

STUDY GUIDE

# IMAGO DEI

The Value of Life from Beginning to End



grace church

## IMAGO DEI SERIES

1/12                  Genesis 1

1/19                  Psalm 139

1/26                  Psalm 71

## INTRODUCTION: THE *IMAGO DEI*

One of the most significant sentences ever uttered in human history is found in the very first chapter of the Bible: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:27).

With this one verse comes an entire foundation upon which our lives are built, answering life’s most important questions. What does it really mean to be human? What does it mean to be male and female? What is our purpose in life? Where do I find value and significance?

These are questions being asked and answered wherever we look today. People are desperate to find the most rewarding, fulfilling, and significant life, but without the foundation of Genesis 1 we are left to define it for ourselves. What has come from that is a culture that can’t explain what it really means to be human, or why humans have inherent value and dignity. The casualties to this have been massive and widespread. Individuals are hurt, confused, and lonely. The youngest among us, the unborn children, are discarded as inconveniences. The oldest among us, the elderly, are cast out of sight and mind once their perceived value has faded.

If ever we needed evidence of our culture’s confusion over where humans find value, we need look no further than the growing sentiment to allow the legalized taking of life at both ends of the spectrum, whether the youngest (abortion) or the oldest (assisted suicide). Ours is a time where there is a crisis of identity. What gives a human being value?

To find the answer, we need to journey to Genesis 1, where we learn this world-changing truth: we are, each one of us, made in the image of God. There is a theological term for this, from the Latin, called the *imago Dei* – meaning image (*imago*) of God (*Dei*).

If we could understand what this means, and if we could recover an understanding of humanity in line with how God sees us, it would change our lives.

So this month, we are going to be doing a brief three-week study on the *imago Dei*, seeing how the image of God shows us the value of life from beginning to end.

We will start with Genesis 1, exploring what it really means to be made in the image of God. Here, my prayer is that you understand why your life has significant value and purpose because you have been made – wonderfully, purposefully, lovingly made – by God.

Then we will consider how this concept of the *imago Dei* shapes the way we view the unborn, and how the church must be ardent defenders of the value of unborn children.

Finally, we will consider how the *imago Dei* shapes the way we view aging, and how the church must celebrate the value of those who feel their purpose has run its course.

Throughout this series, my prayer is that we will all understand just a bit more all that God intends for us to be and do as human beings, to His glory and for our everlasting good.

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Our prayer is that the Lord will use this study in the life of our church to stir our hearts to rejoice in Christ today, anchored in looking back and looking forward.

In the pages that follow, you will find a series of questions accompanying each week of our sermon series. There will be questions for you to answer based on your own personal study of the text, and further questions to reflect on and discuss in groups.

In order for you to get the most out of this series, we encourage you to read the text and write down your observations before listening to the sermon each Sunday. Devote time in the week leading up to Sunday morning to explore the text for yourself.

You will notice that each week asks the same basic questions:

- What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?
- What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?
- What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?
- What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?
- What is one question you have about this passage?

These questions form a good introductory tactic to studying the Bible. We often rush to application (what it means for my life) without considering what the text really says, and we often read the Bible as if it is primarily about us when it is really about God. So we want you to begin each week by learning about God and the gospel, then by considering

what the text says about us, before then moving to what the text calls us to. Remember: application is not simply what we do; application of the Bible is holistic: it is about what we do, say, think, believe, and love.

There will also be opportunities for you to write, and ask, questions that arise during your study. We encourage you to write down these questions, and then share them.

Finally, there are a handful of questions designed to be reflected on and discussed with others. Perhaps your Grace Group will consider discussing them, or maybe you can talk about them with your family, or pull together a small group of trusted friends to walk through this series together with. However it happens, we must remember that Bible study is meant to be done in community.

After each section, you will then find blank pages for additional notes, particularly for note-taking during the sermons. This would allow all of your notes throughout this Christmas series, both in personal study and in sermon content, to be together in the same place. If this would be useful, it is there for your benefit.

We pray that this study guide, going along with our weekly sermon series, helps you to grow deeper in understanding and applying the words we will read in Scripture, and that the words you read and the truths you learn will fuel a delight in Jesus Christ that gives you strength to live where the Lord has called you today.

Week 1: January 12, 2025  
The Value of Life: Made in the Image of God

READ: Genesis 1

What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- Read through the entirety of Genesis 1. What differences do you notice between God’s creation of the world and creatures, and His creation of man? Why is this significant?
- What purpose did God give to man when He made them? What should that teach us about our priorities in life today?
- What does it mean to be made in God’s image?
- How should this passage shape the way you view yourself? Your significance? Your body? Your value? Your purpose?



## Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:

**Week 2: January 19, 2025**  
**The Value of the Unborn: How the image of God undermines abortion**

**READ: Psalm 139**

What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- What comfort(s) do you find in this Psalm? Why are those promises of particular comfort to you today?
- Where do you struggle to believe God is with you or that His purposes are good for you? What truths in this Psalm can remind you of His care in these areas?
- What does this Psalm teach us about the value of all life, including unborn children in the womb?
- Where do you need to ask God to search your heart, like the Psalmist does?

## Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:

**Week 3: January 26, 2025**  
**The Value of the Elderly: How the image of  
God gives dignity to aging**

**READ: Psalms 71**

**What is one thing this passage teaches you about God?**

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**What is one thing this passage teaches you about the gospel?**

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**What is one thing this passage teaches you about yourself?**

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What is one thing this passage teaches you about how God commands you to live?

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What is one question you have about this passage?

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Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion:

- What does it mean to find refuge in the Lord? How can you practice this today?
- How does this Psalm speak to hoping in God through all of life? What encouragement does it give you in your current season of life?
- What comfort(s) and purpose(s) does this Psalm give to those who are older?
- What reasons does this Psalm give you for praising and rejoicing in God?

## Sermon Notes:

Text:

Title:

Preacher:



# grace church

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