

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION AND PURSUIT

STORY: NEW CREATION

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION AND PURSUIT

Matthew 7:15-20; Colossians 1:9-14; Romans 6:15-19; Hebrews 10:19-25

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

BIG IDEAS

- Our lives are supposed to bear fruit that brings glory to God.
- We cannot bear fruit unless we abide in the vine.
- Abiding is position, being connected to God through Jesus.
- Abiding is pursuit, an active and intentional love for and obedience to God's Word and Spirit.

BIBLE STORY: JOHN 15:1-15

Everyone who abides in Jesus, actively pursuing to stay connected to Him through knowledge of and obedience to His Word bears much spiritual fruit for Him. Jesus is the way we fulfill the mission that God has given each of His followers.

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:

- God has given us a holy mission to make Him known to others



Every child should feel:

- Burdened for those in their lives who do not know Jesus



Every child should:

- Share the gospel with someone who does not know Jesus



Every child should want:

- To live faithfully on mission for God and be aligned with His purposes instead of our own

FAMILY DEVOTION: CONNECTED FOR LIFE

Everyone who believes in Jesus is connected to Him. He is the vine and we are the branches. We bear much fruit through knowledge of and obedience to His Word. As He prunes us we bear even more fruit for Him.

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Life in Christ enables a person to live for Christ.

- It is impossible for us to do anything glorifying to God apart from Christ.
- Unless we abide in Christ, which means we are actively pursuing Him through knowledge of His Word and obedience to His Word, we cannot bear fruit.
- When we know Christ and our lives are submitted to Him, we can bear much fruit for Him.
- We can put on the fruit of the Spirit through a life that is submitted to Him.

Jesus gives a person the ability to obey God.

- We do not have the ability obey God in our own power.
- Even after we are saved, we cannot use our human power to obey God.
- It is only through the Holy Spirit, which we receive when we are saved, that we can obey God's Word and commands.
- Jesus is the reason we receive the Holy Spirit because He removes the sin barrier that separates us from God.
- When the sin barrier is removed, we can be reconciled to God.
- When we are reconciled to God, He gives us His Spirit to live inside of us and to guide us and help us.
- It is through this Spirit that we are able to truly live for God.

Jesus removes the sin barrier between God and man.

- We are all separated from God because of our sin.
- Our sin keeps us from knowing God and living for Him.
- Before we know God, we do not live for Him. Instead, we live for ourselves.
- When Jesus lived the perfect life and died on the cross for us, His death removed the barrier between man and God.
- Because this barrier is removed, we are set free to live for God through the power of His Spirit.
- His Spirit works in us to make us more like Him.

BIBLE STORY: JOHN 15:1-15

The Vine And The Branches

Opening Illustration:

Divide the children into small groups. Give each group construction paper and pencils. Have each group trace one another's hands. After they finish, have the children write their names on the hands and then write something that God offers to us, such as, "He offers hope and friendship." Help the children glue or tape their hands to a paper plate to make a wreath around the edge of the paper plate. Talk with the children about how God offers us many things. He offers us hope and friendship. He offers us new life. All of these things are offered to us through Jesus.

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION

BIG IDEA: OUR LIVES ARE SUPPOSED TO BEAR FRUIT THAT BRINGS GLORY TO GOD.¹

Believers receive the Holy Spirit to help them bear spiritual fruit.

- When a person repents and believes in Jesus, not only are his sins forgiven, but he receives the Holy Spirit as guide and teacher.
- The Holy Spirit serves as a person's personal teacher and reminder of the things that God has said in His Word.
- The Holy Spirit helps a person follow God's Word by illuminating Scripture and reminding a person of things already taught.
- The Holy Spirit is the power through which a person can obey God's Word and live for Him.



Divide the children into small groups and ask them to define the words “fruit”, “glory”, and “Spirit.” Ask the children to share their definitions and then remind them that every believer should bear fruit that brings God glory.

A believer's life should bear fruit enabled by the Spirit.

- It is only through the power of the Spirit that a believer bears fruit for God.
- The Holy Spirit is the power source for all believers. He helps believers obey God's Word. He helps believers live for God and bring God glory.
- A believer's life should be characterized by fruit that pleases God.
- No believer can truly live a life that fails to please God because of the work of the Holy Spirit inside of him or her.
- With the help of the Holy Spirit a person can bring God glory by living out His Word.

Those who have been transformed will bear God-glorifying fruit.

- Any person who has been saved will bear fruit for God.
- It is impossible to have been forgiven of sin, have the Holy Spirit and not bear fruit.
- Because it is the power of the Holy Spirit that enables the fruit to be born, every person who has the Spirit will bear fruit for God.
- Every life that has been transformed by God will bear fruit that brings God glory.

What should believers' lives bear? (Believers' lives should bear fruit that glorifies God.)

1. Colossians 1:10: We are to walk in a manner worthy of Christ and to bear fruit for Him.

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION

BIG IDEA: WE CANNOT BEAR FRUIT UNLESS WE ABIDE IN THE VINE.²

Those who do not know Christ will not bear good fruit.

- Everyone who does not know Christ cannot bear good, healthy fruit.
- Every person who is apart from Christ is unhealthy spiritually.
- They cannot bear good fruit when they are unhealthy spiritually.
- Only those who do know Christ will bear good fruit.
- Those apart from Christ are not connected to the vine of life.
- They cannot bear fruit that glorifies God when they are not connected to the life-giving vine.



