RIDGEPOINT CHURCH • GROW GROUPS GUIDE

Crowned with Glory and Honor

Imago Dei

WEEK 3

PSALM 8:4–5 • JAMES 3:9 • PROVERBS 14:31 • 1 PETER 2:17

Brent Warkentin • October 25, 2026

Lesson length: 60 minutes. Suggested times are shown next to each section. "Beyond the Sermon" is optional, for when time allows or for personal study during the week.

Leader tip: This sermon came during election season and touched on politics and biblical convictions. Keep the conversation focused on how we view and treat people, not on debating positions. If discussion starts to drift, gently bring it back to Pastor Brent's key statement: how we view and treat others is a reflection of how we view and treat God.

Opening (Leader overview)

In week 3 of the Imago Dei series, Pastor Brent asked how being made in God's image affects the way we look at and treat other people. He began with a distinction: Jesus is the image of God, reflecting Him perfectly, while we are made in the image of God. That still gives every person dignity and worth, the capacity for relationship with God and others, moral responsibility, and a part in God's mission. Everything in the message hinged on one truth: every single human equally bears God's image. God does not approve of everyone's behavior, but He loves everyone equally, and every person is equally worthy of the blood of Jesus. Psalm 8 says God crowned humanity with glory and honor, and that has direct implications for how we treat the coworker, the neighbor, the homeless person on the corner, and the people we disagree with.

THE THREE MAIN POINTS

1. **Every person equally bears God's image:** Jesus is the image of God, and we are made in His image and crowned with glory and honor (Genesis 1:27; Colossians 1:15; Psalm 8:4–5).
2. **How we treat others reflects how we treat God:** God takes it personally when we dishonor the people He made (Matthew 18:5; James 3:9; Proverbs 14:31).
3. **Give greater honor to some, but never withhold honor from anyone:** Some are owed more honor, but everyone is owed honor because they bear God's image (Romans 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17).

Opening Question (5 minutes)

Go around the room and let everyone answer. Keep it light; the goal is to get people talking.

> *Think of someone who treated you with honor or kindness when they didn't have to, maybe a teacher, a boss, or even a stranger. What did they do, and how did it make you feel?*

Alternate: Who is someone you deeply respect? What is it about them that earned your respect?

Big Idea (10 minutes)

> **Every person equally bears God's image and has been crowned by Him with glory and honor. So how we view and treat others is a reflection of how we view and treat God.**

WHAT WE WANT EVERYONE TO TAKE AWAY

- **Jesus IS the image; we are IN the image.** Jesus reflects God perfectly (Hebrews 1:3). We are made in God's image, which gives us dignity and worth, the capacity for relationship, moral responsibility, and a part in His mission.
- **Every human equally bears God's image.** God doesn't approve of everyone's behavior, but He loves everyone equally, and every person is equally worthy of the blood of Jesus.
- **God takes it personally.** When we bless God and curse people made in His likeness, or ignore the poor, we dishonor God Himself.
- **Honor is for everyone.** We will naturally give more honor to some, like leaders and faithful elders, but we should never withhold honor and respect from anyone.

QUESTIONS TO GET STARTED

1. What stood out to you most from Sunday's sermon?
2. Pastor Brent said, "How we view and treat others is a reflection of how we view and treat God." Is that statement comforting, challenging, or both for you? Why?
3. Who is the hardest kind of person for you to see as someone made in God's image?

Learning Together (30 minutes)

Spend about 10 minutes on each point. Read the scripture aloud, share the explanation, summarize, and then discuss.



MAIN POINT 1

Every Person Equally Bears God's Image

> **Genesis 1:27** (NIV)
> *So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

Explanation: Humanity alone, out of all creation, is made in God's image. That is the source of every person's dignity and worth.

> **Colossians 1:15** (NIV)
> *The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

Explanation: Here and in 2 Corinthians 4:4, Christ is the image of God. We are made in God's image, but Jesus is His image.

> **Hebrews 1:3** (NIV)
> *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.*

Explanation: Jesus reflects God perfectly, in a way no other person ever could.

> **Psalm 8:4–5** (NIV)
> *4 what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? 5 You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.*

Explanation: David wonders why a great and holy God would care about small, sinful people. The stunning answer is that God made humanity His crowning achievement, crowned with glory and honor we don't deserve.

SUMMARY

Being made in God's image means we have dignity and worth, the capacity to relate to God and others, moral responsibility to reflect His goodness, and a part in His mission to save the world. Rocks, trees, and animals are good, but they do not bear God's image. Most importantly, every single human equally bears that image: God loves everyone equally, and every person is equally worthy of the blood of Jesus.

DISCUSSION

1. Pastor Brent listed four things that come with being made in God's image: dignity and worth, relationship, moral responsibility, and mission. Which one do you think about least? Why?
2. Psalm 8 says God "crowned" us with glory and honor. How would your week look different if you truly believed that about yourself?
3. God doesn't approve of everyone's behavior, but He loves everyone equally. Why is it important to hold both of those truths together?

MAIN POINT 2

How We Treat Others Reflects How We Treat God

> **Matthew 18:5** (NIV)
> *And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.*

Explanation: Jesus draws a direct line between how we receive people and how we receive Him.

