



BIBLE STUDY LEADER GUIDE

SUMMER 2023

IN HIS IMAGE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to one of your most important jobs – FUGE Camps Bible Study Leader!!

You have an incredible opportunity to help shape the lives of hundreds of students by pointing them to Christ! You will stand before students and share the truths of Scripture all summer! While you have a huge responsibility, this summer will be one of the most rewarding experiences you have ever had. Thank you for accepting this calling on your life!

This Bible Study Leader Guide provides you a detailed plan for teaching Bible study. The lessons in this Guide are based on guided-discovery, creative learning. You are expected to follow this plan and not lecture to your group or do your own study. While this is written in script form, you do not have to memorize it. You will prepare teaching outlines from this plan.

The best way to prepare to teach before the summer is to study the Scripture and use the lessons as your personal Bible study. As you interact with Scripture and the material in the Guide, take notes and answer the questions for yourself. Learn from the lessons before you attempt to teach them. If you teach a small group of students or young adults at your church or school, consider teaching these lessons before you get to camp. Allow the Holy Spirit to teach you through this study and then allow Him to use you to teach your students.

The tag line for FUGE Camps is, ‘Life-Changing Camps.’ Bible study is the foundational part of the experience and the life-change. Prepare yourself and pray for your students. Then, sit back and watch God do His work. The goal is for God to work in the lives of students during Bible study.

Each day provides a teaching plan and commentary on the Scripture passage. The outline for each day is as follows:

OVERVIEW

This provides a daily overview with a life question, Scripture passages and key verse.

GATHER THESE SUPPLIES

This is the list of supplies you need each day.



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PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME

These are preparations to make before the session.

MOTIVATION

The motivation section includes learning activities designed to introduce the concept for the day and to create interest in the following Bible study material.

EXAMINATION

The Scripture study includes learning activities to encounter the meaning and truth of each Bible passage, and it's broken down into teachable sections. This section contains a key verse activity to help students memorize these verses.

APPLICATION

The application section allows you as the leader a time to sum up the lesson in a personal way, and it allows the students to put into words what they have learned.

COMMENTARY

This section provides commentary from the Holman Old/New Testament Commentary series and will provide you background and helpful information on the Scripture passages.

We hope you have the time of your life, and we will be praying for you throughout the summer!

FUGE Camps Coordinators



Opening Night – IN HIS IMAGE

Introductions

Call roll to account for every student who has been assigned to your group. Introduce yourself and share a brief portion of your story. Allow time for students to introduce themselves by sharing their name, church group and hometown.

Name Game

Play the name game below. Learning the names of your students should be a priority.

Group Juggle

Instruct students to stand in a circle. Toss a ball to a student and say, “Here you go, (insert name).” Receiving student will say, “Thanks, (insert your name). Here you go, (insert name)” as he or she passes the ball to that person. Continue doing this until all students have caught and thrown the ball. The last person will toss it back to you. Instruct students to put their arms and hands behind their backs as soon as they have had the ball. Also tell them to remember to whom they threw the ball. If you have time, do this again in the same order as before or introduce a second object. Continue as you have time.

Get to Know Each Other Game

Play the game below so students can get to know one another.

Clumps

Call out a number and instruct students to form groups of that size. Then, give them a question to answer within their groups such as ‘Where were you born?’ Do several rounds of this. Here are some questions to use with each round: What would you do on a free afternoon? If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be? What is your favorite birthday gift? What is the most beautiful place you have visited? What is your dream job?

Student Question Cards

Pass out question cards and instruct students to complete the questions. Collect the question sheets. Later in the evening, make notes from the cards. These will be collected at paper party on opening night to be given to group leaders so they will know better how to pray for and minister to their students at camp.

Introduction to Theme and Bible Study

Distribute a Camp Guide and pen to each student. Instruct students to write their name and church name on the back cover. Tell them you will collect these each day and then allow them to take their Camp Guide with them on closing morning.

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Share:

This summer's theme is In His Image. At some point in our lives, we have all struggled with our image - what we look like, who we really are, how we fit in, what we stand for. As humans, we are uniquely created in the image of God. If you believe this to be true, what does that mean for your life and others around you? As Christians, we are called to bear this image like Christ did on earth. Therefore, we are called to live as a new creation, one who is set apart and is a reflection of the God who created us and loves us.

“We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

2 Corinthians 3:18

Missions Emphasis

Draw attention to the mission posters and share the IMB and NAMB emphasis for the week.

International Mission Board (IMB) - The Embera People Group

This summer, our focus will once again be on the Embera, a group of unreached peoples spread throughout the mountain and river regions of Colombia and Panama. As Animists, believing that all material objects are inhabited by Spirits that must be appeased, the Embera have lived in fear. As indigenous minorities, they have often been victims of tribal and organized crime violence. But God loves the Embera and has not forgotten them.

During camp these next few days, you will hear first-hand testimonies of how the Lord has transformed lives through a diverse missionary team that includes IMB missionaries, Colombian Baptist partners, Cuban and Panamanian missionaries.

North American Mission Board (NAMB) – Portland, Oregon

Vergel and Kelsey Brown and their children moved to Portland, OR in 2019 to start a church. Many of the people the Browns first met in Portland had not only never heard of Jesus but had never even set foot in a church. They were genuinely curious about why the Brown family had moved to Portland and that curiosity opened the door to important and unexpected conversations.

In 2020, Send Network, the North American Mission Board's church planting initiative, helped the Browns start Redemption Church in Northeast Portland. Now,

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the work of growing that new church has become a family affair. Vergil and Kelsey's children help teach Sunday School, run the live stream, set up chairs and signs, and

welcome newcomers. Their oldest child even started a home Bible study with her friends from school. In a community that had no gospel witness, people in Northeast Portland are now being introduced to and are responding to the gospel.

When you give to the missions offering this summer at camp, you're helping missionaries like the Browns start new churches like Redemption Church. You're helping provide Bibles and chairs and microphones and everything else a new church needs to get up and running.

MFuge Local Missions

Every year a portion of the mission offering received at camp goes back to the local community through MFuge grants. Local ministries that we partner with can apply for the grant to continue ministry throughout the year. It is amazing to see how the Lord uses these ministries throughout the year.

Say: Later in the week during worship, we will collect a mission offering. This money will be taken up in your church group.

Challenge students to give to the offering. Make them aware of which night the offering will be collected in worship. Share the name of your mission mobilizer and the location of the mission table.

Announcements

Communicate announcements and camp rules given to you by your leadership staff. Collect Camp Guides from students.

Prayer

Pray over the group and dismiss.

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Day 1: Image of God

OVERVIEW

Scriptures: Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139:13-16; Deuteronomy 7:6-9; Galatians 3:13-14

Key Verse: “I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well” (Psalm 139:14).

Life Question: What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

God created us in His image. He set apart the Israelites as His chosen people. Since we bear the image of God, we are called to live as a reflection of His character.

GATHER THESE SUPPLIES:

- Handheld mirrors
- Sheets of white paper, cut in half
- Markers
- Pens
- Blue tape
- Family photo
- Spool of yarn
- Clear plastic cup
- Water
- Cooking oil
- Strips of paper with J or G printed on them
- Two colors of sticky dots
- Two containers
- Camp Guides
- Extra Bibles
- Refrigerator Outline, Key Verse, Truths, and Image Bearer posters (provided)

PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME:

- Hang posters around the room except the Image Bearer poster. Hold that one to put up during the application activity.
- Roll pieces of tape and stick to the wall around the Refrigerator Outline poster.



- Fill the clear plastic cup with water.
- Cut enough slips of paper for each student to receive one. On one third of these, print the letter “J” and on the rest print the letter “G.”
- Place sticky dots in two separate containers, one color in one container and a second color in the other container. Cut these apart so each student can grab several.

MOTIVATION

Refrigerator Artwork

Say: **“Think back to your childhood.”** Ask: **“What did your parents do with artwork you brought home from school or church?”** (*Displayed it on the refrigerator.*) **“Why did your parents display it on the fridge?”** (*They were proud of you and your work.*)

Distribute a half sheet of paper and pen to each student. Make markers available, too. Instruct students to look in the mirror on page 9 of their Camp Guide and/or pass around the handheld mirrors and ask them to take a quick look in one of the mirrors and then draw on their paper what they saw.

After a few minutes, form five small groups and instruct students to display their self-portraits within their groups and briefly share about them. As they finish sharing as a group, instruct students to take a piece of tape from the wall and tape their self-portrait on the Refrigerator poster.

Once all students have added their artwork, lead students to look at the refrigerator and the artwork displayed. Invite students to make observations (Examples - we are all different, we are all humans, some are better artists than others, etc.). Say: **“The main observation to point out is that we are created by God, remarkably and wondrously made. We are unique and set apart from the rest of God’s creation. We are going to learn more about being created in God’s image today in Bible study.”**

EXAMINATION

Genesis 1:27

Family Resemblance

Share a picture of your family and point out resemblances you have to your parents.

Say: **“Children bear the likeness of their parents. You may look like your parents,**



but you may not. If not, maybe you have other similarities such as interests, habits, traits, or even sayings. This is true even if you have adoptive parents who raised you.”

Instruct students to turn to **Genesis 1:27**. Call on a volunteer to read aloud this verse.

So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female. Genesis 1:27 CSB

Instruct students to turn to page 10 in their Camp Guide and point them to the term “Imago Dei”. Invite students to say it with you. Say: **“This is the Latin expression for ‘image of God.’ Just like we share likenesses with our parents, we have likenesses of God because we were created in His image.”**

Ask: **“What does ‘made in His image’ mean? Is this referring to physical attributes?”**

Say: **“When we talk about being created in God’s image, we are talking about His characteristics, not a physical likeness or appearance.”**

Characteristics of God

Say: **“Let’s take a look at some of God’s characteristics now.”**

Point students to page 10 in their Camp Guide and note the characteristics of God listed there. Invite students to call out the ones listed, one at a time. Then, lead them to choose from these characteristics to answer the questions.

Choose and note one or two characteristics of God from the list:

- 1) To which you can most relate:**
- 2) That you need to develop in your own life to be more like God:**

Relationship with God

Say: **“Humans are the only one of God’s creatures created in His image. He made us from the dust of the earth with unique abilities such as intelligence, the ability to reason, and with a sense of morality and justice. He gave us not just a physical being but an emotional and spiritual side, too. Because we are set apart from the other creations, God wants to have a relationship with us.”**

Lead students to page 10 in their Camp Guides and ask them to rate their current relationship status with the Lord.



Mark on the scale below where you are in your relationship with the Lord.

1	5	10
Non-existent	Acquaintance/distant	Personal/intimate

Challenge students to work on their relationship with the Lord by reading the Bible, praying, worshipping, spending time with Him daily. Say: **“We make quiet time a program element so each of us have time alone with God every morning of camp. Make this a goal when you get back home.”**

Psalm 139:13-16

Intricately Designed

Display a spool of yarn. Ask: **“For what is yarn used? What are some examples of knitted items?”** (*mittens, blankets, hats, scarves*) Ask for a show of hands for those students who enjoy the hobby of knitting or whose family members or friends do.

Say: **“Knitting is the art of using needles to interlace yarn in a series of connected loops to create an item using patterns. It involves intricately designing and creating an item with specific colors that looks beautiful and has purpose.”**

Say: **“We will now look at another passage that supports the truth of God’s intricate design of each of us.”**

Instruct students to turn to **Psalm 139** in their Bibles. Ask a student volunteer to read aloud **verses 13-16**.

¹³ For it was you who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. ¹⁴ I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well. ¹⁵ My bones were not hidden from you when I was made in secret, when I was formed in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began.

Psalm 139:13-16 CSB

Call on another volunteer to summarize those verses in their own words.

Say: **“We were formed and are known by God. He designed us uniquely in our mother’s womb, from the beginning. Nothing is hidden from Him. He sees us, looks on us in love, and knows our days and our purpose.”**



Our Response

Ask: **“According to verse 14, what should be our response?”** (*Praise to God*)

Say: **“Yes, we are to praise God. In fact, we were created to worship Him.**

Share that John Piper is a well-known writer, speaker, and pastor. Read aloud the quote from John Piper below.

“God created us in His image so that we would display or reflect or communicate who he is, how great he is, and what he is like. So I think being created in the image of God means that we image God. We reflect God. We live in a way, we think in a way, we feel in a way, we speak in a way that calls attention to the brightness of the glory of God.”

[Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-to-be-made-in-gods-image>]

Say: **“This quote helps us understand the appropriate response we should make to our creation in God’s image. We are to live in a way that brings glory to God.”**

Say: **“Sometimes we praise and worship other things instead of the Creator. We will look at what happens when we do this in our study tomorrow. While we share a common purpose of praising Him, we each have an individual purpose that we will talk about on Day 4.”**

Instruct students to stand in one circle facing into the middle. Refer to the Key Verse poster and invite students to recite the verse aloud in unison: **“I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well” (Psalm 139:14).**

Grab the spool of yarn. Hold the end of the yarn, say the first word of the Key Verse as you toss the spool of yarn to a student across the circle. Lead the student to do the same, tossing the yarn to a different student. Continue this until you get to the end of the verse (including the Scripture reference). When you finish, you should have a web of yarn. Lead students to recite aloud the verse one more time in unison.

Ask students to observe the design that was created. Compare to how God designed and knitted each of us. Lead students to drop the yarn. Then, move it out of the middle of the floor and re-roll it at the end of class.

Remarkably and Wondrously Made

Ask: **“How does verse 14 describe each of us?”** (*remarkably and wondrously made*)

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Say: **“Given this truth, how should this impact our self-image, how we see ourselves, and how we see others?”** Lead students to turn to page 10 in the Camp Guide to answer these questions. Then, allow for some discussion.

Deuteronomy 7:6-9

Set Apart

Ask: **“Who were the Israelites?”** (*descendants of Abraham*) Say: **“We will now take a look at God’s special relationship with the Israelites.”**

Direct students to turn to **Deuteronomy 7:6-9**. Call on a student to read aloud these verses.

⁶For you are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷“The Lord had his heart set on you and chose you, not because you were more numerous than all peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸But because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors, he brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹Know that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps his gracious covenant loyalty for a thousand generations with those who love him and keep his commands.

