

GOD'S FAMILY IS THE CHURCH

STORY: NEW CREATION

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S FAMILY IS THE CHURCH

John 1:11-13; 14:6; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26-29; 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:11-12; Hebrews 2:10-11; 1 John 3:1-2

BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 2:19

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,"

BIG IDEAS

- Our sin makes us spiritually dead, isolated, and separated from God.
- Through Jesus God has made a way to adopt us into His family.
- All of the people who make up God's family are the church.
- As Jesus followers our deepest belonging and connections in life are to God's family.

BIBLE STORY: RUTH 1-4

Ruth chose to go with Naomi and to make Naomi's God her God. Ruth's choices brought her into the genealogy of Jesus and the family of God. When we know Jesus, we are brought into the family of God, too.

STORY: NEW CREATION

Part of the beauty of the gospel is that God does not just rescue us from the power of sin, but He is also making everything new. God offers new creation to those who place their faith in Jesus. This newness comes in two ways. The first is that by breaking the power of sin, Jesus is making men and women into brand new people with new identities. Second, God is not only making people new, but He is also going to make a new heaven and a new earth for us to live on and worship Him in.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- The church is God's family
- The Christian life cannot be faithfully lived apart from the local church



Every child should feel:

- Loved by the church family that God has placed them into
- Love for their church family



Every child should:

- Participate in their local church
- Serve someone within their local church



Every child should want:

- To grow together in Christ with other members of God's family

FAMILY DEVOTION: THE FAMILY OF GOD

Ruth faced a life-changing decision when her husband died. She chose to go with her mother-in-law to her homeland and in so choosing, she chose Naomi's God and forever became a part of God's family.

BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 2:19

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,"

When we know Jesus, we are no longer outsiders.

- Our sin makes us separated from God.
- Our sin nature causes a barrier to exist between God and man.
- Jesus breaks down this barrier and removes our sin and separation.
- Because of Jesus, we are no longer outside of the family of God.
- Because of Jesus, we are no longer separated from God, but we can be a part of His family forever.
- Our sin keeps us from God, but our belief in Jesus brings us to Him.

Knowing Jesus means we gain rights and privileges.

- Knowing Jesus means we are no longer aliens to God.
- We gain the rights and privileges of being God's children when we believe in Jesus.
- We no longer have to live enslaved to our sin, but we are set free to live for God.
- We become God's children and are considered His sons and daughters.
- We gain access to God and are no longer separated from Him.
- We also are no longer condemned and under God's wrath.

Knowing Jesus means we become citizens of God's family.

- When we know Jesus, we are no longer strangers.
- We become citizens of God's family and are a part of His family forever.
- We are no longer outsiders, but are now a part of His body for all time.
- Knowing Jesus means we can be with God now and forever in eternity.
- We do not have to be separated from Him ever again.

BIBLE STORY: RUTH 1-4

Ruth And Naomi

Opening Illustration:

Bring in several different colored pom-poms. Divide the children into small groups and toss the pom-poms all together onto the floor. Have the groups race one another to gather a specific color of pom-pom. For example, one team will gather only red pom-poms. Once they are finished, talk with them about how God offers us a new relationship through Jesus and adopts us into His family, which brings us peace.

BIG IDEA: OUR SIN MAKES US SPIRITUALLY DEAD, ISOLATED, AND SEPARATED FROM GOD.¹

Our sin excludes us from God's family.

- Sin causes a barrier between God and man.
- When Adam and Eve sinned they were banished from the Garden of Eden and from God's presence.
- Every person is born sinful, so every person is born separated from God.
- Sin keeps a person from being a part of God's family because God's family is made up of His followers.



Have the children define the words "isolated" and "separated." Allow the children to share their definitions and then remind them that our sin isolates and separates us from God.

Our sin makes us strangers to the promise of God's salvation.

- God's promise to mankind is salvation.
- Because of our sin we are strangers to that promise.
- We do not understand it and are not part of it while we are sinners.
- Only when we repent and believe in Jesus do we become familiar with God's promise of salvation and understand it is for us.
- Our sin keeps us blind to the truth about God and His offer of salvation.

Our sin leaves us hopeless and without God.

- When we do not know God and are isolated from Him, we are without hope.
- God is our only hope.
- It is only through Him that we have any hope of a life here on earth and in eternity.
- Our sin leaves us hopeless because we are enslaved to our sin nature and we are living outside of the family of God.

What does our sin do to us? (It leaves us separated and isolated from God.)

