

WE ARE NO LONGER SLAVES; WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: I AM IN CHRIST
SERIES: GOD IS THE VINE - I AM A BRANCH

BIG TRUTH: WE ARE NO LONGER SLAVES; WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

Galatians 4:7; Ephesians 2:19; 3:6; 1 John 3:1; Philippians 2:15

BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 8:15-17

"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him."

BIG IDEAS

- We are more than servants or conquerors; we are family.
- In Jesus, nothing can separate us from God.
- Nothing compares to being in the family of God.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ROMANS 8:15-39

TRANSFORM - I AM IN CHRIST

The Transform Year is an exploration of what it means to become a "new creation" in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17) In order for this to happen, we must first find our identity in Him. Many of us live in a consistent state of identity crises. We wrestle with questions like who am I, where do I belong, why do I exist? The answer to these questions is found in Jesus. Our prayer for this semester is that like the Apostle Paul we would be able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- God is the vine, and they are a branch.



Every student should feel...

- Insufficient and inadequate at their inability to meet their own needs, while at the same time thankful and overwhelmed by an all-sufficient Savior who satisfies.



Every student should strive to...

- Memorize Gal 2:20, read and meditate on John 15:1-15, and pursue an abiding relationship with Jesus together with leaders and others in their church.



Every student should want to...

- Abide in Jesus and to aim higher in their personal pursuit of Him.

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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Jesus sets us free from our slavery to our sin nature and fear of punishment.

"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear..."

- When we repent of our sin and believe that Jesus is our Savior, we are set free from the bondage that our sin nature has over us. Though we still battle our sin nature while we live on earth, we have the freedom to not sin as we submit our lives to the Holy Spirit inside of us and seek to obey God's commands. Being free from the slavery of our sin means that we have been given a new life and we are no longer blinded by our sin nature.
- Being freed from our sin debt also means that we no longer have to fear God's wrath or eternal punishment. Because our sin debt is forgiven through the blood of Jesus, we are free from the fear of that condemnation. We were once slaves to our sinfulness, but when we repent and believe in Jesus, we are set free to live holy lives through the work of the Holy Spirit.

We are adopted into God's family through the blood of Jesus and we receive the Holy Spirit as a sign of our adoption.

"but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

- When we walk from the darkness of our sin into the light that is Jesus, we no longer owe a sin debt to God. We are no longer condemned to eternal punishment and separation from God. We are adopted into His family as His sons and daughters. We don't just receive freedom from sin and punishment, but we receive the right to call God our Father.
- When we have this saving faith in Jesus, we receive His Spirit, or the Holy Spirit, who lives inside of us to guide us to be more like Christ. This Spirit serves as a sign that we are God's children. We can find comfort when we feel and see the Holy Spirit at work in us. This is evidence of our being a part of God's family.

When we become God's children, we share in all things with Jesus.

"heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him."

- Becoming part of God's family means that we become co-heirs with Jesus, His Son. We share all things with Jesus including His suffering. This is a sign that we are God's children and that His Spirit is at work in our hearts.

WE ARE NO LONGER SLAVES; WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

BIG IDEA #1: WE ARE MORE THAN SERVANTS OR CONQUERORS; WE ARE FAMILY.¹

[THIS]

Jesus' death on the cross brought victory over sin to those who repent of their sin and believe in Him. We gain victory through Christ, but we are more than conquerors. Through Jesus we are reconciled to God. We become part of God's family and receive the right to be called His children. Our position with God changes from enemy to son or daughter. We are not only purchased by Jesus that we might be set free, but also that we might be part of God's family.

[THEREFORE]

How does the truth that believers receive the right to be called God's sons and daughters influence the way you think about God?

Throughout Scripture, God is seen as Father. In Malachi 2:10, the prophet reminds his listeners that God the Creator is also God the Father. Ephesians 4:6 also describes God as the one Father over all. In 1 Corinthians 8:6, we see Paul present the truth that all things exist for our Heavenly Father. We also learn from the way Psalm 103:13 speaks of God that He is our compassionate Father who cares for us as His children.

