



# EXODUS

YHWH GOES TO WAR!

## **Small Group Guide: Being God's Image**

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon explores God's purpose for humanity - to be image bearers who reflect His character, not merely to achieve worldly success. Through examining the laws given to Israel in Exodus 21, we see how God describes what His recreated people look like, particularly in how they treat the vulnerable. The law isn't a prescription for earning God's favor, but a description of what God is making us into through Jesus Christ.

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## **Opening Prayer & Icebreaker**

**Prayer:** Ask God to open hearts and minds to understand His purpose for our lives.

**Icebreaker:** "When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? How has that changed?"

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## **Discussion Questions**

### **Understanding the Text**

- 1. What stood out to you most from this sermon? What challenged you or surprised you?**
- 2. How does viewing the law as a "description" rather than a "prescription" change your understanding of God's commands?**
- 3. What differences do you notice between how God instructed Israel to treat servants versus how Israel was treated as slaves in Egypt?**
- 4. Read Exodus 21:1-11 together. What do these laws reveal about God's character and priorities?**

## Going Deeper

5. The sermon states: "What God wants you to be is not a basketball player, is not a baseball player, is not a doctor...God wants you to be is his image." How does this challenge our culture's definition of success?
6. How can someone be successful in their career but fail at life according to God's standards? Can you think of examples (without naming names)?
7. The sermon emphasizes God's special concern for vulnerable people. Who are the vulnerable people in our community today? How should that concern shape our actions?
8. What does it mean practically to "reflect God's glory" in your daily life - at work, at home, in your neighborhood?

## Personal Application

9. The pastor asked: "What does God want you to be?" How would you answer that question for yourself right now?
  10. In what areas of your life are you most tempted to pursue your own agenda rather than reflecting God's image?
  11. The sermon mentions we often fail to become what God wants us to be (using coveting as an example). Where do you see this struggle in your own life?
  12. How does understanding Jesus as the perfect image of God help you in your own journey of transformation?
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## Key Takeaways

- God's primary purpose for us is to be image bearers, reflecting His character in all we do
- The law describes what God is making us into, not just rules to follow
- God has special concern for the vulnerable and expects His people to treat them with dignity and care
- Jesus perfectly fulfilled the law and is the prototype of what God is recreating us to become
- True success is measured by reflecting God's glory, not worldly achievement

- **Through Christ's death and resurrection, we are freed from sin's punishment, guilt, and power**
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## **Practical Applications**

### **This Week's Challenge:**

**Choose one of the following to practice this week:**

#### **1. Study the Law with New Eyes**

- **Read through one chapter of biblical law (Exodus 21-23, Leviticus 19, or Deuteronomy 24)**
- **Journal: "What does this reveal about God's character? What is God shaping me to become?"**

#### **2. Identify and Serve the Vulnerable**

- **Identify one vulnerable person or group in your sphere of influence**
- **Take one concrete action to care for them this week (without taking advantage)**
- **Reflect: How did this reflect God's image?**

#### **3. Examine Your Definition of Success**

- **Write down your current life goals and priorities**
- **Beside each one, ask: "Does this help me reflect God's image or is this purely selfish ambition?"**
- **Share your reflections with an accountability partner**

#### **4. Meditate on Christ as Image-Bearer**

- **Read one Gospel account of Jesus this week (consider Luke for Jesus' care for the vulnerable)**
  - **Note specific ways Jesus perfectly reflected God's character**
  - **Pray daily: "Jesus, make me more like you in this specific way..."**
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## Memory Verse

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

*or*

**2 Corinthians 3:18 - "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."**

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## Closing Reflection

**Final Question: "If someone observed your life this past week, what would they conclude you want to be? What would they conclude about the God you serve?"**

**Closing Prayer: Pray for each group member by name, asking God to:**

- **Reveal areas where selfish ambition has replaced His purposes**
  - **Give grace to reflect His image in daily life**
  - **Provide opportunities to care for vulnerable people**
  - **Transform hearts to desire what He desires**
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## Leader Notes

- **Be sensitive when discussing slavery - emphasize the distinction the sermon makes between biblical indentured servitude and chattel slavery**
- **Encourage honesty about struggles with the law and personal failure**
- **Point to grace - we fail, but Jesus succeeded for us**
- **Make it practical - help people identify concrete "vulnerable people" in their context (elderly neighbors, single parents, refugees, those in financial crisis, etc.)**
- **Follow up next week on how people applied what they learned**