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 CSB

Ask: **“How do these verses describe the Israelites?”** (*holy people, chosen, loved*)

Refer to the clear cup of water and bottle of cooking oil. Say: **“Let’s observe what will happen when I add cooking oil to the cup of water.”** Pour about 1-2 tablespoons into the cup of water. Ask for students to share observations. Note that the oil and water do not mix.

Debrief this by saying: **“The Israelites were set apart. They were not to mix with other nations. God knew that if they did, they would lose their focus on Him. Our response to being created in God’s image is to reflect God and live a life of worship. In doing so, we are set apart, in the world but not of the world.”**

Say: **“Last summer at camp, we learned that God made a promise with Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars and would become a great nation. God later made this into a covenant with Abraham.”**

Refer to the statement in **verse 8** that reads, **“kept the oath he swore to your ancestors”** and the statement in **verse 9** that reads, **“Who keeps his gracious**



covenant loyalty for a thousand generations.” Point out that these verses refer to the promise and covenant that God made with Abraham and God’s faithfulness in keeping them.

Say: **“The Israelites were chosen and set apart not because they were great or great in number but because God chose them and as a result of Abraham’s obedience to God’s direction for his life. As followers of Christ, we are set apart, not because of anything we have done, but because Jesus was set apart. Therefore, being set apart is not optional.”**

Lead students to get back in their groups from earlier and refer to page 11 in their Camp Guide. Assign each group one of the verses below to read and fill in the blanks. Guide them to briefly discuss their verse and how it addresses being set apart and chosen and how that translates to life today. Then, ask one student from each group to share their verse. Instruct students to fill in the blanks of the other verses in their Camp Guide as they are shared.

- 1 Peter 2:9
- Deuteronomy 14:2
- Psalm 4:3
- Jeremiah 1:5
- Romans 12:2

Say: **“The Israelites were a chosen and blessed group of people so they could be a blessing to other people and bring more glory to God. Verse 9 refers to all nations and generations. Let’s look in the New Testament to see how Christ made a way for all people.”**
Galatians 3:13-14

For Everyone

Lead students to turn to **Galatians 3** and ask a volunteer to read aloud **verses 13-14**.

¹³ **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree. ¹⁴ The purpose was that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, so that we could receive the promised Spirit through faith.**
Galatians 3:13-14 CSB



Distribute a slip of paper with a J or G printed on it to each student. Invite those with a J on their paper to come to the front of the group. Say: **“Let’s pretend that these students with a J on their paper are given salvation.”** Ask: **“How does getting to spend eternity with God make you feel?”** Ask the others how they feel not receiving salvation.

Say: **“For purposes of this illustration, the J stands for Jews and the G for Gentiles.”**

Instruct students to turn to page 12 in their Camp Guide and unscramble the words in the statement. Then, read the statement aloud and explain.

Say: **“In Bible days before Jesus came, the Jews saw themselves as the only people worthy of God’s salvation, but Jesus came to show us that salvation is for everyone!”**

Explain that this truth is such a good thing because we are not Jews, and the Good News is for us! Christ made a way for Gentiles because He created us in His image and loved us and has purpose for our lives as well.

Say: **“Verse 14 assures us that we will receive the promised Spirit by faith.”** Ask: **“How would you define faith?”** (*believing without seeing*)

Ask rhetorically: **“Have you placed your trust and faith in Christ?”** Say: **“If you have not made this most important decision, be sure to talk to your youth pastor or an adult from your group today.”**

APPLICATION

Make It Stick

Form two teams and choose two volunteers from each team to be “it.” Give students in each of the two teams sticky dots of the same color. (**Note:** You need two colors of the sticky dots.)

Give these instructions:

- Each volunteer is to move around the room as students move around the room and attempt to place sticky dots to their shirt.
- Instruct the volunteers to take the bumpers up position.
- Running is not allowed by anyone.

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- Sticky dots are to only be stuck to the shirt above the waist.
- Volunteers cannot block their shirts with their arms or hands.
- The objective is for the volunteers to avoid the opposing team's sticky dots and to try to get as many of their own team's notes to stick to their shirt as possible.
- At the end of the game, for each sticky dot of your team's color, you will get a point. For each one that is the opposing team's color, you will lose a point.
- The winning team is the one with the most points.

Give the command to start play. Make sure the volunteers move around the room and there is no running. Once play has continued for no longer than one minute, call "stop" and encourage volunteers to count the sticky dots on their shirts.

Debrief this time. Ask students to share how this activity is similar to life and our identity. Say: **"In our world today, we are constantly bombarded with things that can shape our opinion and image of ourselves, things that we often allow to form who we are."** Ask: **"What are some examples of those things?"** (*social media, media, celebrities, etc.*) (Adapted from <https://ministrytoyouth.com/who-od-says-you-are/>)

Today's Truths

Say: **"It's impossible to live life without these influences, but just like in our game, we need to be careful about what we let stick to us and what we don't. We need to cling to God's truths that we learned today."** Refer students to page 12 of their Camp Guide and to the Truths poster. As you share the three truths below, instruct students to fill in the blanks in their book.

1. **We are created in God's image. He formed us intricately.**
2. **He knows us and desires a relationship with us.**
3. **We are set apart as His chosen people.**

Conclude this session by stating: **"You are an image bearer to bring God glory."** Tape the Image Bearer poster over the fridge portraits. Challenge students to see themselves as only God does. Refer to the Mission Moment on page 13 of the Camp Guide and challenge students to read it later.

Share a sneak peek of tomorrow's lesson: **"Unfortunately, things take a turn for the worse. We will see where man takes things into his own hands and distorts God's plan."**

PRAYER

Ask a volunteer to pray, closing the Bible study session.

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COMMENTARY

Genesis 1:27

SUPPORTING IDEA: God fills His universe with productive matter and places mankind in a position of authority.

Special attention is paid to one creature who, although he could be confused with other land animals, was significantly different. Mankind became the highlight of this day and, except for the Creator himself, became the most powerful, authoritative being in all creation. His creation is treated separately from the other land creatures.

Only of this creature is it said that he was created in the image of God. The creation of “man” in the image of God refers to all mankind, not just Adam, as the pronoun them and the reference to male and female in verse 27 indicates. God and mankind share a likeness (the Hebrew terms for image and likeness are essentially synonymous terms) that is not shared by the other creatures. This likeness probably involves the personality, aesthetic appreciation, authority, moral, and spiritual qualities that both God and humans share, unlike the animals. Since God and humans share such likeness, it should not be surprising that a relationship between God and humans is a focus in the rest of Scripture. Mankind possesses a self-conscious life in which he is able to thank and worship the Creator.

Kenneth O. Gangel and Stephen J. Bramer, [Genesis](#), ed. Max Anders, Holman Old Testament Commentary (B&H Publishing Group, 2002), 14.

Psalm 139:13-16

SUPPORTING IDEA: David is astounded that God precisely created him and ordained the number of his days.

139:13. Moreover, David knows that God is all-powerful. This is proven in that the Lord has made him skillfully in his mother’s womb. God created his inmost being (i.e., his kidneys, symbolic of his vital organs, his heart, liver, lungs, even his innermost emotions and moral sensitivities). God knit him like a skilled artisan would weave a beautiful tapestry. This work of creation was done in his mother’s womb, beginning nine months before he was born.

139:14. David could only praise God for this display of wonderful omnipotence. He understood he was fearfully and wonderfully made, which resulted in awe and astonishment within him toward God who created him so perfectly.

139:15. My frame (i.e., bones and skeleton) was not hidden from God but in full view to divine eyes. God made David in the secret place, a euphemism for the womb, that

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unseen place concealed from human eyes. There he was woven together like a multicolored piece of cloth or fine needlepoint. All these threads picture his veins, arteries, muscles, and tendons.

139:16. God saw his unformed body before he was made. All his days were sovereignly ordained for David before he came into the world. The span of his life was written by God in His divine book containing His eternal decree. The precise length of his life was determined by God before he was born. There could be no changing the number of his days (Job 14:5).

139:17-18. These divine truths were precious to David, vast and beyond his human comprehension. If he tried to list these truths about God, they would outnumber the grains of sand on the beaches of the world, far past his ability to understand. When he awakens, his thoughts are still dominated with God. He cannot remove such towering thoughts about God from his mind.

Steven J. Lawson, [Psalms 76-150](#), ed. Max Anders, vol. 12, Holman Old Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2006), 334-335.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8

SUPPORTING IDEA: Israel's unique position depended on fidelity to God. Therefore, the distasteful and difficult work of holy war must proceed.

7:6. Perhaps more than any other chapter of Scripture, Deuteronomy 7 flies in the face of the modern passion for political correctness. In this chapter Israel is given property at the expense of a group of resident ethnic groups and told to eradicate them from the land. It was not because of their moral superiority, however, that they were chosen for such elevation. Israel was simply regarded as a people holy or separate by virtue of their relationship with God. It was God's choice, and not their superior behavior, that made them special in His sight, His treasured possession.

7:7. Lest they be infected with the bacteria of pride, God explained through Moses that He did not set His affection on Israel because they were more numerous than other peoples. On the contrary, they were the fewest of all peoples. Such an evaluation could hardly apply to Israel as it then stood east of the Jordan River, since, as Moses observed in Deuteronomy 1:10, "The Lord your God has multiplied you, and here you are today, as the stars of heaven in multitude" (NKJV). When God chose Israel, however, he really chose one man, Abraham, and set him apart together with his as-yet-unborn offspring (Gen. 12:1-3).

7:8. Since he had discarded the option that God chose Israel because of their numbers, Moses explained why God did place Israel first in His affections. It was because the Lord loved them; in other words, simply because He chose to do so. If there was any special reason for His choice, it had to do with the oath that God swore

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to Israel's forefathers. God loved them simply because He loved them; it was in His nature to do so. And because He loved them, He brought them out of Egypt with a mighty hand and redeemed them from a life of slavery. God's choice of Israel commended God's character, not Israel's. This distinction is especially important in view of the modern notion that God chose Israel because of their intrinsic religious fervor or moral superiority.

7:9. God's sovereign choice implies that He alone is God. Happily, His sovereignty is not His only attribute, nor even His leading one. He is the faithful God, demonstrating that faithfulness by honoring His loving commitments to a thousand generations of those who love Him.

Stephen J. Andrews and Robert D. Bergen, [Deuteronomy](#), Holman Old Testament Commentary (B&H Publishing Group, 2009), 97-98.

Galatians 3:13-14

SUPPORTING IDEA: The law cannot justify. It can only bring judgment. Therefore, grace is superior to the law.

3:13. The positive solution to the curse of the law is in Christ who redeemed us from the curse of the law. Redeem means "to buy out of slavery by paying a price." This word was used when someone purchased a slave for the purpose of freeing them. When Jesus died on the cross, He took our curse upon Himself. Through His substitutionary atonement, Christ paid the penalty of the curse. When we believe in Him, He frees us from the slavery of the law.

3:14. Christ redeemed us, on the cross, for two purposes. First, He redeemed us so that the blessing given to Abraham (salvation through faith) might come to the Gentiles. Second, He redeemed us . . . by faith so that the promise of the Holy Spirit could be given to all who believe (compare v. 2).

Max Anders, [Galatians-Colossians](#), vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 37.

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Day 2: Image Distorted

OVERVIEW

Scriptures:

Genesis 3:6-7; Exodus 32:1-8; Romans 1:22-25

Key Verse:

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Romans 3:23).

Life Questions:

What have you allowed to distort the image of God in your life? Do you find your identity in Christ or in the world?

Sin distorted the image of God in our lives, resulting in broken relationships with Him and with others. The Israelites turned from God and created their own image and worshiped it.

GATHER THESE SUPPLIES:

- Handheld mirror
- Cling wrap
- Sheets of white paper
- Markers
- Note cards
- Two small trash cans or boxes
- Two small balls
- Two poster boards
- Blue tape
- Pens
- Camp Guides
- Extra Bibles
- Key Verse, Sin Cycle, and Truths posters (provided)

PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME:

- Hang posters around the room.
- Tear a piece of the cling wrap the size of the handheld mirror and lay it out on a table.
- Print the following questions on a sheet of butcher paper and hang on the wall.
 - How did the serpent distort God’s instruction?
 - How does Satan distort God’s truths today? Be specific.



- Cut apart the Sin Cycle Steps that are part of the Sin Cycle poster.
- On two poster boards, draw a blank line for each word of the Key Verse and the Scripture reference. (**Note:** You should have 13 blank lines on each poster.)
- Set two trash cans at a wall in the classroom and place a piece of tape on the floor about 4 feet away from each trash can. On the wall over each trash can, hang the posters above and tape a marker to each.
- Print each of these actions on a separate note card: Brush your teeth; pull weeds in your garden; care for your pet; do laundry; clean your room; go to practice.
- After the session, remove cling wrap from mirror and clean it.

MOTIVATION

Distorted Image

Instruct students to turn to page 19 in their Camp Guide. Ask if anyone knows what famous painting is found there. Share that the artwork is the *Mona Lisa*. Share the facts below about this painting.

- The painter was Leonardo da Vinci.
- It was painted in the early 16th century.
- The painting is housed in the Louvre Museum in Paris.
- The painting was stolen in 1911, which was one of the greatest art heists in history. [Source: <https://www.history.com/news/the-heist-that-made-the-mona-lisa-famous>]
- The painting is valued at \$908 million today.

[Source: <https://artistryfound.com/how-much-the-mona-lisa-is-worth-today/>]

Say: **“I invite you to use a pen or markers to update the *Mona Lisa* to a modern-day version. You have one minute to get creative.”** Once students have had a minute, lead them to hold up their picture for others in the room to see. Make this a quick competition to recognize the student who did the best updating job. Choose the top three or four and encourage the other students to vote by cheering for the one they think is the best depiction of a modern-day *Mona Lisa*. Congratulate the winner.

Say: **“While this was a fun activity, all of you have distorted the image of the *Mona Lisa*.”**

Hold and look into one of the handheld mirrors and then turn it so students can see in it. Share how when looking into the mirror we can see a clear reflection. Place the



piece of cling wrap over the mirror. Turn it so students can see into it again. Point out how the image has been distorted.

