



WEEK 1 | GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CONNECT - ICEBREAKER

This ICON series title is taken from Colossians 1:15: *The Son is the image of the invisible God*. The Greek word for *image* here is *eikon*, where we get the words *icon* or *iconic* from. An icon is defined as *a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol*. A doppelganger is someone that can be a representative symbol or double for another person. **Ask your group who they think your celebrity doppelganger would be? For those tech-savvy groups, download the “Star By Face” app on your phone to take a picture of yourself. The app will tell you who your celebrity doppelganger might be. Have some fun with this!**

CONSIDER

What encouraged or challenged you from the sermon and/or daily devotions this week?

CHRIST

1. This ICON series is challenging us to take a hard look at things that we may be making an idol of; often times without realizing it.
 - We can do this by idolizing a celebrity or someone you look up to. (read Exodus 20:3)
 - We can do this by “idolizing” our careers or our pursuit of money. (read 1 Timothy 6:10)
 - We can do this by putting our family above our God. (read Luke 14:26)

In what ways has culture contributed to people idolizing the wrong things?
2. We were created to worship God. Since we were designed to worship and not to be worshiped, if we do not worship God, we can easily find ourselves worshiping another person. There are great consequences for redirecting our worship away from Jesus (Matthew 10:38-39), but what we often don’t consider is the effect of worshiping another has on that person. If we worship the ground that another person walks on and that person is not designed to handle being worshiped, things can go terribly wrong. Think about a celebrity like Michael Jackson, who was worshiped everywhere he went. That worship resulted in him living a tortured life. We can continually praise a son or daughter or another person to the point of worship, only to have them not know how to exist with that same level of adoration. Some have heaped undue praise on religious leaders, only to be disappointed later on. **How can you protect yourself from worshiping another person whether at home, the workplace, or even the church?**
3. There are so many verses of scripture that warn against making false idols or gods and the language is often very strong. Read the following:
 - *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.* (Colossians 3:5)
 - *Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them.* (Jonah 2:8)

- *Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble.* (Judges 10:14)
- *Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.* (1 Corinthians 10:14)

Do these scriptures help you put the danger of idolatry into perspective? Explain why.

4. The idols we create often begin as something good in our lives. One of the tricks the enemy uses is convincing us that more of a good thing is better, when too much is often not a good thing. It is a good thing to provide for our families, but pursuing more wealth is not always good. Taking care of bodies and being focused on our health are good things, but obsessing over it is bad. **What are some of the good things in your life that can easily turn to bad if you were pursuing more of a good thing?**
5. *Image* is such a hot-topic word in today's culture. There is a hot discussion today in college sports as to whether or not amateur athletes should be able to make money off of their own name, image, and likeness (NIL). Many people, especially young women, are sinking into deep and often clinical levels of depression over their own body image. Social media influencers carefully craft and protect their own image for their own financial gain. However, in Christian circles, we often discuss things like protecting our character or even our reputation. **What is the difference between your image, your character, or your reputation? Why is this important to understand how this relates to your walk with the Lord?**

CALLING

Read Psalm 121

This scriptures ask *Where does my help come from?* and answers this way: *my help comes from the Lord.* Sometimes we can make ourselves an idol because we are relying solely on our own abilities instead of relying on God. Recognizing where your help and strength comes from protecting you from doing this. **Take some time this week to ask the Lord to help you in the major areas of your life.** This can be things such as:

- God, you know the concerns I have about my family, help me to _____.
- Father, I know you want me to be a better leader, help me to _____.

Make it a priority to make God the first place you look when you need help.

Daily Devotions: Read and engage with the ICON Daily Devotions. Text JOINGOD to 81411 to have them texted to you each morning at 7:00AM or tap on *Study* in Northside's App to find the Daily Devotions.

Further Study & Reflection:

- Read *Made to Worship: Empty Idols and the Fullness of God* by Phil Stacey
- Additional Scriptures:
 - **Galatians 5:19-21** - See the long list of things God puts in the same category as idolatry and the warning that *those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*
 - **Deuteronomy 13** - Keep in mind the Old Testament context in which this portion of scripture comes from, but also pay attention to the incredibly strong language about what our reaction should be to prophets, religious leaders, family members, and city officials if they lead us to serve other gods!

Memorize: *"You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God..." Exodus 20:4-5a NIV*