

OUR GENDER AS IMAGE BEARERS IS A GIFT FROM GOD

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

BIG TRUTH: OUR GENDER AS IMAGE BEARERS IS A GIFT FROM GOD

Genesis 5:2; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6

BIBLE VERSE: GENESIS 1:27

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

BIG IDEAS

- God created men and women with equal value and significance.
- God created men and women uniquely different.
- God created marriage for His glory, our good, and the advancement of the gospel.

BIBLE PASSAGE: GENESIS 2:5-9, 15-25

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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BIBLE VERSE: GENESIS 1:27

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

God created all people in His image.

“So God created man in His own image...”

- God’s plan for creation was to create a people for Himself. He chose to place His likeness on humans instead of another species. He formed the first man from the dust of the ground into His own image, as a reflection of Himself in the world, and He breathed life into his lungs.
- Every person ever born bears God’s image. We are all image bearers as part of God’s plan for the world and mankind. Even those people who live their whole lives rejecting God as their Savior still bear His image. Part of being human is to bear God’s image. It is what sets us apart from the rest of creation.

Being an image bearer means being male or female.

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

- God created people to be male or female. To accurately reflect God’s image in the world is to be either male or female. While this is a great mystery, God’s Word clearly tells us that people reflect God’s image as male or female.
- In the beginning, God created the first two people—Adam and Eve. In His creation of them, He created two genders—male and female. These two genders are part of God’s plan for His creation and it brings Him glory. When we change this, we mar or distort the image of God placed upon each one of us.

Being male and female means fulfilling God’s purpose for the world.

“...male and female He created them.”

- Gender is determined by God at creation. It is not something that we feel or decide as we grow up. God created people as either male and female as part of His design and purpose for the world. Male and female are complements of one another and work together to fulfill God’s purposes in the world.
- Gender is a gift from God, not a burden to carry or a curse. God created male and female and said that they were good. It is not better to be one gender rather than another in God’s eyes. Both are equally good and right according to His plan for creation.

OUR GENDER AS IMAGE BEARERS IS A GIFT FROM GOD

BIG IDEA #1: GOD CREATED MEN AND WOMEN WITH EQUAL VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE.¹

[THIS]

When God created the first man and woman, He created them both in His image. They were both created equally reflecting God's image in the world. There was not lesser or greater gender in the beginning. Inequality of genders is a product of our sinful and fallen world. When God created Adam and Eve, He did not assign greater value or worth to one of them over the other. He saw them both as very good and significant in His purpose and plan for His creation. Men are not more of an image bearer than women and vice versa. Our brokenness also leads us to place no value on gender, to declare that gender doesn't matter, but God was intentional in creating two equal, yet different genders and we should not distort that.

[THEREFORE]

How has sin distorted our view of gender?

Genesis 1:27 is a statement on the image of God. In some way, male and female reflects the image of God in the world. While this is mysterious to us, it does not make it any less true that in order for people to accurately reflect God's image, there needs to be male and female. The world leads us to believe that gender doesn't matter or that one gender is more important than another. John 3:16 includes all people—male and female—and reveals the value that all people have to God. Sin leads us to consider one gender as greater than another or to dismiss gender altogether.

[THIS]

In Genesis 2:5-9 and 15-25, God creates the first man. After creating Adam, God allows Adam to feel the lack of a helper, or companion, and then He creates Eve by taking a rib from Adam and fashioning the first woman. God's secondary creation of Eve doesn't imply that she was less significant or only created because God realized He'd left something out. It was part of God's creative design to create Eve second as a statement on His plan and purpose for the world. Eve complements Adam just as women complement men. This doesn't mean that men are superior to women in their value or significance. Women are of great value and significance and necessary to God's purposes and plans for the world and His church. Men need women and women need men. This is God's plan and it is good.

[THIS]

How do you specifically see God's image reflected in both genders?

Proverbs 31:25-26 describe an excellent wife and also reflect the characteristics of wisdom and kindness. 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 speaks of men being strong and having firm faith. Both men and women reflect God's image by being who they are created to be.

Knowing that God created men and women with equal value and significance, how can you treat the opposite gender as a fellow image bearer?

1 Peter 4:8 teaches us to love one another earnestly. 1 John 3:18 encourages us to love in word and action. When we recognize one another as image bearers, we will love one another as we should.

1. Genesis 1:27: In the very beginning, God created people to be male or female and He sees them as equally valuable and important.

OUR GENDER AS IMAGE BEARERS IS A GIFT FROM GOD

BIG IDEA #2: GOD CREATED MEN AND WOMEN UNIQUELY DIFFERENT.²

[THIS]

In Genesis 2:21-23, God created woman by taking one of Adam's ribs. This act of taking woman from man reveals the way God made men and women different from one another. Their differences aren't just found in the way they were created. They are uniquely and beautifully different from one another. God did not create another Adam to be Adam's companion. Instead, He created Eve, a person like Adam, yet different in her makeup and purpose. Men and women have different functions in God's design. While both men and women share the common purpose of bringing God glory, they have different attributes and abilities within God's world. It is God's design for men and women to complement one another. Their differences are good and God-ordained to fulfill His purposes on earth.

