

MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDE 2

GOD CREATED US IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS

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

BIG TRUTH: GOD CREATED US IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS

Genesis 5:1; Ephesians 4:24; James 3:9

BIBLE VERSE: GENESIS 1:26-28

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

BIG IDEAS

- We were created to be in right relationship with our good Creator.
- We were created with value and worth to reflect the value and worth of our good Creator.
- We were created to fill the earth with the worship of our good Creator.

BIBLE PASSAGE: GENESIS 1:1-25

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 were created in God's image and likeness for the purpose of worship.
- Value, purpose, significance, and worth are found in and flow from God alone.



Every student should feel...

- Awe that God created them in His own image.
- Loved by their heavenly Father who knows them better than they know themselves and still pursues them.



Every student should strive to...

- Understand and embrace who God created them to be.
- Talk about gender and identity as a gift from the Lord for His purposes and His glory.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.



Every student should want...

- To have a deeper relationship with the God who made them in His image.
- To pursue a lifestyle of worship that centers on the true Savior and rejects false saviors.

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 CREATED US IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS

BIBLE VERSE: GENESIS 1:26-28

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God created mankind in His image.

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image...’”

- When God created man and woman, He made them differently than the rest of creation. He created man and woman in His image, which means people are a reflection of God in the world. By placing His image upon people, God made a statement about them. They are valuable and have great worth to God.
- God’s image upon mankind also sets them apart from the rest of creation. Their purpose is higher and greater than the rest of the created things. While all creation declares God’s glory, mankind is specifically chosen to represent God’s image in the world.

God created two genders when He created mankind.

“...in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

- Mankind reflects God’s image in gender as well. God created man as male and female—two genders—to accurately reflect His image. In order for mankind to reflect God’s image, people are male or female. This is God’s design and purpose for people.
- Gender is not a bad thing, but rather a reflection of who God is and how He works through people to glorify Himself in the world. God’s image is best reflected through men and women. This means that both men and women equally bear and reflect the likeness of God in the world.

God made people to be stewards of the rest of creation.

“... ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

- When God created man and woman, He gave them a command to multiply throughout the world. He also commanded them to subdue the animals of the earth and care for creation. God placed people above the rest of creation and gave them the job of stewarding creation.

GOD CREATED US IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS

BIG IDEA #1: WE WERE CREATED TO BE IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR GOOD CREATOR.¹

[THIS]

All throughout the creation narrative, God calls the things He has created good. He finds His creation very good because He is the Creator. God is a good God. He is perfect in every way, which means that all He does is good. Creation is good because God is good. When God made the first man and woman, they were sinless, good because He is good, and created to be in a relationship with Him. In the very beginning, the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, had a right relationship with God. He visited with them daily and they enjoyed an unhindered relationship with Him. Just as Adam and Eve were created to fellowship with God, people are made to know God and to be known by Him. When we acknowledge that God is the Creator and acknowledge Him as the good Creator of all things, we move closer to an understanding that we are made by Him for Him.

[THEREFORE]

What are some of the attributes of our good Creator that make you long to know Him more?

Psalm 86:15 speaks of God's mercy and abounding steadfast love and faithfulness. When we think about the things about God that are always true and always good, we are compelled to seek Him. 1 Peter 3:18 reminds us that Christ willingly suffered on our behalf to reconcile us to God that we might have a relationship with Him. God willingly sacrificed on our behalf. Remembering these things leads us to seek Him.

In what ways have you followed your heart instead of aiming your heart at God?

Psalm 10:4 serves as a warning to us. When we are prideful, we do not seek God, and not seeking God leads to our destruction. Obadiah 1:3 also serves as a warning to those who are deceived by the pride in their hearts. Proverbs 14:12 tells us that there is a way that seems right to us, but in the end it leads to our destruction. Jeremiah 17:9 reminds us that our hearts are wicked and we are distracted by our evil desires.

[THIS]

In Genesis 2, God lays out His plan for mankind. Throughout this chapter, God tells Adam and Eve how they should live according to His command and experience a right relationship with Him. God created people to be in a right relationship with Him. By giving Adam and Eve boundaries and His commands for their lives, He showed them how to live in a right way with Him. We, too, can experience this right relationship by following God's commands and obeying His Word. God gave us His Word, the Bible, to help us know Him and understand how to live our lives. When we follow Him, we will have a right relationship with Him. To truly follow Him, we must first repent of our sin and believe that Jesus is our only way to know God.

[THEREFORE]

What are some specific ways you tend to doubt God's goodness and/or reject his commands?

Proverbs 3:7 teaches us to not be wise in our own eyes, but to fear God. When we follow our own reasoning or think we know best, we push against the boundary of human understanding that God has put in place. Proverbs 1:7 shows us that fools despise the instruction and guidance of the Lord and this leads to a wrong relationship with God.

1. 1 John 3:1: God saves us for relationship with Him. We move from sinners to His children.