Ask for a definition of the word “distort.” After students have shared, give this definition: **“pull or twist out of shape; give a misleading or false account or impression of.”** (Oxford Dictionary)

Say: **“Today, we will take a closer look at how our sin distorts the image of God in us.”**

EXAMINATION

Genesis 3:1-7

Act of Disobedience

Point students back to their Camp Guide to page 20 to the picture of the loaf of bread. Tell them that one small ingredient was left out when making the bread which resulted in the picture next to it. Ask if anyone knows the missing ingredient. Share that it was yeast. Say: **“Without yeast, bread will not rise. The same is true in life with our decisions. Sometimes, one misstep or mistake or act of disobedience can change everything.”**

Lead students to turn to **Genesis 2:8-15**. Share: **“God created a special, perfect place for Adam and Eve to live, work, and watch over the garden of Eden. It was beautiful and had plenty of food and everything else they needed. It also had the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In verses 16-17, God commanded them not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or they would die.”**

Ask: **“Why do you think it was so important for them not to eat of this tree?”** (*God gave Adam and Eve a choice and a command. He wanted them to choose to obey Him. If they died with the knowledge of good and evil, they would be eternally separated from God.*)

Now, ask a volunteer to read aloud **Genesis 3:1-7**.

¹ Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden?’” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. ³ But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’” ⁴ “No! You will

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certainly not die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Genesis 3:1-7 CSB

Form small groups of students and point them to the poster with the following questions. Instruct them to discuss the questions.

- **How did the serpent distort God’s instruction?**
- **How does Satan distort God’s truths today? Be specific.**

Allow groups to share if they want. Say: **“God’s truth is the only truth. We are not to follow our own version of the truth. There’s no ‘my’ truth or ‘your’ truth but only absolute Truth.”**

Sin

Distribute a sheet of white paper and marker to each group and lead them to write a definition of sin. After a no more than one minute, ask groups to share their definition. Combine these into one definition. Then, ask groups to turn over their paper and make a list of as many sins as they can think of in one minute.

Say: **“Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and sin entered the world.”** Ask: **“How did Adam and Eve attempt to fix their disobedience?”** (*They made clothes out of fig leaves. They hid.*)

Ask rhetorically: **“When was a time you resorted to other things to fix yourself and your issues?”**

Say: **“Sin often looks good from a distance and even up close sometimes. That is the deception part. Eve was attracted to the tree because the fruit of the tree was good to eat, pleasing to the eye and a source to gain wisdom. She allowed these to deceive her into eating the fruit.”**

Share:

“Sin changed everything for Adam and Eve. They saw their nakedness and knew shame and guilt. That distorted God’s perfect garden and life for them. As a result, their sin had consequences.” Refer students to **verses 8-19** and ask them to call out some of these consequences (*labor pains in childbirth, hard work, death*).



Refer students to page 20 of the Camp Guide to answer the questions there.

- **How has Satan distorted God’s truth in your own life, leading to sin?**
- **What are some of the consequences of that?**

Share the John Piper quote below:

“I was created like a mirror. And a mirror that was supposed to be 45 degrees with the clear reflective side pointing upward so that as God shone on it at the 45 degree angle, it would bounce off, and it would make a 90 degree turn and be reflected out into the world. And at the fall, Satan persuaded me that my image is more beautiful than God’s image, and so I flip the mirror over. Now the black back side is toward God. It doesn’t reflect anything. Instead, the mirror casts a shadow in the shape of itself on the ground, and I fell in love with the shadow. That is what happened. And we have been loving ourselves ever since.”

[Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-to-be-made-in-gods-image>]

Say: **“Obviously, Adam and Eve’s actions impacted their relationship with God.”**

Ask: **“But what did this decision do to Adam and Eve’s relationship with each other?”** (They saw each other’s nakedness, which meant their relationship was no longer virtuous. Adam blamed Eve, which caused strife between the two. They now had to live a hard life.)

Ask students to refer back to their Camp Guide to answer this question: **“How has your sin impacted someone else?”**

Exodus 32:1-8

Sin Cycle

Share this context about the Israelites.

“Let’s revisit the Israelites. As we learned yesterday, the Israelites were God’s chosen people. They were forced into slavery in Egypt for 400 years, but God used Moses to deliver them from Pharaoh and their slavery. They wandered in the desert for 40 years before arriving at the promised land. During this time, they would follow God, turn against Him, repent, and return to Him. They repeated this cycle over and over again.”

Distribute the Sin Cycle Steps – Serves the Lord, Falls into Sin, Repents and Cries out to the Lord, Delivered from Sin to four students. Point to the Sin Cycle poster. Instruct students with the steps to work together to place the steps in the proper order. Once these are in the correct order, read them aloud. Say: **“This was the cycle of sin that the Israelites found themselves in over and over again.”**

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Explain that this is the same sin cycle we often find ourselves falling into.

Lead students to turn to page 21 in their Camp Guide to the sin cycle diagram and guide them to print the steps from the poster.

Say: **“In Exodus 24:3, we see where they were all in and would do whatever the Lord asked of them. But other times, they would quickly turn against Him. Let’s look at one of those times now.”**

Instruct students to turn to **Exodus 32** in their Bibles and call on a volunteer to read aloud **verses 1-8**.

¹ When the people saw that Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, “Come, make gods for us who will go before us because this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt—we don’t know what has happened to him!” ² Aaron replied to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters and bring them to me.” ³ So all the people took off the gold rings that were on their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took the gold from them, fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made it into an image of a calf. Then they said, “Israel, these are your gods, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!” ⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of it and made an announcement: “There will be a festival to the Lord tomorrow.” ⁶ Early the next morning they arose, offered burnt offerings, and presented fellowship offerings. The people sat down to eat and drink, and got up to party. ⁷ The Lord spoke to Moses: “Go down at once! For your people you brought up from the land of Egypt have acted corruptly. ⁸ They have quickly turned from the way I commanded them; they have made for themselves an image of a calf. They have bowed down to it, sacrificed to it, and said, ‘Israel, these are your gods, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.’” Exodus 32:1-8 CSB

Invite a student to put these verses in their own words.

Say: **“The Israelites were looking for a physical representation of God to worship, so they attempted to build a representation of God using the gold they had. They would then worship the calf and not God. They wanted the comfort of seeing something in their timing rather than waiting on God and His perfect timing, so they took matters into their own hands.”**

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Ask: **“What were the specific consequences of sin for the Israelites?”** (*God was not happy with them. They were enslaved for 400 years. They wandered in the desert for 40 years.*)

Romans 1:22-25

Trading the Truth for a Lie

Say: **“So, we have just seen how the Israelites, God’s chosen people, turned their backs on Him. It is easy for us to point our fingers at them and wonder how they could do such a thing, but we do the same thing.”**

Direct students to turn in their Bibles to **Romans 1**. Ask a volunteer to read aloud **verses 22-25**.

²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles. ²⁴ Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever. Amen.

Romans 1:22-25 CSB

Say: **“Earlier in the Genesis passage, Adam and Eve believed Satan’s deceit and distortion, and in doing so, they traded God’s favor for a lie. According to verse 25, we do the same. We trade the truth of God for a lie.”** Ask: **“What are some things ‘created’ that we worship instead of worshipping the Creator?”**

Making the Goal

Ask: **“What is the main object of the game of basketball?”** (*To make a goal*)

Combine groups into two teams. (**Note:** Try to make teams equal in number. If needed, move some students to keep count of goals, chase the ball, write words on the poster, etc.).

Ask students to line up beyond the tape on the floor and give each a small ball. Give these instructions: **“One at a time, each student on each team is to take a shot to attempt to get a goal. For each goal made, the student who made it will add the next word of the Key Verse to the poster. As they do, they must shout out that word. The team to get all words of the verse including the Scripture reference will be the winning team. Both teams are to continue until the Key Verse posters are complete.”**



Point to the Key Verse poster and read aloud Romans 3:23: **‘For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.’**”

Start play and allow it to continue until both teams finish.

Ask: **“Would it have been harder to make the goal the further you were from the trash can? What if you turned away from the trash can or turned your back completely to it?”**

Lead students to recite the key verse in unison several times, each time getting louder in volume. Say: **“Sin causes us to drift further and further from God or to turn away from God, who is our goal.”** Read aloud Isaiah 53:6.

Say: **“To make a goal in basketball, we must be in the game, facing the goal, trying to get closer to it and aiming at it. To get to our goal of living as people who bear the image of God, we must stay close to Him and not turn our backs on God by focusing on earthly things instead of eternal ones.**

Point students to page 21 in their Camp Guides to list these steps to reaching our goal of being image bearers of God.

- 1. Stay close to God.**
- 2. Do not turn our backs on God.**

Say: **“Some of you may be thinking that you are not involved in “big” sins. Keep in mind that God looks at all sin as serious. The sins that we often think about are referred to as ‘sins of commission,’ actions we take that we should not. But, there are also ‘sins of omission,’ when we fail to do things that we should do, like spend time with the Lord.”**

APPLICATION

What Will Happen

Lead students to form six groups. Give each group a card with one of the statements below printed on them. Ask students to discuss in their group what will happen if you choose not to consistently do the action listed on your card.

Brush your teeth

(You will get cavities and gum disease, require major dental work, and maybe lose teeth, etc.)



Pull weeds in your garden

(Your garden will be overcome with weeds, plants will not produce a crop, you will not be able to get to the fruits/veggies for the weeds, etc.)

Care for pet

(Your pet will get fleas and ticks, your pet will smell bad, and your pet will have long, mangy hair, etc.)

Do laundry

(Your clothes will be dirty, the house will be full of dirty clothes laying around, you will not have clothes to wear or will have to wear dirty ones, etc.)

Clean room

(Your room will be a mess, you will not be able to move around or sleep in your room, and you will get bugs and pests in your room, etc.)

Go to practice

(You will not improve, you probably will not be allowed to play in the game, you will be seen as not reliable or dependable, etc.)

Allow groups to share. Now, invite students to discuss in their groups how this relates to their spiritual life. Ask for volunteers to share.

Say: **“Sin is the same way. If we are not constantly seeking after the Lord, we are going to choose our own path and grow further from Him. These things will crowd out your time with the Lord.”**

Point students to page 22 of their Camp Guide. Say: **“At this time, spend some time in reflection and prayer. List your sins of commission and omission that the Lord reveals to you in the appropriate column in your Camp Guide.”** Play music during this reflection time.

Sins of Commission

Lying

Sins of Omission

Not obeying your parents

Say: **“Repentance is the act of remorsefully turning from your sins. Spend some time in repentance and prayer over the list you made.”**

Today’s Truths

Refer students back to their Camp Guide and the Truths poster. As you share the three truths below, instruct students to fill in the blanks on page 22 of their Camp Guide.

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1. **We are all sinners.**
2. **Sin distorted the Image of God in our lives.**
3. **Sin results in a broken relationship with God and with others.**

Refer to the Mission Moment on page 23 of the Camp Guide and challenge students to read it later.

Say: **“Here is a sneak peek for tomorrow. Where we leave off today is not the end of the story. For Adam and Eve, He made clothes for them (Genesis 3:21) and provided a way out of the garden (Genesis 3:23). For the Israelites, He delivered them to the promised land (Joshua 3:14-4:1). And for us, He provided His promised Messiah, His Son, Jesus (Genesis 3:15 — the first mention of Jesus coming to save and defeat Satan).”**

PRAYER

Ask a volunteer to pray, closing the Bible study session.

COMMENTARY

Genesis 3:6-7

SUPPORTING IDEA: Humanity makes the worst decision in the history of the world.

3:6. Notice the threefold temptation experienced by Eve: When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. Eve allowed her God-given desires to be wrongly satisfied. This threefold temptation is similar to the various means of temptation detailed in 1 John 2:16: “For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of one’s possessions—is not from the Father, but is from the world.” The difference is that Eve did not have a sinful nature within her. These appetites that Eve had were before sin entered the world. They were hers as a created being.

These desires—to satisfy herself with food, to appreciate the beauty of the fruit, and to gain knowledge and wisdom—were all legitimate and God-given and could be satisfied in a God-ordained manner. The problem for Eve, however, was in how these desires would be fulfilled. No doubt there was a lot of fruit she could eat, lots of beauty to appreciate, and much about which she could learn and gain wisdom. There was a whole new world for her to explore and master.

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Ignorance, disregard, or deception about God’s Word makes a person vulnerable to temptation. Psalm 119:11 declares, “I have treasured your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you.”

Failure to appreciate God’s goodness leads to distrust of His goodness. Distrust leads to dissatisfaction and finally to disobedience. God’s prohibitions as well as His provisions are for our good. But mankind wants to be independent, to go his own way, to be subject to no one. God has always asked people to believe and trust His word. God has always asked people to believe that He is sovereign and good. His desire is that we trust Him so we will live abundantly (John 10:10; 17:3). God has always asked people to believe that true satisfaction comes by obeying Him and respecting His prohibitions—to live by faith, not by sight.

Not only did Eve eat, but her partner participated in the sin as well: She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Sinners have a way of involving others and then validating one another in their sinning. Romans 1:32 says, “Although they [sinners] know God’s just sentence—that those who practice such things deserve to die—they not only do them, but even applaud others who practice them.” Adam was not deceived (1 Tim. 2:14); he sinned with understanding.

It is important to understand that it was not when Eve sinned but when Adam sinned that the entire human race fell. Eve had not been created independently but was made from Adam. Adam had been created first, and from him came the whole human race, including Eve. The apostle Paul makes it clear in Romans that everyone born into the human race will be a sinner, for it was as head of the human race that Adam sinned. All participate in this “original sin.” Romans 5:12 declares, “Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned.”

SUPPORTING IDEA: When Adam and Eve sinned, it affected not only their relationship with God but also their relationship with each other and with the rest of creation.

3:7. As a result of their sin, Adam and Eve felt shame about their physical bodies. Before the fall, Genesis 2:25 declared, “Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.” But now they were no longer virtuous. They had a new awareness of themselves and of each other; they now knew that their bodies could be viewed and used with evil lust. They sensed a need for concealment: They sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. They tried to change these conditions by their own effort. But these leaves from the fig tree were neither long-lasting nor effective.

Kenneth O. Gangel and Stephen J. Bramer, [Genesis](#), ed. Max Anders, Holman Old Testament Commentary (B&H Publishing Group, 2002), 41-43.

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Exodus 32:1-6

SUPPORTING IDEA: The Israelites attempted to make a visible, material god that would lead them.

32:1. Moses stayed on the mountain longer than expected. As a result, the Israelites grew impatient. They were far away from familiar environments and leaderless, although they did have Aaron, whom Moses had appointed to lead them in his absence. But Aaron had neither the moral fortitude nor the force of will to resist the popular uprising. The people probably sensed a void in Aaron, so they conspired to make themselves gods who would lead them.

