriate for Adam and Eve after they have left the garden and are out in the world laboring. (Note that the verbs "subdue" and "have dominion" are verbs indicative of struggle, a consequence they become subject to in the expulsion.)

Read in this way, Adam and Eve's existence outside the garden seems to be God's intent all along (or at least he is able to turn their actions for their good), for while in chapter one God declares that the end of various stages of his creation are "good," no such pronouncement is made after the creation of Man. It is only when all the necessary elements for building their community are in place that God surveys the whole experience and sees that "behold, it was *very* good" (1:31, italics added).

Regardless, however, of whether one accepts such an interpretation, the story of Man's expulsion by God from the utopian Eden offers more insights about the kind of deep learning that becomes available to all within powerful learning communities. The work God makes available outside the garden seems designed to bring Man together in ways that teach them of their enduring individuality. Through their different work they can come to know who they uniquely are. At the same time, however, their specific work will strengthen their shared relationships; both sets of responsibilities are necessary for both of Adam and Eve. Who they are as individuals will directly affect who they are together. Their experiences will help to make each whole, unified. It is for Man, together, to realize that unity–through participation in the community they must struggle together to create.

Chapter 6: Abundant Learning Within Moral Community

Out of the Garden Into Community

The stories of Genesis 1–3 suggest an alternative understanding both for what it means to be human and its implications for coming together in fruitful community. As the following summary shows, at each succeeding step in the stories we see the man's and the woman's relationship progress until, in the end, all the elements are in place to allow them to experience the abundance that comes from living in community.

In the first chapter of Genesis we see the variety and richness of the world God has made for Man. God creates abundance and then commands his creations to do the same: dissimilar elements are combined to create different environments that support diverse life. The land supports grass and herbs and fruit trees "yielding seed after his kind" (1:12). Both land and water animals "bring forth abundantly" and are "fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and…multiply in the earth" (1:20–22). In relationship all of God's creations become more than they are alone; together they are productive; their existence becomes purposeful. Man, too, are told to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (1:28). In relationship to each other, the man and the woman fit in the order God imposes; together they are a part of the productive power the cosmos now embodies.

Genesis chapter 2, however, begins to focus on human be-ing as Adam and Eve are given responsibility for each other. God says it is "not good for man to be alone" (2:18), then "the Lord God … made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." (2:22). Adam responds, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave

unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (2:24). Each, quite literally, is made for the other. They find themselves surrounded by beauty and variety inside a garden that provides for their needs (2:8–16). It appears that God has prescribed a Utopian existence for Adam and Eve, a kind of romance.

In the stories of both the fall and the expulsion, however, we soon learn that the seemingly idyllic existence Adam and Eve have been experiencing will change. Even their relationship, developed so that they would not be alone, must evolve. They have been created like God, but it appears that their pre-fall relationship did not offer enough opportunity for the growth God had designed for them (1:26–28 and 2:25).

Genesis chapter 3 explains Adam's and Eve's new opportunities for growth as God outlines the experiences from which they can begin to build a life together. They will gain the knowledge they wanted, but it will not be without work; they will now learn through sorrow, labor, pain, and exertion. God tells them, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children" (3:16), and "Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living" (3:20). Adam is called on to struggle for the family by engaging with the world (3:17). Their expulsion from the garden will make their experiences more diverse, and their new environment will require that they find ways to bring their differences together as they struggle to create a life and livelihood. They need each other. Their laborious and painful experiences will school them; they will grow and have increase (3:16–19). In this environment they will learn (among other things) about death and good and evil.

The Genesis stories show us that the human experience is not only about diversity being ordered or brought together harmoniously; Adam's and Eve's experiences together

are also about the promise of abundant relationship. At the end of Genesis 3, Adam and Eve must leave the garden and enter a world that has been cursed by God (3:17). But as now constituted the earth begins to provide a greater learning environment for Man. The earth is now structured to help strengthen Man's relationship because now they must depend on each other. Thus their relationship can become deeper as they work together; through that relationship each will grow.

The beginning of Genesis 4 shows us the fruition of the creation story, the point where everything comes together to produce the fruitfulness that God earlier stated he intended for the humans he created in his likeness (1:26). Here, we see more emphatically that the Adam and Eve stories are not only about the two of them:

> 1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. (Genesis 4:1–2)

This, finally, is the fulfillment of both the promise and the commandment of God. It is what the stories have been leading to all along. As Eve bears Cain, a third person has been brought into Adam and Eve's relationship. Here we can see that the Genesis stories are not about two-person, dyadic relationships any more than they are about individuals. Adam and Eve have been created to experience increase and abundance; their stories are about family—a multiplicity of relationship and an increase of work. Abundant (and presumably fulfilling) relationship is, we learn, what it means to be human. The Genesis stories are, after all, about the beginning of community.

Thus, relationships are not things we must struggle against in order to maintain our individuality, nor are they tools we can choose to use—or not—to make our experiences more beneficial (for sociality, increased support, added resources, etc.), or more efficient (for collaboration, team work, etc.). These stories show that we *are* our

relationships. And no single relationship by itself is sufficient for full human experience. Human be-ing is about a multiplicity and abundance of relationship. Thus understanding the nature of how to exist in relationship, particularly in multiple relationships such as are experienced in community, becomes profoundly important.

Just as importantly, these stories also teach the general dynamics of learning. Cain and Abel are introduced into the community: "And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground" (4:2). As Adam has been commanded to rule (through replenishing, subduing and dominating) the earth, Cain works with, or tills, the earth. As Adam has been commanded to rule over "every living thing" (1:28), Abel keeps sheep. They begin sharing in the commandments given their father by God and learning the lessons Adam is privy to through that work. Adam's experiences are valuable not just as they play out in what he can bring to his relationship with Eve, now Adam teaches someone else to mimic his work, as Adam has done by imitating God's. Adam teaches his sons. Through their work together (Adam, Cain, and Abel) they each will learn more as well.

Here we begin to see the promise of fruition and multiplicity in human be-ing. It happens when others are brought together into relationships of learning. These new relationships not only help define Adam (and Eve) in new ways, they also teach all the participants about themselves in uniquely different ways. Each relationship brings new dimensions to their existence and to their learning. Together in community the whole family can generate more than the sum of their individual contributions.

I argue, therefore, that life's fullness and abundance (not only in prosperity of resources, but more importantly in terms of variety and the richness of sociality) are

found within the diverse experiences available through a multitude of supportive relationships. In fact, these stories indicate such relationships are necessary for Man's greatest learning (and thus growth) to occur.

Diversity (otherness and difference) is obviously needed for community. However we also see through these stories that community, including learning community, is more than two disparate things standing in opposition to each other; it's more than simply a multitude of relationships. It's also about purposeful unity, which is accomplished by coming together in work. It is through work that Adam's and Eve's family can struggle to create an environment that fosters relationships which are powerful enough to generate growth and understanding; their work brings about a more fulfilling experience of human be-ing. Working together makes their relationships rewarding; their fruitful relationships produce abundance and meaning—fulfilling human be-ing. Now the human family is in community

Recognizing the Power of Community Relationships

Many in education have noticed the power of supportive sociality for human growth and are calling for those nurturing relationships to be used in education as well. Theorists, educators, and researches alike have come to recognize the "fruitlessness" of trying to educate human beings outside of the rich relationships that they naturally create (Tagg, 2003; Palmer, 1981, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1994). The literature on educational learning communities is especially attuned to the importance of human relationship and sociality, although what they mean by sociality is somewhat different. Despite that difference, I believe their sociality is one of the main reasons that learning communities

of all kinds have become so popular. In the introduction of his book *Communities of Practice,* Etienne Wenger (1998) offers this perspective on some of the problems of simply focusing on the individual learner:

