

GOD'S GRACE IS RECEIVED THROUGH FAITH

STORY: REDEMPTION

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S GRACE IS RECEIVED THROUGH FAITH

John 3:14-18; Romans 3:20-24; Ephesians 2:8; Galatians 2:15-16; Philippians 3:8-11

BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 2:8-9

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

BIG IDEAS

- We cannot save ourselves from sin.
- Faith is not possible until we begin to see God for who He really is and we see ourselves for who we really are.
- Faith is choosing to put our trust in Jesus alone as our Savior.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 18:9-14

When we truly understand who we are as sinners, we understand the grace that God has shown us. The tax collector really saw God in His holiness and he saw himself in his sinfulness.

STORY: REDEMPTION

Thankfully, God does not just leave us in the broken world, but is repairing the brokenness through His Son. From the very beginning of time, God promised He would fix creation, and He kept His promise by sending Jesus to rescue us from our sin. Jesus came to live on the earth and willingly died on the cross so that sin's power over creation would be broken forever.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- God provides mercy and grace through Jesus
- Mercy is when God does not give us what we deserve; grace is when God gives us what we do not deserve



Every child should feel:

- Awe at God's goodness in His mercy and grace to us



Every child should:

- Give thanks because God is merciful and gracious to us



Every child should want:

- To accept God's gifts of mercy and grace that He extends to us through Jesus

FAMILY DEVOTION: A FAITH THAT TRUSTS

Faith is more than believing in God or a higher power. Faith is trusting God and His plan for our salvation.

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Salvation is God's grace on our lives.

- That we can be saved from our spiritual deadness is an act of God.
- He makes a way for our sins to be forgiven.
- He sent Jesus to pay our sin debt so we could be saved.
- There is no work or deed we could do to save ourselves.
- Salvation is a gift that God gives us through His grace.

We are saved by believing in the work of Jesus.

- It is not enough to believe in God or in a higher power.
- Our salvation comes from believing that we need to be saved.
- It comes by believing that Jesus paid our debt for us.
- We receive salvation by believing, or having faith, in what God has offered us through Jesus.

God's grace enables us to have faith.

- We do not have faith on our own because we are blinded by our sin.
- We do not even know we need saving until God shows us.
- God's gift of grace to us is that He opens our eyes to see our brokenness and He offers us Jesus.
- God gives us faith to be saved.
- He shows us grace by giving us faith.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 18:9-14

The Prayer of the Tax Collector

Opening Illustration:

Gather together clear contact paper, different colored tissue paper (torn and balled up), and black construction paper. Draw a cross on the construction paper and then cut the inside of the cross out leaving a 1" edge. Next place the contact paper over the cross and place it sticky side up. Give the children different colored tissue paper to place on the contact paper. Once they finish filling in the contact paper with tissue paper, place another piece of contact paper on the back of the cross. Remind the children that the cross shows us that God rescues us from our sin and brokenness. He fixes our brokenness by sending Jesus to pay our sin debt.

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BIG IDEA: WE CANNOT SAVE OURSELVES FROM OUR SIN.¹

Our good works are not good because of our sinful hearts.

- Even the good things we try to do are not really good because we do them for ourselves, not for God.
- The Pharisee seemed to do a good thing by going to the temple to pray.
- His good work was not really good because he really just glorified himself and he did not glorify God.
- Our sin keeps us from glorifying God.
- It keeps us from being able to pay our sin debt.
- Nothing we do is really good when we are still captive to our sin.



Help the children create a community helpers badge, such as a police badge or a fireman badge out of cardstock. Help them cut out a badge using a template you find online. Next, help them decorate their badges. Talk with them about how community helpers help us when we cannot help ourselves. Jesus helps us by saving us because we can never pay our own sin debt.

Our sin holds us captive and taints all that we do.

- Everything about us is affected by our sin.
- The Pharisee's prayer was a good action itself, but was made bad by his sinful heart.
- His sin caused him to be prideful and puffed up about himself.
- Our sin does the same thing; it makes us proud and puffed up.
- Even the good things we think we're doing are often done to make ourselves look good.
- This sinfulness keeps us from saving ourselves.
- There's no way we could ever save ourselves.

Are we able to save ourselves from our sin? (No, we are all sinners and cannot save ourselves.)