32:2-6. Aaron seemed only too willing to oblige the corrupt desires of the people. He caught the drift of where they were headed in their request and suggested they make a god from existing materials—their gold earrings recently obtained from the Egyptians. Keil believed Aaron actually attempted to arrest the uprising by appealing to the vanity of the women (Keil, 221). But if this were the case, it backfired. The people wanted a visible manifestation of a god, just like the other nations around them. Aaron probably made the idol from wood, then covered it with gold. The people, in response, said, “Israel, these are your gods, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!” We shouldn’t infer from this expression that they attempted to make an Egyptian god of sorts. They attempted to materialize the Lord, whom they acknowledged brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Aaron then constructed an altar. The next day the people offered sacrifices and began to engage in revelry.

Glen S. Martin, [Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers](#), ed. Max Anders, Holman Old Testament Commentary (B&H Publishing Group, 2002), 137-138.

Romans 1:22-25

SUPPORTING IDEA: Instead of worshiping its Creator, the human race descends into idolatry and worships the creation.

1:22-23. This exchange of glory is the theft of glory in no uncertain terms, and could not be more “senseless” (v. 21). Humans began ascribing “worship” to other humans, or to birds and animals and reptiles, when “their senseless hearts were darkened” (v. 21). Literally, they became fools and became idolaters. If “stupid is as stupid does,” then “foolish is as foolish does” as well. Idolatry is a sign of moral and spiritual depravity (the baseline of foolishness), a sign of the rejection of the glory and prominence of God. For such foolishness the wrath of God is revealed, Paul says. The glory of God is the “heaviest” thing in the universe. To assign, through worship, the glory of the Creator to a part of the creation is to turn moral and spiritual sensitivity

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upside down. And such upsetting of the spiritual order of things has dreadful repercussions.

SUPPORTING IDEA: Because immorality springs from idolatry, a holy God is justified in revealing His wrath against the unholy practices of the human race.

So far, Paul has said that the wrath of God is revealed against humanity in light of the suppression of truth about God. When people act as if they do not know the truth about God (“The fool says in his heart, ‘There’s no God’ ” Pss. 14:1; 53:1), then their hearts become increasingly dark and they move to idolatry. And because idols cannot speak or write, and there is no revelation to govern the people, idolatry always results in immorality (“Without revelation people run wild,” Prov. 29:18). The sin of the human race is getting ever more specific: first, the suppression of truth. Then, the specific sin of idolatry.

Now, Paul will catalog the specific sins that characterize the lives of those who suppress the truth about God and exchange His glory for the glory of a part of the creation. (**Note:** as you go through this last section, think about Rome and the people Paul was writing to. Also think of where you live and what you observe about mankind’s descent away from God into sin. See if you think Paul’s assessment of the human tendency to sin is accurate and provides justification for his saying that the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven.)

We said above that the wrath of God that Paul discusses here is not the judgment-type wrath that will come at the end of human history. Rather, there is an ongoing, dual manifestation of His wrath, revealed in their bodies (vv. 24-27) and in their souls, or minds (vv. 28-32). It becomes obvious that what begins as a willful choice in the realm of the spirit (idolatry, vv. 21-23) ultimately manifests itself in body and soul as well.

1:24-27. Some commentators make much of the threefold occurrence of God gave them over (vv. 24, 26, 28) to construct a three-part outline of the remainder of Romans 1. However, this seems forced in light of the clear unity of verses 24-27 and its topic of sexual immorality compared against the catalog of additional sins in verses 28-32. Therefore, rather than listing three distinct ways or reasons by which God gave them over, it is more natural to see the first two occurrences (vv. 24, 26) as being repetitive for emphasis, with the final “giving over” standing by itself as indicative of a different category.

Both in the present verses, and in verses 28-32, it is important to understand what it means that God gave them over. First, note the causality indicated in both verses 24 and 26. Verse 24 begins with Therefore (*dio*) and verse 26 with For this reason (*dia touto*). Verse 24 follows Paul’s statement that human beings have exchanged the glory of God for the “glory” of created beings, and verse 26 follows his assertion that the truth of God has been exchanged for a lie.

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Rather than fine-tuning the differences between these two exchanges and their resulting, respective retributions, a more general conclusion is acceptable: humankind has, as an act of the will, chosen to replace the glory of God and the truth of God with lies that justify idol worship and unbridled moral license. As a result of these choices, God has given the human race over to the pursuit of a life based on idol worship (whether outright or subtle) and philosophies built on their own moral and speculative preferences.

When God “delivered them over,” is it passive or active? That is, does he merely step out of people’s way and allow them to pursue those things which depravity dictates (“He [God] ceased to hold the boat as it was dragged by the current of the river” [Frederick Godet, in loc, cited by Moo, p. 111].), or does he take an active role in moving them deeper into a downward cycle of sin “like a judge who hands over a prisoner to the punishment his crime has earned”? (Moo, p. 111). Certainly, both the human and divine elements are present in Scripture.

In the Old Testament, God handed over Israel’s enemies to her for their intentional destruction (Exod. 23:31; Deut. 7:23–24) and reversed the situation at other times by handing over Israel to her enemies (Lev. 26:25; Josh. 7:7; Judg. 2:14; 6:1, 13). These military examples are particularly instructive since God’s passively stepping out of the way and allowing war to take its inevitable result might or might not have accomplished His will or purpose. In fact, examples exist of the exact opposite of what one might have expected to happen militarily. In these cases, the active “giving over” of God is the only explanation (see, for example, the defeat of 185,000 Assyrians [2 Kgs. 19:35], and the victory of Ai over Israel [Josh. 7:3–5]). The case of Job being given into the hands of Satan is another example of God’s active involvement (though in this case not for purposes of retribution; Job 1:12; 2:6).

Another clear picture arises from Paul’s use of the same word (*paradidomi*) that he uses in Romans 1. In 1 Corinthians 5:5 Paul decides that a believer in the church at Corinth needs to be delivered over to Satan “for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.” This involved not a passive standing aside by Paul and the leaders of the church (allowing the man to remain a part of the fellowship), but the action of expelling him from the fellowship, delivering him to the realm of the devil. In the closest parallel found to Paul’s words in Romans 1, Ephesians 4:17-19 discusses Gentiles who have arrived at the same depraved state as Paul describes in Romans. But in Ephesians, he says that they “gave themselves over to promiscuity” (*paradidomi*, Eph. 4:19), which certainly involves active, not passive choices on their parts.

It is best to conclude that God takes an active involvement in giving people over to the desires of their hearts. Certainly they are responsible for their choices, and in some sense God may be viewed as allowing sin to take its normal course. But in the end, God’s giving those who bear His image over to sin is an active process on His part,



whether for reform or for retribution or both. As has been well stated, “the punishment of sin is sin.”

Kenneth Boa and William Kruidenier, [Romans](#), vol. 6, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 52-55.

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Day 3: Image Renewed

OVERVIEW

Scriptures: Isaiah 53:1-12; 2 Corinthians 4:16-17; Colossians 3:9-11

Key Verse: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Life Questions: Have you experienced renewal through the new covenant of Christ? What impact does that have on your daily life?

The Old Testament is filled with Scriptures pointing to the promise of a coming Messiah to fulfill the law and to be the ultimate sacrifice for sin. Jesus initiated the new covenant to replace the old covenant made with the Israelites. Through Him, our relationship with the Father is renewed.

GATHER THESE SUPPLIES:

- Sheets of white paper
- Markers
- Pens
- Different colored small sticky notes
- Tape
- Camp Guides
- Extra Bibles
- Key Verse, Truths and HOPE posters (provided)

PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME:

- Hang the Key Verse and Truths posters on a focal wall.
- Print each of the following word phrases on a sheet of white paper:
 - Wrecked car
 - Old, abandoned house
 - Worn-out shoes
 - Worn, damaged furniture
- Print these questions on a sheet of paper.
 - To whom do you think these verses are referring?
 - How are people described?
 - What will He do?



- Print each phrase below on a separate sheet of paper and post one high on a wall in each corner of the room.
 - 1 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ
 - 2 - He is a new creation
 - 3 - The old has passed away
 - 4 - And see, the new has come

MOTIVATION

Renewal

Form four groups. Give each group one of the sheets with a damaged, broken, or worn item printed on it and a marker.

Instruct students to list the steps necessary to make their item new again. Ask: **“Did anyone have problems knowing what to do?”** Say: **“If you were not a shoe repair person, knowing how to properly repair worn shoes might be difficult.”**

Allow groups to share how they would restore their item. Lead students to listen as steps are shared for any that may have been left out. Say: **“Old furniture that is worn or damaged can be restored to like-new condition. An old, dilapidated or storm damaged house can be renovated so people can live in it again. Nearly everything can be renewed if it is damaged, if placed in the hands of someone qualified to fix it. We would never ask a child to restore an old car, but we would take it to an expert who knows cars and has previously restored them.”**

Ask: **“How does this relate to our spiritual lives and relationship with God?”**

Say: **“We are all broken and damaged in need of renewal. Sin has caused a broken relationship with God as we studied yesterday. But, Jesus came to restore that relationship through the forgiveness of our sin. He is the only way to the Father. We will learn more about that today.”**

EXAMINATION

Isaiah 53:1-12
Future Hope

IN HIS IMAGE

Refer students to page 28 in their Camp Guide and lead them to think about their future, where they think they might be in two years, five years, and ten years, and note that in their book. Once they have had some time to respond, instruct students to find a partner and share their thoughts.

Say: **“In some instances, it would be nice to see into the future and know what was going to happen. Some of you may have big plans for your future, while others have no idea what the future might hold. Sometimes, our plans change or look totally different from what we thought. God loves us and has a plan for each of us. We must be open to God’s plans and seek Him so He can reveal His plans to us.”**

Lead students to turn to Isaiah in their Bibles. Say: **“At the time of Isaiah, the Israelites had turned their backs on God. They were not being the servants of God that He called them to be. Isaiah was a prophet. Prophets were people equipped by God to speak to the people on behalf of God. They shared God’s revelations.”**

Give each group a large sheet of paper and a marker. Instruct students within their groups to read **Isaiah 53:1-12**.

¹ Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? ² He grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground. He didn’t have an impressive form or majesty that we should look at him, no appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like someone people turned away from; he was despised, and we didn’t value him. ⁴ Yet he himself bore our sicknesses, and he carried our pains; but we in turn regarded him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced because of our rebellion, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on him, and we are healed by his wounds. ⁶ We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth. Like a lamb led to the slaughter and like a sheep silent before her shearers, he did not open his mouth. ⁸ He was taken away because of oppression and judgment, and who considered his fate? For he was cut off from the land of the living; he was struck because of my people’s rebellion. ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, but he was with a rich man at his death, because he had done no violence and had not spoken deceitfully. ¹⁰ Yet the Lord was pleased to crush him severely. When you make him a guilt offering, he will see his seed, he will prolong his days, and by his hand, the Lord’s pleasure will be accomplished. ¹¹ After his anguish, he will see light and be satisfied. By his knowledge, my



righteous servant will justify many, and he will carry their iniquities. ¹²Therefore I will give him the many as a portion, and he will receive the mighty as spoil, because he willingly submitted to death, and was counted among the rebels; yet he bore the sin of many and interceded for the rebels. **Isaiah 53:1-12 CSB**

Refer to the poster with the questions below and instruct students to answer the questions after reading the passage.

- **To whom do you think these verses are referring?** (*Jesus*)
- **How are people described?** (*Rebellious, sick, strayed, turned to our own ways*)
- **What will He do?** (*Die for our sins*)

Allow groups to share briefly. Say: **“This prophecy of Jesus coming into the world was approximately 700 years before He was even born. This was a prophecy describing a future Hope found in Jesus.”**

Refer to **Genesis 15:1-21** that we studied last summer when we discussed Abraham. Say: **“In these verses we see where God made a covenant with Abraham that 1) his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky; 2) these descendants, the Israelites, would occupy Canaan, the promised land, as their own land; and 3) they would receive the blessing of God.”**

Say: **“Jesus came as the new covenant for Jews and Gentiles alike, to provide the only way to the Father.”**

Prophecy Fulfilled

Lead students to work together in their groups to complete the matching activity in the Camp Guide on page 28. Say: **“Work together to match the prophecies found in Isaiah 53 to the New Testament fulfillment passages.”**

After a few minutes, share the correct answers below to the large group. Point out a few of these.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Verses 5 | D. 1 Peter 2:24 |
| 2. Verse 6 | E. 1 Peter 2:25 |
| 3. Verse 7 | C. John 3:16 |
| 4. Verse 9 | A. 1 Peter 2:22 |
| 5. Verse 10 | B. Hebrews 9:28 |

Making It Personal

Reread aloud **Isaiah 53:5-8**.



Lead students to page 29 in their Camp Guide and instruct them to print their names in the blanks found there and to read **verse 5** to themselves using their names.

But He was pierced because of _____ rebellion, crushed because of _____ iniquities; punishment for _____ peace was on Him, and _____ is healed by His wounds.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

Do Not Give Up

Ask students to find a partner and share a time they had to push ahead and persevere to the end—a game, competition, trial with family or friend, and so forth. Share a personal story of your own here.

Call on a volunteer to read aloud **2 Corinthians 4:16-17**.

¹⁶Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory.
2 Corinthians 4:16-17 CSB

Say: **“Verses 16-17 tell us not to give up, even when the going gets tough. It refers to a daily renewal.”**

Sanctification

Ask: **“Who has heard the term, ‘sanctification’?”** Say: **“Let’s say that word together— ‘sanctification.’”** Ask: **“Does anyone know what it means?”** If so, allow the student(s) to share. Then, share this definition: **“the state or process of being set apart and made holy as a vessel, full of the Holy Spirit.”**

Point out the word “process.” Say: **“Once we are saved, we begin a process of growth and learning and drawing closer to the Lord. This is not a ‘one and done’ process. In fact, it is a lifelong process. We will never reach perfection. Another way to explain sanctification is the growing holy behavior and transformation of our lives.”**

Refer students to page 29 in their Camp Guide to answer the question about their personal sanctification.

Where are you in your sanctification journey? Mark it on the diagram below.