> **Acts 9:4** (NIV)
> *He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"*

Explanation: Saul was persecuting Christians, yet Jesus asked why Saul was persecuting Him. God takes the way we treat His people personally.

> **James 3:9** (NIV)
> *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness.*

Explanation: We cannot honor God and dishonor the people made in His likeness at the same time.

> **Proverbs 14:31** (NIV)
> *Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.*

Explanation: How we treat the poor and needy is ultimately a statement about how we see the God who made them.

SUMMARY

Because every person is crowned with glory and honor, God says, in effect, "When you treat them poorly, I take that personally." That changes our first thought about the homeless person on the corner, the frustrating coworker, or the person in the political ad: they are made in God's image, equally loved, and equally worthy of the blood of Jesus. We can stand strong on what the Bible teaches and still remember that how we view and treat others reflects how we view and treat God.

DISCUSSION

1. Pastor Brent asked what our first thought is when we see someone holding a cardboard sign on a street corner. Be honest: what is yours? How might it change if you started with "made in the image of God"?
2. James 3:9 says we praise God and curse people with the same tongue. Where are you most tempted to speak poorly of others: online, at work, about politics, or somewhere else?

3. How can we hold firm biblical convictions and still treat people who disagree with us as image-bearers? What does that look like in practice?

MAIN POINT 3

Give Greater Honor to Some, but Never Withhold Honor from Anyone

> **Romans 13:7** (ESV)
> *Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.*

Explanation: Paul's teaching on government shows that some people, because of their role, are owed more respect and honor than others.

> **1 Timothy 5:17** (ESV)
> *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.*

Explanation: The same principle applies in the church: leaders who serve faithfully are worthy of extra honor.

> **Galatians 6:10** (ESV)
> *So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

Explanation: We are to do good to everyone, with a special responsibility to fellow believers.

> **1 Peter 2:17** (CSB)
> *Honor everyone. Love the brothers and sisters. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

Explanation: Peter wrote this while the ruthless Nero was emperor. We don't honor evil behavior, but we honor every person because of their value as an image-bearer of God.

SUMMARY

Respect and honor are sometimes earned, through a person's character or faithful work, and sometimes given, because of a title or office. Scripture is clear that some people are worthy of greater honor, like faithful leaders and elders. But it is just as clear that we must "honor everyone," because every person is made in God's image and crowned by Him with glory and honor.

DISCUSSION

1. Do you tend to think of respect as something people earn or something we give? How does being made in God's image change that?

2. Peter told believers to honor the emperor, even though it was Nero. Who is someone you find hard to honor right now? What would honoring them look like without approving of their behavior?
3. Who in your life deserves "double honor" that you haven't expressed lately? How could you honor them this week?

Why This Matters (8 minutes)

If every person equally bears God's image, then there is no one we are allowed to look down on, write off, or treat with contempt. That truth starts with gratitude, thanking God that He created us in His image and crowned us with glory and honor even when our behavior doesn't match it. It then changes how we see everyone else: we may not approve of what people think or do, but we can see them the way God sees them. And while we will naturally honor some people more, everyone is worthy of our respect and honor because they bear God's image.

APPLICATION IDEAS

- **With God:** Each morning this week, thank God by name for making you in His image and crowning you with glory and honor, using Psalm 8:4–5 as your prayer.
- **With our family:** Before reacting to a family member who frustrates you, pause and remind yourself, "They are equally loved by God and made in His image," then respond with honor.
- **With those around us:** Pick one person you usually overlook or avoid, like a neighbor, coworker, or someone in need, and show them honor this week through a kind word, a meal, or your full attention.

Prayer (7 minutes)

Take prayer requests, then pray through these prompts together:

- Thank God for making us in His image and crowning us with glory and honor.
- Ask Him to help us see every person the way He sees them.
- Pray for grace to honor the people we find hardest to love, including those we disagree with.

Beyond the Sermon (If time allows)

These passages weren't in Sunday's message but fit this week's theme. Use them if your group wants to go deeper.

MORE SCRIPTURE TO EXPLORE

- **Matthew 25:40:** "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." How does Jesus' teaching here echo the idea that how we treat others is how we treat Him?
- **Luke 10:30–37:** In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the hero is the person the audience least expected. Who might be the "Samaritan" you are tempted to overlook?
- **Romans 12:10:** "Honor one another above yourselves." What would it look like for our group to outdo one another in showing honor?

TRY THIS

- **The image-bearer lens:** Have each person quietly think of someone they find difficult. Write that person's first name or initials and three truths underneath: "equally loved by God," "worthy of the blood of Jesus," and "made in His image." Pray over the card this week.
- **Honor out loud:** Give each person a notecard to write a short note honoring someone, such as a pastor, teacher, boss, or family member, and encourage them to deliver it this week.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. How does social media make it easier to forget that the people we disagree with are made in God's image?
2. Pastor Brent admitted he wasn't "landing the plane" on exact definitions of honor and respect. How would you explain the difference between them?
3. If our Grow Group fully lived out "honor everyone," how would people outside the group notice?

RIDGEPOINT CHURCH

ridgepointwichita.com · Grow Groups