

JESUS IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

STORY: REDEMPTION / YEAR: ETERNITY

BIG TRUTH: JESUS IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 3:21-22; 4:1-5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 4:20-24

BIBLE VERSE: 1 PETER 2:24

“He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.”

BIG IDEAS

- To be in God’s presence means that we must be holy or righteous.
- Jesus not only bears our punishment, but also applies His righteousness.
- In Christ, the Father no longer sees our sin, but instead sees His Son’s perfection.
- Jesus makes us positionally holy before God.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 15:15-31

Jesus’ parable about the young son who left his father’s house to seek his own sinful pleasure is an example of how God welcomes us as sinners into His family. Just like the young son could never pay for the sin he had committed against his father, we cannot pay our own sin debt. God credits Jesus’ righteousness to us, making us holy before Him.

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 sent Jesus to die in our place as our substitute
- We need a substitute because we cannot pay our sin debt on our own



Every child should feel:

- Awe at Jesus’s willingness to sacrifice Himself as our substitute



Every child should:

- Talk about why we need a substitute and how Jesus is our substitute



Every child should want:

- To believe in Jesus’s work on their behalf to pay their sin debt

FAMILY DEVOTION: NOT MY RIGHTEOUSNESS

The fact that those who have saving faith in Jesus get to be in relationship with God is based upon the life and death of Jesus, God’s Son. God credits Jesus’ righteousness to man when a person repents and believes. We can be with God because of the life and death of Jesus.

BIBLE VERSE: 1 PETER 2:24

“He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.”

Jesus knew no sin until He bore ours on the cross.

- Jesus is fully God and fully man.
- He is perfect and holy because He is God.
- He came to earth and lived a perfect life.
- Jesus knew no sin until He took on the sin of the world.
- He was seen as sinful in God’s eyes so that He might pay the sin debt of every person.
- Jesus bore our sin debt on the cross. He paid our penalty.

Jesus’ death enables us to die to sin and live for Him.

- Because Jesus paid our sin debt, we are no longer enslaved to our sin nature.
- Jesus’ death made a way for us to have freedom from the sinful desires that once ruled our lives.
- We can resist the temptation to sin when we repent and believe in Jesus because we have the Holy Spirit to help us and guide us.
- When we have a relationship with Jesus, we can die to our sin in His power and live for Him.

We are healed spiritually by His sacrifice.

- We are spiritually broken and dead when we are born.
- Without Jesus, separated from God, we have no hope.
- When we repent and believe in Jesus, we are given new life through Him.
- Our hearts are no longer enslaved by our sin nature and we are set free to live for Jesus.
- We are no longer dead spiritually because saving faith in Jesus gives us new life.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 15:11-31

The Prodigal Son

Opening Illustration:

Give each child a shield cut out of cardstock and crayons. Help the children write their name on the shield and then give them crayons, glitter, and stickers to decorate their shields. Talk with the children about how God rescues us and fixes our relationships with Him and others.

BIG IDEA: TO BE IN GOD'S PRESENCE MEANS THAT WE MUST BE HOLY OR RIGHTEOUS.¹

God is holy and man is not.

- God is perfect. He is without sin.
- He is the holiest of beings because He is righteous.
- Mankind is not holy. We are born sinful and continue to sin even after birth.
- We are not righteous and are in need of being saved from our sinfulness.
- Because God is holy and man is not, man is separated from God.



Have the children define the word "holy." Allow the children to share their definitions. Next, ask the children to name ways that Jesus makes us holy. Help them think of specific sinful behaviors that may change when they have faith in Jesus.

God's holiness requires man's holiness.

- If God were not holy, then it would not be necessary for man to be holy.
- Because God is holy, man cannot be in God's presence unless man is holy.
- God's holiness is the standard by which we are all judged.
- His perfection demands our righteousness.

Faith in Jesus is the only way to God.

- Man cannot acquire his own righteousness.
- We cannot make ourselves holy because we are so sinful.
- Only God could make a way for man to know Him.
- God sent Jesus to pay man's sin debt. Because Jesus' sacrifice is accepted by God, we are seen as righteous before God.
- Only our faith in the work that Jesus did on the cross can give us access to God.

What is required in order to be in God's presence? (We must be holy in order to have a relationship with God.)

1. Hebrews 12:14: We are not holy and God requires holiness.

BIG IDEA: JESUS NOT ONLY BEARS OUR PUNISHMENT, BUT ALSO APPLIES HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.²

Jesus became like us that He might save us.

- Jesus is fully God. He stepped down from heaven to be born as a baby to a human mother that He might be like man.
- Jesus took on flesh and a human nature so He could live the life that we should have lived but could not.
- He lived a perfect life on this earth so that He could pay our sin debt and set us free.
- He bore our punishment so that we wouldn't have to.
- Because He became like us, He is the perfect sacrifice for us.



Give the children two paper plates each and markers. Ask the children to create a mask from both plates. On one of the plates ask the children make a mark with a marker for every sinful behavior they have done this past week. Tell the children that we are all sinful and before we have saving faith, God sees our sinfulness. Next, ask the children to place the white mask over the marked mask. Tell them that when we have saving faith, God sees Jesus' righteousness, or holiness instead of our sinfulness.

Jesus' sacrifice cleanses us of our sin.

- Jesus lived as a man on this earth. He was tempted to sin in every way that we will ever be tempted to sin.
- He resisted every temptation and lived a sinless life.
- Because God required a sinless sacrifice to pay our sin debt, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice on our behalf.
- His death on the cross satisfied our sin debt.
- We are set free from the sin debt when we have saving faith in Jesus.