> Our institutions, to the extent that they address issues of learning explicitly, are largely based on the assumption that learning is an individual process. . . . Hence we arrange classrooms where students—free from the distractions of their participation in the outside world—can pay attention to a teacher or focus on exercises. We design computer-based training programs that walk students through individualized sessions covering reams of information and drill practice. To assess learning we use tests with which students struggle in one-on-one combat, where knowledge must be demonstrated out of context, and where collaborating is considered cheating. As a result, much of our institutionalized teaching and training is perceived by would-be learners as irrelevant, and most of us come out of this treatment feeling that learning is boring and arduous, and that we are not really cut out for it. (p. 3)

Recognizing the social nature of meaningful learning, Wenger, along with Jean Lave, an anthropologist and a social learning theorist, studied the dynamics of learning groups. Lave and Wenger are credited by many with identifying the dynamics of groups known as "communities of practice" and popularizing the name. They are both strong advocates of social learning. With the additional perspective of anthropology they have recognized the commonality of social learning across time and cultures. Thus, in speaking about our own educational culture, Wenger (1998) offers a new model by asking:

> So, what if we adopted a different perspective, one that placed learning in the context of our lived experience of participation in the world? What if we assumed that learning is as much a part of our human nature as eating or sleeping, that it is both life-sustaining and inevitable, and that—given a chance—we are quite good at it? And what if, in addition, we assumed that learning is, in its essence, a fundamentally social phenomenon, reflecting our own deeply social nature as human beings capable of knowing? What kind of understanding would such a perspective yield on how learning takes place and what is required to support it? (p. 3)

Here Wenger argues that social learning is a ubiquitous activity, natural to human be-ing and helpful to education for increasing learning.

One thing learning models that incorporate sociality are helping educators to do is move way from seeing education as the passing of discrete bits of information from the mind of the teacher into the mind of the student by drawing on learning theories that acknowledge the deep significance of culture and society to human development. As Parker Palmer (1998) notes, "the human brain works best with information presented not in the form of isolated data bits but in patterns of meaningful connection, in a community of data as it were" (p. 127). Our brains, it seems, are influenced by our human (social) condition.

Problem-based learning is another methodology that has become a popular and powerful kind of learning community. It started at McMaster University and has since been used extensively in medical and other professional schools as a way to decrease the stress of the programs. Problem-based learning is an instructional strategy that has students work collaboratively to solve real-world problems in cohort groups. Parker Palmer (1998) describes this approach as told to him by the dean of McMaster University. Speaking of the methodology he writes,

> Its key feature is that students, from their first day in medical school, are gathered in small circles around a live patient with a real problem and are asked to diagnose the patient's condition and prescribe a course of treatment. [The dean explains:] "On one level, the students sitting in that circle do not know very much. Some of them have no premed training at all, since we admit all kinds of majors to medical school…As a group, they know even more. Here sits a student who has a gift for observation, who is noticing the dullness of the patient's eyes. There sits a student with a gift for intuition, who is picking up information from the patient's body language. And there is a student with a gift for asking questions, who can get more information from the patient in a few minutes than most of us could get in an hour. If you can get all of these people and their perceptions to multiply exponentially in a good group process, it is sometimes possible for a collection of amateurs to come up with solid insights. (pp. 125–126)

In problem-based learning the students must work together to be successful. Though a trained physician stays with the group to make sure no harm is done to the patients, the

physician is careful only to guide a “collective inquiry” and not to tell the students the diagnosis or the prescription. Students must do their learning together in order to be successful; additionally, their work has meaning because it involves real people. They are working to help those who are truly ill.

These programs understand that the development of the mind does not occur in isolation, rather education is a dialectical process involving the individual as a member of the larger society and culture. While these models vary widely in type and implementation, they typically acknowledge that students learn to become part of their societies through concentrated engagement with others, including the teacher as well as other learners (Land & Hannafin, 2000; Palmer, 1998).

A common strength of these learning models is the use of “active learning” as a means of helping students engage more deeply with the curriculum and thus retain knowledge longer. Because the learning tasks can be more complex than those assigned when students are working alone, there can be more collaboration centered on learning experiences that are more like how students might actually use their learning. Many educational environments are now trying to become more “authentic” to how learning occurs naturally, in informal settings and in settings where particular knowledge will be used. For this they are recognizing they must incorporate human sociality into their learning methodologies.

All of these community-learning models, both theoretical and in actual practice, call for moving away from more traditional methods of educations of “learning as transfer.” They place much needed emphasis on social learning because they recognize that human be-ing is profoundly relational. There is a difference, however, between the

sociality of these learning models and the model we see in the Genesis stories. In Genesis, though the individuality (otherness) of the individuals is critical, the focus is clearly on the development of the community in ways that benefit everyone involved. In contrast, social learning models recognize the power of sociality for learning, but the primary aim tends to remain the development and growth of the individual.

In social learning models a person enters into learning communities because of a shared interest with others in that community. And while shared interest can certainly be a potent factor in creating meaningful relationships, those relationships are not the focus of the learning. One participates with others in these communities because holding membership in the community suits a purpose for the individual (Wenger, n.d.). Members may be learning from those who know more about something in which they are interested; they may be able to find answers to questions; they may find the sociality enjoyable; or it may allow them to pursue an interest, etc. These communities of practice are aptly named and often successful for their learning goals (those focused on the common interests of participants) because those in the community can benefit from a natural camaraderie that exists between people of similar interests. Those with more knowledge certainly share their knowledge/skills, abilities, etc., with others, and all work to increase the understanding within the group. But like most formal learning in education, the relationships are forged to serve the learning, not the other way around. The educational "abundance" for social learning theory is the learning, not the sociality.

Human Potential Within Moral Community

In the Genesis stories, diversity and unity work together to create abundance, both in terms of variety on the earth and in terms of human increase and growth. Creating abundance in learning might mean any number of productive and rewarding opportunities, including increased exposure to all kinds of learning, better retention, diverse experiences, greater joy in learning, improved ability to function well and contribute to society, etc. As I argue below, certainly it should include deeper, more supportive and life-sustaining relationships. This abundance, it seems to me, is the very purpose of education. If I am right, then the question for educators becomes, "How can we help students bring their diversity together into an educational experience of unity that produces abundance for them?" I believe this can best be done by helping students to become morally responsible to the deeply ethical relationships which constitute their lives.

As the Adam and Eve stories (supported by insight from contemporary philosophy) tell us, we are not fully human—we cannot even fully exist—without others. Human existence is inescapably one of mutual moral obligation to each other. Therefore, human be-ing is an existence of fundamental responsibility to one another. In other words, our diversity (the difference between us that makes each of us absolutely "other" and thus determines our "self") obligates us to strive for a unity with others, a coming together, that benefits the other. There are many ways humans can come together that focus inwardly on ourselves, but these are not uniting, nor ultimately fulfilling or abundant relationships. Instead, because our relationships with others are actually relationships of obligation, they must be relationships of nurture and support, for the

other's sake. In such relationships we accept responsibility for the other; we acknowledge our debt of obligation. But in so doing, we also come into ourselves because we respond to our own true nature.

Thus, it is not just the fact that we have interaction with others, our sociality, that defines us; instead, we are human because our relationships are moral. Our relationships are moral in two ways. First, and inescapably, we are fundamentally obligated to others; that makes the relationship itself, that which defines us, moral. We are moral beings because we are in relationships that require us to act. Secondly, these relationships can be moral when we choose to respond morally to our obligations (by choosing, for example, to act justly rather than unjustly toward the other). I assert (along with many others) that to be human is to be in relationships of moral responsibility. We come to know what that means by learning the correct response to our related situation, by learning to distinguish good and evil, and by choosing the good. Therefore, trying to understand sociality outside of a moral framework misunderstands the nature of human be-ing and will not bring people to their full fruition.

