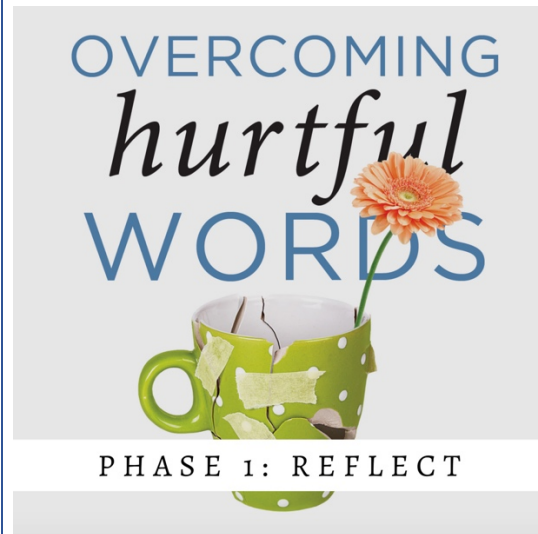


Your Genesis 2:7 Beginning

Travel back to where it all started.



*Take advantage of the audio recording of *Your Genesis 2:7 Beginning*, located in the REFLECT Resources on www.janellrardon.com/book-club. Instead of reading this meditative exercise aloud, let the words of this special audio message pour over you.

Your Genesis 2:7 Beginning

The first step toward a healthy heart is to travel back to where it all started—to your very own Genesis 2:7 beginning. Back to the moment in history when God decided it was time for you to be born—not a ho-hum idea, but an exacting, strategic, highly intentional decision.

Will you walk with me to that special moment?

God had created the entire earth but had not yet created anyone to take care of it. It is recorded that He “formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). That same, incredible, God-sized deep breath that gave life to Adam also gave life to you and me. What an astounding thought.

If I could, I’d take your hand and lead you to one of my favorite spots—a beautiful pier that extends over the historic James River near my house. I go there to catch my breath, practice being still, fill my composure tank, and oftentimes, to pray. There, we would reenact your Genesis 2:7 beginning. Over the years, I’ve been privileged to do this with many people—

women, married couples, families, in person. Of course, we can't do that, so instead, we will do it right here, right now. Here are a few important preparations before we start:

- Find time and space. Is there a quiet place in your home, your neighborhood, your workplace, or your community where you can go to be alone? This is so important that I encourage you to get a babysitter or ask a friend for a few moments of childcare. Back in the day, I literally closed myself in the closet of our master bedroom.
- If you can, turn off all devices (unless you're reading this on one, of course).
- Settle down inside and allow the outside world to fade for a few minutes.
- Close your eyes and be mindful of this moment.
- Imagine God's breath entering your being. Expect to hear whispers or perhaps see pictures in your mind of what God breathed into you. It can be as simple as the gift of setting a beautiful, inviting table for your family or friends or as big as a leadership gift that will be at the forefront of change. Really lean in and listen. You may find yourself engaging in this exercise two or three times. Each time relaxing more and opening up your heart with greater ease.

Once these critical preparations are in place, use the following meditative exercise. If you are alone, read the words below aloud with intention. If you are with a close friend or in a small group, take turns reading it aloud to one another, letting each person experience this special narrative.

Are you ready? Take a deep breath. Three, to be exact. Making the exhale longer than the inhale, creates a sense of calm. Inhale three counts, exhale four counts.

Picture a beautiful, luscious garden. The colors are mesmerizing. Deer are drinking from a crystal river. Lions lie with lambs. There's a peace in the air that feels unusual, yet comforting. Gently, with grand intention, God bends down and picks up a handful of life-

giving, heartlifting Eden-dust. Smiling, He closes His eyes. His mind fills with passion, purpose, potential, and endless possibilities for what is about to happen. He lifts His hand and quiets everything around Him. Silence settles in like a soft summer rain. Then He inhales, taking a God-sized deep breath, and exhales the excellence of His Being into your being. That breath of life imbues your distinct inner and outer character qualities, your gifts and talents, your purpose and passion, and gives you a God-created capacity for affecting your sphere of influence with greatness. This God-sized deep breath enables you to move through the ups and downs of life as an overcomer. When you need strength—remember this breath. When you need courage—remember this breath. When you need love—remember this breath. When you need joy—remember this breath. God’s creative work is now finished. Waves of laughter and joy swell as all of Eden rejoices over your life. Hear all of heaven say, “Ah! Look at her beautiful smile. She is full of potential. God outdid Himself today.”

You feel so welcome. So loved. So valued. So peaceful.

God speaks His blessing over you, His highly valued child. Then, with a heavenly embrace, He sends you off into the world to fulfill your God-breathed destiny.

Pause for a moment before continuing. Do you hear any God-whispers? When God breathed HIS life into your being, he endowed you with special qualities. Be sure to write them down. Then take yet another moment and just be.



Prior to leaving, speak the following prayer aloud as the finishing touch. It is actually the text of Psalm 139:13–18, but we will speak it to God as a prayer. You will probably need your own God-sized breath—full of new vigor and faith, because this can feel foreign, especially after a season of hurt and pain. But you can invite the Comforter, your heavenly guide, to help you.

Dear God,

You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand—when I awake, I am still with you.

Amen.

Notes: