

OUR TESTIMONY IS JESUS

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING ON MISSION / SERIES: ACTS

BIG TRUTH: OUR TESTIMONY IS JESUS

1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:4; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 1 John 1:5; Colossians 1:28

BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 26:22-23

"I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing, but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: That the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, He would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

BIG IDEAS

- We testify with God's help.
- We testify of Jesus' suffering.
- We testify of Jesus' victory for Jew and Gentile.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ACTS 25:22-26:32

KNEEL: LIVING ON MISSION

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- The gospel has the power to turn the world upside down.
- They are empowered and chosen to be a gospel witness in the world.
- Our salvation has come by grace alone.



Every student should feel...

- Comfort that the Lord is with them wherever they go.
- Hope in the God of salvation.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read, study, and meditate on the entire book of Acts.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Pray consistently for boldness to make Jesus known.



Every student should want...

- To pursue faithfulness in living on mission.
- To share the gospel with people in their lives who do not know Jesus.
- To sacrifice their personal freedoms for the sake of the gospel

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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Believers have a testimony in Christ.

"That the Christ must suffer and that, being the first to rise from the dead..."

- Christ is first in all things. He is the first to live a perfect life as a human. He is the first to rise from the dead, making it possible for all people to have eternal life through Him. Because of Him, people have the opportunity to have their sins forgiven.
- Believers have a testimony because of Jesus. Because He willingly came to earth and took on flesh, believers have something to tell others about. If it were not for Christ suffering in our place, we would not have a testimony. We would still be lost in our sin.

Believers testify about Jesus' life.

"That the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, He would proclaim light..."

- A believer's testimony is Jesus. It is not all the sin that he or she has committed. Instead, it is the grace that has been shown to them. When a believer testifies, he or she tells what Jesus has done.
- A believer tells others about Jesus' life—He came to earth, lived the perfect life, and died on the cross in our place. His death covered our sin debt. He was buried and rose again on the third day. Believers testify of His life that made it possible for all who believe to have new life.

Believers testify about Jesus' redemptive work for all people.

"...by being the first to rise from the dead, He would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

- Jesus' life is the story of redemption. He came to the earth to redeem His people. His life offers redemption to those who believe. His redemption is available to all people who call on His name.
- Believers tell all people about this redemptive work. Believers testify of Jesus' redemption that is available to all people all over the world who call on His name. Those who repent and believe in Him receive redemption.

BIG IDEA #1: WE TESTIFY WITH GOD'S HELP.¹**[THIS]**

To testify is to tell others of something or someone. Testifying is to give the facts and details of your experience. Typically, it is a firsthand knowledge that you are conveying to others. Believers testify of the work that has taken place inside of them and they do so with God's help. Paul is an example of this in Acts 25:22-26:23. Paul stands accused before Agrippa. His defense is his testimony of the work that Jesus has done in him. Paul relays the story of his Damascus Road conversion, retelling the events that occurred when he encountered Jesus and how his life was changed. Since that day, Paul continued to teach and preach Christ and the work Jesus did on earth and on the cross. In Acts 26:23, Paul confesses that any testimony he has given has been through God's help and the power that has been afforded him by God. Paul did not tell of his own accomplishments, of the many churches planted or conversions seen. Instead, he relayed the work that God had done through him and the power of Christ in him.

[THEREFORE]

What does it mean to testify of the work of Jesus? How does God help us testify of this work?

John 16:12-15 tells us that those who are new creations in Christ have the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our helper and the way in which we testify of the work of Jesus. Acts 1:8 also reminds us of the help that the Holy Spirit gives us in telling others about Jesus. When we testify of Jesus, the Spirit works in us to give us the words to speak and a boldness to speak them.

[THIS]

Speaking about Jesus requires a boldness and willingness to stand apart from the rest of the world. When we stand apart from the rest of the world, we place ourselves in a situation that could bring about our harm. Paul knew this and continued to testify of the work of Jesus in his life. He did this with God's help. We can testify of Jesus' work in our lives with God's help also. As we tell others all that Jesus has done for us and the salvation that is available to them, God helps us through His Spirit. His Spirit works in us to guide us and to give us the words we need to speak. We also receive boldness and courage to continue in the face of opposition and difficulty. As we endeavor to tell others of Jesus, God works on our behalf to protect us and to strengthen us to do His work.

[THEREFORE]

How have you felt strengthened by God when you have faced opposition in sharing the Gospel?

When we share the Gospel, God is with us and He helps us. Isaiah 41:10, Psalm 54:4, and Hebrews 13:6 remind us that God is our help and strength when we are doing His will. He does not leave us and He strengthens us to testify of His Son. We can trust that He will give us the power and strength we need to share the truth of who Jesus is with the world around us.

What encouragement do you find in Paul's faithfulness to continue testifying of Jesus' work despite the opposition he faced?

In Acts 26:1-32, Paul faced opposition. He was questioned and accused because of his faithfulness to Jesus. None of this stopped him from continuing to tell others about Jesus. Paul testified of the work of Jesus without pause or hesitation. He did not let anything that happened to him keep him from testifying of the work that Jesus had done in his life.