Adam and Eve can only realize their full godlike potential in their moral obligations to those within their community. When they foster and cultivate the type of moral relationships where they can offer the essence of their individuality in support of each other, they can create experiences of "com-unity" with one another. In these types of moral relationships, a creative tension that fosters growth and abundance (for all) is the outcome. This is when our be-ing becomes fully human.

The way, then, to realize human potential is not to teach someone to become a self-fulfilled individual (indeed I argue such an existence is not even possible and is why

God was so emphatic when he denounced Adam's isolation[17]). Rather, human potential is realized only by fully embracing (being true to) our fundamental obligations to the other and thus creating a community characterized by coming into unity with others. This can provide the potential for abundance, including educational abundance. I contend it should be the aim of every educational experience.

As noted, many in education, including those advocating the use of social learning models, do recognize the relatedness of human be-ing, but I contend that most of these theories and practices (with few exceptions) remain situated within a framework that focuses on individual identity and personal fulfillment and not on moral relationships and communities of mutual responsibility. Relationships are important in social learning theory. But the development of moral relationship remains, at best, a secondary goal, a subset of a primary goal (individual fulfillment). For many, human sociality is just one characteristic of many, albeit a powerful one, that constitutes a person's identity. For others, the focus of education is on the individual's "rights" rather than responsibilities. As such, social learning educators view sociality as a useful tool among several that can be used as a means to achieve individual (or at the best, group) development that is separate from fundamental moral obligations.

If our relationships could be merely social (but not formed by morality), such an understanding of relationships may be correct. What many social learning educators do not seem to recognize, or at least acknowledge, however, is that, as Levinas and other contemporary philosophers have asserted, morality constitutes our relationships. As the core of our relationships (not just one characteristic among many), our morality defines our identity; it is what makes us human. This is what the Genesis stories teach us; Adam

was not whole without "a help meet for him" (2:18), or an other to be in (moral) relationship with; however, in relationship with Eve and their children, he learns what it is to be human. Only in community can Adam, or Eve, or anyone, experience full humanity. If education is about human fulfillment, and this can only be realized in moral relationship, then teaching learners how to form and live in moral community should be paramount. It should be both the means (the way we teach) and the ends (the outcome) of education. All other learning should serve the experience of community, not the other way around.

There are others who are also calling for the introduction of an ethical orientation in teaching. Nel Noddings and Parker Palmer are just two educational theorists who have been influential in my own understanding of moral education. Noddings has published several books calling for an ethical approach to education. Two of her books include *The Challenge of Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education* (1992) and *Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Building* (2002). In them she argues persuasively that moral concerns should be part of everyone's educational experience. Parker Palmer (1993), who draws heavily from his religious (Quaker) background, has written prolifically on the subject of ethical educational interaction as well. He provides this observation of how what he calls "consensual inquiry" is "true" to the human learning experience:

> Through consensual inquiry, people are learning by "practicing obedience to truth"; that is, they are learning by listening and responding faithfully to each other and to the subject at hand. They are using an educational process that is not individualized and competitive but communal and cooperative, one that reflects the communal nature of reality itself. They are learning by practicing the rule of truth as troth….With consensus, the learning process itself becomes a model of the obedience required for us to live faithfully with each other and our common world. Students who learn in this way are learning more than facts. They are

> learning a way of relating obediently to each other and to their world; they are practicing a communal epistemology that will form them in a communal ethic. (pp. 94–97)

Noddings and Palmer have persuasively argued that relationships are more than social conveniences or a happy "happenstance" of human be-ing. They recognize the moral nature of human interaction and that the kind of learning taking place within relationships that recognize the value of the other can be transformative.

Learning Through Lived Experience in Moral Community

Most religions[18] are deeply concerned with issues of ethics and focus heavily on our moral obligations to each other. They emphasize the importance of relationship for the kind of changes they are trying to make in the lives of their adherents. For many religious communities the types of relationships one develops with others is paramount to the transformative changes they encourage in the lives of their followers since it is only within moral relationships they believe one can truly come to understand be-ing. In religious settings then, one learns primarily through lived experience, and often in a community, how to respond to the moral relatedness of human be-ing (not just cognitively but with one's heart, might, and soul as well). This is critical for education. Converts to many religions often must first be schooled in the tenets of a faith before they can join, but this kind of cognitive training is much less important for affiliation with a denomination than how one behaves. It is not unusual, for instance, for a practitioner to be unclear about their particular religion's theology, but observers often know well the traditions of how one lives their particular religion.

For many, religiosity is much more about the moral nature of a person than what one knows. (For some even a professed belief in Christ, or a willingness to let him into

their life, or a confession of salvation is enough to indicate a person's moral nature; but these are all "acts" more than they are knowledge.) Thus one's belief is demonstrated most in daily observances, how one lives one's life. As with Adam and Eve, religion is learned by "embodying" the tenets of one's faith. Thus Jesus told those asking for proof of the doctrine he preached: "If any man will do his [God's] will, he shall know of the doctrine," (John 7:17). In other words if people wanted to know whether Christ's words were true, he suggested, they had only to "do," or live, them to know.

The Adam and Eve stories also suggest that for knowledge to be fruitful, it needs to be more than cognitive. In these stories, learning isn't about teaching the ability to memorize and manipulate what are essentially facts or information. In the stories, God does not send angels as teachers to school Adam and Eve in how to be godlike; instead, he uses a cursed world as their learning environment and explains what their experiences will teach them. Thus, according to the stories, the way to realize human potential is to learn by embodying not just knowledge, but also experience, and through them wisdom and understanding. This is done in community characterized by relationships of mutual responsibility to the other—as opposed to responsibility to the learning—facilitated by shared work. Our diversity (the fact that the "other" also makes us who we are), gives us a responsibility (obligates us) to strive for unity (to love and support one another). Work is the way we can learn to live in unity (love) with others. Because this is our natural state, it speaks to our be-ing. These relationships also create abundance.

Thus the New Testament records that when Jesus was asked, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" he responded, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great

commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:36–40). In other words, all other scripture and any commentary religious leaders might make in explanation, is subsumed by these two commandments. Developing relationship, both with God and with one's fellow man should be, according to Jesus, the primary work project for Christians. However, these commandments are not specific to Christians. As Dillon Inouye (2002) points out, this same instruction is given as either a "golden rule" (something to do) or a "silver rule" (something not to do) in many religions (see table 1).

Table 1

Golden or Silver Rules

Religion	Golden or Silver Rule
Judaism	Whatsoever thou wouldest that men should not do unto thee, do not that to them. (Babylonian Shabbath, 31a.)
Christianity	All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them. (Matthew 7:12)
Buddhism	In five ways should a clansman minister to his friends and familiars,...by treating them as he treats himself. (Sigalovada Sutra, 31; Sacred Books of the Buddhists)
Hinduism	Do naught to others which, if done to thee, would cause thee pain: this is the sum of duty. (Mahabharata, 5:1517; as translated in Monier-Williams, Indian Wisdom)
Confucianism	The Master replied, "...What you do not want done to yourself, do not do unto others." (Analects, 15:23; also 5:11; 12:2; Great Learning, 10:2)
Taoism	To those who are good to me, I am good; and to those who are not good to me, I am also good. And thus all get to be good. (Muller, 39:91.)
Zoroastrianism	That nature only is good when it shall not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self. (Muller 18:271)

Even people without a religious tradition, however, are familiar with this injunction as an ethical principle for human interaction that is known as the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." The pervasiveness of this instruction within so

many traditions is another manifestation of the fundamental morality of the human condition and our indebtedness and responsibility to the other.