IN HIS IMAGE

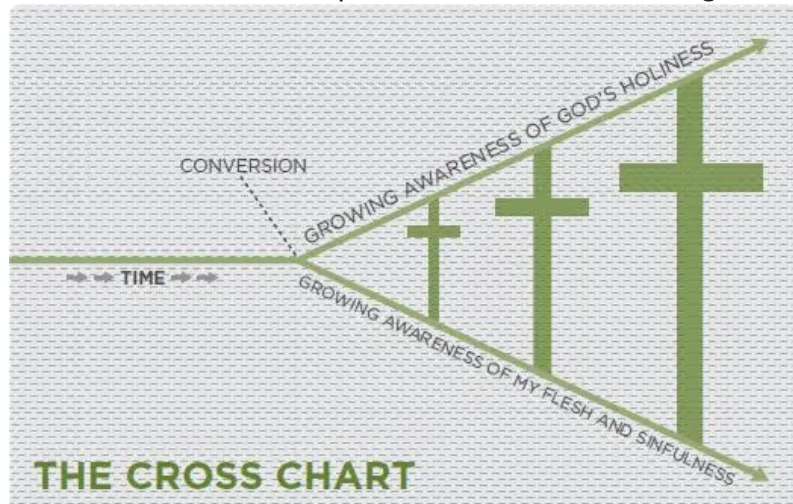
Before Jesus

Following Christ More Closely

When I Met Jesus

Growing Awareness of My Need for Christ

Note: Refer to the Camp Guide for the actual diagram. This is an example.



Source:

<https://www.fundamentallyreformed.com/2011/10/03/the-gospel-grid-living-the-gospel-centered-life/>

Say: **“Part of your sanctification is coming to camp this week to learn and grow in your faith. Good for you for taking this step!”**

Say: **“While we all will face trials and suffering at some point in our lives, the fact that Jesus is on our side should encourage us to change our perspective for how you live on earth, knowing that we have eternal life.”** Point back to the **Isaiah 53** passage. Remind students that Jesus did all the hard, heavy work so we do not have to live in this world but can spend eternity with Him and the Father.

Colossians 3: 9-11

New Creation

Lead students to turn to **Colossians 3** in their Bibles. Ask a volunteer to read aloud **verses 9-11**.

⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self. You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator. ¹¹ In Christ there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all. **Colossians 3:9-11**

IN HIS IMAGE

Assign each of the four teams a corner of the room. Instruct them to refer to the key verse phrase posted there. Explain that they will recite their phrase aloud in order of the key verse. Say: **“We will start with corner 1 and move around the room to all four corners with groups reciting their phrase.”** Then, lead groups to rotate clockwise to the next corner and repeat this. Do this four times so that each of the four groups has had a chance to say all phrases of the verse. End this time with everyone saying the entire verse together.

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ
He is a new creation
The old has passed away
And, see, the new has come**

Say: **“We take off our old selves and put on the new when we surrender to Christ. We let go of our past mistakes and struggles and look to the future with a new Hope.”**

Point back to the Colossians passage. Say: **“Verse 10 reads that we are being renewed in knowledge according to the Creator. Verse 11 helps us know and understand that Jesus does not see our differences, nor does He only choose certain types of people. He is for all and all we need. All are created in the image of God, and all are being renewed.”**

Hold one of the handheld mirrors with the back to the group. Turn it as you read aloud this John Piper quote. **“And in salvation, two things happen. The mirror gets turned around, and we see the glory of God again, and the defilement that had gone over the face of it gets wiped off gradually, and we begin to reflect God.”**

[Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-to-be-made-in-gods-image>]

APPLICATION

Hope Mosaic

Lay the HOPE posters on the floor in the center of the room. Give each student two small sticky notes of different colors. Instruct them to print their name on one sticky note and how Jesus is their hope on the other. Lead them to then take it and stick it on the HOPE poster, creating a mosaic.

Gather students around the mosaic and ask students to make observations. Say: **“We are all broken and in need of restoration and renewal. Jesus makes that possible and gives us an eternal HOPE.”**



Point students to page 30 in their Camp Guides.

If students have surrendered to Christ, lead them to write about that experience—when it happened, how old they were, who was there, and so forth. Then, ask them to write about how that decision impacts their daily lives.

If students have not accepted Christ, ask them to write what is holding them back. Then, invite them to write any questions they have about this decision and to share these with an adult from their group.

Refer to the self-portraits from Day 1. Ask students to ponder how the truth of being renewed in Christ changes their perspective and how they see themselves.

Refer to the Truths poster. As you share the truths, instruct students to fill in the blanks in their book on page 30.

- 1. Jesus initiated the new covenant to provide the only way to the Father.**
- 2. Once we accept Christ, we begin a process of being set apart and made holy.**
- 3. We take off the old self and put on the new self to better reflect the image of God.**
- 4. Christ is for all, and all we need.**

Refer to the Mission Moment on page 31 of the Camp Guide and challenge students to read it later.

Say: **“Here is a sneak peek for Day 4. Once we have surrendered and followed Christ, we cannot simply sit around and not do anything for Him. We are to tell others about Him and show them His love.”**

PRAYER

Ask a volunteer to pray, closing the Bible study session.

COMMENTARY

Isaiah 53:1-12

SUPPORTING IDEA: The Divine King will rescue, redeem, and restore His people to show His salvation to all nations.

IN HIS IMAGE

53:1-3. The scene shifts dramatically. A group takes center stage to give its testimony. Are these the kings of 52:15 or the audience to whom the prophet normally spoke—the exiles in Babylon? They echo the note of astonishment—they had seen the unbelievable. They had seen the arm of the Lord revealed to the most unexpected person (people)! Then they turn to describe the event and again surprise us. They did not tell an event at all. They pictured the life of a most unlikely individual. The person grew up in the presence of God without receiving the blessings of God. Instead, He appeared to be cursed, having no physical attributes that would attract a second glance. People would, in fact, have nothing to do with Him. Verse 3 again presents translation problems, a literal reading going something like: “He was despised and abandoned by men—a man of pain and experienced in sickness. Like a person from whom faces should be veiled (hidden), he was despised and not respected by anyone” (author’s translation). He was physically sick and either hideous to look at or dangerous to be around because of His sickness. His fellow citizens avoided Him and saw no worth in Him.

53:4-6. Now the astonishing revelation! The group must confess: “He carried our suffering and bore the load of our pain” (author’s translation). All the time we thought God was punishing Him (cp. the friends of Job). The problem could not be limited to the physical plane of life. The theological was also involved. He suffered because of our sins, so that we might be healed and find the life of peace. What’s more, every one of us was involved as we went merrily along our own paths like dumb sheep, while God made the servant suffer with the load of sin and guilt that belonged to all of us.

53:7-9. Although He was oppressed and afflicted, He endured without a sound. He faced the death squad, still silent. He even had to go to trial and prison (the meanings of v. 8 are probably concrete judicial terms in KJV, REB, NKJV, TEV, NLT, NJB, rather than abstract as ASV, NRSV, NASB, JPS, NAB, and NIV). Not even one member of His generation (not the descendants of NIV) bothered to see what was going on. He was totally cut off from humanity, sick unto death. And all because of the sin of my people! It got even worse. They buried Him with the wicked, who do not even get last rites and ceremonies. They even put Him out with the rich enemies instead of with His own people. He had done nothing to deserve such horrible treatment. What can all this mean? What is the purpose of it all? How could it have happened?

53:10. Why, Yahweh did it! It is all part of God’s will. He chose to make His servant suffer. Note that the Hebrew text of verse 10 is difficult to interpret. It seems to read, “But Yahweh delighted in his crushing; he made him sick. If his soul would set up a guilt offering, he will see seed; he will prolong days, and the delight of Yahweh will prosper in his hand” (author’s translation). The suffering of God’s servant was a guilt offering (Lev. 5:14-19) when in the exile with the temple destroyed there was no chance for such offerings. What He did would help Yahweh’s plan come to pass. The

IN HIS IMAGE

guilt offering was not for the servant's sins, but for those of the people. Still God made the servant prosper. A part of that prosperity was new life after burial, life in which he would see his offspring and prolong his days. God's people in exile thought Yahweh was silent and had forgotten them, but He had been working in His servant! What a revelation!

53:11-12. That revelation was confirmed. Yahweh gave His own word to the congregation again (see 52:13-15). The understanding of the text again rests on translation problems—problems recognized as early as the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint, both of which add light to a difficult Hebrew text that does not give a direct object for “he will see.” A literal translation of verse 11 reads: “From the suffering of his soul, he will see; he will be sated. By his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, will bring righteousness for many. He will bear the burden of their guilt (or punishments or unjust actions)” (author's translation). God acknowledged the suffering of the servant's soul or life. This suffering would not bind Him to the darkness of death. He would again see. He would be satisfied or satiated with all He has done with His life. He would especially be satisfied because His knowledge—the experience of suffering and sacrificing for others—would bring justice to multitudes. They would be righteous before God and in their relationship with others because of His death for them. He would carry their burdensome sins. He would be numbered among the mighty heroes because He was willing to die among the sinners. He would receive God's victory spoils because He chose to obey God and die. The servant was willing to sacrifice His reputation, be numbered with the transgressors, and even intercede on behalf of the transgressors. He took what appeared to be the wrong side of the battle and won! Why? Because He took God's side. Thus, God reaffirmed the judgment of the group. The servant was the bearer of sins for the group. They owed their lives to Him. And they had never suspected what He was doing.

Trent C. Butler, [Isaiah](#), ed. Max Anders, Holman Old Testament Commentary (B&H, 2002), 297-299.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

SUPPORTING IDEA: Paul closed this section with a strong affirmation of the beliefs that served as foundation to his discussion throughout this chapter

4:16. In summary, Paul reaffirmed that he did not lose heart. As he had already illustrated so clearly, the apostle could draw a sharp distinction between what was happening to him outwardly and inwardly. In terms of his physical existence—what he called “jars of clay”—the suffering and hardship he faced as an apostle caused him to say that he was wasting away. This assessment of the human condition is true in a general sense for everyone. On a physical level, we are all moving toward death. Yet, Paul had in mind not only physical suffering but hardships of every kind. In terms of the externals of his life, Paul was wasting away.

IN HIS IMAGE

By contrast, inwardly Paul found the opposite to be true. He was being renewed day by day. This distinction between the outward and inward dimensions of human existence does not indicate that Paul hated his body or that he wished to escape physical existence. On the contrary, to be without one's body was to be in a state of nakedness that could be remedied only by the physical resurrection when Christ returns.

At the present time, though, a paradoxical situation exists for followers of Christ. On the one hand, they have believed the gospel and have been granted salvation. The Holy Spirit lives within believers as the “deposit guaranteeing our inheritance” (Eph. 1:14), bringing many spiritual blessings into their lives. On the other hand, they have yet to be granted full salvation, including the resurrection of their bodies at the end of the age. This is why Paul spoke of himself as decaying and being renewed at the same time. As he waited for his physical existence to be renewed at the resurrection, he took comfort and joy in the renewal of his inward person by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. **4:17.** Paul had a more specific explanation of his inward renewal in mind. He found encouragement and refreshment during his sufferings by assessing them to be light and momentary—in other words, to be relatively insignificant by comparison with the eternal glory that far outweighs them. In line with the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, Paul was confident that all true believers would receive the eternal reward of glory and honor in the new heavens and new earth. The difficulties of this life are minor when compared to the wonder of our eternal salvation.

Richard L. Pratt Jr, *I & II Corinthians*, vol. 7, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 341-342.

Colossians 3: 9-11

SUPPORTING IDEA: Genuine spiritual living is behaving in accordance with the character of Christ.

3:9-11. Perverted passions, hot tempers, and sharp tongues are to be removed as part of the life-transformation process. These things, along with [lying] to each other, are not appropriate behavior for our new life in Christ. The remnants of the former lifestyle are to be discarded since [we] have taken off [our] old self with its practices. What is the old self (literally “old man”) and the new self (literally “the new”)? The “old man” refers to more than an individual condition (“sinful nature”) and also has a corporate aspect. The corporate aspect of “the new” (man) is unmistakably seen in verse 11. What has been put off and what has been put on? Our former associations, the old humanity has been put off, and we now have a new association, the new community. As members of the new community, we are to conduct ourselves in ways which will enhance harmony in the community. Notice how the sins mentioned in the previous verses disrupt community and damage human relationships.

IN HIS IMAGE

As individuals, and as believing communities, our objective is to be a part of the transformation process of being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator (Christ). Within the new community all barriers are abolished. Distinctions which normally divide people—racial (Greek or Jew); religious (circumcised or uncircumcised); cultural (barbarian or Scythian); social (slave or free)—no longer have significance. The reason human categories no longer matter is that Christ is all, which means Christ is central and supreme. Our relationship with Him is really all that matters. Unity within the community is based on the fact that Christ is in all. He indwells all believers and permeates all our relationships. This does not mean that people cease to be Jew or Greek, slave or free, and so forth. It does mean that within the new community those distinctions don't matter. The false teachers at Colosse were fond of dividing people into categories—elite versus ordinary, spiritual versus not so spiritual. The truth is, all believers are equal; all believers are to discard any and all behaviors and attitudes which are inappropriate for our new life.

Max Anders, [Galatians-Colossians](#), vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 329-330.



Day 4: Image Shared (6-Day Camps)

OVERVIEW

Scriptures: Matthew 9:36-38; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:6-8

Key Verse: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

Life Questions: Who in your life needs to know that they were created in the image of God? What is keeping you from sharing?

Everyone is created in God’s image. Jesus was the image of God on earth, and therefore is the perfect example of how to share this image with others. So, like Christ, we are to have compassion on them and share the love of God with them.

GATHER THESE SUPPLIES:

- Handheld mirrors
- Flashlight
- Butcher paper
- Markers
- Sheets of paper
- Pens
- Camp Guides
- Extra Bibles
- Key Verse, Concentric Circles, Key Verse Scramble, and Truths posters (provided)

PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME:

- Hang posters except the Key Verse Scramble poster.
- Cover the Key Verse poster with butcher paper.
- Cut apart the three sections of the Key Verse Scramble poster.
- Print these questions on a sheet of paper and hang on a wall:
Why is sharing Christ with others important?
What benefits come to us and others from sharing our faith?
What are some excuses or reasons people give for not sharing Christ?
How can you be prepared to share Christ with others?

