

IMAGE BEARERS ARE UNCEASING WORSHIPERS

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

BIG TRUTH: IMAGE BEARERS ARE UNCEASING WORSHIPERS

1 John 5:21; Luke 10:27-28; Colossians 2:6-7; 2 Peter 2:2

BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 1:25

“Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.”

BIG IDEAS

- Worship never stops; it only changes direction.
- We were created to worship God alone.
- Sin lies to us and distorts our worship by turning our hearts toward false saviors.

BIBLE PASSAGE: JOHN 4

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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BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 1:25

“Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.”

False worship is deception.

“Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie...”

- We are created for worship. Because worship is part of our DNA, we are always worshiping. We are made to worship God, but our worship can change directions. This means that instead of the focus of our worship being on God, it changes to ourselves or something else.
- We do not stop worshiping because it is part of who we are as image bearers. When we stop worshiping God, our mind’s attention and heart’s affection has been placed on something or someone else. Sin leads us to worship something other than God.

Sin leads to our worship of created things instead of the Creator.

“...and worshiped and served the creature...”

- It is our sinful heart that leads us away from God. Our sin blinds us to who God is and we move farther and farther away from God. Sin leads us to worship ourselves or other created things instead of the Creator.
- We worship nature, wealth, power, other people, and ourselves instead of worshiping God for who He is and what He has done. Because we are unceasing worshipers, if we are not worshiping God, we are worshiping created things that cannot offer us any form of salvation or eternal happiness.

God alone is worthy of all of our worship.

“...rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.”

- Only God deserves our unceasing worship. He alone is perfect in every way and He alone offers us eternal life. Besides God’s place as our Savior, He is our Creator and sits in a place of authority and honor in our lives.
- God made us in His image and He deserves to have our undivided worship and affection. He made us for Himself and when we turn our eyes away from Him, we mar His image and sin against Him—our good Creator. We also do not fulfill our created purpose of bringing God glory with our lives.

IMAGE BEARERS ARE UNCEASING WORSHIPERS

BIG IDEA #1: WORSHIP NEVER STOPS; IT ONLY CHANGES DIRECTIONS.¹

[THIS]

In John 4, Jesus intentionally encounters a Samaritan woman at a well when He is passing through Samaria. During His conversation with this woman, she questions Him about the correct place to worship. Jesus teaches about man's worship and implies that it does not stop. It is unceasing and never-ending. This means that the focus of our worship changes from God to something else. Worship is part of who every person is as an image bearer. We may think we aren't worshipping when in fact we are always worshipping something. We hold our material possessions tightly and love them too much. We value a relationship or opportunity over the one true God. Whatever holds a higher place in our hearts is what we worship.

[THEREFORE]

What are some specific examples of how we worship in all of life?

Romans 1:23-25 shows us how our worship does not end, it just changes focus. We worship created things instead of God. 1 John 5:21 also shows us the command to flee from worshipping idols, which means we easily turn to idols instead of God. We can falsely believe that if we aren't worshipping God, we aren't worshipping, but we are always worshipping. When we fixate on something, placing our attention and resources on it, we are worshipping unceasingly.

[THIS]

We often mistake our change of focus for a lack of worship and we can mistakenly think it doesn't matter. Because we are unceasing worshipers, a change in focus is an indicator of sin in our hearts and we must beware. Our upward praise and adoration of God changes to earthly, self-focused adoration of ourselves and/or created things that we've turned into idols. We focus on this temporal life instead of the eternal life God promises us. We focus our eyes on our daily lives and no longer focus on the one true God who never lets us down. The Samaritan woman Jesus encountered at the well focused on the place of worship rather than the subject of worship. We, too, focus on a place or material object of worship rather than God.

[THEREFORE]

In what ways have you been like the Samaritan woman, mistaking a physical place as the only place of worship, rather than seeing yourself as an unceasing worshiper?

Acts 7:48 tells us that God does not dwell in temples or buildings made by human hands. This means that the place of worship is not what matters. 1 Corinthians 3:16 reminds us that God dwells inside of His people. This means we worship Him with our selves. We do not have to be in a particular place to worship God. The focus of our worship should be on Him.

What obstacles prevent you from worshipping with the right focus?

Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27 show us that our worship flows from our love for God. When we love Him with our entire being, we will worship Him alone. John 4:24 tells us that we worship God in spirit and truth, meaning we worship Him for who He is and through our undivided focus on Him.

1. Romans 1:25: We are always worshipping, but we do not always worship God who is worthy of all our worship.

IMAGE BEARERS ARE UNCEASING WORSHIPERS

BIG IDEA #2: WE WERE CREATED TO WORSHIP GOD ALONE.²

[THIS]

The Samaritan woman's focus on a place of worship rather than the object of worship reveals that she is indeed not truly worshipping God alone. Her mind and heart are focused on earthly things that are temporal and have left her disappointed and empty. Jesus corrects the Samaritan woman by pointing her to the true right subject of all worship—God. We are all created by God for God. This means our purpose is found in God and God alone. We may look for our purpose in other things and people, but unless we are worshipping God alone, we will find ourselves feeling empty and lacking. As we grow in our knowledge of God, our worship of Him will grow. Our focus will be on Him and Him alone.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen your worship grow as your knowledge of God has grown?