Inouye (2002) referred to these commandments as "The Savior's Laws of Growth" not only because they came from Jesus, but also because he recognized that following those two commandments created powerful relationships wherein one could experience life-changing growth; these two commandments encompassed all our relationships of learning, both in a vertical relationship (from someone in authority like parents, teachers, experts, etc.) and horizontal relationships (from those in roughly the same stage of learning and development such as peers, friends, siblings, etc.). They commanded us again, as God had earlier in Genesis with Man, to enter into moral relationship, to fully participate in loving community. Inouye maintained that Christ gave his followers these two great commandments for be-ing in these moral relationships with each other because these were the very relationships that caused transformative learning (and change) to occur as one entered into them wholeheartedly. In this way, people could have experiences that helped them become, as with Adam and Eve, godlike.

Moral community suggests a different kind of learning because it seeks a different purpose for education, one that acknowledges and respects the fundamentally relational nature of human be-ing and which recognizes one's inescapable responsibility to others. Thus, a moral learning community is one that works within relationships of mutual responsibility. It is one where participants are working to be outward-looking and other-centered in their interactions. Our interconnectedness is paramount; thus learning serves to strengthen people's relationships not the other way around. The stories of Adam and Eve suggest we will be most fulfilled when we foster and cultivate the type of moral

relationships that place individuality in creative tension with unity. These communities support that thesis.

As was discussed in the introductory chapter, the current educational system is still grounded in a philosophical foundation in conflict with the idea that we are relationally responsible beings. The fact that we meet together is often more for efficiency than for deep learning. For example, in classes many times we can do what is asked of us, struggle to master the new knowledge, skill, or ability (sometimes even working together), and receive an assessment for our performance all without even knowing the names of the others we have been in class with for months. As mentioned earlier, the ability to engage with materials when it's convenient for us (with minimal need to interact with others) is one of the most compelling reason people choose to take online courses. Like many elements of society, modern education sees the individual as the fundamental unit in learning whose rights are paramount. Thus, the methods of learning focus almost exclusively on facilitation of teaching the individual and very rarely on the learner's responsibilities, much less moral responsibilities.

While the rhetoric of education has gone beyond seeing learning as a teacher/learner "two-person problem" (Gong, 2002) where the teacher's responsibility is to transfer knowledge to the student (often through lectures), the fact that so much of educational practice revolves around such a paradigm suggests that it is difficult to fully escape this perspective on learning. The popularity of social learning theories notwithstanding, a continued focus on individuals, cognition, and the importance of the mind as the center of human be-ing (all legacies of some modern philosophy), makes the

transfer of knowledge paradigm a compelling, and more efficient, methodology than those that must incorporate sociality, especially when it is seen to be superfluous.

The learning paradigm that knowledge is simply transferred from one person to another equates being educated with acquiring information. In this model, the teacher gives knowledge to the student; the relationship through which it comes is seen as much less important if existent at all. However, doing so, I argue, also fundamentally misunderstands both the nature of knowledge and the way we truly learn. As C. Terry Warner points out in his introduction to Arthur King's (1986) *The Abundance of the Heart*:

> Our contemporary conception of the truth as mere information…is not only false; it is dangerous. It leads us to suppose that we can pass bits of the truth conveniently to one another, as if they were coins. We are encouraged to regard the mind as a kind of purse in which we can collect and even hoard these coins. We believe we can buy, sell, and barter for them; we treat them as if they have exchange value. …All of this is false. The idea that truth is information is, ultimately, a menacing economic metaphor. (p. 3)

One reason the metaphor is menacing is because thinking of education as a transfer of information misses the point of education as taught in the Adam and Eve stories, and as I have argued throughout this dissertation. If we believe that "truth [is] mere information" that can be collected and negotiated as commerce, then the role of relationship between learners becomes negligible. Therefore, it is not surprising that the learning environments this type of education tends to construct are focused on how best to transfer information from one person, the teacher, to another, the student. Failure to recognize, and therefore honor how we learn truth, however, makes it much less likely that the learner will receive knowledge that becomes transformative for them. It discounts the nature of human be-ing. Since this perspective minimizes the relationship through which the knowledge comes and is made meaningful, the focus of the learning is inward and self-directed.

According to what we learn from the Adam and Eve stories, the world has been created in order to nurture and increase relationship, but not just any relationship. The stories teach about a specific kind of interaction, one of mutual respect and responsibility to the other. It is one that helps individuals become more themselves through their unified work with others. These three things, then—(a) individuality/diversity, (b) unity, and (c) work—seem to be particularly foundational to communities that become powerful learning environments. Participation in them promotes a growth of self, a greater understanding and responsiveness to our mutual interdependence, and the possibility of individual and community transformation. Since the purpose of education is to help people to live as full and fruitful beings, and learning to live in community is the most fruitful task of human be-ing, I contend the primary task of education should be teaching people how to create and live in community. One question for education then becomes how does one invite learners to live in moral community?

Inviting Learners Into Moral Community

What does it mean to be responsible, to treat others as we would be treated, to be in community? I believe chapter three from the Genesis stories can provide some ideas. In that chapter, Adam and Eve are taught by God what it means to be responsible to each other in a life outside the garden. Eve is told that she will experience sorrow in bringing forth children (3:16), and Adam is told he will experience sorrow in the labor he performs to provide for himself and his family (3:17–19). In essence, they are responsible to contribute to the community, but their contributions will entail hard work and sacrifice.

Moral responsibility thus places far greater demands on us and on our relationships with others than those we choose to enter into and leave as is convenient for our immediate situation. Morally responsible work is performed for others' sake. It is work that is not always easy and may not be rewarding. It may entail sweat, as Adam was told his would. But being morally responsible is a large part of what makes work meaningful. It is through this kind of work (the third important aspect of community), that diversity and unity can produce the abundance associated with community.

Responsibility to another, as both Adam and Eve learn, also ultimately means being willing to suffer, to be affected,[19] on another's behalf. Thus our moral obligation to the other is more than doing a good turn for someone when time and circumstances make it opportune for us to do so. The fact that something is convenient implies the cost to ourselves is minimal; it might just as easily be about what we get (feelings of competence, accolades, well-being, etc.) as what we give. Work done in response to moral relationships, however, is likely to also involve sorrow, because be-ing in relation to others necessarily means being able to be affected (by them or their circumstances). If we can be affected, our experiences with another means we are not in control. We are vulnerable to the possibility that through them we will experience pain.

As has been noted, one reason communities of practice are popular today is because a person chooses to enter and leave as his or her interests are being addressed and his or her needs are met. Knowing that community entails difficult work, pain and suffering (an existence that focuses on the needs of another), and calls us to be morally responsible, what might possibly be compelling enough to draw people into such an experience? A community of moral obligation might not seem to have much to offer

anyone, especially considering today's climate of self-focus. As Robert Putnam (2000) writes:

> Community has warred incessantly with individualism for preeminence in our political hagiology. Liberation from ossified community bonds is a recurrent and honored theme in our culture….Even Alexis de Tocqueville, patron saint of American communitarians, acknowledged…"Individualism [is] a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look after itself."
>
> Our national myths often exaggerate the role of individual heroes and understate the importance of collective effort…. Nevertheless, the myth of rugged individualism continues to strike a powerful inner chord in the American psyche. (p. 24)

Given the reluctance of people to participate in community building in favor of relationships that are "formed to his taste" and an American admiration of "rugged individualism," how might learners be invited into educational communities of moral relatedness? This, I believe, is where the fact that we already exist in moral relationships to each other—we already are moral beings (who nevertheless may choose to act against our moral obligations)—becomes most important. Because relatedness, and therefore morality, is de facto the situation of all human be-ing, I contend education does not have the luxury of deciding whether to teach ethics. Adding another class to teach students the boundaries of one's rights (what we can and cannot do together) fundamentally misunderstands the true nature of the learner and falsely teaches that we can choose to be morally related. The Genesis stories (as well as contemporary philosophers) teach that as human beings in relationship to others our existence is already fundamentally moral. What we choose is whether to be true to that nature (towards relationship, abundance, and community) or not (towards isolation and death). The story of the Fall shows us the consequences of that choice. Man's choice to separate themselves brought death into the

world. After their expulsion, as they work to create community, they bring life (in their case children) into the world. Teaching students how to choose fulfilling life, then, should be the concern of every educator in every classroom. However, when the choice is presented only cognitively ("Would you rather try to be self-actualized, learn by yourself and determine your own success," even when this scenario is impossible, or "Would you rather be morally obligated to be in each others' lives when the consequence is labor, and suffering?") few would be willing to choose community.

