

# JESUS FOLLOWERS PUT SINFUL DESIRES TO DEATH

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: I AM AN IMAGE BEARER  
SERIES: GOD IS PURE — I AM PURSUING

## BIG TRUTH: JESUS FOLLOWERS PUT SINFUL DESIRES TO DEATH

Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Jude 1:16; Psalm 37:4

## BIBLE VERSE: COLOSSIANS 3:5

*“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”*

## BIG IDEAS

- Lust must die.
- Covetousness must die.
- Idolatry must die.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: COLOSSIANS 3:5-7

## KNEEL - I AM AN IMAGE BEARER

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...

- They exist for God’s glory
- The life of a Jesus follower is a life of constantly pursuing being more like Christ.



### Every student should feel...

- A deep love for God’s Word.
- Humbled that God would use us to make Him known.



### Every student should strive to...

- Spend time each day studying God’s Word and letting it shape their thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- Flee temptation and strive to “put off” sinful desires, thoughts, and actions.



### Every student should want...

- To have a healthy fear of the Lord that leads them to walk in His wisdom.
- To pursue Christlikeness in their attitudes, desires, thoughts, and actions.
- To walk in and model a life of purity because God is pure.

## 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.

# JESUS FOLLOWERS PUT SINFUL DESIRES TO DEATH

## BIBLE VERSE: COLOSSIANS 3:5

*“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”*

### Believers must decisively die to their sinful desires daily.

*“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you...”*

- Being raised with Christ means we are set free from our sin natures. We do not have to follow the sinful desires in our hearts. Through Christ, we receive new hearts and the Holy Spirit. This means we can live for Christ, but this new life requires a daily death to our old self.
- Our sinful desires are not pleasing to God and in order to truly live for Him, we must actively seek to put them to death. This means we work to pursue Christ and to put off our old self so that we might live a life that is pleasing to God. It is no small matter to die to our sinful desires. It is not something to be taken lightly. We must work to put off the desires of the flesh every day.

### Believers battle their earthly desires in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you...”*

- The sinful desires we have are works of the flesh. The things our flesh desires are earthly and lead us to follow the prince of this world and not Christ. As followers of Christ, we do battle against the things of the world every day.
- Though we still battle our flesh nature, we have the power of the Holy Spirit inside of us. It is through His power that we do battle against the earthly desires in our hearts. Because the Holy Spirit is fully God, He is greater than any earthly desire we may ever have. This means we can put these desires to death every single day.

### Sinful desires lead to idolatry.

*“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”*

- The sinful desires of our flesh nature lead us to disobey God’s Word and His command for our lives. These desires lead us to break the boundaries that God places on our lives for our good and His glory. Giving in to these desires leads us to covet and become consumed with our evil desires.
- Our evil desires lead us to create idols in our hearts. We begin worshiping other things and people. We spend our time and money pursuing our idols instead of worshiping God. We value temporal, earthly things over our eternal Lord and Savior. These desires must be killed and our hearts submitted fully to following Christ in every way.

# JESUS FOLLOWERS PUT SINFUL DESIRES TO DEATH

## BIG IDEA #1: LUST MUST DIE.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

In Colossians 3:5, Paul explains how believers can live for Christ. He addresses sexual immorality, revealing the way sexual sin is not only grievous to God, but physically and emotionally harmful to the person committing the sin. Sexual immorality involves our hearts, minds, and bodies and is not limited to just physical acts. As Paul addresses sexual immorality, he includes impurity. Impurity is the state of having some spot or blot, or being defiled. Sexual immorality defiles our hearts, minds, and bodies. To be holy is to pursue purity and God commands His people to be holy. Our actions and thoughts matter to God. This means we must not allow our thoughts to be impure as well as our actions.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### How does purity pave the way to intimacy in our relationship with God and others?