1. Ephesians 2:12: Our sin alienates us from God and separates us from Him.

BIG IDEA: THROUGH JESUS GOD HAS MADE A WAY TO ADOPT US INTO HIS FAMILY.²**Jesus came to redeem a sinful people.**

- Jesus came to the earth for people full of sin and who reject God.
- Jesus came to the earth to save mankind because mankind cannot save itself.
- Jesus' life and death make a way for sinners to become saints.
- We are renewed and made into new creations because of Jesus.
- Ruth was outside of the family of God because she was not a believer.
- When she chose to make Naomi's God her God, she became a part of God's family.



Give the children an arrow made out of cardstock. Ask the children to write down the way that people can become part of God's family on their arrows. Remind them that Jesus is the way that we become part of God's family.

Jesus' redemption removes our sin barrier.

- Because Jesus lived a perfect life, He was the perfect sacrifice.
- God accepted Jesus' death as full and complete payment for our sin debt.
- Now, when we turn away from our sin and believe in Jesus, we are no longer counted as sinners.
- Instead, we are seen as saints.
- The sin barrier that separated us from God is removed because of Jesus.

Because of Jesus, believers are adopted by God.

- Not only does our redemption make us forgiven, but we are no longer separated from God.
- When we are redeemed, we become a part of God's family.
- He adopts us as His sons and daughters and makes us joint heirs with His Son, Jesus.
- We are no longer outsiders and fatherless. Once we believe in Jesus, we become part of God's family forever.

How is God able to adopt us into His family? (Through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus, God is able to adopt us into His family.)

2. Galatians 4:4-5: God sent Jesus to redeem sinners and to bring them into His family.

BIG IDEA: ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP GOD'S FAMILY ARE THE CHURCH.³**All those who believe in Jesus are His body.**

- Every person who repents and believes in Jesus becomes a part of God's family.
- People who believe in Jesus are His redeemed people.
- All the redeemed people in the world make up the body of Christ.
- The body of Christ is known as God's church.
- The church is made up of believers all across the world who have lived, are living now and will live in the future.



Place a picture of a church building or the outline of a church on the wall. Give the children small paper cutouts of people. Use a bandana as a blindfold and have the children take turns wearing the blindfold and trying to pin the people on the church. Remind the children that the church is made up of all of God's redeemed people.

Christ's body is His church.

- The church is the body of Christ.
- It acts as His hands and feet.
- The church serves a unique purpose to be Christ to the world.
- The body of Christ is not in one particular place or section of the world.
- It is made up of all the people who have been redeemed by God through Christ.

Christ is the head of the church.

- Redeemed people become part of the church through Christ.
- Christ is the way that a person joins the family of God.
- God has made Christ the head of the church.
- Christ leads the church and leads His people to serve God through following and obeying His Word.

What is the church? (The church is made up of all of God's redeemed people.)

3. Ephesians 5:23: Christ is the Savior of the church and the church is made up of God's redeemed people.

BIG IDEA: AS JESUS FOLLOWERS OUR DEEPEST BELONGING AND CONNECTIONS IN LIFE ARE TO GOD'S FAMILY.⁴

The body of Christ is made up of many members.

- The body of Christ is not just one member or one congregation of people.
- It is made up of many, many members.
- Everyone in every part of the world who believes in Jesus is part of the body of Christ.
- Every member of the body of Christ is connected to one another through Jesus.



Have the children make a chart of the qualities that a best friend has. Go over these qualities and then talk with the children about how a believer's relationship with a fellow believer is eternal and lasting.

Being a part of God's body is forever.

- Members of God's family can have deep and lasting relationships with one another because being in God's family is forever.
- The relationships that fellow believers have with one another are eternal.
- Being a member of God's family is eternal. It never goes away or changes.
- Being a part of Christ's body is forever, too.

Christian relationships are deeper than any other relationship.

- A relationship between two believers is a long-lasting relationship.
- The friendships that we build with fellow believers are eternal friendships.
- Even when physical death may separate us, we have the hope of our eternity together.
- These relationships are deeper and more connected because of the spiritual depth that they can have through abiding in Jesus.

What are the deepest connections for members of God's family? (The deepest connections are those with fellow believers.)

4. Romans 12:5: All believers are one body and individual members of it.

HOOKS

**Family Of God Wreath**

Have each child trace one of his hands. Cut these hands out and then glue them on a paper plate to create a wreath. Lead the children in a discussion about the family of God and how these relationships are deeper than any other.



- When we believe in Jesus, we become part of God's family.
- God adopts us into His family and we become part of His church.
- The relationships in the church are deeper and more connected because they are eternal and everlasting.

**Friendship Bracelet**

Bring in beads and string. Help the children create their own friendship bracelet using the beads and string. Talk with the children about how God adopts us into His family when we believe in Jesus.



- When we believe in Jesus, we are adopted into God's family and we are part of His church.
- Being a part of God's church means that we are joined with other believers.