

# Image Bearer – Week 4

## Middle School Ministry Teaching Guide

### BIG IDEA

You don't have to earn God's love. You are made right with Him through Jesus, not through being perfect.

### BIBLE

Philippians 3:4-9

### ABOUT THIS WEEK

You don't have to earn your way to God—He already did the work through Jesus. When you trust in Christ, your identity isn't "what I've done," but "who I belong to." Real freedom comes from resting in grace, not striving for approval.

WHAT?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have you ever felt like no matter what you do, it's just not enough?</li><li>• We live in a world that constantly says, "Prove yourself." Be smarter. Be better. Be perfect. But the Gospel tells a different story: You don't have to earn God's love. You can't. But the good news is you don't have to.</li></ul>
SO WHAT?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In Philippians 3:4-9 Paul is writing to a church, and he's basically saying, "If anyone could brag about being 'good enough' for God, it was me."</li><li>• Paul had all the "right" things going for him – he followed the rules, went to the right schools, had the right background.</li><li>• But the he says something surprising: "All of that is garbage compared to knowing Jesus."</li><li>• Imagine working super hard to collect trophies, only to find out their all made of chocolate and melt in the sun. That's kind of what Paul is saying. In light of who God is, our achievements can't hold up.</li><li>• What really matters is knowing Jesus because only Jesus makes us right with God.</li><li>• You don't need a perfect record to be close to God.</li><li>• Jesus gives you His record, His goodness, when you trust Him. That's what grace means.</li><li>• Following Jesus isn't about trying harder. It's about trusting deeper.</li></ul>
NOW WHAT?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Challenge:</b> Let go of the pressure to be perfect this week. When you mess up, don't hide from God, run to Him.</li><li>• When you feel like you're not enough, remind yourself: "Jesus is enough for me".</li><li>• <b>Next Step:</b> Write this down and keep it somewhere close: "I don't have to earn God's love. I already have it."</li></ul>