

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION BEGINS WITH BURDEN

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: I AM AN AMBASSADOR
SERIES: GOD IS THE MESSAGE - I AM THE MESSENGER

BIG TRUTH: GOSPEL PROCLAMATION BEGINS WITH BURDEN

Romans 9:1-3; 10:1-2; Philippians 1:14

BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 17:16-17

“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.”

BIG IDEAS

- Burden begins by seeing people from an eternal perspective.
- Burden grows as we personally encounter the worship of false saviors around us.
- Burden compels us to meet people where they are with the good news of the Gospel.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ACTS 17

KNEEL - I AM AN AMBASSADOR

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28). Worship is not something that is limited to a service once a week, but instead occurs every day, in all of life. We are unceasing worshipers. Worship never stops, it only changes directions. In order to worship God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind, we must embrace our identity as image bearers. It is out of that identity that we can begin to live for God’s glory in all of life (Colossians 3:17).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- The gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ that brings salvation to sinners.
- Salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
- Jesus followers have been trusted with the gospel in order to share it with others.



Every student should strive to...

- Share the gospel each month with at least one person who does not know Jesus.
- Practice sharing the gospel using multiple different tools or methods.



Every student should feel...

- Humbled that as believers we have been entrusted with the glorious gospel of our Savior.
- Satisfied in Jesus as the only true Savior



Every student should want to...

- To grow in awareness of the false saviors they are tempted to put their hope in.
- To have a softened heart and love for people who are lost
- To take advantage of opportunities to share the gospel with people in their lives who need Christ

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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BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 17:16-17

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The brokenness of the world should produce sorrow in our hearts.

“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city was full of idols.”

- When Paul traveled to Athens, he saw firsthand the brokenness of the place. All around him, he saw the idols that the people were worshiping and it provoked something inside of him. He was moved by their false worship to the point of engaging the people there with the Gospel.
- When we see the brokenness of the world, we should feel sorrow over it. When we see people’s worship of false idols and saviors, we should want to share the Gospel with them. Our hearts should be stirred to tell them the truth and to give them everlasting hope through Jesus.

Believers should be burdened for unbelievers.

“...his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.”

- Paul’s sorrow led him to feel a burden for the people of Athens. Because he saw their idol worship and knew they were living hopeless lives, his sorrow burdened him for them. He could not leave them because of his burden.
- When we feel sorrow over a lost person, we will have a burden for them. A burden will more than just a bad feeling or even feeling sorry for them. It is lasting and is something that drives us and leads us to tell the truth.

A believer’s burden should lead them to share the Gospel.

“So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.”

- When Paul felt sorrow and was burdened, he sought out the lost people in the city. He went to the synagogue and to the marketplace engaging people there with the truth. His burden led him to tell everyone he met about the true hope we have in Jesus.
- When we experience a burden for lost people, we will desire greatly to tell them about Jesus. We will seek them out and put ourselves in places to interact with them in order to share the Gospel with them. Not because it is something we think we have to do, but because we will want them to know the true and experience freedom from their sin.

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION BEGINS WITH BURDEN

BIG IDEA #1: BURDEN BEGINS BY SEEING PEOPLE FROM AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE.¹

[THIS]

Acts 17 teaches us a lot about what it looks like to have a burden for the souls of others. As Paul travels on missionary journeys, he is repeatedly burdened for the lost people he encounters. Paul has this burden because he understands that he once was lost, too. He understands the life-transforming power of the Gospel. Paul himself knows the joy of being forgiven and having a right relationship with God. He sees and understands the futility of worshiping anything other than God. When we remind ourselves that we, too, were once lost and are now redeemed only because of God's grace, we can better see things through an eternal perspective. As we keep the Gospel before us and present in our minds, we will look at our lives and the lives of others with their eternity in mind. We will have a burden for the lost people in our lives because we will know the hope they can have and from what they could be saved.

[THEREFORE]

How does your personal understanding of the Gospel produce a burden for others?

Romans 15:12, 1 Timothy 4:10, and 1 Peter 1:21 remind us that our hope is in the work of Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus, we can have eternal hope. When we personally understand this, our hearts will long for our lost friends to have the same peace and hope that we have. We will have a burden for our friends when we comprehend our lostness before knowing Christ.

[THIS]

Paul was burdened for lost people because of his own eternal perspective. He believed that a Christian's true home is heaven and that a person either spends eternity in heaven or hell. This perspective produces a desire for others to know Christ. It led Paul to endure many hardships and much persecution in order to make Christ known to unbelievers. Seeing the world and people through an eternal perspective will produce an urgency and a desire to help others spend eternity in heaven. As we begin to change our perspective from an earthly perspective to an eternal perspective, our burden for lost people will increase. We will think through life in terms of our eternal home and as we do, we will want others to join us in eternity.

[THEREFORE]

What obstacles keep you from having an eternal perspective daily?

Often the cares of this world can keep us from having an eternal perspective, such as focusing on the material things we have. In Luke 12:22, Jesus teaches that we don't even have to concern ourselves with what we will eat and drink. Instead, we can focus on His kingdom and pursuing Him. Isaiah 40:31 and 41:10 serve as encouragement that our hearts do not have to be troubled with the things of this world because of who God is.

What are ways you can discipline yourself to have an eternal focus each day?

Often, the battle we fight each day is within us. It is in our own hearts and minds. We can discipline ourselves to focus on eternity by taking our thoughts captive each and every day. Colossians 3:2 tells us to set our minds on the things above, not on the things on earth. Philippians 4:8 and 2 Corinthians 4:18 also teach us to think on the things that are eternal. In order to have our hearts set toward eternity, we must focus our minds on them.

