

GOD'S FAMILY SHINES FOR HIS GLORY

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

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S FAMILY SHINES FOR HIS GLORY

Matthew 22:36-37; John 15:15; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 18-20; Ephesians 2:1-4; Romans 6:23; 9:1-3; John 1:4-13; Philippians 2:12-16

BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 5:16

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

BIG IDEAS

- Jesus followers exist to make known the love of God.
- Jesus followers are called to carry the message of life to those who are dead and decaying in their sin.
- Jesus followers are called to shine the light of the gospel in a world blinded by the darkness of sin.

BIBLE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 5:13-16

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.



Property of Tri-Cities Baptist Church
171 Promise Land Dr. Gray, TN 37615

GOD'S FAMILY SHINES FOR HIS GLORY

BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 5:16

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Believers have the light of Christ inside of them.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others..."

- Because all people are born sinful, we are all born into the darkness. This means that we are all blind to the truth of God. We live in the world that is darkened by the sin in men's hearts and we do not naturally seek God. God's people were spiritually dead in their sin prior to knowing Christ. When Jesus came to the earth, He shone a light on the darkness in the world through His perfect words and deeds.
- When we have true saving faith in Christ, we have this light inside of us in the form of the Holy Spirit. We are no longer blind to the truth and oblivious to our sinfulness. We are awakened and our eyes are opened to the truth of God's Word and we are new people. This light illumines the truth of God's Word and enables us to see this sinful world for what it is.

Believers should let the light of Christ shine in the world around them.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others..."

- God uses His people to spread the gospel in the world. It is His plan for His people to live in such a way that the world sees something different in them. The difference is more than just living a good life; it is living in a way that the light inside of them illuminates the darkness of this world and in people's hearts. It's living like Jesus.
- This means that God's people will speak differently, act differently, and they will seek to speak the truth of God's Word to those around them. Believers should not continue living in darkness but boldly live out God's truth and proclaim Jesus' name in their daily lives.

The world sees the light of Christ through His people.

"...so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

- As the Holy Spirit works through God's people to make them like Christ, the world will see the transformation in their lives. The light of Christ inside of His people will be evident to those whom God is drawing to Himself.
- God's people will bear fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit inside of them and the world will see this. As God's people are transformed to be more like Jesus, the spiritually dead people in their lives will see this and a light will shine on the sin in their own hearts. As they walk from darkness to light, they, too, will praise God in heaven.

GOD'S FAMILY SHINES FOR HIS GLORY

BIG IDEA #1: JESUS FOLLOWERS EXIST TO MAKE KNOWN THE LOVE OF GOD.¹

[THIS]

God's children have experienced God's love intimately. Because it is His love and kindness that lead people to saving faith, Jesus' followers know how to love Him and others. God's love is transforming. It transforms a believer's life and understanding of what love is. Because it is so transforming, God's people can love Him and others as He commands them to in His Word. In Matthew 22:36-37, Jesus teaches that His people are to love Him wholly and completely and they are to love others as they love themselves. To love God with our whole person is to pursue Him and to seek after Him whole-heartedly and in every way we can. This pursuit will result in a greater knowledge of God Himself and thus His love.

[THEREFORE]

Read John 14:21. What is a specific way you can be obedient to God this week?

John 14:21 teaches us that those who love God obey His commandments. If we do not obey God's commandments, we reveal that we do not truly love Him. 2 Timothy 3:2-5 shows us that often it is a love of the world and our sinfulness that leads us away from loving God fully and completely. As we die to our fleshly desires and pursue Christ, we can love God with our whole being.

[THIS]

In 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, Paul writes that God's people are controlled by God's love. Because God's people have an intimate knowledge of the love of God, it drives them to make His love known in the world. Just like it was the love of God that led Jesus to come as the light of the world, God's people are led by His love to share the gospel with the lost people in their lives. God reconciles His people, He uses them to tell others about His love and the salvation that is offered to them because of it. Later in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, Paul teaches that God's people are His ambassadors and we share in God's ministry of reconciling unbelievers to Himself. Our purpose is to share God's love with the spiritually dead world around us.

[THEREFORE]

What are some specific ways that you love in the wrong way and not as God loves?

What is true about people is that they are all sinners. Because we are all sinners, we can be difficult to love sometimes. 1 Peter 4:8 reminds us that love covers sin and as we seek to love God and others, we will have to lovingly overlook the offenses of others. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 teaches us what love is and is not. Often, our flesh nature loves selfishly, impatiently, and conditionally. It is our flesh nature that keeps us from making God's love known in the world around us.

Who is someone you can make God's love known to? How can you do that this week?

In Matthew 25:35 as Jesus is teaching about what it means to have true faith, He speaks of the ways that His true followers reveal they really know Him. As they care for others and seek to meet the needs of others, they are showing God's love to those people. Philippians 2:3 also speaks of considering others as more important than ourselves. This week, as you seek to show God's love, you can consider those around you as more important by setting aside your own desires and needs for theirs. Love others as God loves. Be kind to others as God is kind. Doing these things will result in you showing the world around you God's love.