In Psalm 24:3-6, the psalmist asks the question, “Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in His holy place?” The answer to these questions is the person who has clean hands and a pure heart. This means a person who seeks to obey God and to honor Him in their actions towards others and their worship of Him alone. Living a pure life enables us to approach the throne of God and to enjoy a right relationship with Him, which produces intimacy that isn’t possible with unrepentant sin in our hearts.

#### What are some of the challenges to pursuing purity?

Proverbs 4:23 instructs us to guard our hearts with all vigilances. This implies that it is in our hearts that we are first led astray. The greatest challenge to pursuing purity is our own hearts. If we do not guard them, we will fall to the sinful temptations inside of them. 1 Peter 5:8 warns us to be on guard because Satan is seeking to lead God’s people astray. By not being watchful and guarding ourselves against impurity, we set ourselves up to give in to the temptation to sin.

### [ THIS ]

Also in Colossians 3:5, Paul speaks of passion and evil desires as sinful things that we must put to death. Passion, or a strong love or devotion to something, when paired with evil desires leads to sin. In this verse, Paul is speaking of lust, or sexual desire. Lust is not honoring to God, but rather, leads us to turn away from God and focus on the object of our desire. Lust is all-consuming and can rule our lives if we allow it. Paul admonishes the Colossians to put this to death. When we lust for something, the object of our lust becomes our pursuit. We put lust to death by following the Holy Spirit guiding us. We must first take our thoughts captive to the Lord and then discipline ourselves to seek the things of Christ and not to focus on the evil temptations of this world. When we die to ourselves every day, we will put to death passion and evil desire.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### How does dying to lust lead us to pursue holiness?

Galatians 5:24 shows us that those who are in Christ have crucified their flesh. This means they are no longer bound by their sin nature and are free to obey God. Romans 6:12-14 teaches us that sin does not have to control a believer. Because of the freedom we have in Christ, we can actively pursue holiness by choosing to deny the desires of our flesh.

#### What behaviors and disciplines can you pursue to help you to put lust to death?

James 4:7 tells us to submit our lives to God and resist the devil. When we daily fall under the rule of God in our lives, we can resist the devil. Romans 12:2 teaches us to renew our minds by growing in our knowledge of Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:13 reminds us that we can indeed resist every and all temptation to sin and Philippians 4:8 shows us that by controlling our thoughts and choosing to think on pure and honorable things, we can live holy, pure lives.

1. Colossians 3:5: Lust is a product of our sexual immorality. Lust must die in order for our hearts to be fully submitted to Christ.

# JESUS FOLLOWERS PUT SINFUL DESIRES TO DEATH

## BIG IDEA #2: COVETOUSNESS MUST DIE.<sup>2</sup>

### [ THIS ]

As Paul continues teaching the Colossians how to live holy lives, he tells them to put to death evil desire and covetousness. Our natural desires are sinful and selfish. We are born desiring to please ourselves. When we desire things that we do not have, we are focusing our minds and hearts on something other than God. Just as lust leads us away from pursuing Christ, covetousness leads us to turn our devotion and attention to the things of this world. We may covet material things or other people. Covetousness is not just wanting something. It is a great desire for something with the idea that we deserve it or should have it. When we covet, we imply that God has not been true to His promise of providing all that we need. When we covet, we believe lies about God. We see God as not a good God, but instead as a God who fails us.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### How do you struggle with desiring things that aren't yours?

Exodus 20:17 gives us the commandment to not covet. Covetousness leads us away from Godliness and towards our own destruction. James 1:14-15 reminds us of just how destructive our sinful desires can be and Luke 12:15 teaches us the futility of seeking after the things we desire. Our flesh desires things contrary to what pleases God and our struggle comes when we focus on the things of the flesh instead of God.

#### How does longing for things that God hasn't given us take our focus off of longing for Him?

When we covet, we are not focused on pursuing Christ, but instead on fulfilling our desires. Proverbs 23:17 warns us not to envy sinners. This shows us that our sinful hearts are tempted to long for sinful things, or things that others have. When we focus on the things we do not have, we are not focusing on God. Psalm 84:2 shows us a heart that longs for God alone, which is possible when we focus on God alone.