GOD CREATED US IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS

BIG IDEA #2: WE WERE CREATED WITH VALUE AND WORTH TO REFLECT THE VALUE AND WORTH OF OUR GOOD CREATOR.²

[THIS]

In Genesis 1:27 we see that people are made in God's likeness. To be made in God's likeness is to possess great value and worth. God, the one and true Lord of all, has the highest value and worth of any being. To be made in His likeness is to have great value and worth placed upon us. God implies the importance of people by creating them in His image, something that sets people apart from the rest of creation. Though our sinful hearts lead us to value other things over ourselves and even others, the truth is that we all possess great value and worth given to us by our good Creator. We must recognize this value and worth, but not give in to the sinful temptation to give ourselves the glory that only God deserves. We must seek to gain a right understanding of our value and the value of others in light of God's ultimate value.

[THEREFORE]

What makes it hard for you to value people rightly?

James 3:9 shows us that with our words we can devalue ourselves and others. Our words, once spoken, cannot be unspoken. As James warns, when we forget that people are made in the image of God, we can use our words to curse them. Psalm 139:14 reminds us the care and attention God gave to creating people. When we forget that people are valuable by disrespecting them, hurting them, or mistreating them, we are not valuing what God values.

[THIS]

By placing His image upon us, God also places an expectation on us. In Genesis 2, we see that God gave mankind dominion over the earth. By commanding Adam and Eve to subdue the earth, God made them stewards of His creation. The dominion that God gave to mankind over creation is not for mankind to abuse creation or to destroy it. Rather, mankind is to use creation as God's provision. Mankind is also tasked with reflecting God's image in the world. When God commands Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply the world, this isn't just a command to have a lot of children. Rather it is a command to fill the earth with God's image bearers. In order to reflect God's image, man must value what God values. God values all of His creation, but it is only upon people that He has placed His likeness and this makes them highly valuable to Him.

[THEREFORE]

What are some of the ways that humanity has failed to be good stewards of God's creation?

In Genesis 2:15 we see that God has given man the earth as a home that is to be cared for. Jeremiah 2:7 speaks of the ways in which mankind does not care for the land and the expectation that the earth be cared for. In Exodus 23:10-11, God gives His people specific instructions of how to care for the land. God values creation and as His image bearers, we should value it, too.

Practically, how can you reflect God's image in the world by valuing other people?

Because we know that people are our fellow image bearers, we know that God values all people. 1 John 4:20 warns us that if we hate our fellow human beings, we do not know God, which means we are not reflecting His image well. John 15:12 commands us to love people and when we do, we reflect who God is to the world.

2. Genesis 1:27: All people are made in God's image and reflect His value and worth in the world.

GOD CREATED US IN HIS IMAGE AND LIKENESS

BIG IDEA #3: WE WERE CREATED TO FILL THE EARTH WITH THE WORSHIP OF OUR GOOD CREATOR.³

[THIS]

Throughout the Psalms, the psalmist worships God as the great Creator. God's Word shows us that man's worship of God as Creator is appropriate and even common. We are God's created beings and when we survey creation as God's handiwork, we will praise Him. When we fully understand that we are made by the one true God who spoke all things into being by the power of His Word, our hearts will be filled with praise. God has placed worship as part of our DNA. We cannot help but worship and when we understand that our created purpose is to worship God our Creator, we will do so.

[THEREFORE]

Read Psalm 80:3-9. Knowing that God is Creator of all things, how have you worshiped Him as your Creator?

Psalm 95:2 shows us that when we approach God with thankful hearts, we will praise Him. Ephesians 5:20 also speaks to a posture of thankfulness producing praise in God's people. When we live in the knowledge that God is the Creator, we will see His good creation and praise Him for it. He is the giver of life and an attitude of thanksgiving results in praise in our hearts.

[THIS]

Genesis 1:27-28 recounts God's creation of mankind. God made people male and female, commanding them to go into all the earth populating it. The command to be fruitful and multiply is also a command to fill the earth with man's worship of God. By filling the earth with people, who are created to worship God the Creator, the earth is filled with praise for God. As we live as God's stewards of His creation, we encounter His provision, protection, and purpose through His creation. Romans 1:20 reminds us that we can see God in the created world and when we do get a glimpse of some of His attributes, such as His power, our hearts worship. When we are followers of Christ, our hearts worship God. While we are still enslaved to our sinful hearts, our hearts often worship creation rather than God. Yet, God draws us to Himself and leads us to fulfill our purpose of worshipping Him in all the earth.

[THEREFORE]

In what ways have you misplaced your worship this week?

Romans 1:25 serves as a warning that man can worship created things rather than the good Creator. When we turn our eyes from God the Creator to the world around us, our worship gets misplaced. Romans 12:3 warns us not to think too highly of ourselves. When we do have a higher view of ourselves than we ought, we worship ourselves rather than God.

How can you help to fill the earth with worship of the good Creator this week?

One way we can participate in filling the earth with worship of God is by declaring His good works to those in the world. Psalm 96:3 speaks to declaring God's works, particularly His work of salvation, to the nations. As we evangelize the world, the world will be filled with worship of God. Mark 16:15 also speaks to sharing the gospel with the nations and as we do and people believe, the world will be filled with worship for the good Creator.

3. Psalm 80:3-9: God is the Creator of all things and we are created to worship Him in all the earth.