1. Acts 26:22: God helps His people testify of the work of Jesus.

BIG IDEA #2: WE TESTIFY OF JESUS' SUFFERING.²**[THIS]**

The testimony of every believer is that they are redeemed by Jesus. To be redeemed by Jesus requires Jesus' suffering in their place. Jesus came to the earth, took on human flesh, lived the perfect life, and then died the death that every person owes for their sin debt. He was arrested and falsely accused during His earthly ministry. He was beaten severely and crucified. He was mocked and ridiculed—all for the sake of providing redemption for those who call on His name. He suffered in our place. He did this all while owing no sin debt. He did this all while being innocent and not deserving of the punishment He was receiving. His testimony is the testimony that every believer tells when they tell their redemption story. Paul exemplified this when he stood before King Agrippa. This story, relayed in Acts 26:1-32, is an example of how a believer testifies of Christ's suffering. As Paul stood before Agrippa, he told of Christ's suffering and how he died in his place. Paul, like the prophets before him, testified that Christ must suffer to make a way for mankind to be saved.

[THEREFORE]**Why must believers testify of Jesus' suffering?**

In Luke 9:22 and 24:46, Jesus teaches that the Son of Man must suffer for the sake of the world. The suffering of Jesus is necessary for the salvation of the world; therefore, believers must testify of this suffering. It is part of the salvation story.

[THIS]

Jesus' suffering is a part of every believer's story. Without His suffering, we are not redeemed, and we do not have a testimony. If we are to testify of the salvation offered to the world, then we must tell others of the suffering of the Christ. We cannot shrink back from telling others what Jesus suffered for our sake. Instead, we must tell others that Jesus lived and suffered in our place. By doing this, we reveal our own need for salvation. Paul does this in his testimony before Agrippa. As Paul tells of his own conversion, he relays the suffering of Christ and reveals his own sinfulness. When we tell others that Christ suffered, we also tell that He suffered because of our sin and the sin of the world. In doing this, we share the truth of who we are and the salvation offered to those who call on the name of Jesus.

[THEREFORE]**Why are we tempted to leave out the suffering of Jesus when we share the Gospel with others?**

The suffering of Jesus points to our sin and when we point out the sin of mankind, it is offensive to some. This can lead to our persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12, John 15:18, and 1 Peter 4:12-14 remind us that persecution is part of serving Jesus. We should expect it.

Read Acts 26:1-32. What does Jesus' suffering teach us about our own suffering for the spread of the Gospel?

Paul suffered because he testified of the suffering of Jesus. When we testify of the suffering of Jesus, we will suffer, also. Matthew 5:10 and 2 Corinthians 12:10 remind us that suffering for the sake of Jesus is part of our Christian walk. When we testify of Jesus' suffering, we can take heart because we know that we are like Him when we experience some of the same things He did.

2. Acts 26:23: Believers testify of Christ's suffering on their behalf.

BIG IDEA #3: WE TESTIFY OF JESUS' VICTORY FOR JEW AND GENTILE.³**[THIS]**

Jesus' victory over sin and death is a victory for Jews and Gentiles. Paul testified to this truth when he stood before King Agrippa. In Acts 26:23, Paul testified that the salvation offered by Jesus is offered to Jews and Gentiles alike. The Gospel that Paul was preaching was not just for Jews. He was preaching it to Gentiles also. God's salvation plan is for all those who believe. The victory that Jesus accomplished over death was a victory for Jew and Gentile. Paul was instrumental in carrying the Gospel beyond the Jewish people to the rest of the world. God used him to move the Gospel from His chosen people, the Israelites, to the rest of the world. Paul testified that the redemption available to Jews was also available to Gentiles. Anyone who called on the name of Jesus could be saved.

[THEREFORE]

Read Acts 26:23. What is significant about Paul's testimony that the Gospel is for Jews and Gentiles?

The victory Jesus acquired over our sin was significant. It sets captives free and enables us to have a relationship with God. For this salvation to apply to people beyond the Jews means that even we are able to join the family of God and receive forgiveness of our sins.

[THIS]

When we testify of Jesus' victory, we do so to all people. God's call on the lives of His people is for the Gospel to go into all the world. Our testimony is for all people to hear. Our goal should be that the Gospel is heard by all people everywhere. When we tell of Jesus' victory, we should testify that He overcame sin and death for all people, not just some. His death was sufficient for all people's sin. All people can have redemption of their sin if they repent and believe. Paul stood before Agrippa and testified that salvation is available to Jew and Gentile. We stand before people, declaring that salvation is available to all people who believe. Telling all people about Jesus requires us to go to all people. To take the Gospel to all nations, we must leave our homes and the comfort of our lives to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth. This will carry the Gospel to all people and testify of Jesus' victory for the Jew and Gentile.

[THEREFORE]

How can we testify to all people that Jesus' victory is for them?

Psalm 96:3, Matthew 24:14, and Mark 13:10 remind us that the Gospel is for all nations and all people. To testify to all people that Jesus' victory is for them, we must be willing to go to all nations and all people.

What are some excuses we use for not testifying to all people?

Matthew 9:37 reminds us that spreading the Gospel requires people willing to carry the Gospel to all places. Acts 13:47 also teaches us that we are called to carry the Gospel to all people. We can find excuses not to carry the Gospel to all people when we are focused on earthly things. Colossians 3:1 reminds us to set our minds on things above, not on things on earth. When we do that, we will testify to all people about the victory Jesus acquired for the Jew and the Gentile.

3. Acts 26:23: Jesus' salvation is available to all people.