Bring in several different pieces of plastic fruit. Ask the children to identify the source of life, or what tree, bush, etc., for each piece of fruit you show them. Remind the children that we cannot bear fruit unless we abide in the vine, which is Christ.

Those who know Christ will bear evidence of knowing Him.

- It is impossible for a person to know Christ and not bear some fruit for Him.
- God promises that the Holy Spirit works inside of a person to make him more like Christ.
- Since the Holy Spirit is working inside of a person to make him more like Christ, that person will bear evidence of knowing Christ.
- Though a believer can live a life that doesn't always perfectly glorify God, he or she will bear fruit for God because of the work of the Holy Spirit.
- When a person meets Christ, his or her life is changed forever and their lives will show others that Christ has done a work in their hearts.

We cannot be like Christ without knowing Him.

- When a person doesn't know Christ, he or she cannot become like Christ.
- Our sin blinds us from knowing and understanding the truth, so without knowing Christ, we will not even seek to be like Him.
- When we do know Him, our lives will bear fruit for Him.
- He will live inside of us and our lives will be transformed to be more like His every day.

What do we need in order to bear fruit for Christ? (We must abide in the vine in order to bear fruit for Christ.)

2. Matthew 7:15-20: A healthy tree will bear good fruit. An unhealthy tree will bear bad fruit.

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION

BIG IDEA: ABIDING IS POSITION, BEING CONNECTED TO GOD THROUGH JESUS.³

Because of Jesus, we can draw near to God.

- Before we are forgiven, our sin separates us from God.
- We cannot know God because of the sin in our hearts.
- When Jesus died on the cross, He removed the barrier that separated us from God.
- His death paid the price and made it possible for us to be forgiven and to know God.
- We can now have a personal relationship with God because Jesus made a way.



Play a game of musical beanbag, but instead of removing a person when he or she is left holding the beanbag, change that person's position in the circle. Do this several times and remind the children that abiding in Christ changes our position with God.

We gain access to God when we know Jesus.

- When we know Jesus, we know God.
- Jesus is the only way to know God. When we have saving faith in Jesus, we are able to know God in a personal way.
- God calls us sons and daughters because Jesus removes our sin barrier and makes it possible for us to be in His family.
- We can have access to God through Jesus because Jesus serves as our mediator to God.
- Jesus not only paid our sin debt, but He petitions the Father on our behalf.

Because Jesus changes our position, we are close to God.

- Without Jesus we remain far away from God.
- We have no way of knowing God and learning about Him when we do not know Jesus.
- Because Jesus was the perfect sacrifice and God accepted His death as sufficient to pay our sin debt, we can be close to God.
- We can draw near to God without threat or fear of His wrath because Jesus has removed that from us.
- Jesus took His wrath so that we might be close to God without feeling His wrath.

How does abiding in Jesus change our position? (It removes the sin barrier and allows us access to God.)

3. Hebrews 10:19-21: Jesus made a way for us to know God and to become more like Him.

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION

BIG IDEA: ABIDING IS PURSUIT, AN ACTIVE AND INTENTIONAL LOVE FOR AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD AND SPIRIT.⁴

When we abide in Christ, we actively pursue Him.

- When we abide in Christ, we have saving faith in Him.
- Because we have saving faith in Him, we have the Holy Spirit to guide us.
- The Holy Spirit draws us to Himself and guides us to pursue God.
- Abiding in Christ means that we will seek to know God and to be known by Him.
- Abiding in Christ means that we will actively pursue a relationship with God and will seek to become more like Him because of the working of the Holy Spirit inside of us.



Ask the children to discuss what it means to be connected to someone. Talk with them about what it means to be in a family, to be in a church and how those things affect our lives. Talk with them about how being connected to Jesus changes our lives because it makes us more like Him and allows us to know God.

Abiding in Christ means we love and obey God's Word.

- When we abide in Christ, we will love the things that Christ loves.
- Christ loves God's Word and is obedient to it.
- When we abide in Christ, we will love God's Word and seek to be obedient to it.
- We will seek to be more like Christ and that means we will look more like Jesus every day.

Because of Jesus we are able to pursue a relationship with Him.

- Because Jesus made a way for us to be forgiven and seen as righteous, we are able to have a relationship with Jesus.
- Having a relationship with Jesus means that we will pursue Him.
- We will seek to know Him and to be like Him.
- We will also seek to be known by Him.
- Our lives will be fully submitted to Him and we will live every day for Him.

How does abiding change our pursuit? (It makes us pursue a relationship with Jesus.)

4. Hebrews 10:22: We can draw near to God with a clean conscience because of the work of Jesus on the cross.

GOD'S MISSION IS FUELED BY POSITION

HOOKS



The Vine Of Vines

Place a picture of a vine on the wall or board. Give each child a small paper branch. Use a bandana as a blindfold and play a game in which the children try to pin the branches on the vine blindfolded. Lead them in a discussion about how those who know Christ will abide in Him.



Good Fruit Versus Bad Fruit

Give each child different types of fruit shaped paper. Ask the children to write down behaviors that are pleasing to God and behaviors that are sin. Allow the children to share their behaviors and then place each one in a bowl that is either labeled good fruit or bad fruit. Lead the children in a discussion about how those who abide in Jesus will bear good fruit.