1. Matthew 23:23-24: We are all sinful

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BIG IDEA: FAITH IS NOT POSSIBLE UNTIL WE BEGIN TO SEE GOD FOR WHO HE REALLY IS AND WE SEE OURSELVES FOR WHO WE REALLY ARE.

We must see God as holy and ourselves as unholy.

- To have a right view of ourselves, we must have a right view of God.
- We must really understand the nature of God as much as we can.
- We must see Him as the holy and righteous God He is.
- The tax collector understood the holiness of God.
- He couldn't even look up toward heaven because of his understanding of the holiness of God.
- We must understand our own lack of holiness.
- The tax collector saw God's holiness and his own lack of holiness.



Show the children a balloon with air in it. Let them touch the outside of it and try to squish it. Make sure the balloon is tight. Next, release the air and show the children how the balloon becomes stretchy when the air is out. Tell them that when we see ourselves as we really are, sinners, we will be like the stretchy balloon. We won't be puffed up or proud.

Faith happens when we truly understand our helplessness.²

- The tax collector stood far off because he understood his own sinfulness.
- He had faith to cry out to God for salvation because he understood his helplessness.
- When we understand our helplessness, we can have faith to trust in God's offer of salvation.
- The Pharisee did not cry out for help because he could not see his own helplessness.
- The Pharisee did not really understand God, much less himself.
- We have faith when we see our own sinfulness and understand God's holiness.

What do we need to see about God to have faith? (We need to see God for who He really is.)

What do we need to see about ourselves to have faith? (We need to see how sinful we really are.)

2. Genesis 4:4-7: Cain did not truly see God or understand his own sinfulness. Abel understood God and he understood his own sinfulness and need for God.

GOD'S GRACE IS RECEIVED THROUGH FAITH

BIG IDEA: FAITH IS CHOOSING TO PUT OUR TRUST IN JESUS ALONE AS OUR SAVIOR.

We cannot trust in ourselves to save ourselves.

- We are not able to save ourselves.
- Nothing we do can save us.
- The Pharisee thought he was worthy and justified by his religious actions.
- He did not understand that he was blinded by his sin.
- We cannot help ourselves or trust in our actions because they aren't truly good.
- The tax collector knew he was helpless.
- He knew his only help was Jesus.



Play a game of Simon Says with the children. Let them take turns being Simon. When you finish playing, talk with the children about how we each make a choice to follow Simon, just like we make a choice to believe in Jesus. Faith is when we make the choice to believe in Jesus.

When we trust in Jesus alone, we understand He is our Savior.³

- We have to realize that there is no other way to receive salvation.
- There is no other road we can walk, no other path we can follow except through Jesus.
- We must realize that Jesus was the only person to live a perfect life.
- He is the only right and acceptable sacrifice for our sins.
- Only He can pay our sin debt.
- Only Jesus is the way to be saved.
- We show our faith when we trust in Jesus as our Savior.
- Trusting in Jesus as our Savior shows that we know and believe that He is the only way to know God.

What does our faith show we believe? (It shows we believe that Jesus is the only way to know God and to be saved.)

3. 1 John 5:5: Faith means trusting in Jesus alone as our Savior. When we trust in Jesus, we overcome the world.

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HOOKS



KNOW

With Bowed Heads

Talk with the children about how people used to bow to show their humility. People would bow to someone if that person was in a position of honor above them, such as a king or queen. Have the children practice different bows, such as bowing at the waist, bowing to the ground, bending one knee and bowing, etc. Talk with them about how the tax collector bowed his head because he understood his own sinfulness and God's holiness.



DO

- The tax collector didn't enter the temple and raise his eyes to heaven.
- He didn't pray telling God how great he was. Instead, he prayed asking God to help him and to save him.
- We show our faith when we understand who we really are. When we understand that we are sinners and need God, we can have real faith in Jesus.



FEEL



WANT

The Right Choice

Help the children create a treasure map using white cardstock and markers. On their maps, they should include several roads to choose, but only one that leads to the treasure. After the children finish their maps, lead them in a discussion about how our faith is shown when we choose the only way to be saved, which is Jesus.

- Our treasure maps have more than one road to choose from, but only one road leads to the treasure.
- There are many ways that seem like the right way in life, but there is only one way to be saved.
- The only way to be saved is through Jesus.