[THEREFORE]

What are some ways we push against there being any differences between men and women?

In 1 John 2:16, we see the warning that the desires of our flesh and desire for the things of the world are not from God. When we buy into the world's ideas of what manhood or womanhood is, we are following the ways of this world and fighting against God's design. We can often think that being different equals lesser or greater, when all it really means is different.

[THIS]

When God created man and woman, He made them both people, yet different. Both men and woman are equally image bearers of God and they hold equal value in God's eyes. A woman's body differs from a man's as part of God's creative plan. Men and women serve different functions within God's plan and purpose for the world. Men tend to be more powerful physically and less emotional while women tend to be softer and more compassionate. While every person doesn't fit into an exact mold, there are distinct differences between all men and women that are designed by God. Men can do things that women cannot and vice versa. God's design is always best because He is the only Creator of the world.

[THEREFORE]

What thoughts or ideas about gender have you believed that don't align with God's design?

Proverbs 3:7 and Isaiah 5:21 warn against a person thinking that he or she is wise. When we begin to think that our own thoughts and ideas are greater truth than God's Word, we have crossed over into the dangerous zone of thinking more of ourselves than we ought. Mark 7:8 warns of forsaking God's truth and holding to the tradition of man. We do this with gender when we believe the world rather than God's Word.

How can you embrace God's design for your gender?

Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to trust God's Word and Truth over our own limited understanding of things. In Psalm 9:10 we see the encouragement to trust in God and His purposes and plans. Even when we might not understand God's design, we can trust Him because He is wise and good.

2. Genesis 2:21-23: God created man from the dust of the ground and woman by taking a rib from man.

OUR GENDER AS IMAGE BEARERS IS A GIFT FROM GOD

BIG IDEA #3: GOD CREATED MARRIAGE FOR HIS GLORY, OUR GOOD, AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE GOSPEL.³

[THIS]

In Genesis 2:23, Adam sees Eve, the first woman, and declares, “this at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” Adam’s response to Eve reveals God’s perfect design for all of mankind. By creating Eve, a woman like Adam, yet different, God created the first husband and wife. When God gave Eve to Adam as his wife, the first family was created. Marriage and family are God’s design for His people. In Genesis 2:24, we see the significance of this union, or marriage. Marriage is so significant in God’s plan that He commands men to leave their mothers and fathers and to cling to their wives. This means that they leave the provision and care given by their parents and begin a new family with their wife. This union brings God glory and reveals His great design for the world. God is glorified in so many ways when a man and a woman marry. Paul says it is a mystery and points to the way Christ loves the church in Ephesians 5:32.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen God glorified through marriages in your church or family?

Ephesians 5:22-32 is a great description of how a husband and wife can glorify God through their marriage. When two people join together and live for God, their union glorifies God because it reveals His great power at work in their lives. 1 Peter 3:6-7 gives us a picture of what it means to glorify God through marriage.

Knowing that marriage exists for God’s glory, what are some of the qualities that we should pray and eventually look for in a future spouse?

Ephesians 5:22-33, Paul explains how husbands and wives should interact with one another in their marriages. As we look for a future husband or wife, we should take these things into consideration. We should look for a husband who can lead and someone we can follow and we should look for a wife who will support, help, and follow. Finding a future spouse carries a weight because we are making a covenant before God that should not be broken.

[THIS]

God’s union of Adam and Eve was His establishment and definition of what marriage is. Marriage is good and is good for people. Marriage and family make cultures and societies better. Adam’s and Eve’s lives were enhanced when they were joined together as one flesh. Marriage offers companionship and support to people and connects people in a physical and deeply emotional way. Marriage is also a way for the gospel to advance in the world. When two people are working together to bring God glory, the gospel will advance in the world. A husband and wife living for God will share the good news of Jesus with others and will support others carrying the gospel all over the world.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen God’s design for marriage distorted?

Hebrews 13:4 serves as a warning to not defile marriage and helps us understand the significance of marriage. Matthew 19:9 shows us that marriage is distorted and defiled by divorce and even sexual immorality. Matthew 19:4-6 teaches us that marriage is between a man and a woman. Anything else is a distortion of God’s design.

How have you seen marriage be for God’s glory and people’s good?

Psalm 68:6 tells us that God notices the lonely and places them in families. This means that marriage makes life good for people because marriage is how families are created. God uses families for His people, placing those without family into already established families.

3. Genesis 2:23: God created the first marriage when He brought Adam and Eve together as husband and wife.