

THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD'S GLORY

YEAR: UNITE / FOCUS: I AM PART OF A FAMILY
SERIES: GOD IS FATHER - I AM PART OF THE FAMILY

BIG TRUTH: THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD'S GLORY

1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 2:5-9; Matthew 5:14-16; Philippians 2:12-18; 1:9-11; Hebrews 13:21

BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 3:20-21

"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

BIG IDEAS

- The church is the house of God.
- The church is the bride of Christ.
- The church is the light of the world.

BIBLE PASSAGE: EPHESIANS 3:20-4:16

UNITE - I AM PART OF A FAMILY

The Unite Year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are given a spirit of adoption as sons (Romans 8:15-16), are made a child of God, and we are also saved into a family- the Church. The Unite Year explores how we are to live as a part of a family, and to live in light of our calling as servants and disciples of Christ. We use our gifts to build up the church as we pursue unity, humility, and gentleness with our brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 4:1-2).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- The church is a family.
- The church is given by God.
- The church exists for God.



Every student should feel...

- Thankful for the unique ways God has gifted them and their church.
- Appreciation for the elders and leaders that God has gifted their church.



Every student should strive to...

- Prioritize gathering to worship each week with their church family.
- Learn more about membership in their local church.
- Do something to intentionally serve someone in their church family each week



Every student should want...

- To devote themselves to pursue holiness with their church family.
- To have their lives be marked by love for the church.
- To live in a way that is sacrificial and generous for the good of others and the glory 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

THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD'S GLORY

BIBLE VERSE: EPHESIANS 3:20-21

"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

God's power works in every believer.

"...according to the power at work within us..."

- God's power is evident in creation and in the lives of humans. We get a sense of God's great power in the way He controls all things. Though men and women have power over creation, our power pales in comparison to God's.
- God gives His power to His redeemed people, or His church when He sends His Spirit to live inside of every believer. God's power works inside of His people to bring Himself glory. As the Spirit works inside of a believer, he or she is made more and more like Christ. This is only possible because of the power of God at work in each believer.

The church can glorify God because of the Spirit.

"...according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church..."

- God redeems sinners for His glory. He calls the lost to Himself and gives them His Spirit that they might work together as His church to glorify Him. The church is able to do this because every believer has the Holy Spirit.
- Without God's Spirit, the church could not bring Him glory. We could not obey God and share His truth in the world. In our own power, we are weak and things are impossible, but in the power of God, nothing is impossible and His church can walk in obedience to Him.

The church glorifies God in every generation, forever.

"...to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

- All things are created through God and for God for all time. Man's purpose is always to bring God glory. This purpose does not change, even when time ends on earth. The church, which is made up of redeemed men and women, exists now and always for the glory of God.
- The church will always be and always exist for God's purposes because it is God who sustains the church. The church can and will always bring God glory because it is through His everlasting power that never ends or subsides that the church accomplishes its purpose.

THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD'S GLORY

BIG IDEA #1: THE CHURCH IS THE HOUSE OF GOD.¹

[THIS]

In the Old Testament and before the coming of the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit resided in a temple made by human hands. Once Jesus ascended into heaven after He was resurrected, God sent the Holy Spirit to live inside of His followers. No longer did the Spirit live inside of temples built by man, but instead lives inside of God's people created by Him for His glory. This means that God's people, His church, is His house. In 1 Timothy 3:14-15, we see that God's people are His chosen people and they make up His household. When earthly families live together in the same house, they are known as a household. These people are connected by something deeper than just friendship. God creates a family through His followers, and they are His household. Every believer everywhere is a part of this household. They are connected by His Spirit and are held together by His power as we see in Ephesians 3: 20-21.

[THEREFORE]

Describe some connections you have experienced with other believers.

Because believers are connected by the Holy Spirit, they can experience a deeper connection with one another than with unbelievers. Often, a follower may have a deeper connection with another believer than they have with an earthly family member. Jesus spoke to this in Matthew 12:48-50 when He taught His followers that anyone who does the will of the Father is a brother or sister. Romans 12:5 also reminds us of the connection that believers have with one another.

[THIS]

In Ephesians 4:1-16 teaches us how the household of God is supposed to behave. Because all believers are part of a royal priesthood established as seen in 1 Peter 2:5-7, being a part of God's household comes with great responsibility. Just as earthly households pursue the same goals and act and behave according to common rules and boundaries set in their homes, God's house does the same. The house of God is not a building or structure, though His people may gather in one. Instead, it is His people joined together with a common purpose, His glory. In our Ephesians passage, Paul reminds the house of God what their interactions with one another should be because they are gathered and created for the glory of God. Believers live, not for this life, but for their eternal life. The house of God exists for His glory because every member of His house is a fellow citizen of the new earth.

[THEREFORE]

What hope does it bring to know that you are joined to fellow like-minded people in the house of God?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 gives us a beautiful picture of what the household of God should and can be like. As we journey together in this life, members of the household of God can encourage one another, lift one another up, and help one another. Ephesians 4:29 shows us that even our speech matters in the household of God because it can bring hope and encouragement to fellow believers.

What are some ways that the house of God can fail to bring God glory?

James 3:14-16, Romans 12:21, and Proverbs 10:12 help us understand the sinful attitudes and behaviors that can prevent the house of God from truly glorifying God. When we walk in the works of the flesh, the house of God does not glorify God, but when we put these off and put on the fruit of the Spirit, the house of God glorifies Him.

1. 1 Timothy 3:15: God's people make up His household.

THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD'S GLORY

BIG IDEA #2: THE CHURCH IS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST.²

[THIS]

Throughout Scripture, many metaphors are used to explain the relationship between God and His people. In Ephesians 5:31-32, Paul says earthly marriage between a man and woman is a picture of Christ and His church. This picture helps give us an understanding of the relationship between Christ and His church. The church is ransomed by the blood of Jesus. He paid a very great price to reconcile unbelievers to God. Christ is the head, or leader of the church just as the earthly husband is the leader of the wife and home. Just as a husband and wife become one flesh when they are married, Christ and the church are one flesh. They are united completely and nothing can change that because Christ does not change. The church's status as the bride of Christ is important because it reveals the intimate relationship that believers enjoy with Christ. God is not some far away God who does not interact in the lives of His people. Instead, He is their bridegroom and He cares for them greatly.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it important to note that the church is the bride of Christ?

Ephesians 5:25-27 helps us see the significance of the church as Christ's bride. Jesus paid a great price for the church and it is only through His blood that the church is cleansed and made holy. Also, the church belongs to Christ because He has purchased her with His life as 1 Corinthians 6:20 shows us. The price paid for believers means believers should live as the bride of Christ.

[THIS]

In Ephesians 4:1-16, Paul writes to the bride of Christ in Ephesus about the way they should live. The instructions that Paul gives to the Ephesians apply to all believers. The church, or bride of Christ should live for Him. Being the bride of Jesus comes with the responsibility to live in a righteous way. The church should pursue holiness and Christlikeness because she belongs to Jesus. God's Spirit enables the church to live for Christ and continues to work inside of every believer to make them more and more like Christ. In Revelation 21:9, we see that the bride will be presented to Christ when the new earth comes down. Every believer should live as the bride of Christ, enjoying the intimate relationship with God that is theirs because of Jesus. Walking in obedience to God's Word is one way the bride prepares for Jesus' return. The imagery of the bridegroom coming for the bride is played out in Revelation as we see that one day, Jesus will return for His church.

[THEREFORE]

Read Ephesians 4:1-16. Why should the bride of Christ live a life worthy of her calling?

The church should live according to God's Word because Jesus died for the church. Revelation 5:9 reminds us of this great truth and gives us a glimpse of the praise that will resound in the new heaven and earth. Titus 2:14 and 1 Peter 1:18-19 also remind us of the price Jesus paid for the bride. Jesus ransomed believers for the glory of God and it brings God glory when the bride walks in a worthy manner.

What attitudes, actions, or behaviors do you need to put off in order to walk in a manner worthy of the calling on your life as a member of the church?

1 Corinthians 7:23 and Acts 20:28 remind us that we should watch over our hearts. The world is full of temptations and if we aren't careful, we will fall prey to them and not honor God.

2. 2 Corinthians 11:2: God's people are His bride prepared by the blood of Jesus Christ.

THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR GOD'S GLORY

BIG IDEA #3: THE CHURCH IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.³

[THIS]

In John 8:12, Jesus declares that He is the light of the world. He came to the world shining a light on the darkness of the world. In Matthew 5:14-16, Jesus tells His followers that they, too, are a light in the world. God redeems people for His purposes. Jesus didn't come just so people could be saved from eternal punishment. Jesus came to reconcile people to God so that God's people could know Him and spread His fame in the world. When Jesus told His followers they are a light in the world, He was teaching them of the purpose and responsibility that Jesus followers have. God's desire for His church is that they reflect His image to others. The church does this by living for Jesus and striving to become like Him. When we walk in obedience to God's Word, choosing to follow His commands, and to put on the fruit of the Spirit, we shine the light of Christ in the world. The world sees that the church is different. She loves differently, speaks differently, and lives differently than the world. This shines a light on the sin of the world and can help point people to their need for Jesus.

[THEREFORE]

How can your personal obedience to God's Word help the church be a light in the world?

Because the church is made up individual believers, in order for the church to be a light, each believer must be a light in their personal lives. 1 Peter 1:14-16 and John 14:31 remind us that each person is commanded to seek holiness and to put on Christlikeness. By obeying God's Word in our personal lives, we will join with other believers, making up the church, to shine a light in this dark world.

[THIS]

Whatever God asks of His people, He equips them to do it. God gives every believer the Holy Spirit as their Helper and Guide. Because believers have the Holy Spirit, they have the light of the world inside of them. It's possible for the church to shine a light in the world because they have been transformed by the Spirit and are daily being renewed to look more and more like Jesus. The power of the Holy Spirit helps believers cooperate together to show the world the love of Christ. It's this power that helps the church to love those who persecute them, to give sacrificially, and to share the good news of the Gospel with the world. When the church works together as the body of Christ, the world sees the light of Christ. God is glorified through the church as they seek together to follow God's Word.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it important for believers in the church to work together to shine the light of Christ in the world?

The church is made up of God's people. His people are the way in which He has chosen to spread His gospel. 1 Peter 2:9-10 and Matthew 28:19-20 help us understand the purpose of every person and the purpose of the church. The church exists for God's glory and God is glorified when the church is a light in the dark world.

What are some ways that the church fails at being a light in the dark world?

Often, we can get distracted from God's purpose for us. The church can be distracted by getting caught up in disagreements or the things of this world. We can also worry too much about fitting in with the world, but John 15:18 reminds us that the world will hate us because it hated Christ. In order to stay focused and shine a bright light in the world, we must obey God above man.

3. Philippians 2:12-18: The church is the light of Christ in the world.