Ephesians 3:17-19 teaches us that when we grow in our knowledge and understanding of Christ, we become more rooted in Him and our hearts overflow with thanksgiving to Him. It is our thanksgiving to Him that leads to our worship of Him. Colossians 2:6-7 also shows us that when we grow in our understanding of Him, we will live lives of worshipping Him alone.

[THIS]

Our Father made us to worship Him alone. John 4:23 tells us that God seeks His people to worship Him. He is expecting us to worship Him, not because He is arrogant or selfish, but because He is God and God, the beginning of everything, the only source of life, deserves to be worshiped by His people. God deserves our undivided attention and affection because He is perfect in every way. He did not need to create us, yet He chose to make a world and a people to call His own. He is a loving and benevolent Father who made the ultimate sacrifice to pay a sin debt He did not owe. He created all things and continues to sustain all things through His power. He is pleased to bless all of mankind and especially His children. God alone should be the recipient of our heart's overflowing love and adoration.

[THEREFORE]

What is something that captured your attention and affection this week?

Colossians 3:5 teaches us that we often worship things like power and money. We allow these things to rule our hearts and lives and they take us away from God. 1 Corinthians 10:7 speaks to the worship of a good time. When we are always seeking the next experience or rush of excitement, we are worshipping a temporal happiness that is not from God.

What attitudes or behaviors can you take on to make sure you are worshipping God alone?

Romans 12:1-2 tells us to not be like this world, but to be transformed and renewed. When we are transformed and renewed, always growing in our knowledge of God, we will worship Him. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 speaks to our need to take our thoughts captive to God. When we do this, we can focus our mind's attention and heart's affection of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Isaiah 12:5: God is glorious and magnificent always. We should worship Him unceasing.

IMAGE BEARERS ARE UNCEASING WORSHIPERS

BIG IDEA #3: SIN LIES TO US AND DISTORTS OUR WORSHIP BY TURNING OUR HEARTS TOWARD FALSE SAVIORS.³

[THIS]

Romans 1:25 speaks to the lengths that sin takes our worship away from God. Sin lies to us and our rebellious hearts believe the lies. We shift our focus from God, the only being worthy of our worship, to something or someone else. We even convince ourselves that our worship is acceptable to God because we are worshiping created things. We skip out on gathering with the local body of believers in order to “experience” God in nature participating in some activity that we enjoy. Though we are unceasing worshipers, we are also called to worship as the gathered body of Christ and not just as individuals. We can check our hearts for false saviors when we consider how we might react if we were to lose some material or earthly thing we’ve acquired. If we experience lasting devastation or fear losing it, we have moved it from the place of a good gift from God to an idol in our hearts.

[THEREFORE]

What is a false savior, and why are our hearts drawn to them?

A false savior is anything other than God that we pursue and look to for salvation. 1 John 4:1 teaches us not to trust everything we hear or see. We should be people who test others’ words to make sure they align with God’s Word. Matthew 24:24 teaches us that many false saviors perform wonders and signs and may seem real, but they lead people astray with their seemingly good works. Our hearts are drawn to them because our hearts are deceptive as Jeremiah 17:9 teaches us.

What disciplines and behaviors help you keep from being led away to worship other things?

Knowing God and growing in our knowledge of Him will lead us to worship Him alone. Hebrews 6:1 encourages believers to mature in their faith by growing in their knowledge. 1 Peter 2:2-3 implies that when we learn about God, we will get a taste of His goodness and long for more of Him. This will move us toward a life of worship of God alone.

[THIS]

Satan is the father of lies and sin is deception. Sin distorts our worship. We can believe we are worshiping God because we attend church services, sing during the worship time, and even serve at times, but our hearts can be far from God. We are often blind to our worship of false things. We would insist that we do not worship false saviors, but trust in God alone. But when we really evaluate our lives and hearts, we’ll find that we are really trusting in our own power and abilities, the money that God has provided, or other people.

[THEREFORE]

What are some “false saviors” you are trusting in and worshiping in place of worshiping God?

Often, we trust in our own ability to accomplish something or to make our life what we want it to be. We trust in money, our parents, our friendships, and even our own work ethic. 1 Corinthians 4:7 serves as a reminder that everything we have is from God, even our ability to work, create, have friends, etc. To evaluate our hearts, we must ask ourselves how often we thank God for all that we have.

3. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15: Satan disguises himself as light, but he is the father of lies and deceives people.