Saving faith enables us to obtain the righteousness of Christ.

- When Jesus died in our place, God saw Him as sinful, like we are.
- When we have saving faith, God sees us through the lens of Jesus' righteousness.
- The perfect life that Jesus lived is counted toward us and we are no longer seen as sinful in God's eyes.
- We can obtain Christ's righteousness because He died for us.

How are we seen as righteous? (When we have saving faith in Jesus, God credits Jesus' righteousness to us. He sees us as righteous because Jesus paid our sin debt for us.)

2. Ephesians 4:24: Our new self is the righteousness of Christ. We are credited His righteousness when we have saving faith.

BIG IDEA: IN CHRIST, THE FATHER NO LONGER SEES OUR SIN, BUT INSTEAD SEES HIS SON'S PERFECTION.³

We are unrighteous before God.

- Our sin nature rules our lives. We are blind to our own sin even though God had revealed things about Himself in nature and through His Word.
- We suppress the truth and deny His existence.
- We call what is wrong, right and what is right, wrong.
- We are not holy. We are sinful and unholy before God.
- We owe a great sin debt to Him because He is the Creator and Ruler of the world.

When we have saving faith our sin debt is forgiven.

- We cannot save ourselves because a sinless sacrifice is required to satisfy our sin debt.
- There is no person who can pay the sin debt of mankind, except Jesus.
- Because Jesus came to this earth and lived the perfect life, He could take on our sin debt and God's wrath be satisfied.
- When we recognize that it is for us that Jesus died and we turn away from our sinfulness, we can have saving faith in Jesus.
- Saving faith means we believe that we are sinful and that it is only through the sacrifice of Jesus that we can be saved.
- Our saving faith frees us from the sin debt that we owe.

Because our sin debt is forgiven, we are no longer considered sinful.

- When our sin debt is forgiven, God no longer sees us as sinful.
- He makes us part of His family and sees us as righteous, or holy.
- We are credited with the righteousness of Jesus.
- We have a new hope because we are no longer under God's wrath.

What does God see when we are in Christ? (He sees Christ's perfection and not our sin.)



Bring in a pair of glasses with colored lenses. Ask the children to look at a particular picture or person with their bare eyes. Next, let the children take turns looking at the same picture or person through the glasses. Ask the children to describe the difference in what they see with the glasses and without. Remind the children that when we have saving faith, God no longer sees us as sinful, but sees Jesus' perfection.

3. Romans 4:5: When we believe in the sacrifice of Jesus, our faith is counted as righteousness to us.

BIG IDEA: JESUS MAKES US POSITIONALLY HOLY BEFORE GOD.⁴**Jesus came as our high priest for all eternity.**

- Before Jesus came to the earth, God gave His people laws and guidelines for how they would interact with Him.
- Before Jesus, a high priest entered the most holy place, which represented God's presence, to make sacrifices on the people's behalf.
- After Jesus came, we no longer needed someone to go on our behalf because Jesus' holiness is credited to those who believe.
- Jesus became our eternal high priest. He is the way in which we can have a relationship with God.
- Because Jesus is God, when we know Jesus, we know God.

Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we are considered holy by God.

- There is nothing that we can do to make ourselves holy.
- There is nothing we can do on our own or in our own power to cause God to see us as holy.
- It is only through the sacrifice of Jesus that we are considered holy.
- God chose to send Jesus to pay our sin debt and it is only through His Son that any person is seen as righteous.

We are holy in God's eyes and are daily sanctified.

- To be sanctified means to be made more like Jesus every day, or to be made holier every day.
- When we put our faith and trust in Jesus, we are seen as holy by God.
- God looks at us and sees the righteousness of His Son.
- Not only are we seen as holy, but the human nature that we have while we live on this earth is daily made holier through the work of God's Spirit.

How are we made holy before God? (Through the sacrifice of Jesus and our faith in that sacrifice's fulfillment of our sin debt, we are made holy before God.)



Give each child a number. Next, have the children line up in a single file line. Next, ask the children who is first in line. Then ask the children who was given the number one. Talk with the children about how the child at the beginning of the line is positionally first, even though they were not given the number one. Remind them that we are made positionally holy even though we are not born holy.

4. Hebrews 10:10: We are made holy through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

HOOKS

**Lost And Found**

Give each child a blank piece of paper and pencil. Ask the children to draw the prodigal son in one corner of their paper and the father at the opposite end of their paper. Next, ask the children to use the pencils to create a maze from the prodigal son to the father. Ask the children to exchange their papers with another child in class and take turns working each other's maze. Lead them in a discussion about how we are forgiven and made holy like the prodigal son was forgiven.



- The prodigal son could never repay his father on his own, but the father forgave him and welcomed him back home.
- We cannot be holy in our own power.
- God sent Jesus to pay our sin debt, and through Jesus we can be holy before God.

**Good Choices/Bad Choices**

Divide the class into teams. One child from each team can run to the chalkboard and quickly draw a GOOD or a BAD choice for the class to guess what it is and why it is good or bad. Then the next player from each team will do the same. The player can only have 60 seconds to draw, and when the whistle blows or teacher says, STOP, they have to stop and let the class guess the choice - whether good or bad, and why.



Lead the children in a discussion about how we are all unholy, but God is holy. We make unholy or bad choices, but through Jesus we are seen as holy.

- Jesus came to earth and made all good choices.
- We make bad choices that keep us from being holy before God.
- When we have saving faith in Jesus, we are seen as holy in God's eyes.