

BIG TRUTH: WE REJECT GOD'S JOY

1 Chronicles 16:26-27; Isaiah 44:9-11; Psalm 16:1-4, 11; John 15:10-11; 16:14; 17:13; 1 John 5:3

BIBLE VERSE: JEREMIAH 2:13

"For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water."

BIG IDEAS

- Our sin blinds us to God's goodness.
- Our sin causes us to look for happiness in empty things.
- Our sin separates us from true joy.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 14:14-24

Jesus told many stories during His ministry on earth. One story He told was about a man who invited guests to a great banquet or meal. The guests all refused his invitation and gave many excuses about why they couldn't come. They all chose to do other things besides experience the great banquet that the man had prepared for them. The invited guests were blind to the goodness of the banquet just as people are blind to God's goodness. Our sin keeps us from really experiencing true joy that is found only in Jesus.

STORY: FALL

Everything was perfect in the world until we broke it. When humanity chose to sin, the world that was once perfect became messed up and broken. Sin is ultimately a rejection of God Himself. Because of sin bad things happen, we experience all types of pain, and death has come into the world. All of creation groans and wishes that the world could be perfect and good like it was before.

BIG AIMS**Every child should know that:**

- Our sin is a rejection of God that separates us from Him

**Every child should feel:**

- A need to have a right relationship with God

**Every child should:**

- Trust what God tells us about the depth of our sin and brokenness

**Every child should want:**

- A restored relationship with God

A BANQUETING TABLE

As a family, plan a special meal. Let each family member choose a favorite dish and then work together to prepare it. As you share your special meal together, talk about what joy is and how true joy comes from God. (You can choose a special restaurant as an alternative to preparing a meal.)

DISCOVER IT: *(Use the passage to illustrate the Big Truth.)*

Luke 14:15-24

THINK ABOUT IT: *(Use the commentary to reinforce the Big Truth.)*

Jesus told special stories called parables. These stories were meant to show the people listening to Him who He is and who God is. One story He told was about a man who prepared a great banquet or meal. He used his very best to prepare the banquet. He wanted it to be very special. He invited his guests to his banquet because he wanted them to share in his very best. The day of the banquet came, but the guests he invited didn't show up. They all said they had other things to do that were more important to them. They missed out on the great banquet that would have brought them a lot of joy. The man was disappointed that his guests had chosen not to come to his banquet. He sent his servants to find other people, people who didn't have a lot or had not been invited to the banquet, and told his servants to invite them instead. The banquet is like God's goodness. God has given His Son to the world to pay the world's sin debt. We are all invited to believe in His Son, but some refuse and when they do, they reject God's goodness. Our sinful hearts keep us from choosing God's goodness. Our sinful hearts keep us from knowing true joy because true joy comes from knowing God. When we reject God, we are like the invited guests who rejected the invitation to come to the man's banquet.

TALK ABOUT IT: *(Use the questions to discuss the Big Truth)*

- What did the man prepare for his guests? (He prepared a great banquet.)
- How did the guests respond to the man's invitation? (They rejected his invitation to come to his banquet.)
- What does our sinful heart keep us from? (It keeps us from God's goodness and joy.)



KNOW

As a family, memorize Jeremiah 2:13 by having a memorization race. The first family member who memorizes the verse and can say it on their own without looking wins.



DO

Help your child create his or her own banquet table. Supply balloons, streamers, tablecloth, plates and napkins. As you help your child decorate his or her own banquet table, talk to them about how God invites us to believe in Jesus. Jesus is like the great banquet. When we believe in Him, we experience great joy. When we refuse, like the invited guests refused, we miss out on God's goodness and joy.



FEEL

Spend some time this week talking with your child about how you have experienced God's joy in your own life. Share a time when you saw God's goodness in your life. Pray, thanking God for His goodness in your life.



WANT

As a family, talk about what joy means and the things that bring you joy. On a large poster board or a piece of paper make a list of the things that bring each of you joy. Place the list in a visible place in your home. Throughout the week talk with your child about how everything we have is from God, even our toys. Talk with your child about how true joy is found in knowing God because only He can give joy.

Spend some time this week singing praise songs with your child, such as "His Banner Over Me" and other songs that talk about joy in the Lord. Remind your child that true joy comes from God, but our sinful hearts keep us from experiencing that joy.