

GOD COMMANDS ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE TO REPENT

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING ON MISSION / SERIES: ACTS

BIG TRUTH: GOD COMMANDS ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE TO REPENT

Acts 26:20; 2 Chronicles 6:38-39; Ezekiel 14:6; Matthew 4:17; Mark 6:12; John 3:16

BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 17:27B-30

"Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for 'In him we live and move and have our being', as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.' Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance of God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent."

BIG IDEAS

- God makes himself known as the Creator.
- God makes himself known as the Sustainer.
- God makes himself known as the Judge.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ACTS 17:22-34

KNEEL: LIVING ON MISSION

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- The gospel has the power to turn the world upside down.
- They are empowered and chosen to be a gospel witness in the world.
- Our salvation has come by grace alone.



Every student should feel...

- Comfort that the Lord is with them wherever they go.
- Hope in the God of salvation.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read, study, and meditate on the entire book of Acts.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Pray consistently for boldness to make Jesus known.



Every student should want...

- To pursue faithfulness in living on mission.
- To share the gospel with people in their lives who do not know Jesus.
- To sacrifice their personal freedoms for the sake of the gospel

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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God is the one true God.

"Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for 'In him we live and move and have our being...'"

- It is common for man to create false gods, to worship idols that are created from earthly things. Man worships anything other than God. From the beginning, the very first man and woman chose to reject God's plan and to worship something other than God. This is sin—our rejection of God's plan and purposes.
- God is the one true God. He is the only God. There is no other. All created gods are false and not truly god. They are cheap imitations that fall grossly short of the one true God. God is real and perfect and always near His people. It is through Him that life is given and sustained.

God is living and present.

"Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art or imagination of man."

- God is living and eternal. He has no beginning or end. He is always present. He is not like other gods created by mankind. He is fully alive and the source of all life.
- It is from Him that we have life; therefore, he is the most living thing alive. We continue to have life because of Him. It is by His good pleasure that we continue to have life. He is always present, never far from His people.

God's holy being requires repentance.

"The times of ignorance of God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent."

- Not only is God living and present, but He is holy. He is always holy, and His holiness requires a response from man. The response required is repentance. There is no other response that man can give. Because every person is sinful and falls short of God's glory.
- When a person encounters God, His holiness demands repentance. The Gospel is the call to repentance. When a person hears the Gospel, he or she is hearing the truth of God's grace and mercy and the truth of who they are. This truth demands an acknowledgement of their own sinfulness and a repentance.

GOD COMMANDS ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE TO REPENT

BIG IDEA #1: GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN AS THE CREATOR.¹

[THIS]

As Paul traveled on his missionary journey, he entered Athens and encountered people worshipping many false gods. In Acts 17:16-17, we see that Paul found the city of Athens full of idols and he began to preach the truth about Christ. The people were intrigued because they had not heard about Christ. They took Paul to the Areopagus which was the established court of authority over religious and civil life in Athens. Before the Areopagus, Paul preached Christ crucified and resurrected, but he also taught of God as Creator of all things. He began by showing them that God had created all people from one man and was the giver of all things. He pointed them to God the Creator and Christ the Savior. The people were intrigued, and others mocked him, especially when he preached Christ resurrected. Still others believed in the Gospel and followed Paul when he left the presence of the Areopagus. God is revealed as the Creator of all things. It is through this revelation that people can be drawn to Christ as the Savior.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it important that people recognize God as the Creator of all things?

Hebrews 11:3 teaches us that all things were created by the word of God. John 1:1-3 tells us that the Word of God became flesh. It is this Word that saves and redeems. Isaiah 45:7 reminds us that God is the sovereign Ruler of all things. It is important to understand these things to truly understand our Savior.

[THIS]

Throughout the history of the world, people have ignored God as the Creator. They have, like the people in Athens, created false gods and idols. Instead, of worshipping the one true God as Creator and Savior, they have written their own stories and ideas of how the world came into existence. They have even attempted to define what is good and what is bad. Yet, throughout this history of the world, God continues to reveal Himself as Creator through His chosen people and His creation. In Acts 17:23, the people of Athens had created an altar to an unknown god. Even in the midst of their rampant idol worship, they still felt a lack of the true God. God is always present in His creation and reveals Himself through it. As we share the Gospel with others, God is revealed as the Creator through the truth that we tell others. As we reveal the truth of who Jesus is, we reveal the truth of who the Father is and the truth of how the world and all of creation came into existence. Those with ears to hear believe and those without, reject it.

[THEREFORE]

How does the Gospel reveal God as the Creator?

John 1:1-3 tell us that the Word of God became flesh. John's account of the Gospel reveals that Jesus is God in the flesh and He is the Savior of the world. Colossians 1:16 also reveals that all things were created through and for Jesus. Creation is connected to the Savior and the proclamation of the Gospel reveals God as the sovereign Creator.

How have you found it helpful to share the creation story when telling others about Jesus?

In Genesis 1-2, God is revealed as the Creator of the world and mankind. Revealing God as the Ruler of the world is helpful in showing people why we owe Him a sin debt. Showing how He is the Creator and Ruler of all things helps in revealing why we owe Him our lives.