1. Matthew 5:14: God uses His children to spread the gospel in the world.

GOD'S FAMILY SHINES FOR HIS GLORY

BIG IDEA #2: JESUS FOLLOWERS ARE CALLED TO CARRY THE MESSAGE OF LIFE TO THOSE WHO ARE DEAD AND DECAYING IN THEIR SIN.²

[THIS]

In Matthew 5:13, Jesus tells His followers that they are to be salt and light in the world. Being the salt of the earth means living in a way that the world around us sees God at work in our lives. Because believers have the Holy Spirit inside of them, we have the light of Christ that shines on the darkness in this world. Believers have life now and in eternity. Because we are all born dead in our sins and trespasses, we are all in need of new life that is only possible through the Holy Spirit. The people we encounter in our lives who are unbelievers are all spiritually dead and decaying in their sin just like we once were. Paul reminds us in Romans 6:23 that the wage of our sin is eternal death. The world around us is in need of the truth of God's Word and God has chosen His people as the means of sharing this truth.

[THEREFORE]

Read Ephesians 2:1-4. What are some actions, attitudes, or behaviors of people that make you more aware of the deadness of the world?

The world is a broken and dark place because of the sin of mankind. Mark 7:21-23 details the sinfulness found in the world. This is the sinfulness that we are all guilty of in our flesh. Galatians 5:19-21 and Romans 1:24 also reveal to us the darkness of the world. As we grow in our understanding and knowledge of Christ, we become more and more aware of the darkness of the world in the people around us. The world is spiritually dead and decaying in its sin.

[THIS]

Because God has chosen His people to carry His message of salvation to the world, believers have a responsibility to share the good news of the gospel in their daily lives. Paul models a broken heart for unbelievers in Romans 9:1-3 as he agonizes over the lostness of unbelieving Romans. We, too, as God's chosen people should feel great sorrow over the lostness of our friends and family. When we feel this sorrow, it should lead us to feel an urgency in proclaiming the gospel. We should desire to urgently share the good news with our lost friends that they might be saved.

[THEREFORE]

Have you experienced sorrow over the lostness of your unbelieving friends? Why or why not?

In Matthew 9:36-38, Jesus teaches His followers a lesson about loving the lost. As He sees the crowd of Samaritans coming to Him, He has great compassion upon them because they are not believers. As we seek to follow Christ, we should feel compassion and sorrow over the lostness of the world around us. This should move us to share the life-giving message of hope to those who have yet to believe.

How can you share the life-giving news of the gospel this week?

In Matthew 10:19-20, Jesus encourages His disciples that they will have the help of the Holy Spirit during their most difficult challenges. This same Spirit helps us now as we step out boldly to proclaim His truth to our lost friends.

² Matthew 5:13: God's people are the salt and light of the earth. This means that their lives stand out for Him and reveal the transforming work that He does.

GOD'S FAMILY SHINES FOR HIS GLORY

BIG IDEA #3: JESUS FOLLOWERS ARE CALLED TO SHINE THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL IN A WORLD BLINDED BY THE DARKNESS OF SIN.³

[THIS]

As sin continues to prevail on this earth, darkness continues to grow. Just as it is difficult to see clearly in a darkened room, those who are not believers do not see the truth of God's Word. People's hearts are darkened and in rebellion to God's Word. This leads to a blindness to their own sinfulness and need for the salvation offered by Jesus. People do not know they are lost because their sinfulness has hardened them to the truth. We, too, were once hardened to the truth. It is not until someone speaks truth combined with the awakening power of the Holy Spirit that a person sees themselves in great need of salvation.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen yourself be blind to your own sin?

1 Corinthians 2:14 shows us that we are naturally blind to the things of God. We are not awakened to spiritual things and consider God's truth foolishness. It is our sinfulness that causes this in us and leads to spiritual blindness. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 also shows us that it is the god of this world, Satan, who blinds us through deception, but ultimately it is the sin in our hearts that causes us to reject God's truth and further blinds us.

[THIS]

In Matthew 5:14-15, Jesus tells His people to be lights in this dark world. Jesus followers are called to shine their light in this dark world because they have the light of Christ inside of them. Jesus came as the light shining truth on the darkness of this world. His life and death show us our sinfulness and offer us hope for a new life in Him. In order to be this light in the world around us, we must live obedient lives to God's Word and we must share the truth with those who are perishing in their blindness. We must seek to follow Jesus' example of living a holy life and speaking truth in love to those who are separated from God by their sin. As we seek to do this, we will be the light of Christ in the world. Our lives will show others that we believe and obey God and our words will show them the way to have spiritual life now and for eternity.

[THEREFORE]

Read Philippians 2:12-16. Why is it important to live obediently to God in your daily life?

Paul writes to the Philippians that they should strive to be without blemish in this world. It is important to live obediently to God because this reveals to those around us that we are being transformed and that God is at work in our lives. This shines a light on the darkness of sin the world around us.

What thoughts or fears do you experience when you hear the command to be a light in the dark world?

In John 12:42-43, we see a picture of people fearing men rather than God. We also see people desiring the approval of men more than they desired to obey God. God has called His people to shine as a light of truth in this dark world. When we fear persecution or even just being seen as "different" more than we desire to obey God, we become like the Samaritans in John 12. Often, we give in to the temptation to just live a good life as opposed to living so obediently and radically that we might stand out as a bright light shining in this dark world.

3. Matthew 5:14-16: The sinfulness of the world causes it to be blinded by darkness. Jesus tells His followers to be a light in the darkness for His glory.