To present this choice, however, is to act the serpent because it misrepresents the situation to the learner. Christ explained the choice differently. In response to the question, "Who is my neighbour?" (those we often think of being in community with), Jesus tells this story:

> A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (Luke 10:30–35)

Jesus concludes by asking, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" (Luke 10:36). Thus, Christ presents in his story the actual choice that we, as human beings have. He doesn't denigrate those who choose not to help, nor does he glorify the Samaritan. There is no mention that the Samaritan ever gets his "just rewards" or glory because of his actions. Christ simply presents our (already morally obligated) situation and asks which of the travelers has chosen to acknowledge our relatedness: "which of these three…was neighbor?" When the learner

correctly identifies the one willing suffer for another, “He that shewed mercy on him,” Jesus then instructs the learner, “Go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37).

Here, I think, is one answer for how education might address moral education. “Go, and do thou likewise” is an invitation to learn through lived experience. Learners learn from their own experience and from those around them, including both teachers and other learners, and (perhaps most importantly) exemplary role models. They also can learn from stories that draw them into the moral complexity of human be-ing, those that invite the learner to mimic the story. Educational settings (like other environments that contain multiple individuals and meaningful work to do) are rich in opportunities that offer experiences to learn about and respond to moral obligations. In educational settings, individual learners are brought together into a common space to learn. Meaningful learning is a type of work. Teachers could use that work to help learners learn to become unified.

How, for instance, might things be different if teachers used the work of mastering the curriculum to offer opportunities for their students to experience community? This might be done by encouraging students to learn together and by providing opportunities for students to share their individual talents, knowledge, or skills in ways that further the learning for everyone—perhaps by encouraging students to teach each other. All the social learning techniques education is currently using to help students grow could be useful. But if they are to speak to our moral relatedness, they must be directed toward a different goal than cognitive learning. Education’s goal of helping each individual person become learned, fulfilled, and capable can still be pursued. But such a goal is only possible within a moral sociality. It must therefore be situated within the

work of creating moral communities. However how to create the kind of moral communities I describe in this work, and understanding what they might look like suggests, as many new questions as it answers.

I have argued throughout this dissertation that human existence can only be experienced in relationship to others. If so, understanding the relational nature of human be-ing and how best to educate learners to experience that sociality should be (and often is) at the top of educational agendas. However, exactly how to fully accomplish such a goal so that learners can have the greatest opportunities to live fruitful, fulfilling, and purposeful lives continues to be an on-going discussion. Currently education is looking to social learning theories to address the issues. One strategy that is becoming increasingly popular is the use of learning communities. While, some learning communities have proven to be helpful, there is still much to do to better understand their power and dynamics and how they can best be used to aid the learning process.

Related Questions for Future Development

This dissertation offers a "simplest case" framework for understanding community by looking at three aspects of human relationship: diversity/individuality, unity, and work, and how they can come together to create life-changing experiences. It suggests a different perspective on which to continue to build an understanding of human sociality. I hope this perspective will meaningfully contribute to an ongoing discussion of improved student learning in which many will want to participate. Continued research and supporting insights, in fact, would strengthen the claims made here that learning communities are enhanced by purposeful inclusion rather than exclusivity.

In this section, I propose three related areas of future research which all draw upon this dissertation's learning theory and which, I believe, would need to be addressed as we seek to enhance our understanding of how best to create more powerful educational communities. Within each of the three general questions, I have included a few related sub-questions that might stimulate more ideas and help give some direction to their main question. All three areas of investigation would, I believe, yield greater insight into our relatedness and the kind of rich and meaningful learning that can take place in environments that respect and seek to enhance supportive community relationships. Study in each of these areas could be used to enhance all aspects of learning.

First, what additional implications or issues arise from thinking about community in terms of diversity, unity, and work, and how does that impact how we think about education? In analyzing the Adam and Eve stories, I argued that diversity, unity, and work are essential to human be-ing and are fundamentally important in helping us understand our relatedness within community. If this is so, it becomes important to recognize how each contributes to the whole as well as how they work together. Here are some questions that I find particularly intriguing:

1. How does the diversity of individuals as discussed here differ from other views of diversity/difference that are found in current educational literature? Can an individual be too different to be part of a particular community? How does individuality affect community learning?
2. What does unity mean in the context of a classroom? What kind of unity can be achieved in the current educational system? Can unity be both the means and the end of education? What does unity look like as a "means"? What specifically does

it mean to say unity is the "end goal" of learning? I've tried to establish that unity means a moral relatedness that calls on participants to respond to each other differently; how can this unity be most successfully applied or helpful in educational settings?

3. In the Adam and Eve stories, I have used the idea of "work" almost as a synonym for living. In an educational setting (probably most often in a classroom setting), what kind of work helps students bring their diversity together into a unity that is greater than the sum of its parts? What kind of work do students find most meaningful and life-changing? How might work be used to help students learn to care about and support each other? Does this change the kind of work a teacher assigns to learners? Is there a certain kind of work that lends itself more easily to building this type of community? What kind of work detracts?
4. I have used the features of diversity, unity and work as a lens for looking at human be-ing in community. What does the educational literature tell us is currently happening in learning communities? What do learning communities look like to those who are learning within them?

Secondly, what does it mean for community to be the focus of education? I've defined community as "moral community" and argued that if creating such community relationships were the focus of education, learning would not only be more fulfilling and meaningful, but also that students would do better as measured by traditional learning assessments. However, Alasdair MacIntyre (1984) claims today's society has not only lost its ability to understand and therefore reach consensus on issues of morality, but that it doesn't even realize the problem exists. If this is true, there is a compelling need for

research that examines the moral nature of education. Of particular importance would be studies that advance both the understanding and the success of the kind of learning community I have proposed. Here are some questions that I feel might help us better understand these claims and test their veracity:

1. Just what do we mean when we talk about morality? Given the inability of society to come to an understanding of morality, will students be striving for different ends? What role does morality play in learning?
2. How do you create moral community within a traditional framework of education that sees ethics as an "additional" feature of learning, often taught in its own class? How can we understand human morality through traditional educational assessments?
3. What other ways of coming together ("collectives" such as groups, teams, clubs, etc.) do we create as learning environments? What is different about these collectives and "community" as I have described it? Can one be more or less in community or are we simply in community or not in community?
4. What role does responsibility play in allowing a learner to participate in community? What is the balance between respecting individual "rights" and calling for learners to respond to the call of "responsibility" toward the other?
5. What would community as I describe it here look like in terms of roles, responsibilities, diversity, unity, work, relationship, agency, etc., for a learner? How would educators know if they had succeeded in establishing this different community? What would it mean in daily practice to focus more on relationships inside of the classroom?

6. Can community be built around classes designed to teach students basic skills such as the elements table in chemistry or English grammar rules? Do the communities that I advocate enhance or inhibit this type of learning?
7. What should teachers do differently based on the argument of this dissertation that our relatedness is key to our be-ing and therefore our learning? What obstacles would one encounter in today's educational system when such community is implemented?