IN HIS IMAGE

MOTIVATION

Reflection Illustration

Give the handheld mirrors to different students and lead them to hold them with the mirror facing out. Instruct students to stand around the room with their backs to the wall. Give a student the flashlight. Turn off the lights. Say: **“Reflection is when light bounces off an object. We are going to see this now.”** Lead the student with flashlight to shine it into one of the mirrors. Instruct students to observe where the light travels on the wall after it hits the mirror. Then, pass the flashlight to a different student in a different area of the room to repeat this illustration. Instruct students holding the mirrors to hold them at different angles. If time allows, consider inviting more students to do this.

Share this quote from John Piper:

“Here’s the picture in my mind. I was created like a mirror. And a mirror that was supposed to be 45 degrees with the clear reflective side pointing upward so that as God shone on it at the 45-degree angle, it would bounce off, and it would make a 90-degree turn and be reflected out into the world.”

[Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-to-be-made-in-gods-image>]

Turn on the lights. Say: **“Just as the mirror reflected the light, we are to reflect the image of Christ to the world, to show compassion and share the love of God with them. We will learn more about what it means to reflect and share Christ in our session today.”**

EXAMINATION

Matthew 9:36-38

Compassion

Call on a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 9:36-38**.

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:36-38 CSB

IN HIS IMAGE

Refer to the word “compassion” in **verse 36**. Point students to page 38 in their Camp Guide to share a definition of compassion. Then, share this one from dictionary.com: **“a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.”**

Say: **“Jesus saw the people around Him, had compassion on them, and met their needs. We must do likewise. First, we must see people and their needs. We must be aware and engaged where we are. We can’t just live in our little bubbles. Once we are aware, that should stir empathy within us, and we must do something about what we see.”**

Say: **“We must meet people’s physical needs, but we cannot stop there. We have to meet their spiritual needs.”**

Say: **“Verse 36 mentions sheep and shepherd.”** Ask: **“What happens to sheep without a shepherd?”** (*They go astray, get lost, get eaten by predators.*) Say: **“The people of Jesus’s day were being led astray by the leaders of the time and by culture. Jesus was there to lead them in truth and care for them like a shepherd cares for his sheep. Without Jesus as our Good Shepherd, we do the very same thing as sheep. We wander around endlessly without hope and become prey to the devil and his schemes.”**

Fruit Pickers

Ask students to find a partner and share their favorite fruit and why it is their favorite. Allow a couple students to share.

Ask: **“What do you think would happen if fruit did not get picked? What if no one came to harvest the produce?”** (*It would get old, possibly rot or get moldy. It would not be good to eat.*)

Say: **“We would not be able to enjoy it, and it wouldn’t provide nourishment or joy. That seems a little sad and wasteful, doesn’t it? In verses 37-38, Jesus calls us all to be fruit pickers! If people never hear about the good news of Jesus, and they never experience the love of God, they won’t be able to bless others and be blessed through faith.”**

Form three groups and give each group a sheet of butcher paper and markers. Instruct groups to label one side of their paper as Physical and the other as Spiritual. Lead students to list ways they can meet people’s physical needs on the Physical side and spiritual needs on the Spiritual side. Allow time for groups to share.



Point back to the Camp Guide, page 38, and lead students to list at least a couple physical needs in the Physical column and a couple spiritual needs in the Spiritual column that they will commit to personally meet in the days ahead.

Say: **“The most important spiritual need to meet is that of salvation for those who have not accepted Jesus. We are going to talk about sharing the gospel.”**

Matthew 28:18-20

Mirror Writing

Give each of the three groups a hand-held mirror, a Key Verse Scramble sheet where the Scripture has been written backward, and a sheet of paper. Instruct groups to work together, using the mirror to decipher the Key Verse.

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19

Lead them to print it on the sheet of paper as they decipher it. As soon as they have it figured out, they are to stand and recite it aloud together. Once everyone is finished, invite everyone to share it boldly. You can uncover the Key Verse poster at this time.

The Great Commission

Invite students to turn in their Bibles to **Matthew 28**. Explain that this passage is after Jesus’s earthly ministry has come to an end by His crucifixion and resurrection and when He is about to ascend back to heaven to be with the Father.

Invite a student to read aloud **verses 18-20**.

¹⁸ Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20 CSB

Point out that these verses are often referred to as The Great Commission.

IN HIS IMAGE

Say: “The verses just read are very clear instructions for all believers. Let’s look at the four action steps we are to take. As I talk through these steps, please note them in your Camp Guide on page 38.”

The Four Parts of the Great Commission

1. Go

Say: “The ‘go’ refers to how we live our daily lives. It always means in our community with the people around us, but sometimes it means going outside of our normal surroundings. We are to share Jesus wherever we are, either by the way with live or by sharing verbally.”

2. Make Disciples

Ask: “**What is a disciple?**” (personal follower of Jesus) “**How can we make disciples?**” (*Going through Scripture with them, praying with them, mentoring them, just living life and being relational, sharing our story, sharing the gospel-anything that will help them to make a decision to accept Christ.*)

Ask: “**Do you have a discipler, someone who is helping you grow in your faith?**”

Say: “**If so, take time today to thank them. If not, pray and ask the Lord to lead you to someone who will be this for you.**”

Ask: “**Are you discipling anyone? If not, is there someone who needs you to step up and lead them?**”

Ask: “**Who are we to make disciples of?**” Say: “**People from around the world of all people groups. Everyone is created in God’s image.**”

3. Baptize

Say: “**Baptism is an act that publicly demonstrates our faith in Christ, a step of obedience. It is our first evangelistic expression, but this act alone does not save us.**”

If time allows, share your own baptism experience. Encourage students who have not taken this step to consider it today.

4. Teach

Say: “**As we are learning, we should be sharing with others. Age doesn’t matter. We are to teach all people to observe all the commands of Christ. Another way we teach is through how you live. Often, actions speak louder than words.**”

Ask for a show of hands for students who are actively teaching others. (Kids in VBS, Awanas, or children’s church or who teach younger students in the youth group)



Explain that **Matthew 28:18-20** is not “The Great Suggestion” but rather a command from the Lord to all believers.

Say: “**Jesus gave us a very comforting promise in verse 20 when He said that He would be with us always. Christ is present with us at all times in the person of the Holy Spirit.** Ask: “**How does it make you feel knowing we have the Holy Spirit with us always?**”

Acts 1:8

Ends of the Earth

Lead students to turn to **Acts 1** in their Bibles. Ask a student volunteer to read aloud **verses 8.**

“**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**”

Acts 1:8 CSB

Explain that the passage we read in Matthew is the “what” and this verse in Acts is the “how” and “where” to our Christian calling. Say: “**As a recap, what – go, make disciples, baptize them, and teach them; how - by the power of the Holy Spirit; where – to the ends of the earth.**”

Lead students to get back with their groups from earlier. Point students to the poster you made with the four questions below. Lead them to discuss the questions, then give some time for sharing.

- Why is sharing Christ with others important?
- What benefits come to us and others from sharing our faith?
- What are some excuses or reasons people give for not sharing Christ?
- How can you be prepared to share Christ with others?

Say: “**When you accept Christ, the Holy Spirit comes on you and in you, and it is powerful.**” Point back to the statement in **Matthew 18** that we just read. Say: “**We should not fear but trust the presence and the power of the Spirit in our lives and seek His leading and direction.**”

Point to the poster displayed on the wall diagramming the concentric circles of the “where” in sharing Jesus. Say: “**This poster is a diagram of where to share the gospel based on Acts 1:8.**”

IN HIS IMAGE

Jerusalem
Judea
Samaria
Ends of the Earth

Refer to page 39 in the Camp Guide to the personal concentric circles illustration. Say: **“Let’s turn our attention to sharing Jesus where we are.”**

Tell students to label the circles this way: the center circle represents their family and friends, the first circle represents classmates, the second represents people in the neighborhood and community and the last one represents the nations. Guide students to write the names of people in each of the areas who need to know Christ.

On Mission

Refer to the mission statistics in the Camp Guide on page 39. Say: **“Imagine that you go through life and never hear the gospel or the name of Jesus, that you have a sense that there is something more, but you do not have anyone who can explain that to you.”** Ask: **“What would that be like?”**

Say: **“Jesus’s followers have been carrying on the Acts 1:8 mission for almost 2,000 years, but it is not yet accomplished since around 3 billion people still have not heard the story of Jesus. Sharing the gospel to further His Kingdom is the ultimate reason He has left the church on earth, and it is our mission.”**

Ask for a show of hands for students who have served in missions locally and then for those who have served internationally. Say: **“Internationals are coming to us, to live in America, so you may not have to go anywhere but your own community to find unreached people.”**

Say: **“When we have opportunities to share, we should always keep in mind that we are not alone. The Holy Spirit is always there to lead and guide us. The Spirit convicts people of the truth of the gospel, and the Spirit does a work in their lives as they place faith in Jesus.”**

APPLICATION

Point back to the self-portraits displayed on the refrigerator. Say: **“Hopefully, we have all experienced change in some way over the last several days. Go to page 40 in your Camp Guide to record your thoughts.”**

IN HIS IMAGE

Affirm decisions made at camp. Allow a brief time of sharing. Ask: **“Now that things have changed, what are your steps when you get home?”** Say: **“Turn back to your Camp Guide on page 40 and list a few steps to take when you get home.”**

Examples: Tell a friend about camp and how your life has changed, mentor a younger student, get involved in local missions, and so forth.

Today’s Truths

Refer to the Truths poster. As you share the three truths below, instruct students to fill in the blanks on page 40 of their Camp Guide.

1. **We are to see people, show compassion, and meet their needs.**
2. **We are to be practicing Great Commission Christians.**
3. **We are to share Jesus wherever we go.**

Refer to the Mission Moment on page 41 of the Camp Guide and challenge students to read it later.

Conclude this session by stating: **“You are an image bearer to bring God glory.”**

PRAYER

Ask a volunteer to pray, closing the Bible study session.

COMMENTARY

Matthew 9:36-37

SUPPORTING IDEA: Jesus sees the peril of the misguided crowds and is moved to address their need through the ministry of His followers.

9:36. As Jesus conducted His itinerant ministry, He saw many crowds. He felt compassion for their lack of spiritual shepherding and the presence of spiritual abuse. A shepherd feeds, comforts, heals, guides, and protects his sheep (Ezek. 34). But Israel’s religious leaders were harassing and abandoning their sheep, leaving them harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. “Harassed” is from a verb meaning “to trouble, distress.” “Helpless” is from a verb meaning “to throw down.” The past tense used here implies the thoroughness of their oppression and its persistent effect on the people. These people were completely and perpetually discouraged.

Remember from 9:13 that compassion or mercy is an attitude toward a need that grows into action in an effort to meet the need. Here Matthew used a different word,

IN HIS IMAGE

whose root meaning is “intestines, bowels.” Jesus was physically moved by a stomach-wrenching empathy for the plight of His flock. He was literally sickened by the poor leadership of Israel’s hypocritical religious leaders. We can read His words in 9:37-38 as an impassioned plea to His disciples, whom He proceeded to equip and commission to meet the people’s need.

9:37-38. In these verses, Jesus’s disciples begin to take a place of greater prominence in Matthew’s narrative. Until now, Jesus had been training them primarily through their observations of His ministry, but His focus turned increasingly toward intensified teaching directed at them. These men and their spiritual offspring were Jesus’s plan for continuing His ministry to a lost world. If He failed to prepare His workers, His ministry would die when He left. This is instructive to every spiritual leader today—mentor and multiply. Do not just “perform.”

Jesus’s passion for the needs of the crowds caused Him to ask His disciples to pray for workers to go out into the harvest. Christ’s workers gain courage from His assertion that the harvest is plentiful. The hurting people whom He saw and whom we see all around us are like fruit ripe for the picking. Christians today seem to view non-Christians with fear, but Jesus saw them with compassion. And so should we. If we hold out the truth—Jesus himself—they will come to Him, for they hunger for guidance.

The workers are few, said Jesus as He turned from the distressed masses to the dozen men around Him. Our job is to pray fervently for more people to come and help, as we are moving boldly to be involved with the harvest.

Stuart K. Weber, [Matthew](#), vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 130-131.

Matthew 28:18-20

SUPPORTING IDEA: The presence and authority of the Messiah will accompany us as we carry out his disciple-making ministry.

28:18-20. The Great Commission passage is reminiscent of Acts 1:6-11. In Matthew, Jesus issued a similar commission in different words with a different emphasis. However, the setting in the Acts passage was in Jerusalem. It coincided with Jesus’s ascension into heaven at the end of the forty days. Jesus probably met with the disciples in Galilee and then instructed them to return to Jerusalem. All of this was done in preparation for their receiving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:40-5) and their continuation of his Spirit-empowered ministry in Acts 2 (in Jerusalem).

Matthew did not record Jesus’s ascension into heaven, as it likely would have distracted from his emphasis in 28:18-20. He wanted the Great Commission to linger in people’s minds as they finished his Gospel. Jesus had a big job in mind for His followers. “All” is a key word in 28:18-20. It emphasizes Jesus’s divine identity: all authority, all nations, all things.

IN HIS IMAGE

Before issuing His commission, Jesus laid the foundation for the success of their future ministry: “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.” This was critically important. Without the Messiah’s authority, the mission of the disciples and our mission today would be doomed to failure. The reader of Matthew’s Gospel should know well by now the nature and power of the Messiah’s authority.

The heart of the Great Commission is 28:19-20, the last words of Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew knew the principle that “last words are lasting words.” He chose carefully, under the Spirit’s direction, the words he wanted to linger in his readers’ minds. “Therefore” identified Jesus’s authority (28:19) as the reason the disciples must carry out His orders.

The central command is make disciples. At the heart of our mission is the reproduction in others of what Jesus has produced in us: faith, obedience, growth, authority, compassion, love, and a bold, truthful message as his witnesses. They were learners commanded to produce more learners.

Jesus’s disciples were to reproduce other disciples of all the nations (the word translated nations is the plural of *ethnos*, meaning “peoples, ethnic groups,” as in 24:14). He was hinting that their fulfillment of their commission would ultimately lead to His second coming. It is significant that Matthew ended his Gospel with one more reference to the Gentile mission, challenging the Jewish Christians to lose their prejudices and unify the church. This also challenges us to break down any artificial boundaries erected by our culture. We must minister impartially. Jesus was an equal-opportunity Savior.

We see three participles here that are subordinate to the central command to make disciples. Each of these clarifies the way in which Jesus’s disciples are to make disciples.