1. Acts 17:16: Paul saw the world through an eternal perspective. He saw people as souls who were in need of the Gospel in order to have eternal life with Jesus.

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION BEGINS WITH BURDEN

BIG IDEA #2: BURDEN GROWS AS WE PERSONALLY ENCOUNTER THE WORSHIP OF FALSE SAVIORS AROUND US.²

[THIS]

During Paul's missionary journey in Acts 17, he sees people worshiping idols. He encounters people in Thessalonica and Athens worshiping false gods. His heart was burdened and his spirit is troubled over the idol worship he encounters. His response is to tell them the truth about Jesus. His burden for their souls is great, and he wants to see them walk in freedom from their sin. He was willing to face persecution and great trials in order to tell people the Gospel. Because of his burden, he shared the truth about Jesus. His burden grew as he saw the false saviors people were hoping in. Our burden grows as we see the false hope that people are building their lives on.

[THEREFORE]

How has the false worship you've encountered produced a burden in your heart for lost people?

In Matthew 9:36, we see Jesus have compassion on the lost people around Him. His compassion is an example to us as His followers. As we see their idol worship, it should produce a burden in us. We should desire to see them know Christ and have true hope. Our heartache over their hopelessness should lead us to pursue them in order to tell them the truth.

[THIS]

As we engage in the world around us, we will encounter people worshiping false saviors. Our world is full of people worshiping themselves, other people, creation, and even material things. Our hearts are naturally prone toward idol worship. We make idols out of all sorts of things. We take the good things that God gives us and turn them into idols that we worship instead of worshiping Him. As believers, when we encounter these things, we should feel as Paul did, sorrow and a burden to tell them the truth. We should want to tell others about the One who can fill their every need and complete their lives, giving them everlasting hope. Nothing else on earth can do that. Our burden for the lost will grow as we truly see the futility of other's pursuits of worldly things that do not last.

[THEREFORE]

What keeps you from really noticing the false worship in the world around you?

Matthew 5:43-44 reminds us that we are to love our enemies and pray for them. When we have people As we live in this world, it's easy to be misled by it. We can easily fall into the trap of having a worldly perspective because of the things going on around us. Matthew 24:24 warns us of people leading us astray with things and ideas that seem Christ-like, but are not. I Corinthians 2:14 and 15:33 also teach us that we must watch out to not be deceived. We may not notice false worship around us if we are worshiping idols ourselves.

What are some things you need to remove from your life to help you grow your burden for lost people?

Ephesians 4:22-24 reminds us that we must consider our old self dead. When we daily die to our flesh nature, we will have a burden for lost people. We will recognize idol worship when we see it and we will seek to tell others the truth about Jesus. We also must strive to further God's kingdom and we can do this when we pursue Christ through prayer and Bible study.

2. Acts 17:16: When Paul entered Athens, he saw the many idols they were worshiping and was led to tell them the truth about Jesus.

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION BEGINS WITH BURDEN

BIG IDEA #3: BURDEN COMPELS US TO MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE WITH THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL.³

[THIS]

In Acts 17:16-34, Paul preaches to the people of Athens about Jesus. Paul first took important steps to understand the Athenians by noticing their pattern of worship and who and what they were worshipping. He learned and made himself aware of the false gods they had made idols of because of his burden for them. He preached the truth to them because he cared for their souls. His sorrow over their false worship and his burden for them led him to put himself in situations that could have led to his arrest or even death, yet his care for their soul was more important than even his own life.

[THEREFORE]

What do you learn from Paul's example in Acts 17:16-34?

Paul observed the people of Athens first. He noticed the things they were placing their hope in and the idols they had created. He entered the city with an eternal perspective and sought to first understand what held their hearts before he began preaching. His burden grew for them. He did not judge them or grow angry at them. He felt sorrow over them. We should approach the lost in our lives the same way.

What are some of the false saviors in our culture that your friends and family put their hope in?

False saviors are everywhere in our culture. We often put our hope in money, status, our friends or family. We can put our hope in false religions or in our government. Matthew 7:15 reminds us that false saviors are everywhere and we can fall prey to them if we do not test them against God's truth.

How is Jesus the only one who can meet the need these false saviors promise to fulfill?

Colossians 1:17 teaches us that Jesus is eternal. This means that He has always been the one true Savior and only He can truly satisfy. Because He is the only true Savior, only He can give us real hope.

[THIS]

As we desire to follow Jesus, we grow in our desire to make Him known. In order for us to encounter lost people, we need to go out in the world to them. Our burden for lost people will compel us to meet people where they are in order to share the truth with them. Our burden will compel us to arrange our lives in a way that enables us to be around lost people, to seek them out, to make an opportunity to tell them about Jesus. We don't go out into the world just to be in the world, but we go with the intent of making Jesus known. This means we live holy lives that are focused on reaching the lost. We may invite our lost friends to hang out. We intentionally sit next to them at lunch or in class, or at work. Our burden for lost people will compel us to live on mission every day.

[THEREFORE]

What fears keep you from seeking out lost people?

Often fear and worry keep us from seeking out lost people. We may fear their reaction to us or we may fear the activities they engage in. Philippians 4:6-7 reminds us of what our response should be when we feel fear. When we place our trust in God and understand that He will guide us and give us the words to speak, we can confidently seek lost people out.

What are some practical ways you can meet an unbeliever where they are this week?

As your burden grows for the lost people in your life, you can plan your day or week around reaching them. Inviting someone to your home to spend time together can give you an opportunity to share the Gospel. Choosing your seat at school to sit next to a lost person can also give you opportunities to reach them. As you evaluate your own schedule and life, you can find ways to seek out a lost person.

3. Acts 17: 17: Paul went to the lost people in Athens to tell them the Gospel.