



## [Genesis 2:7](#)

(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 being.

*New King James Version*

From our childhood, we carry an [image of God](#) kneeling over the created but inert Adam. He is lifeless until [God](#) performs the first mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and then Adam springs to life! His eyelids flutter, he takes a deep breath, and then he bends from his waist and sits up.

Nowhere does the Bible show God breathing life into any animal that He created. When He created them, they started breathing. Why should man be any different?

He is different because he is in the likeness of God. He did something to man that actually made man into the image of God. While he was lying there on the ground, he was still yet a creature. But when God knelt down and breathed into him, the infusion of the spirit in man occurred. That is what made man in the image of God! That is what gave man the power to have dominion. It gave man the intellect he needed to rule what God has created.

Man has creaturely life, but with the infusion of the spirit in man, he is more—alive being with intelligence. Man was given the power to govern his actions, not by instinct, but by memory, by conceptualization and thinking spatially. A man can appreciate beauty, communicate verbally, or write. A human being has feelings that are—in the expression of their subtlety and power—far above an animal in terms of [love](#) or hate, and above all of the emotions that fall in between.

We can create and destroy. The power is in a man to do these things. The power is in the spirit when combined with the brain, but it has to be developed.

God shows very clearly that, as we are, we are nothing more than a pale representation

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of what we can be. Yet, we are endowed with powers that lift us so far above the animals on earth that we can have dominion over them.

Mankind is then commanded to fill the earth and subdue it. *Subdue* means "to tread upon," which implies "to bring into subjection." It does not mean "to destroy" or "to treat violently," but "to control and direct." In [Genesis 1:26](#) and 28, God implies that He has conferred powers to mankind not given to animals.

It is also the first indication, when combined with [Genesis 2:7](#) and 15, that when God confers a responsibility, He also confers the powers to carry out that responsibility.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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[The Right Use of Power](#)



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