First, in the emphatic first position, even before “make” disciples, is the aorist participle “go.” In the context, this Greek participle is best rendered, “when you have gone.” “Going” is one of the three means by which to fulfill the central command to make disciples. Going means more than traveling across geographical borders, although this is part of Jesus’s meaning. The point is that we believers are active; we are not inert. Going means crossing boundaries to make disciples—going across the street, going to dinner with an unbelieving friend, going into the inner city, going beyond one’s comfort zone to make the gospel accessible to the lost. Living life is “going” with a purpose, every day.

Going also implies our support of people who are literally going to other cultures. We must support global outreach financially and support the people going emotionally and personally as well as through prayer. We are a part of their team. In all these ways we “go,” in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We also “go” when we support efforts to equip indigenous ministers in different cultures. We help equip them to lead people of their own culture and language. This

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enables them to fulfill the Great Commission at home and in cultures where they will find a better reception than we would.

Second, we come to the participle baptizing (present participle of *baptizo* meaning “continually immersing them”). Because baptism was so closely associated with the decision of faith (cf. Acts 2:38; 8:36-38; 10:47-48). It may be best to see baptizing as Jesus’s way of summarizing the evangelistic half of the disciples’ ministry. The third participle, teaching (Matt. 28:20), represents the other half of the disciples’ ministry—the edification of those who are already believers. Baptism is an initiating rite that “immerses” the believer into a whole new world.

Baptism is not a step to salvation. Rather, it is an initial step of obedience that results from a person’s decision to trust the Messiah. Baptism represents the identification of people with this new way of life and faith. Baptism should be experienced as soon as possible after a person trusts Christ.

Jesus specified that we are to baptize disciples in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The use of the singular name implies clearly that this listing of three persons should be thought of as one name. Here is a clear affirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity—one God, three distinct persons. The believer who chooses to submit to baptism into this name identifies with God’s name as well as the spiritual family of all others who are identified with this same name.

This is a good summary of the evangelistic task of the church. It is bringing those who identify with the world into a new identification. It is seeing themselves anew as citizens of God’s kingdom, as children of God, as brothers and sisters of the Messiah, and as brothers and sisters with the rest of the family of believers. Our mission is to bring people to a point where they see themselves differently—because they have become different through the transforming work of God’s grace.

Third, the participle teaching (present participle of *didasko*, meaning “keep on teaching them”) completes the series of three means by which we fulfill the Great Commission. This represents the other half of our mission—the edification or building up of those who are believers.

Jesus instructed us not only to teach content, but to train people into obedient action: “teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.” The teachings of Jesus recorded in Matthew are the essence of the practical teaching we are to pass on to new disciples. There is much more teaching from Scripture beyond Matthew that the church needs. But his teaching in Matthew serves as a strong foundation.

By fulfilling the teaching portion of the Great Commission, we take believers at every stage of spiritual maturity to the next stage of growth. This can range from the infancy of a brand-new believer to various levels of spiritual adulthood. Every believer should progress toward the perfect character of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16), but none will arrive there short of eternity. So we must see ourselves as learners in a family of teachers, who themselves are also learners. The believer who is most mature will be most ready to listen and learn, even from the newest member of the family (cf. Matt. 18:4).

IN HIS IMAGE

Matthew's last words are a concluding promise from the Messiah-king. A paraphrase of the phrase "I am with you always" would read, "I myself am continually with you always until the end of the age." Among other things, Jesus claimed omnipresence, again laying claim to deity (note "Immanuel, God with us" in 1:23). He will be with us every step of the way. "I am with you always" reminds us of the great promises to saints of old like Moses (Exod. 3:12) and Joshua (Josh. 1:5).

This promise complements Jesus's claim to universal authority in Matthew 28:18, and it undergirds the believer's confidence in fulfilling the Great Commission. If we take out the three subordinate participial clauses from 28:18-20, boiling the commission down to its grammatical essence, we end up with this: "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Therefore, make disciples of all the nations; I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Stuart K. Weber, [Matthew](#), vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 483-486.

Acts 1:6-8

SUPPORTING IDEA: Our call to witness rests on both Christ's command and His coming.

1:6-7. The disciples' question revived their political goals, an ideal they could never quite stifle. Throughout the Gospels they wanted Jesus to throw off the iron hand of Rome, tell the nation He was their Messiah, and set up the kingdom. Surely now that He had risen from the dead and instructed His troops, it was time for the rebellion to begin. The Lord's answer offers a warning Christians have not heeded very well for almost two thousand years: "It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority" (v. 7).

How many Christian leaders have embarrassed themselves by announcing to the world when the Lord would return! The fact of that return is absolute as we shall see in a moment. The time was not revealed to Jesus's own disciples at the time of the ascension, and it will never be known by any human until the Lord comes again, regardless of what someone may claim.

We can't criticize the disciples too much, however, because the Old Testament links Spirit baptism with the coming kingdom (Isa. 32:15-20; Ezek. 39:28-29; Joel 2:28-3:1). The Lord did not deny the kingdom is coming but only warned the disciples that God's schedule is none of their business.

1:8. Some have suggested that this key verse of our book may contain a three-fold table of contents: Jerusalem, Acts 2:42-8:3; Judea and Samaria, Acts 8:4-12:24; ends of the earth, Acts 12:25-28:31. We cannot know if Luke had that kind of division in mind, but the book unfolds in a fascinating manner somewhat along that pattern.

IN HIS IMAGE

Notice that the call to witness is not limited to any select group of people since it spreads from the apostles to the 120 believers and on throughout the pages of Acts. Nor can we restrict it only to service in our own churches or to some kind of “professional ministry.” Every believer should be a “world Christian,” able to function for the Savior from the other side of the street to the other side of the world.

Kenneth O. Gangel, [Acts](#), vol. 5, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 11.



Day 4: Image Shared (5-Day Camps)

OVERVIEW

Scriptures: Matthew 9:36-38; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:6-8

Key Verse: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

Life Questions: Who in your life needs to know that they were created in the image of God? What is keeping you from sharing?

Everyone is created in God’s image. Jesus was the image of God on earth, and therefore is the perfect example of how to share this image with others. So, like Christ, we are to have compassion on them and share the love of God with them.

GATHER THESE SUPPLIES:

- Handheld mirrors
- Flashlight
- Sheets of paper
- Pens
- Camp Guides
- Extra Bibles
- Key Verse, Concentric Circles, Key Verse Scramble, and Truths posters (provided)

PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME:

- Hang posters except the Key Verse Scramble poster.
- Cover the Key Verse poster with butcher paper.
- Cut apart the three sections of the Key Verse Scramble poster.

MOTIVATION

Reflection Illustration

Lean one of the handheld mirrors against an object. Say: “**Reflection is when light bounces off an object. We are going to see this now.**” Turn off the lights. Shine a

IN HIS IMAGE

flashlight into the mirror. Instruct students to observe where the light travels on the wall after it hits the mirror.

Share this quote from John Piper:

“Here’s the picture in my mind. I was created like a mirror. And a mirror that was supposed to be 45 degrees with the clear reflective side pointing upward so that as God shone on it at the 45-degree angle, it would bounce off, and it would make a 90-degree turn and be reflected out into the world.”

[Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-to-be-made-in-gods-image>]

Turn on the lights. Say: **“Just as the mirror reflected the light, we are to reflect the image of Christ to the world, to show compassion and share the love of God with them. We will learn more about what it means to reflect and share Christ in our session today.”**

EXAMINATION

Matthew 9:36-38

Compassion

Call on a volunteer to read aloud **Matthew 9:36-38**.

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” Matthew 9:36-38 CSB

Refer to the word “compassion” in **verse 36**. Point students to page 38 in their Camp Guide to share a definition of compassion. Then, share this one from dictionary.com: **“a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.”**

Say: **“Jesus saw the people around Him, had compassion on them, and met their needs. We must do likewise. First, we must see people and their needs. We must be aware and engaged where we are. We can’t just live in our little bubbles. Once we are aware, that should stir empathy within us, and we must do something about what we see.”**

Say: **“We must meet people’s physical needs, but we cannot stop there. We have to meet their spiritual needs.”**



Fruit Pickers

Ask students to find a partner and share their favorite fruit and why it is their favorite. Allow a couple students to share.

Ask: **“What do you think would happen if fruit did not get picked? What if no one came to harvest the produce?”** (*It would get old, possibly rot or get moldy. It would not be good to eat.*)

Say: **“We would not be able to enjoy it, and it wouldn’t provide nourishment or joy. That seems a little sad and wasteful, doesn’t it? In verses 37-38, Jesus calls us all to be fruit pickers! If people never hear about the good news of Jesus, and they never experience the love of God, they won’t be able to bless others and be blessed through faith.”**

Point back to the Camp Guide, page 38, and lead students to list at least a couple physical needs in the Physical column and a couple spiritual needs in the Spiritual column that they will commit to personally meet in the days ahead.

Say: **“The most important spiritual need to meet is that of salvation for those who have not accepted Jesus. We are going to talk about sharing the gospel.”**

Matthew 28:18-20

Mirror Writing

Give each of the three groups a hand-held mirror, a Key Verse Scramble sheet where the Scripture has been written backward, and a sheet of paper. Instruct groups to work together, using the mirror to decipher the Key Verse.

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19

Lead them to print it on the sheet of paper as they decipher it. As soon as they have it figured out, they are to stand and recite it aloud together. Once everyone is finished, invite everyone to share it boldly. You can uncover the Key Verse poster at this time.

IN HIS IMAGE

The Great Commission

Invite students to turn in their Bibles to **Matthew 28**. Explain that this passage is after Jesus's earthly ministry has come to an end by His crucifixion and resurrection and when He is about to ascend back to heaven to be with the Father.

Invite a student to read aloud **verses 18-20**.

¹⁸ Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20 CSB

Point out that these verses are often referred to as The Great Commission.

Say: **"The verses just read are very clear instructions for all believers. Let's look at the four action steps we are to take. As I talk through these steps, please note them in your Camp Guide on page 38."**

The Four Parts of the Great Commission

1. Go

Say: **"The 'go' refers to how we live our daily lives. It always means in our community with the people around us, but sometimes it means going outside of our normal surroundings. We are to share Jesus wherever we are, either by the way with live or by sharing verbally."**

2. Make Disciples

Ask: **"What is a disciple?"** (personal follower of Jesus) **"How can we make disciples?"** (*Going through Scripture with them, praying with them, mentoring them, just living life and being relational, sharing our story, sharing the gospel-anything that will help them to make a decision to accept Christ.*)

3. Baptize

Say: **"Baptism is an act that publicly demonstrates our faith in Christ, a step of obedience. It is our first evangelistic expression, but this act alone does not save us."**

Encourage students who have not taken this step to consider it today.



4. Teach

Say: **“As we are learning, we should be sharing with others. Age doesn’t matter. We are to teach all people to observe all the commands of Christ. Another way we teach is through how you live. Often, actions speak louder than words.”**

Explain that **Matthew 28:18-20** is not “The Great Suggestion” but rather a command from the Lord to all believers.

Say: **“Jesus gave us a very comforting promise in verse 20 when He said that He would be with us always. Christ is present with us at all times in the person of the Holy Spirit. Ask: “How does it make you feel knowing we have the Holy Spirit with us always?”**

Acts 1:8

Ends of the Earth

Lead students to turn to **Acts 1** in their Bibles. Ask a student volunteer to read aloud **verses 8**.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8 CSB

Explain that the passage we read in Matthew is the “what” and this verse in Acts is the “how” and “where” to our Christian calling. Say: **“As a recap, what – go, make disciples, baptize them, and teach them; how - by the power of the Holy Spirit; where – to the ends of the earth.”**

Say: **“When you accept Christ, the Holy Spirit comes on you and in you, and it is powerful.”** Point back to the statement in **Matthew 18** that we just read. Say: **“We should not fear but trust the presence and the power of the Spirit in our lives and seek His leading and direction.”**

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Jerusalem
Judea
Samaria
Ends of the Earth



Refer to page 39 in the Camp Guide to the personal concentric circles illustration. Say: **“Let’s turn our attention to sharing Jesus where we are.”**

Tell students to label the circles this way: the center circle represents their family and friends, the first circle represents classmates, the second represents people in the neighborhood and community and the last one represents the nations. Guide students to write the names of people in each of the areas who need to know Christ.

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APPLICATION

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IN HIS IMAGE

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28:18-20. The Great Commission passage is reminiscent of Acts 1:6-11. In Matthew, Jesus issued a similar commission in different words with a different emphasis. However, the setting in the Acts passage was in Jerusalem. It coincided with Jesus's ascension into heaven at the end of the forty days. Jesus probably met with the disciples in Galilee and then instructed them to return to Jerusalem. All of this was done in preparation for their receiving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:40-5) and their continuation of his Spirit-empowered ministry in Acts 2 (in Jerusalem).

Matthew did not record Jesus's ascension into heaven, as it likely would have distracted from his emphasis in 28:18-20. He wanted the Great Commission to linger in people's minds as they finished his Gospel. Jesus had a big job in mind for His followers. "All" is a key word in 28:18-20. It emphasizes Jesus's divine identity: all authority, all nations, all things.

Before issuing His commission, Jesus laid the foundation for the success of their future ministry: "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." This was critically important. Without the Messiah's authority, the mission of the disciples and our mission today would be doomed to failure. The reader of Matthew's Gospel should know well by now the nature and power of the Messiah's authority.

The heart of the Great Commission is 28:19-20, the last words of Matthew's Gospel. Matthew knew the principle that "last words are lasting words." He chose carefully, under the Spirit's direction, the words he wanted to linger in his readers' minds. "Therefore" identified Jesus's authority (28:19) as the reason the disciples must carry out His orders.

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The central command is make disciples. At the heart of our mission is the reproduction in others of what Jesus has produced in us: faith, obedience, growth, authority, compassion, love, and a bold, truthful message as his witnesses. They were learners commanded to produce more learners.

Jesus's disciples were to reproduce other disciples of all the nations (the word translated nations is the plural of *ethnos*, meaning "peoples, ethnic groups," as in 24:14). He was hinting that their fulfillment of their commission would ultimately lead to His second coming. It is significant that Matthew ended his Gospel with one more reference to the Gentile mission, challenging the Jewish Christians to lose their prejudices and unify the church. This also challenges us to break down any artificial boundaries erected by our culture. We must minister impartially. Jesus was an equal-opportunity Savior.

