

# 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 student 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 student should feel:

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



### Every student should strive to:

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



### Every student 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

## 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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### 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.

# GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

## BIG IDEA #1: THE CHURCH IS A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

The redeemed of God are not only washed clean of their sin, but they are chosen by God. God is sovereign over all things and people and chooses His people to be His church. God's people are seen as His children and part of His family that He creates with those He has redeemed. The church is made up of people who were once separated from God by their sin, but are now the children of God because of the work of Jesus on the cross. Because the redeemed become God's children and God is King and Ruler over all, they are part of His royal family. They are no longer His enemy, but instead, are His royal children. They are set apart and made His royal priesthood.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What does God's act of choosing and setting apart His people reveal to us about His character and purposes?**

God is sovereign over all. He is the holy of holies and chooses His redeemed people. Romans 8:29 teaches us that God knows from the beginning who will be His and He makes them part of His family. Psalm 139:4 reiterates the truth that God knows His people, even the words they'll speak, before they do. Lastly, Ephesians 1:4 shows us the wisdom, foreknowledge, and sovereignty of God in choosing His people for Himself.

### [ THIS ]

God sets His people apart as a royal priesthood to be used for His glory. His people are His servants and the way in which the Gospel goes into all the world. God established the order of priests in the life of His people Israel as a means for Israel to interact with Him and to have their sins atoned for. The priests served in the temple, which is where God chose to be present before Christ came. Once Jesus came, God gave His Spirit to His redeemed people and now those people serve as His servants and the way in which His Word goes out to those who are perishing in their sin. By calling the church His royal priesthood, God declares that every believer has direct access to Him and can be used by Him for the furthering of His truth. This position is possible only because God chooses to redeem His people through Jesus.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How can you live out the priestly role that God gives to His church?**

Each redeemed person has the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts to use in the church. 1 Peter 4:10 reminds believers of the duty of every believer to use his or her spiritual gifts for the church. When we use these gifts in our local body, we are living out part of our priestly role. Colossians 3:16 teaches us to know God's Word so well that it dwells inside of us. 2 Timothy 2:15 also reminds us to know the Word of God. When we do, we can serve in the church as God's royal priesthood.

**How does your local church function as a "royal priesthood" among one another and within your community?**

In Galatians 6:2, we see that believers in the church are to bear one another's burdens. As the church seeks to fulfill the royal priesthood role, members will bear the burdens of others. 1 Peter 5:5 speaks to the way members of a church should live with one another in submission, love, and humility. We can also serve as a mediator between God and the lost by sharing the good news of the gospel with them. This doesn't mean we offer a sacrifice on their behalf, but we do, by sharing the gospel with them, offer the opportunity to know and understand God's offer of salvation.

1. 1 Peter 2:9: God sets His church apart for His glory.

# GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

## BIG IDEA #2: THE CHURCH IS A HOLY PEOPLE.<sup>2</sup>

### [ THIS ]

In 1 Peter 2:9-10, God's people, the church, are called a holy people. The idea of God's people begin holy begins with God's holiness. God is holy because He is sinless and perfect. In order for man to be holy, he must encounter the holy God. Prior to knowing God, a person cannot be holy. There is nothing man can do to become holy without the presence of God's Spirit inside of him. When a person has saving faith, he or she can pursue holiness and become more like Jesus through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. We become holy people because the Holy Spirit works inside of us to make us like Christ. In Acts 4, God's people, the early church, pursued holiness and were able to do so because they had received the Holy Spirit.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What is the difference between positional holiness (who we're declared by God to be) and pursuing holiness in everyday life (sanctification)?**

When we have saving faith, we are justified, or made righteous and holy before God. This happens because of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Romans 5:1 and Hebrews 10:14 show us that it is saving faith that leads to our positional holiness. 2 Corinthians 5:21 serves as a reminder of the work of Christ resulting in our positional holiness. 1 Corinthians 6:11 speaks to the work that is done through the Holy Spirit in the life of believers as He works to make them holy like Christ is holy. This sanctification is a pursuit of holiness and is accomplished in the power of God's Spirit.

**How does the Holy Spirit work within us to make us holy?**

1 Peter 1:15-16 teaches us that it is through our conduct, or actions that we are made holy day by day by the power of the Holy Spirit. John 14:26 teaches us that we are given the Spirit to guide us, teach us, and remind us of the truth of God's Word and it is through obedience of His Word that we become holy.

### [ THIS ]

The church, or God's people, are holy because they are set apart by God. Being set apart means being chosen and designated as His special people. God chooses His people and sets them apart, making them holy. The church is given the role of royal priesthood to fulfill God's plans and purposes for the church. The early church seen in Acts 4 sought to fulfill God's purpose for them. They boldly shared the gospel, prayed together, and met each other's needs. They stepped into their priestly roles and served one another for the sake of making God known in the world. God makes His people holy to proclaim His excellencies to the world. When the church fulfills its priestly role, it will succeed in showing the world the majesty and excellence of God who takes sinful people and makes them holy.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How does being set apart as holy influence the way you live your life today?**

Acts 17:24 teaches us that God's Spirit does not dwell, or live in manmade buildings or temples. Instead, the Spirit lives inside of God's people. This means that believers are the temple of God as 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 teaches us. Because God's Spirit lives inside of us, we are set apart as holy and should seek God's holiness every day. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 warns us not to live in such a way that we hinder the work of the Spirit inside of us to make us holy.

**How can you continue to pursue holiness in your daily life?**

The pursuit of holiness in our daily lives involves reminding ourselves that we have been set free from our sinful ways. 2 Corinthians 7:1 teaches us that we should actively put away the sinful things in our lives and 1 Peter 1:14-19 teaches us that we pursue holiness when we remember we have been ransomed from our former lives and can freely pursue the things of God.

2. Luke 23:33: Jesus was crucified as an innocent man and offered salvation to the thief on the cross next to Him asking for forgiveness.

# GOD'S CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

## BIG IDEA #3: THE CHURCH EXISTS TO PROCLAIM GOD'S GLORY.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

In Acts 4, Peter and John exhibited what it looks like for the church to proclaim God's glory. Despite the opposition they faced, they insisted on telling everyone about Jesus, the work He had done on the cross, and the hope everyone who believes has in Him. Even though they were questioned and falsely accused, they persisted in telling of God's great glory. The church has a purpose beyond just being a gathering of God's people. Its purpose is to be the vehicle through which the gospel goes into all the world. The church is to display God's glory to those around them. The church exists for the same reason that anything exists in this life—the glory of God.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How does your life show the glory of God to others? What attitudes and behaviors help you show God's glory to the world?**

1 John 3:9-10 tells us that those who know God do not make it a habit, or practice of sinning. This means that when we do sin, we repent and turn away from it. We do not continue to sin because this does not bring God glory. The fact that sinners can turn away from their sin reveals the glory of God at work in their lives. Matthew 5:16 reminds us to live in such a way that people can see that God is at work in our lives. This brings Him glory.

**What prevents you from persisting, like Peter and John, in making God's name known?**

2 Timothy 2:15 reveals to us that if we do not know God's Word well, we may be hesitant to make Him known for fear of not having the answer or explaining it wrong. 1 Peter 4:16 also teaches us that we may suffer for being a Christian, yet we are not to be ashamed; instead, we are to rejoice and persist in proclaiming Jesus.

### [ THIS ]

The church can proclaim the glory of God by ministering to fellow believers and making God known in the world. When God's redeemed people use their gifts for the church, they bring God glory. We see the church living for God's glory in Acts 4:23-37. The early church provided for one another, shared the good news of Jesus with others, and lived for God's glory together. They did not bicker or fight with one another. They did not give in to the temptation to be jealous or desire to be seen as greater than someone else. They served God, lived humbly, and loved one another with a Godly love.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Acts 4:32-37. How can you join with others in your church to make God known?**

In Acts 4:32-37, the early church believers had a common goal and purpose. They were of one mind and had one goal—to make Jesus known. Part of fulfilling this goal was caring for one another. They willingly gave up their own things in order to meet the needs of other believers. The apostles were telling people about the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the church was joined together to make God known. By submitting to one another and living for God's glory, they were making God's name known in all the world.

3. 1 Peter 2:9-10: *The church's purpose is to make God known in the world and to show others His glory.*