Thirdly, how does one invite learners to live in moral community? These are the most compelling questions for me because, as I have argued, the influence of community becomes most powerful in the lived experiences of those participating. I believe it is in these experiences that learning begins to have the most meaning and where the greatest changes will take place in the lives of learners. I am particularly intrigued with the question of how learning becomes "imbedded" in the learner through lived experiences. The following questions just begin to scratch the surface of this fruitful and meaningful area of research:

1. How could teachers learn to create moral community and then invite students into the experience? How could teachers best persuade students to work to build moral community? How could teachers convince learners to take responsibility for each other and for their own learning without resorting to coercion?
2. How does one help learners come to understand morality? Do learners learn best from role models? Would making moral relationships an explicit goal help? How might such a learning objective fit in with the rest of the class?

3. What expectations should be established in the classroom? How would educators know if their efforts had been successful? What if students don't want to participate in moral community?
4. What role does storytelling play in building powerful community? What stories would best help learners to build moral community? How do stories pass on the ideals of a community; how do they unite people? What stories are being created in cohesive, powerful learning communities? What stories could best bring a classroom together in unity? Could stories be borrowed from various cultures and shared with others or should the class create its own?
5. What is the difference between the kinds of stories told in educational learning communities and those told in religious communities? What has made certain stories so compelling to particular moral communities? What is it about certain stories that become powerful to so many people? Why are moral stories so often so influential in establishing one's identity? What should the expectations be for how community members will use their particular stories?
6. What environment is necessary for creating moral community? Would learning communities work best as, say, a freshman colloquium experience, or with cohorts that met together for only a semester, or as a capstone experience with more mature students, etc.? Could one class in a university environment make a difference for learners in the rest of their educational experiences?

I believe these and related areas of research could build on the theory presented in this dissertation and yield a clearer understanding of human be-ing, human relationships, and human learning which would help in education's goals of providing learners with the

necessary abilities to experience fruitful, meaningful lives. As learners developed more purposeful human relationships, they would be more able to productively participate in their societies as well. Since relationships constitute so much of our be-ing, helping educators address our responsibilities to each other would have far-reaching implications in the lives of learners and those they interact with throughout their lives.

Educational Implications of Our Moral Relatedness

Nel Noddings (1993) writes, "One purpose of education should be to develop an understanding and appreciation of existence, of life lived fully aware" (p. 14). Such be-ing must be a life that is responsive to our obligations as moral beings. If becoming fully aware in this sense were to become education's goal, I believe the experience of learning might change significantly. For instance, if learners respected their teachers not because they had information the learner saw as useful to obtain, but because they had developed relationships together where the learner had been invited into a community of learning by the teacher, how might students engage in that subject matter differently? If learners were encouraged to care about and help each other, they would feel supported and among friends when they came and participated in classes.

We all know the difference it makes in our own ability to perform depending on whether we assess those around us to be supportive or hostile (pressure vs. support). Thus, in a more supported environment I think students would flourish better; they would experience abundance. Also, within such communities, learners would be invited to understand the obligation (and importance) of taking the initiative to help other learners who might be struggling. If they accepted this invitation, they could begin to see

themselves as teachers and grow in this new role. This would cause them to learn differently, to stretch, to learn new techniques or think about the material differently because they would be striving to find ways to help another for whom the standard techniques weren't working.

Additionally, assets among those in a learning community where the participants were striving to support each other could really be shared for everyone's benefit. Learners who came to the experience with more knowledge or particular talents (such as those who learn quickly, see patterns, have time management skills, etc.) could share them with those who needed help. If the class members were working together and one member had access to outside resources (for example, connections to people who were actually using the knowledge or skill outside the classroom, such as business people); personal contacts (such as connections to native-speaking communities for language classes); or people who could benefit from the skills being taught (such as students in lower grades struggling in the same subject), these could be shared with others in the class so everyone could take advantage of those resources. As more individuals came together, more resources would be available to benefit the community. In such an environment, cheating and mean-spirited competition would be minimized.[20] In this more inclusive environment, learners would want to come to class and participate because they saw their learning as meaningful to their "real" lives outside the classroom. The very point of community is that as diverse individuals, each with particular strengths, interests, abilities, and experiences, work to use those assets in supporting each other, more abundance is generated and experienced by all participants.

For moral community to produce abundance in the learners, the learning must take place in the heart and body, as well as in the mind. That is, learning must become "embodied." As the truths of the experience become vital to the learners, they will embrace them (responsibility) because they have made them (work) their own (individuality); at the same time, this experience also connects them to those in that learning community (in unity). Through learning and giving, learners become both more who they are as individuals and more a part of the community as they are able to contribute more to the lives of others.

To embody learning, the learner must somehow find a way to use the knowledge meaningfully, with purpose, such as when Adam and Eve were given opportunities to incorporate their learning through labor for the benefit of those with whom they had relationship, those with whom they experienced community. When experiences make learning purposeful, it can begin to live in the learner and grow into a type of abundance; learning that is used purposefully bears fruit. If it is meaningful, learners will find a use for it and through application, it will become part of them; it will become their own. This is the example Christ showed in his life. His teachings were embodied in all of his relationships with others. His teaching method was to invite others into a similar kind of experience. Because he taught his followers of their moral relatedness, Christ could say, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Philosophers and lived experience show us this is the nature of human be-ing. I believe the Adam and Eve stories show us how, given the nature of our existence, we can best use educational experiences to explore our potential and find fruitful, abundant

meaning and purpose in life. That meaning will be found in morally responsible relationships of learning; it will be found when we are in com-unity with others.

References

Alter, R. (1981). *The art of biblical narrative*. New York: Basic Books.

Aristotle. (1996). *Poetics* (M. Heath, Trans.) London: Penguin Classics.

Aristotle. (1999). *Nicomachean ethics* (M. Ostwald, Trans.) Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Auerbach, E. (1953). *Mimesis: The representation of reality in western literature* (W. R. Trask, Trans.) Princeton, NJ: Princeton. (Original work published in 1946)

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Barab, S. A., Kling, R., & Gray, J. H. (2004). *Designing for virtual communities in the service of learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Barkley, E. F., Cross, K. P., & Major, C. H. (2005). *Collaborative learning techniques: A handbook for college faculty*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bednar, D. A. (May 3, 2009). *CES fireside for young adults, Brigham Young University-Idaho*. Retrieved June 16, 2009, from http://www.lds.org/library/display/0,4945,538-1-4830-1,00.html.

Berge, Z. L., & Clark, T. (Eds.). (2005). *Virtual schools: Planning for success*. New York: Teacher's College Press.

Bowlby, J. (1966). *Maternal care and mental health*. New York: Schocken Books.

Brueggemann, W. (1999). *Texts under negotiation: The Bible and postmodern imagination*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1991). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry, 18*(1), 1–21.

Bruner, J. (2002). *Making stories: Law, literature, life*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Chickering, A.W., & Gamson, Z.F. (1991). Applying the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 47*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clandinin, J., & Connelly, M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Connelly, M., & Clandinin, J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19*(5), 2–14.

Cozolino, L. (2006). *The neuroscience of human relationships: Attachment and the developing social brain*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Crandall, F. M. (1897). Hospitalism. *Archives of pediatrics 14*(6), 448–454. Retrieved May 9, 2009, from http://www.neonatology.org/classics/crandall.html.

Cushman, P. (1990). Why the self is empty. *American psychologist, 45*(5), 599–611.

Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology (n.d.). *Operating model for theoretical dissertations in IP&T*. Unpublished manuscript.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York: Macmillan.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Macmillan.