We see three participles here that are subordinate to the central command to make disciples. Each of these clarifies the way in which Jesus's disciples are to make disciples.

First, in the emphatic first position, even before "make" disciples, is the aorist participle "go." In the context, this Greek participle is best rendered, "when you have gone." "Going" is one of the three means by which to fulfill the central command to make disciples. Going means more than traveling across geographical borders, although this is part of Jesus's meaning. The point is that we believers are active; we are not inert. Going means crossing boundaries to make disciples—going across the street, going to dinner with an unbelieving friend, going into the inner city, going beyond one's comfort zone to make the gospel accessible to the lost. Living life is "going" with a purpose, every day.

Going also implies our support of people who are literally going to other cultures. We must support global outreach financially and support the people going emotionally and personally as well as through prayer. We are a part of their team. In all these ways we "go," in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We also "go" when we support efforts to equip indigenous ministers in different cultures. We help equip them to lead people of their own culture and language. This enables them to fulfill the Great Commission at home and in cultures where they will find a better reception than we would.

Second, we come to the participle baptizing (present participle of *baptizo* meaning "continually immersing them"). Because baptism was so closely associated with the decision of faith (cf. Acts 2:38; 8:36-38; 10:47-48). It may be best to see baptizing as Jesus's way of summarizing the evangelistic half of the disciples' ministry. The third participle, teaching (Matt. 28:20), represents the other half of the disciples' ministry—the edification of those who are already believers. Baptism is an initiating rite that "immerses" the believer into a whole new world.

Baptism is not a step to salvation. Rather, it is an initial step of obedience that results from a person's decision to trust the Messiah. Baptism represents the identification of

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people with this new way of life and faith. Baptism should be experienced as soon as possible after a person trusts Christ.

Jesus specified that we are to baptize disciples in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The use of the singular name implies clearly that this listing of three persons should be thought of as one name. Here is a clear affirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity—one God, three distinct persons. The believer who chooses to submit to baptism into this name identifies with God’s name as well as the spiritual family of all others who are identified with this same name.

This is a good summary of the evangelistic task of the church. It is bringing those who identify with the world into a new identification. It is seeing themselves anew as citizens of God’s kingdom, as children of God, as brothers and sisters of the Messiah, and as brothers and sisters with the rest of the family of believers. Our mission is to bring people to a point where they see themselves differently—because they have become different through the transforming work of God’s grace.

Third, the participle teaching (present participle of *didasko*, meaning “keep on teaching them”) completes the series of three means by which we fulfill the Great Commission. This represents the other half of our mission—the edification or building up of those who are believers.

Jesus instructed us not only to teach content, but to train people into obedient action: “teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.” The teachings of Jesus recorded in Matthew are the essence of the practical teaching we are to pass on to new disciples. There is much more teaching from Scripture beyond Matthew that the church needs. But his teaching in Matthew serves as a strong foundation.

By fulfilling the teaching portion of the Great Commission, we take believers at every stage of spiritual maturity to the next stage of growth. This can range from the infancy of a brand-new believer to various levels of spiritual adulthood. Every believer should progress toward the perfect character of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16), but none will arrive there short of eternity. So we must see ourselves as learners in a family of teachers, who themselves are also learners. The believer who is most mature will be most ready to listen and learn, even from the newest member of the family (cf. Matt. 18:4).

Matthew’s last words are a concluding promise from the Messiah-king. A paraphrase of the phrase “I am with you always” would read, “I myself am continually with you always until the end of the age.” Among other things, Jesus claimed omnipresence, again laying claim to deity (note “Immanuel, God with us” in 1:23). He will be with us every step of the way. “I am with you always” reminds us of the great promises to saints of old like Moses (Exod. 3:12) and Joshua (Josh. 1:5).

This promise complements Jesus’s claim to universal authority in Matthew 28:18, and it undergirds the believer’s confidence in fulfilling the Great Commission. If we take out the three subordinate participial clauses from 28:18-20, boiling the commission down to its grammatical essence, we end up with this: “All authority has been given to



me in heaven and on earth. Therefore, make disciples of all the nations; I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Stuart K. Weber, [Matthew](#), vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 483-486.

Acts 1:6-8

SUPPORTING IDEA: Our call to witness rests on both Christ’s command and His coming.

1:6-7. The disciples’ question revived their political goals, an ideal they could never quite stifle. Throughout the Gospels they wanted Jesus to throw off the iron hand of Rome, tell the nation He was their Messiah, and set up the kingdom. Surely now that He had risen from the dead and instructed His troops, it was time for the rebellion to begin. The Lord’s answer offers a warning Christians have not heeded very well for almost two thousand years: “It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority” (v. 7).

How many Christian leaders have embarrassed themselves by announcing to the world when the Lord would return! The fact of that return is absolute as we shall see in a moment. The time was not revealed to Jesus’s own disciples at the time of the ascension, and it will never be known by any human until the Lord comes again, regardless of what someone may claim.

We can’t criticize the disciples too much, however, because the Old Testament links Spirit baptism with the coming kingdom (Isa. 32:15-20; Ezek. 39:28-29; Joel 2:28–3:1). The Lord did not deny the kingdom is coming but only warned the disciples that God’s schedule is none of their business.

1:8. Some have suggested that this key verse of our book may contain a three-fold table of contents: Jerusalem, Acts 2:42-8:3; Judea and Samaria, Acts 8:4-12:24; ends of the earth, Acts 12:25-28:31. We cannot know if Luke had that kind of division in mind, but the book unfolds in a fascinating manner somewhat along that pattern.

Notice that the call to witness is not limited to any select group of people since it spreads from the apostles to the 120 believers and on throughout the pages of Acts. Nor can we restrict it only to service in our own churches or to some kind of “professional ministry.” Every believer should be a “world Christian,” able to function for the Savior from the other side of the street to the other side of the world.

Kenneth O. Gangel, [Acts](#), vol. 5, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 11.



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CLOSING MORNING (6-Day)

Quiet Time

Instruct students to spend quiet time with the Lord as usual.

Pull students together and allow a few students to share something they learned during their quiet times this week. Encourage students to continue a quiet time once they get home.

Debrief and Recap Bible Study

Refer to each day's theme and allow students to share what was covered and what they learned. Encourage students to share how they can apply what they have learned.

Mission Moment

Ask students to share something they have learned about missions this week.

Share Decisions

Give students who made decisions at camp time to share, if they desire to do so. Celebrate with these students and lead in a time of prayer, thanking God for changing lives at camp this week.

Complete Evaluations

Distribute a student evaluation to each student. Give time for students to complete the evaluation. Then, collect the forms. You will need to take time to read through these at some point before evaluation meeting. ADs will collect all of these during this time.

Take Group Photos

Allow time for group photos to be taken and shared.

Group Time

Group students in small groups of three to share about their favorite part of camp. Invite these students to pray together.

Play a Game (Optional)

Play a game from the rec manual as time permits.

Lead in Closing Prayer

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BIBLE STUDY LEADER 101

GENERAL TIPS

1. Learn names. Find a way that works for you and do it. This doesn't sound like much, but when you know their names, students feel you are interested in and care about them.
2. Study the student information card. The questions really help in starting relationships. You may want to think of some more questions such as favorite toy, movie, worst date, proudest moment, etc.
3. Do your best to hang out and talk with students during meals and hang time. Granted, sometimes they will be preoccupied with others, but find times to talk with them.
4. Be yourself. The Bible study materials, as written, are great, but allow it to take on your personality and teach it the way that is best suited to you.
5. Love students but lead them. You will have times that you will want them to think you are the coolest, but make sure you lead them. Being a Bible study leader is not a popularity contest.
6. Do not compare yourself or your group to others. Anytime we compare, we will always come out the loser. Focus on your students and your call to the job.
7. Don't focus on negatives, but believe you have a great group—because you do.
8. Don't give up when you have a tough group, or they don't meet your expectations. They can and will be a great group if you lead them the way they need to be led. Study your group and meet them where they are.
9. Pray, pray, and pray some more for your students. Pray over the seats before opening night. Pray over chairs in your Bible study room daily. Pray with students. Pray!

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10. Don't just hang out with the "fun kids," "popular kids," or "pretty kids" in your group. Try to build relationships with all of them. Some may not be responsive, but you may just be surprised if you try.
11. When you need help, ask for it. Other staffers and your leadership will be ready to help.
12. Your Bible study may flop one day. Do your best to fix it.
13. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak and teach through you. Pray for this each day.
14. See Bible study as a time of worship and lead that way.
15. Don't stay up too late. Lack of sleep will eventually affect you in your Bible Study.
16. Keep personal time with the Lord a priority throughout the summer.
17. Be forgiving. They are kids.
18. Look for students who need encouragement and encourage them.
19. Build them as a group.
20. Challenge students to minister to one another.
21. Help them search for why they are in this specific Bible Study group.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TIPS

1. Set expectations from the beginning and hold students to that (especially day 1) to make the rest of the week easier. Be consistent from day to day.
2. Tell students on opening night that Bible study is God's time, to respect that and be prepared to listen to what He is saying.
3. Do not be afraid to have students sit in a different area if they are being disruptive where they are.

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4. Allow rowdy/active students to be active. Forcing an active student to sit alone in silence will most likely cause a larger distraction.
5. Be prepared! Do not procrastinate setting up for Bible study. If you are prepared, you will have confidence and in turn, Bible study will run smoother.
6. Set the tone the first night and watch your own attitude and enthusiasm. Students will feed off of you.
7. On your Bible study outline, keep a maximum and minimum time for each section.
8. Do not allow down time. In other words, know where you are going and move from one thing to the next with easy, smooth, and quick transitions.
9. Learn names of students. They have more respect for you, and it is easier to stop a behavior that is a distraction.
10. Know your material backward and forward so you are able to keep a flow of Bible Study regardless of time, tangents, etc.
11. Do not yell over your students. Silence is your friend.
12. Address disruptive behavior immediately. Pull students aside, make expectations clear.
13. If your group is sleepy, lead them to stand and stretch or take a move break.
14. Walk around during Bible study. Do not sit during group discussion time. Keep moving around from group to group.
15. Keep your frustrations to yourself. Do not allow this to show.
16. Give all students a note card to hold throughout Bible study if they are too nervous to ask questions out loud or if it is not pertinent at the time.

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17. Establish a healthy learning environment from the beginning. Students must feel safe. They must feel comfortable to participate and ask questions. Students must feel like what you are teaching is relevant.
18. Always keep calm. Do not panic. Never let them see you sweat.

CLASSROOM DECORATING AND MAINTENANCE TIPS

1. Classrooms should be neat, professional, colorful and distraction free. We want to create a learning environment where students can hear from the Lord and experience life change.
2. Be aware of what your location wants you to use to hang items on the wall masking tape, painters' tape, packing tape, sticky tack, push pins, etc. Do not use tape on walls that may pull off the paint. Do not use sticky tack if it will leave a greasy spot.
3. When taping items to a wall, roll the tape and place on the back of the poster, butcher paper or whatever you are hanging. Tape should not be seen on the outside of the item being hung.
4. When you cut an item to display, make sure you cut in straight lines.
5. Handwriting should be neat and readable. Get someone who has good handwriting to write your posters if you need to. It makes a big difference.
6. Use color-coding. Pick one color to represent each day of Bible study and then make all of your posters, Bible study note cards, etc. match that color for the day. This can help both you and students keep things straight.
7. Use colored posters/butcher paper when you can, instead of white.
8. Display your Bible study name in your room. Consider creating a signing wall. Purchase a bed sheet or use butcher paper, write the Bible study name on it really big, then have students sign the sheet each week so you can take it home at the end of the summer.

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9. If you have activities that need to be written out each week for Bible study, write them ALL out during prep-time during Training Week. That way, all of your BS prep for the whole summer is done.
10. Make sure you have a set place for everything. Don't just keep markers in a pile on the floor, but have an actual place for them, etc.
11. Include your students in keeping everything looking neat. Bible study isn't over until everyone has helped get the classroom back in order.
12. During reset each week, make sure you have all butcher paper pulled and labeled for each day. Also, make sure you have enough index cards, pens, etc. Don't wait for each day to grab your supplies. Your week will be much smoother if everything is already set.
13. Even after you have everything prepared, make sure you check your room before opening night. We are rarely the only activity on campus, so make sure that everything is ready to go where you left it.
14. Feel free to collect items to bring from home that are thematic, the color of your Bible study flag, or that relate to your Bible study name.
15. Consider purchasing a 3-drawer plastic storage organizer to store your supplies.

HOW TO DEAL WITH A DIFFICULT STUDENT

Participants who are difficult may have other issues that are the root of their behavior. Please remember they are not acting up against you.

Common Factors That Lead to Misbehavior:

- Fear of failure
- Fear of the unknown
- Poor self-esteem
- Displaced anger
- Attention seeking
- Loss of personal power
- Physiological factors – drugs, malnourishment, etc.

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Guidelines for Dealing with Difficult Participants:

1. Reinforce the positive – when the participant does something right – praise him/her.
2. Redirect challenging behavior.
3. Be consistent/fair in your conduct and expectations.
4. Respond to rational questions with rational responses and authoritative questions with authoritative responses.
5. Always remain calm when participants misbehave.
6. Avoid power struggles – redirect the structure/situation.
7. Serve as a good role model – verbally/non-verbally consistent.
8. Do not allow one belligerent participant to ruin the entire experience for the other participants.

Techniques for Dealing with Difficult Participants:

1. “Contracting” – establish reasonable, positive expectations.
2. Rephrase the negative situation with a positive response.
3. Establish clear, concise, truly enforceable limits.
4. Ask questions such as:
 - What is the problem?
 - Why is this a problem?
 - What are your choices?
 - What are you going to choose to do?
5. Allow natural consequences to teach if the participant's safety isn't jeopardized.
6. Seat disruptive participants close to you.

Reporting Difficult Participants:

1. Report difficult participants to your camp leadership.
2. Camp leadership will lead and direct the situation from there. He/she will communicate with you, if your participation is needed.

Restraining a Participant:

- Staffers should not restrain participants under any circumstances.
- If a leader feels that an extreme circumstance warrants breaking with this policy for the safety and well-being of the participant, they will have to exercise independent judgment given the circumstances to do so.
- Any time a participant exhibits behavior that causes a staffer to consider an exception to this policy, it is recommended the camp director contact the group leader and possibly the local police. The camp director should decide whether the participant should be sent home.