1. Acts 17:24: God has and continues to reveal Himself as the Creator of all things.

GOD COMMANDS ALL PEOPLE
EVERYWHERE TO REPENT**BIG IDEA #2: GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN AS THE SUSTAINER.²****[THIS]**

As advanced as some civilizations are, we still are not able to truly sustain life. We may prolong life, but ultimately the sustaining of life is in the power of God—the Creator of life. In Acts 17:22-25, Paul reasons with the Areopagus and as he does so, he reveals God as the sustainer of life. He tells these people who have worshiped many idols that God is the One who has given them all things and who has kept them alive. God is revealed as the Sustainer of life because He needs nothing from His creation. He doesn't require breath, food, or even our allegiance to live. He exists in Himself and requires nothing to do so. All things exist inside of Him and because of Him. It is by His power that the world and all that is in it holds together. Through His creation, God makes Himself known as the Sustainer. He reveals this truth about Himself as the world continues to exist, the sun continues to shine, the world continues to rotate on its axis, and life on earth continues even in the midst of all the struggle and strife that are present on earth.

[THEREFORE]

How does a world that continues in the midst of strife and struggle reveal God as the Sustainer of all things?

When we view the sheer amount of catastrophe that occurs in this world, yet the world continues, we can't help but see that God it is God's power that sustains this world. Psalm 54:4, 1 Corinthians 8:6, and Revelation 4:11 also remind us that God is the One who holds all things together.

[THIS]

As Paul shared the Gospel with the Areopagus in Athens, he did so by showing them that God is the One who holds all things together. The people in Athens worshiped many false idols. They had created many gods and were worshiping them as if these false gods were the ones providing for them and holding their lives together. Paul, by sharing the Gospel with them, reminded them that God is the One who gives them life and sustains their lives. When we share the Gospel with others, God is revealed as the Sustainer of all things. To share truth about who Christ is, we must share that all things are made by Him, through Him, and for Him. In addition to this, we must share that He redeems His creation and gives new life to those who repent and believe. As Savior, Christ is sustainer of life here on earth and eternally.

[THEREFORE]

To what are we tempted to attribute our lives and livelihoods now instead of attributing them to God, the Sustainer?

We are tempted to credit ourselves and others for our lives and livelihoods instead of worshiping God as the Sustainer of all things. 1 Corinthians 4:7 and 1 Chronicles 29:12 remind us that it is God who gives all things and sustains all things. From Him, we receive all things and keep all that we have.

How can you worship God appropriately this week as the Sustainer of all things?

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 serves as a warning to even us. We should watch that we do not think we are responsible for any good thing that we have. Instead, we should seek to give God glory for all that we have. 1 Corinthians 6:19 reminds us that even our bodies are bought with a price and a temple to the Lord.

2. Acts 17:25: God needs nothing from us and He gives us all things. He sustains life.

GOD COMMANDS ALL PEOPLE
EVERYWHERE TO REPENT**BIG IDEA #3: GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN AS THE JUDGE.³****[THIS]**

As Paul reasoned with the Areopagus in Athens, he shared foundational truths about God to show the people their need to repent and turn to God. In Acts 17:28-31, Paul taught them that every person is the offspring of God, having been created by Him and for Him. He taught them that God is the rightful judge of His creation as anyone who creates is the rightful ruler and judge of his or her creation. Paul taught them that the God is all these things has commanded men and woman repent because He is the judge of humanity. Paul's explanation of the Gospel revealed God as the rightful judge of humanity and pointed people to the only way to be saved from their own sin. Some of the people believed the Gospel while others did not. Others mocked him and rejected the truth. Those who heard it believed it and followed Paul when he left the Areopagus. Believing the Gospel required that they also believe that God has a right to judge them.

[THEREFORE]

Read Acts 17:28-31. Why was it important for Paul to share God's right to judge mankind?

God is the Creator and man has sinned against the Creator. Because God is the Creator, it is against Him that we have sinned. He is the right judge of what He has created. He alone knows what is good and what is not. He alone is qualified and able to judge us rightly.

[THIS]

At the heart of the Gospel is the call for people to repent of their sin and to turn to God. This call is not just a suggestion or even a polite ask. The God of the universe who created everything and sustains all of creation demands and commands mankind to turn from their darkness to the light. It is the only way to truly live as we are created to live. When we share the Gospel with others, there will be the temptation to share God as one of His attributes instead of revealing Him as who He is fully. If we desire for others to understand the Gospel, we must tell them, as Paul told the Areopagus, who God is in His fullness—Creator, Sustainer, Judge, and Savior. Some will find God as their judge to be offensive, but for those who hear the truth and receive it, God as their judge will be life-giving. Through us, as His messengers, God reveals Himself as the rightful judge of all people, including ourselves. By telling our stories, we reveal Him as the perfect judge who has the right to condemn yet chooses mercy and grace.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it tempting to share certain attributes of God and not others? Why should we not do this?

Because we do not want to offend others or face persecution, we are tempted to share about God's love or His mercy. These attributes seem more acceptable, but Romans 11:33 tells us that God is more than one or two of His attributes. There is a fullness to Him that we cannot even know rightly here on earth. To accurately reveal Him, we must endeavor to tell all of Him and not just part of Him.

How does our pride lead us to reject God as our judge?

Our pride leads us to reject God and to even say there is no God. Proverbs 10:4, 16:5, and 26:12 remind us that man's pride leads us to destruction and not to life. It is our pride that makes us think we should not be judged.

3. Acts 17:31: God judges the world through Jesus, His only Son.