

THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL RAISES PEOPLE FROM DEATH TO LIFE

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: I AM AN AMBASSADOR
SERIES: GOD IS THE SOURCE — I AM A LIGHT

BIG TRUTH: THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL RAISES PEOPLE FROM DEATH TO LIFE

John 5:24; Romans 5:10-12, 21; 2 Timothy 1:10

BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 2:4-5

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved--.”

BIG IDEAS

- Sin makes us dead.
- Jesus raises the dead to life.
- Salvation is only possible through Jesus’ work, not our good works.

BIBLE PASSAGE: EPHESIANS 2:1-10

KNEEL - I AM AN AMBASSADOR

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28). Worship is not something that is limited to a service once a week, but instead occurs every day, in all of life. We are unceasing worshipers. Worship never stops, it only changes directions. In order to worship God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind, we must embrace our identity as image bearers. It is out of that identity that we can begin to live for God’s glory in all of life (Colossians 3:17).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- Our sin leads to darkness, but Jesus is light.
- Christians are set apart to shine the light of the gospel in the world.



Every student should feel...

- Humbled that they exist to point to Jesus alone.
- An urgency to make God known to the dying world around them.



Every student should strive to...

- Spend time each day learning more about who God is through His Word.
- Live a life that reflects God to the world.
- Share the gospel with at least one person who does not know Jesus.



Every student should want...

- To pursue holiness that points people away from themselves and towards Jesus.
- To reflect the Father by living sacrificially.
- To make known the love of God.

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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BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 2:4-5

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved--.”

All people are born spiritually dead.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses...”

- Because we are all born with a sin nature, we all reject God. Even as young children, we naturally rebel against God and His commands. We do not choose to follow Him. This means we are all born spiritually dead. We are blind to God and His commands because of our sinfulness. Our focus is ourselves and our own pleasure. We seek to fulfill our desires and do not seek to glorify God.
- Our spiritual deadness leads us away from God. Because we are spiritually dead, we are headed toward an eternity separated from God. There is nothing we can do ourselves to make us spiritually alive.

God’s rich mercy and great love make new life possible to those who believe.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us...made us alive together with Christ...”

- Salvation is made possible through Jesus alone. Jesus came to the earth to become like us that He might be the perfect sacrifice needed for our sin debt. Jesus came because of God’s love for the world and the mercy He willingly shows to those who believe.
- God’s mercy is perfect and He gives it unconditionally. Our sin is great, but God’s mercy is rich. God generously showed mercy by sending Jesus and sacrificing Him in our place.

We are saved by grace given freely to those who believe.

“...made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.”

- It is God’s grace that saves us and sets us free from our sin debt. His grace is given freely to us and when we have saving faith, we are reconciled to God.
- Saving faith in Jesus makes those spiritually dead alive in Him. This means that when we have saving faith, we are no longer blind to the things of God. Our eyes are opened and we are set free to obey and follow God. This saving isn’t something we do in our own power; it is a gift of God’s grace to us.

THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL RAISES PEOPLE FROM DEATH TO LIFE

BIG IDEA #1: SIN MAKES US DEAD.¹

[THIS]

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he addresses man's condition apart from Jesus. In Ephesians 2:1-2, he teaches that every person is born sinful because of the sin nature that we have. Because the first man and woman rebelled against God, the very nature of humans was changed. What God created as perfect and good was broken by man's sin. Now, every person is born with a sin nature that leads them away from God and not toward Him. Our hearts are sinful and dark. We are blind to God and do not acknowledge Him as the Lord and Creator of all things. Along with sin entering the world, death also entered it. This means that living things die and everyone will experience a physical death except for those alive when Christ returns again. Death is part of life on earth as a result of sin.

[THEREFORE]

How does our sin nature lead us away from God?

Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that the human heart is deceitful and wicked. Prior to knowing Jesus, our hearts lead us away from God. In Matthew 15:19 we see that our flesh nature is sinful and rebels against God. Lastly, in Romans 3:11, we're reminded that no one seeks God. We naturally move away from God and choose our own path because of the sin in our hearts. This makes us spiritually dead.

[THIS]

Because of our sin natures, we are not only blind to the things of God, but we are spiritually dead. This means that we do not understand the truth of God and we reject it as foolishness. Our dark hearts are spiritually dead. We are separated from God and unable to save ourselves. As we continue to sin, our hearts harden. We head toward eternal death which is separation from God forever. Because God is the giver of life, being separated from Him is death. Sin darkens our minds and clouds our understanding. We tragically move away from the only person who can give us true life.

[THEREFORE]

Why does separation from God equal spiritual deadness?

In John 17:3, Jesus teaches that life is found in God and knowing God is possible only through a saving faith in Jesus. In John 1:1-4 we learn that Jesus is the source of all life. This means that knowing Him is the way to true life and not knowing Him results in spiritual deadness. John 5:44 shows us that it is God who draws people to Himself and offers us reconciliation through His Son, Jesus.

Can you think back to when you were spiritually dead? How did your life then look different than it does now?

1 Corinthians 1:18 shows us that for those who are separated from God, the message of Jesus Christ seems like foolishness to them. This is the spiritual deadness in their hearts and the way that sin has darkened their minds to the truth of God. In Ephesians 2:1-3, Paul teaches that in our sin, we follow the darkness of this world. As we continue on our path of darkness, we reveal just how spiritually dead we are.