Dupré, L. (1993). *Passage to modernity: An essay in the hermeneutics of nature and culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Elliott, J. (2005). *Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Sage.

Faulconer, J. E. (2003). Adam and Eve—community: Reading Genesis 2–3. *Journal of Philosophy & Scripture, 1*(1), 2–16.

Fink, L. D. (2003). *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fowers, B. J. (2005). *Virtue and psychology: Pursuing excellence in ordinary practices*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Freedman, D. N. (1996). *The anchor Bible dictionary: Vol. 4*. New York: Doubleday.

Frei, H. W. (1974). *The eclipse of biblical: A study in eighteenth and nineteenth century hermeneutics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Frye, N. (1957). *Anatomy of criticism: Four essays*. New York: Atheneum.

Gabelnick, F., MacGregor, J., Matthews, R. S., & Smith, B. L. (1990). Learning communities: Creating connections among students, faculty, and disciplines. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 41*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gadamer, H. (1989). *Truth and Method* (rev. ed.) (J. Weinsheimer, & D. G. Marshal, Trans.). London: Continuum.

Gong, S. P. (2002). *Learning and teaching for exponential growth: A three person problem.* Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press.

Heidegger, M. (1927). *Being and time: Introduction*. In *Basic writings*, D. F. Krell (Ed.), (pp. 37–90). New York: Harper & Row.

Hobbes, T. (1991). *Leviathan* (R. Tuck, Ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. New York: Routledge.

Inouye, D. K. (2002). *The Savior's laws of growth: A framework for learning and teaching*. Unpublished manuscript, Brigham Young University.

Janis, I. L. (1972). *Victims of Groupthink: A psychological study of foreign-policy decisions and fiascoes*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Jenni, E., & Westermann, C. (Eds.). (1997). *Theological lexicon of the Old Testament.* (M. Biddle, Trans.). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers.

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. (1991). *Active learning: Cooperation in the college classroom*. Elinis, MN: Interactive Book Company.

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Stanne, M. B. (2000). Cooperative learning methods: A meta-analysis. Retrieved June 17, 2009 from http://www.co-operation.org/pages/cl-methods.html.

Karen, R. (1998). *Becoming attached: First relationships and how they shape our capacity to love*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kimber, D. (1994). *Collaborative learning in management education: Issues, benefits, problems and solutions: A literature review*. Retrieved May 2, 2009, from http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au/Articles/june96/kimbe1.htm

King, A. H. (1986). *The abundance of the heart*. Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft.

Kohn, A. (1992). *No contest: The case against competition*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Laister, J., & Koubek, A. (2001). 3rd generation learning platforms: Requirements and motivation for collaborative learning. Retrieved May 3, 2009, from http://www.eurodl.org/materials/contrib/2001/icl01/laister.htm.

Land, S. M., & Hannafin, M. J. (2000). Student-centered learning environments. In D. H. Jonassen & S. M. Land (Eds.), *Theoretical foundations of learning environments* (pp. 1–23). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lave, J. (1988). *Cognition in practice: Mind, mathematics and culture in everyday life.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Levinas, E. (1969). *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority* (A. Lingis, Trans.). Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University.

Levinas, E. (1985). *Ethics and infinity* (R. A. Cohen, Trans.). Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University.

Levinas, E. (1987). *Time and the other* (R. A. Cohen, Trans.). Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University.

Lewis, C. S. (1946). *The great divorce.* New York: Macmillan.

MacIntyre, A. (2007). *After virtue* (3rd ed.). Norte Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame.

Marion, J. (2008). *The erotic phenomenon*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Meiklejohn, A. (1932). *The experimental college*. New York: Arno Press.

Michaelsen, L. K., Knight, A. B., & Fink, L. D. (Eds). (2004). *Team-based learning: A transformative use of small groups in college teaching*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Milbank, J. (2006). *Theology and social theory: Beyond secular reason (2nd ed.)*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (1993). *Educating for intelligent belief or unbelief*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (2002). *Educating moral people: A caring alternative to character building*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (2003). *Happiness and education.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (1990). *Love's knowledge: Essays on philosophy and literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Online Parallel Bible Project. (2004–2009). *Genesis 2:1*. Retrieved May 6, 2008, from http://bible.cc/genesis/2-1.htm

Oxford University Press. (2009). *OED online*. Retrieved July 8, 2009, from <http://dictionary.oed.com.erl.lib.byu.edu/entrance.dtl>.

Palloff, R. M., & Pratt, K. (1999). *Building learning communities in cyberspace*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Palmer, P. J. (1981). *Company of strangers: Christians and the renewal of America's public life.* New York: Crossroad.

Palmer, P. J. (1993). *To know as we are known: A spirituality of education*. New York: Harper & Row.

Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Piaget, J. (1932). *The moral judgment of the child* (M. Gambian, Trans.). London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co.

Piaget, J. (1955). *The child's construction of reality* (M. Cook, Trans.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Pinnegar, S., & Daynes, J. G. (2007). Locating narrative inquiry historically: Thematics in the turn to narrative. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences.* Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Postman, N. (1995). *The end of education: Redefining the value of school*. New York: Vintage.

Prager, K. J. (1997). *The psychology of intimacy*. New York: Guilford.

Preece. J. (2000). *Online communities: Designing usability, supporting sociability*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rasmussen, D. (1985). *The Lord's question: Thoughts on the life of response.* Provo, UT: Keter Foundation.

Ricoeur, P. (1984, 1985, 1988). *Time and narrative* (Vols. 1–3). (K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer, Trans). Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1992). *Oneself as another* (K. Blamey, Trans.). Chicago: University Of Chicago.

Roberts, J. M. (1980). *History of the world.* Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.

Roth, W., & Lee, Y. (2006). Contradictions in theorizing and implementing communities in education. *Educational Research Review, 1*(1), 27–40.

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (Eds.). (2001). *Emotion, social relationships, and health*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schunck, D. H. (2007). *Learning theories: An educational perspective* (5th ed.). NJ: Prentice Hall.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1994). *Building community in schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sheridan, J., Byrne, A. C., & Quina, K. (1989). Collaborative learning: Notes from the field. *College Teaching, 37*(2), 49–53.

Siegel, D. J. (2001). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are*. New York: Guilford.

Smith, J. MacGregor, J., Matthews R. S., & Gabelnick, F. (2004). *Learning communities: Reforming undergraduate education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Solomon, R. C. (1988). *Continental philosophy since 1750: The rise and fall of the self*. Oxford: Oxford University.

Spitz, R. A. (1965). The first year of life: A psychoanalytic study of normal and deviant development of object relations. New York: International Universities.

Sutherland, T. E., & Bonwell, C. C. (1996). Using active learning in college classes: A range of options for faculty. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 67*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Tagg, J. (2003). *The learning paradigm college*. Boston, MA: Anker.

Taylor, C. (2007). *A secular age*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Belknap.

Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research, 45*(1), 89–125.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). *Thought and language* (E. Hanfmann & G. Vakar, Eds. & Trans.). Boston: The MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society: Development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Watson, J. D. (1969). *The double helix*. New York: Signet.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (n.d.). Communities of practice. Retrieved May 9, 2009, from http://www.ewenger.com/theory/index.htm.

Wenham, G. J. (2002). *Word Biblical commentary, Vol. 1 Genesis 1–15*. Dallas, TX: Word.

