

Image and Identity

Group Guide:
Week 1

CONNECT BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING

- What's something that makes you unique?
- Who is the least insecure person you've ever met?
- Discipleship check-in (at the bottom of this guide!)

INTRODUCTION

This week we're starting our new series *Image and Identity*, and we couldn't be more excited! Over the next few weeks, we'll be delving into what it means to be human. This week, we are starting with the foundation: we are made in the image of God. That means that *becoming who we are doesn't start with us; it starts with God.*

READ & DISCUSS

READ: Genesis 1:26-28

DISCUSS: What can we learn about humans from this passage?

READ: Genesis 5:1-3

DISCUSS: What does the word "image" mean here? What does that say about God's relationship to us?

READ: Exodus 20:3-4

DISCUSS: God's people are forbidden from carving "images," or idols. Idols were statues that people thought contained the spirit of a god. What does that suggest about what God means to do when he creates humans as "images"?

REFLECT & APPLY

DISCUSS: God made us as *human imagers*, as people who would show what God is like. We're like children who are growing into the likeness of our father. God wants us to become more and more like Him so that everyone

else can see what He is like. That makes us like what people used to think *idols* were for—we're images of God, filled with His Spirit. And people can come to us to meet God and be blessed by Him. (That means that making idols doesn't just misunderstand who God is! It misunderstands who we are as well).

If that's the destiny we're made for, we need God to show us what it means to be His imagers. We need to know God well if we're going to show what He's like to everyone else. And that requires humility! We have to humble ourselves and ask God what it means for us to become who we were always meant to be.

Is there a place in your life where you haven't made imaging God your goal? What would it look like to invite God to come into that part of your life and transform it to tell the truth about who He is?

PRAY

As we seek to be made into God's imagers, we're seeking to be made into the image of Christ. Jesus was the first human who truly was what we were all called to be: an obedient child and perfect image of his Father. Because of that, he's been given the inheritance we were all meant to have (and are offered still!): to rule along with God forever and ever.

So let's pray this week that the Spirit of God would enter us, individually and as a community, and make us like Jesus. Thank God for the gift of His Spirit, and ask that His Spirit would be poured out on us more and more, and that we would be more and more obedient to it.

A PRAYER REQUEST

As some of you may know, our Cambridge congregation has been in prayer for a new home. Our current hosts, the Cambridge YCMA, have been a huge blessing to us these past few years; but our lease will be ending October 31st, and we will need to find a new church home. That just means (as Pastor Adam says) that we need God to do exactly what we've needed Him to do all along—we are as reliant on God's generosity as ever, we're just a little more aware of it now. That's a grace of God to us, to remind us to rely on Him; and so we want to invite you, in your groups, to join us in praying each week for God to move and bless us with everything we need to serve Him.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you prayed and read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?