### [ THIS ]

When we have ungrateful hearts, we are susceptible to covetousness. A wrong view of ourselves also leads us to covetousness. When we think more highly of ourselves than we should, we feel entitled to our desires. When we feel entitled to our desires, we perceive God has withholding good things from us. We also give root to jealousy, which can breed envy and malice. The more we grow in our understanding of who God is and all that He has done for us, the less we will fall to covetousness. By reminding ourselves that we are sinners saved by God's grace, we will not see our unfulfilled desires as a slight against us, but instead, we will focus on the multitude of blessings we have received.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### How specifically can you cultivate a grateful heart daily?

1 Thessalonians 5:18 instructs us to give thanks in all circumstances. When we focus on Christ and our hearts are pursuing Him, no matter our situation, we can be thankful. Hebrews 12:28 shows us that when we remind ourselves that we have eternal life and our hope is in Christ, we can be thankful always. When we seek to cultivate a thankful heart, we will not covet. Instead, we will be overwhelmed by the grace of God in our lives.

#### In what ways can you remind yourself of God's grace in offering salvation to you even though you did not deserve it?

Ephesians 2:8-9 reminds us that we are saved by grace and not by anything that we do. When we seek to remind ourselves that there was nothing we could do to save ourselves, we will be reminded of God's grace. Acts 4:12 shows us that salvation comes through Christ alone. Because this is true, we know it is God's grace and mercy that saves us and this leads to thanksgiving.

2. Colossians 3:5: Paul teaches that covetousness does not honor God. Believers must put these things to death.

# JESUS FOLLOWERS PUT SINFUL DESIRES TO DEATH

## BIG IDEA #3: IDOLATRY MUST DIE.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Idolatry is anything that rules our hearts. It is anything that we worship other than God. When we are consumed with something or someone, we focus our time, attention, and resources on it. It becomes the center of our world and it is what we live for. Paul warns against our passions and evil desires leading us to idolatry in Colossians 3:5. Very easily the things we desire can become idols in our hearts. Without our even noticing, we will love things and people more than we love God. Our main purpose in life is to seek God's glory, to desire to know Him, and to fulfill His will for our lives. Idolatry keeps us from this and leads us down a path of destruction.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### **Why is it easy to turn people and things into idols in our lives?**

Galatians 5:19-21 describes the works of our flesh. Because we battle our flesh natures, we can easily turn to idols instead of worshipping God alone. 1 Corinthians 10:7 shows us that as we become consumed with the things of this world, we will make idols in our hearts. We will follow after and worship material, earthly things and not God.

#### **Read Jeremiah 10:3-16. How has an idol led you away from serving God instead of closer to Him?**

It is in our sinful hearts to seek after our own glory and to reject God. Though we may not build an actual, physical idol, in our hearts, we worship things other than God. We seek after things that bring us glory and we reject God. We do not follow after Him or pursue His glory.

### [ THIS ]

In order to fully live for Christ, we must remove any and all idols from our hearts. Before we can remove idols, we must identify them. Often, we experience God's blessings in our lives and instead of responding appropriately with thanksgiving, we make the thing or person the center of our lives. We must evaluate our hearts daily for any idol worship. The Holy Spirit will reveal any idols in our hearts if we submit ourselves to His guidance. When we do recognize idols, our only right response is repentance. When we turn away from our idols, we can live fully for God. As we live for Him, we will experience spiritual growth that isn't possible with idols in our hearts.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### **How have you experienced spiritual growth after removing idols from your heart?**

Revelation 22:14-15 shows us that those who tear down their idols are blessed. When we remove the idols in our hearts and repent, we are forgiven and we will grow spiritually. 1 John 1:9 reminds us that God is faithful and just to forgive us when we confess and repent of our sins. When we remove our idols, we will grow in our knowledge of Christ because we will no longer be focused on material things, but on Jesus.

3. Colossians 3:5: Idolatry is worshipping anything or anyone other than God. It is placing something other than God at the center of our lives.