1. Ephesians 2:5: We are all born spiritually dead because of our sin nature.

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BIG IDEA #2: JESUS RAISES THE DEAD TO LIFE.²

[THIS]

Because all people are born sinful, no one can save himself or herself. Just as Paul taught that we are all dead in our sin, we are unable to pay the sin debt we owe. We cannot give ourselves new spiritual life. In God's great plan for mankind, He made a way for all those who believe to have new life in Him. God rescued the world by making the ultimate sacrifice. He sent Jesus, His only Son, to live the perfect life that we could not live. Because Jesus lived the perfect life, He became the perfect sacrifice for us. He made a way for us to be reconciled to God by offering up Himself in our place. Our spiritual deadness means that we could never make ourselves right before God. We are all in need of rescuing.

[THEREFORE]

How does God's sacrifice on your behalf encourage you to pursue Him?

When we understand that it is God's great sacrifice that allows us to have freedom from our sin and new life, we will rejoice in Him and pursue Him. In Psalms 13:5, 35:9, and 40:16, we see examples of the Psalmist rejoicing in the salvation of the Lord. Our hearts will sing with praise to God and we will seek after Him when we grasp His great sacrifice on our behalf.

[THIS]

Jesus' death on the cross made a way for us to be reconciled to God. Because all life is found in God, when we are reconciled to Him, we are raised to new life. Saving faith in Jesus means that we are no longer held captive by our sinfulness. We are no longer blinded by the darkness of our hearts and minds. We receive new hearts after saving faith in Jesus that enable us to see things with a new perspective. We are awakened to the truth of God and we perceive things through the power of God's Spirit that we did not before. This new spiritual life transforms every part of our earthly lives and leads us toward a deepening relationship with the one true God.

[THEREFORE]

Have you experienced the new life that saving faith in Jesus brings?

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul writes that anyone who has saving faith is a new creation. They are new people because they are no longer spiritually dead. Colossians 3:10 reminds us that those with saving faith are new creations and they daily look more and more like Christ. Our lives are different when we have saving faith because we are truly alive.

How can you share the life-giving news of Jesus Christ with someone this week?

In Acts 13:47 we see the disciples understanding that Jesus made them a light in the world to share the gospel with lost people. Psalm 96:3 tell us to declare the glory of the Lord in the world and Romans 1:16 reminds us to not be ashamed of the gospel, but to share it with everyone. We can share the life-giving news of Jesus Christ by obeying God in our actions and by seeking to verbally share the truth with the lost people in our lives.

2. Ephesians 2:5-6: God makes us spiritually alive in Christ.

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BIG IDEA #3: SALVATION IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH JESUS' WORK, NOT OUR GOOD WORKS.³

[THIS]

Salvation is possible to the world because of God's great mercy and love. In Ephesians 2:4-7, we see that God is a God rich in mercy and grace. He loves us perfectly and He showered us with His mercy and grace by sending Jesus to die in our place. God's plan from the beginning has always been to reconcile man to Himself through the life and death of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only way for mankind to know God and to be forgiven for the sin debt that every person owes. Jesus' death on the cross fulfilled the debt that every person owes and made it possible for people to be saved from a life and eternity of spiritual death. God shows mercy by allowing us to escape the punishment we deserve when we believe in the work of Jesus on the cross. He shows us grace by giving us new life and making us new creations in Him through the power of His Holy Spirit.

[THEREFORE]

How has your knowledge of God's grace and mercy increased this week?

Titus 2:11 and Ephesians 2:8-9 teach us that God's grace and His mercy save us. Our salvation is possible because God is a gracious God and He is a merciful God. If it were not for His grace and mercy, we would be lost in our sin forever. God shows the perfect amount of mercy because He is perfect. His perfect mercy and grace are what enables us to be saved.

[THIS]

Ephesians 2:8-9 teaches us about God's grace and helps us understand that we cannot save ourselves. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves or to make ourselves good enough for an eternal relationship with God. God is a holy God who is perfect in every way. When we compare ourselves and our good works to Him, we will always come up short of the righteousness required. Even the nicest, kindest, hardest working person will fall short of measuring up to God's righteousness. This means that we will always sin against Him. Even when we think we are serving others, often our hearts have the wrong motive. We are seeking more to please ourselves than to glorify God. Because of Jesus, we are reconciled to God and this enables us to have the Holy Spirit inside of us which then helps us truly seek to please God.

[THEREFORE]

In what ways have you tried to rely upon your good works to make you right with God?

Romans 4:1-7, 9:16, and 11:6 teach us that it is impossible to be saved or made right with God by our works. Isaiah 64:6 teaches us that our good works are like filthy rags to God. Because we are born sinful, our hearts are sinful and this sin nature taints everything we do. We can try to rely upon our good works because we do not want to admit that we are sinful and can't save ourselves.

How have you seen God's kindness lead you to repentance in your life? How has this led you to worship Him?

1 Chronicles 16:23 speaks of singing of God's praise because of His great salvation. The truth that it is God who saves should result in our praise and worship of Him. Romans 12:1-2 teaches us that a way we can worship God because of His salvation is by living our lives for Him in obedience.

3. Ephesians 2:8-9: We are saved by God's grace towards us not by anything we do or say.