

GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

THE STORY: NEW CREATION

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 1:28; Matthew 5:16; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:11-15

BIBLE VERSE: 1 PETER 2:9-10

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

BIG IDEAS

- The church is a royal priesthood.
- The church is a holy people.
- The church exists to proclaim God's glory.

BIBLE STORY: ACTS 4

In the early days of the church, Peter, John, and the other disciples preached the truth of the gospel boldly, even when it meant they endangered their lives. The early church served one another and ministered to each other and others. God's church is set apart for His glory. It exists for His purposes and is made holy by Him for Him.

THE STORY

The Story is the good news of the gospel. All of Scripture tells the Story of God the Father's work to redeem a people from the power of sin through God the Son so that they might live for His glory through the power of the Holy Spirit. During this series we will explore the four main movements of the Story of God, and our response to the life-altering Gospel Story!

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- God is the author, subject, and hero of the gospel story
- Salvation comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone



Every child should feel:

- Brokenness over the depth of our sin against God
- Joy in Jesus, our Savior and King



Every child should strive to:

- Describe the gospel message through Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation
- Memorize the Bible verse each week



Every child should want:

- To study the Bible so that they can better understand God's story of redemption
- To share the gospel story with those who are separated from God in their sin

FAMILY DEVOTION: PROCLAIMING HIS GLORY

God chooses His redeemed and sets them apart for His purposes. Those God has redeemed through the blood of Jesus become God's family, or His church. God's church is a holy people and they are set apart to bring Him glory in all the world. Their purpose is to make Him known to those who do not yet have saving faith.

GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

BIBLE VERSE: 1 PETER 2:9-10

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

God's people are a chosen people.

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession..."

- God is a sovereign and all-knowing God. He is all-powerful and controls all things. Because He is all of these things, He alone chooses His people. He chooses His redeemed people and sets them apart for His glory. The church is made up of God's redeemed people. The church is God's chosen people because He is the one who awakens a sinful person's mind to the truth of the gospel and leads them to salvation through His Spirit.
- The church is set apart just as the nation of Israel was set apart for God's purposes. Israel did not choose God and the church does not choose Him. God chose Israel and He chooses His redeemed people to be His body. God's people are chosen for a purpose greater than life on this earth.

God's people are chosen to make God known.

"...that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you..."

- God not only chooses His people, but He chooses their purpose. God calls His people to be set apart for His glory. He gives His church purpose and equips them to fulfill this purpose.
- The church exists to make God known in the world. The church works to live holy lives as they serve one another and seek God's glory in all that they do. As the church obeys God's Word and lives out His principles, they make Him known in the world and to those who are lost and dying.

God's people receive mercy to show God's mercy to the world.

"Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

- Before God redeems a person, they are lost and dead in their sin. When God calls a person to Himself, He redeems them and gives them new life. He also makes them a part of His family and gives them purpose.
- God shows mercy to His people and they in turn should show His mercy to the world. When we fully understand the mercy that God has shown to us, we will show mercy to those we encounter in our daily lives.

BIBLE STORY: ACTS 4

The Early Church

Opening Illustration:

Talk with the children about times when we do things that make us stand out, such as wearing bright colors, or doing something nice and helpful for someone else. Ask the children to name some things that make people stand out. Next, show the children pictures of items that stand out from the rest of the items in the picture. Talk with the children about the idea that God's people stand out from the rest of the world. They are chosen and set apart for His glory and work on the earth.

GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

BIG IDEA: THE CHURCH IS A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.¹

God redeems His people to make them His family.

- In Acts 4, we see the early church caring for one another as if they were family members. In truth, they are all members of the family of God. God sets His people free from their sin and makes them His sons and daughters. When a person has saving faith, he or she becomes a part of the family of God and every other person with saving faith is their brother or sister in Christ.
- God sets His people apart by making them a part of His family. His people become His heirs and His royal priesthood as they serve Him and one another.



Write 1 Peter 2:9-10 on the board. Ask the children what a “royal priesthood” is and show them a picture of one of the church’s pastors. Ask the children what the pastor in the picture does. Next, help them understand that all Jesus followers are called to be ministers/priests, or servants of God and for God’s people.

The church is a special, chosen people.

- The church, or God’s family, is chosen by Him. In His sovereignty, He alone chooses those who receive saving faith in Him. God sees His church as His special people. They are set apart from the rest of creation. God loves His church and uses them in the world to bring people to Himself.
- The church exists to serve one another. The redeemed in the church are to help one another grow in knowledge and understanding of God and His Word.

The church exists to serve God.

- As His royal priesthood, the church’s purpose is serving God. As the church collectively seeks God’s holiness, it will serve fellow believers and the world. We see a picture of this in Acts 4 when the early church sacrificially gave to help others. We see the early church gathering together praying for boldness to share the good news of Jesus with the world.
- The church serves God by loving one another in a Godly way. The church serves God by serving its community and the neighborhood that surrounds it. The church serves God by sharing the life-transforming news that Jesus died in the place of man and salvation is available to all who believe.