Woolfolk, A. E. (1998). Educational psychology (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Appendix A: Genesis 1–3

King James Version (KJV)		New International Version (NIV)[21]
GENESIS CHAPTER 1		Genesis 1 NIV The Beginning
1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6 ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9 ¶ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was* good. 11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.		1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. 6 And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." 7 So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. 8 God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. 9 And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. 12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. 14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and

14 ¶ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good. 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. 20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 24 ¶ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. 26 ¶ And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle,		years, [15] and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. [16] God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. [17] God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, [18] to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. [19] And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. [20] And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." [21] So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. [22] God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." [23] And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day. [24] And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. [25] God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. [26] Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." [27] So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.		[28] God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." [29] Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. [30] And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. [31] God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.
GENESIS CHAPTER 2 KJV		Genesis 2 NIV
1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. 4 ¶ These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, 5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground.		[1] Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. [2] By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. [3] And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. Adam and Eve [4] This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens- [5] and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, [6] but streams came up from

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. 7 And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. 8 ¶ And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 11 The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold; 12 And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone. 13 And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. 14 And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that *is* it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates. 15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. 18 ¶ And the Lord God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and		the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground- [7] the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. [8] Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. [9] And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. [10] A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. [11] The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. [12] (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) [13] The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. [14] The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. [15] The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. [16] And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; [17] but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." [18] The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." [19] Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. [20] So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the

whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.		beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. [21] 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 closed up the place with flesh. [22] Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. [23] 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." [24] For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. [25] The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.
GENESIS CHAPTER 3 KJV		Genesis 3 NIV The Fall of Man
1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband		[1] Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" [2] The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, [3] but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " [4] "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. [5] "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." [6] When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. [7] Then the eyes of

with her; and he did eat.
7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.
8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.
9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?
10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself.
11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?
12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.
13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.
14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.
16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.
17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake;

both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.
8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"
10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."
11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"
12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."
13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"
The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
14 So the LORD God said to the serpent,
"Because you have done this,
"Cursed are you above all the livestock
and all the wild animals!
You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.
15 And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel."
16 To the woman he said,
"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;
with pain you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you."
17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the

in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art,* and unto dust shalt thou return. 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 ¶ And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.		tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." 20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living. 21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." 23 So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.
GENESIS CHAPTER 4 KJV		Genesis 4 NIV Cain and Abel
1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.		1 Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man." 2 Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.

Footnotes

[1] The word "being" is most commonly used to indicate an entity, as in "a human being." But I am often talking instead about what it is to experience human existence—to "be" a human being as Martin Heidegger might have spoken of it (cf. Heidegger, 1927, p. 46). To clearly distinguish what I mean, I will write the word as "be-ing" (with a hyphen) when I am emphasizing the lived experience of be-ing, rather than "being" as an object or static existence.

[2] A search on Amazon.com for "self-help" and "do-it-yourself" books currently provides 204,905 titles and 160,888 titles, respectively (June 21, 2009).

[3] Though some find Vygotsky's ideas problematic because of his association with Marxism, many of his learning theories have proven valuable in thinking about the social nature of learning acquisition outside of any political overtones it may possess.

[4] For example, at a recent educational conference I attended, one session devoted to "ethics" centered on issues such as whether an instructor could ethically ask an assistant to bring him or her a cup of coffee rather than more fundamental questions of be-ing. While this may be a legitimate question to ask in some settings, it redefines ethics in terms of rights, instead of responsibility.

[5] I have primarily used the King James Version of the Bible, and referenced the New International Version (online edition) in my analysis for all three Biblical narratives. See Appendix A for the full text.

[6] In verse 4 God calls the light good right after it is created. But the darkness already exists (1:2) and in the very same verse God establishes light's relationship with darkness.

[7] While it's not crucial to this analysis to verify whether fowl come from the seas of the earth, it does seem interesting that fowl don't seem rooted in primarily one kind of environment.

[8] The Creation story uses the word "man" both singularly to refer to Adam and as a plural noun that includes Eve. Since in this story it is not always specific in its use of the word "man," it becomes somewhat problematic in an examination of the text as well. In an attempt at clarity, I will adopt the following convention: (a) I will use "Man" with a capital "M" as a generic pronoun and make its accompanying verb plural when the story refers to them together; (b) when the story appears to single the man out, I include the article "the," as in "the man," and after the text uses his name, "Adam" (note, however, that the Hebrew word "Adam" means simply "man" and is not considered by some to be used here as a proper name; (c) I will call Eve "the woman" unless I am referring to her sometime after she is given her name at the end of the story; then I will refer to her as Eve.

[9] This is in contrast to God's pronouncement at the end of the first summarized telling of the story after Adam and his wife *are* in relationship. There, the scriptures record that "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was *very* good" (1:31, italics added).

[10] Though Adams *repeats* God's actions, he does not *duplicate* them. He experiences God's activities differently. For example, God creates a world; Adam has dominion over it with the woman (see Genesis 1). God produces life that is "other" in kind, i.e. flora, fauna, and man. Man cares for and nurtures all types of life, but only (later) reproduces in kind.

[11] This in no way implies that man does not need to have a relationship with God; as the next section will show, they absolutely do. Nor does it imply that man is more important than God. Without God, man is, quite literally, hopeless. It is only meant to point out that without human relationship, man cannot learn and grow in the way this story indicates God has planned for them to.

[12] The Hebrew word for *labor* has the double meaning the English word *labor* has: general work in the world as well as the work of bringing forth new human life. Where the King James Version translates the Hebrew into "sorrow," the New International Version translates it to mean "pain." They are similar in meaning.

[13] Imagine the pain, for example, of the woman who is mother to both Cain *and* Abel as she experiences Cain's rebellion and his resulting sanctions (see Genesis chapter 4).

[14] Adam is a Babylonian word meaning "red." In both Hebrew and Assyrian it means "man" in the generic sense. It can also mean dirt. "In Hebrew, the name Adam means- Red, a reference to either the red skin or the red earth of Eden from which the Old Testament Adam was created in Genesis 2" [from meaning-of-names.com]

[15] Adam realizes he has no "other" after naming all the animals, then the woman is brought to him. Adam recognizes she comes from his bones and his flesh and that he is to cleave to her. The woman gets her "husband" to eat the fruit along with her, etc.

[16] The Bible records that Adam, Eve, and their posterity continue to have a relationship with God, albeit altered because they no longer enjoy God's physical presence. Succeeding generations also called upon and received direction from him even

though outside the garden man needed to learn new methods (such as prayer) of interaction with him.

[17] Jewish scholar, Nehama Leibowitz, notes that when God says, "it is not good that man should be alone," the Hebrew word for "not," is "emphatic." It means "not at all." She writes that the use of this word "commit[s] the speaker to the opinion that the thing is the opposite of good….[or] "not at all good" (Leibowitz, n.d., pp. 10-11).

[18] My examples for religion will almost all come from Christianity, my own religious tradition. I believe, however, that the claims I am making about religion can work for many (if not most) religious traditions. Therefore, in this chapter Christianity is being used as proxy for religion in general.

[19] Some other pertinent definitions of "suffer" from the Oxford English Dictionary include the following: to endure, to submit to, to be acted upon, to bear or stand, and subjected to. These all imply the possibility of experiencing loss and pain (Oxford University Press, 2009).

[20] Many believe that "healthy competition" is beneficial to some particular kinds of learning, such as athletic competition. On a recent KUER FM RadioWest program (March 4, 2009) coaches and parents of lacrosse players talked of the roots in American Indian traditions that viewed such competition as an agreement among athletes to try and test each other's limits on the field in order to help participants see where they needed to grow. In other words, the opposing team was seen as a supporting force, allowing players to strive for their own personal best. While this may be true, this is not the kind of competition many students experience as they compete with others for grades and/or positions in education, and I have had little experience with this orientation toward

competition. Therefore, I offer the contention simply as one made by others that competition, in *such a* supportive setting, can be very nurturing of growth. I am arguing for a cessation of non-supportive competition, the kind that does not recognize our morally related reality.

[21] Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. The "NIV" and "New International Version" trademarks are registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by International Bible Society. Use of either trademark requires the permission of International Bible Society.