Why did God make the church a royal priesthood? (The church is a royal priesthood because the church exists to serve one another and God.)

1. 1 Peter 2:9: God’s church is chosen and made holy through the blood of Jesus.

GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

BIG IDEA: THE CHURCH IS A HOLY PEOPLE.²

The church is a holy people because God makes His people righteous.

- If God did not make His people righteous, they would not be holy. Because God sent Jesus to pay the sin debt of the world, God's redeemed people are a holy people and can grow in their holiness. The church is made up of God's holy people because they have been chosen and set apart for Him.
- Holiness is possible only because of God. He is holy and those who know Him can be holy, too. Part of this holiness is because His people are chosen and set apart by Him and part of it is because His Spirit works inside of the redeemed to make them more like Him.



Divide the children into small groups or pairs. Give each group a piece of cardstock and markers. Ask the groups to come up with a list of ways that believers can pursue holiness. Discuss with them the truth that God makes His people holy through the blood of Jesus.

The church exists to proclaim God's holiness.

- In Acts 4, we see a picture of God's church fulfilling its God-given purpose. The redeemed of God proclaim the gospel to the world, they love and support one another, and they seek God's glory.
- When the redeemed of God live according to His Word and seek to fulfill His purpose for their lives, their actions proclaim God's holiness to the world around them. By living for Him, they reveal the life-transforming power of His Spirit.

The church exists to pursue God's holiness.

- The church is a holy people because it is made up of individuals who personally pursue God's holiness. We see this truth in Acts 4 when the church gathers to pray for boldness and seeks to care for one another. We also see the early church sharing the gospel no matter the consequence.
- The church's purpose is to bring God glory and it does so by pursuing God's holiness. When a group of individuals collectively seek to be holy because God is holy, that group will bring God glory in all the world.
- Even young people can pursue holiness through their thoughts, actions, and attitudes. Holy thoughts, actions, and attitudes are those that align with God's Word. We can pursue holiness through our relationships also. When we choose friends and interact with them in a Godly way, we are pursuing holiness. We can interact with our friends in a holy way by treating them with kindness and love and by not engaging in sinful, disobedient behaviors with them.

2. 1 Peter 2:9: *God's chosen people are holy because God makes them holy and sets them apart for His glory.*

GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

BIG IDEA: THE CHURCH EXISTS TO PROCLAIM GOD'S GLORY.³

God equips His people to share the Gospel.

- In Acts 4, we see God's people seeking God's glory by sharing the gospel boldly, loving one another sacrificially, and obeying His Word. They are able to do these things because of the Spirit of God at work in them. None of us can bring God glory in our own power. We all need the Holy Spirit to truly glorify God.
- God gives His people the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit works inside of them to equip them for His purpose for them. Because God's redeemed people have the Spirit of God, they are able to glorify God in all that they do. God equips the church to share the Gospel with those who do not know Him.



Play a game of musical beanbag. The child holding the beanbag when the music stops gets to name one way he or she can proclaim God's glory in the world. After every child gets a chance to name something, remind them that the church exists to proclaim God's glory.

God's people are commanded to edify one another.

- God gathers His people into local bodies, also called local churches, so the people might encourage and build up one another. We see a local church in Acts 4, when the believers gather together to pray for boldness and they also take care of one another.
- God's people are to love one another and to encourage and edify one another in love. When individuals seek God's glory and they join with other believers, the gathered body of Christ will glorify God by loving one another well and in a Godly way. This means they love one another enough to point out sinful behaviors and to help carry the burdens of other believers.

The church proclaims God's glory by sharing the Gospel.

- Every person who is redeemed has a purpose. That purpose is to share the good news of Jesus with others. God uses His redeemed people to carry His gospel into the world.
- The church is God's chosen people. Their purpose is to carry the gospel into the world. The church shares God's glory with the world by sharing the gospel. The greatest picture of God's glory is His willing sacrifice of His Son to pay the sin debt of the world. By sharing this good news, the church shares God's glory.

3. 1 Peter 2:9-10: *The church's purpose is to glorify God in all the world.*

GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

HOOKS



KNOW

The Church's Purpose

Write the following verse on the board and have the children look them up in their Bibles and read them: Matthew 28:19-20. Discuss with the children God's purpose in gathering His redeemed together and the command for the church to take the gospel into the world. Discuss with them how God makes His people holy by setting them apart and they are to proclaim His glory in all the world.



DO

The Holy of Holies

Give each child a large craft stick and ribbons. Tell the children to make a list of some of the ways that God's people can be holy like God is holy. For every way they list, tell them to glue one of the ribbons to their craft stick. Tell the children that God makes the church holy and it is the job of the church to proclaim His glory throughout the world.



FEEL

A Prayer for Purpose

Lead the children in a prayer asking God to help each person to understand his or her purpose.



WANT