[THIS]

Because Jesus has set us free from the bondage of our sin, we do not have to fear God. We are more than conquerors. God is our Heavenly Father. He cares for us as His children. We are fellow heirs with Jesus as God sees us as one of His children like Jesus is His Son. We are set free to live a life of holiness for the glory of God and to live in relationship with God.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen God parent you as your Heavenly Father?

Hebrews 12:4-12 gives us a perfect picture of the way God the Father interacts with us as His children. Just as our human fathers or mothers train us, guide us, and discipline us, God, our heavenly Father, works in us for our good and His glory. In Deuteronomy 31:8-9 and Joshua 1:9-10, we see God's promise to His people, the Israelites that He goes before them and fights for them. This same promise holds true for all of God's children. Lastly, in Psalm 116:1-2, we are reminded that God offers comfort to His children.

What leads you to resist God's interaction with you as His child?

In Ephesians 4:30-31, Paul writes to the church at Ephesus about what it means to live for God. Living for God means submitting to His commands and allowing Him to work in our lives as our Heavenly Father. In Deuteronomy 32:6 as God's people are reprimanded for their disobedience, they are reminded of God's faithfulness to them as their Heavenly Father. God is a faithful Father who cares for His children with great wisdom, mercy, and grace.

1. Romans 8:37: We are more than conquerors through Christ. We become part of God's family.

WE ARE NO LONGER SLAVES; WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

BIG IDEA #2: IN JESUS NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM GOD.²

[THIS]

Every person is born separated from God because of man's sin nature. Through Jesus' perfect life, man has the opportunity to be free from that sin nature and to be reconciled back to God. We are no longer held captive by our sin and are free to live for God. At salvation we become a part of God's family and nothing can remove us from His family. No one can tear us away from God and no future sin we commit can cause us to lose our place in God's family.

[THEREFORE]

In what ways can you see the freedom you have through Jesus in your daily life?

In James 4:7, we learn that when we resist the devil, he flees from us. As we walk in the freedom we have in Christ, we can resist the devil and experience victory over our temptation. In Galatians 5:13-14, we're taught that the freedom we do have shouldn't be used for the desires of the flesh. In Ephesians 3:12, Paul speaks of a boldness and freedom we have to approach the throne of God that is only possible through our freedom from the bondage of sin.

How does the truth that nothing can separate you from God help you live more fully for Him?

In 1 John 1:9, we learn that when we confess our sin, God is faithful to forgive us. This truth is important in our understanding that nothing separates us from God. James 5:16 goes even further to show us that when we confess our sins, we are healed and our prayers are mighty to work.

[THIS]

When we repent and believe in Jesus as our Savior, we are reconciled to God once and for all. We are no longer separated from God. Because Jesus' sacrifice on the cross fulfilled our sin debt, there is nothing that can take us away from God. Once we are reconciled to God, we cannot be separated from Him. Even when we give in to temptation and sin against Him, we are secure in His family. Once we become His son or daughter, we never stop being His son or daughter. God's adoption of us into His family is final and forever. There is no place we can go or action we can commit that tears us away from God when we are His children.

[THEREFORE]

In what ways have you remained in your sin or thought wrongly about your position in God's family?

In Psalm 32:2-5, the psalmist paints a beautiful picture of what it looks like to live with un-confessed sin and then the beauty of receiving forgiveness through confession to God. In James 4:7-10, James teaches us that when we submit ourselves to God, we can resist temptation and overcome sin. 1 Peter 5:8 and John 8:44 teach us about Satan's character and remind us that he is constantly seeking to tempt us to sin and to believe lies about God. God's truth is that nothing separates us from our Heavenly Father.

2. Romans 8:31-39: God fights for His children and nothing can tear us away from Him. We are secure in His hands.

WE ARE NO LONGER SLAVES; WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

BIG IDEA #3: NOTHING COMPARES TO BEING IN THE FAMILY OF GOD.³

[THIS]

Our sin makes us hopeless. We cannot overcome our sin nature in our own power. This inability to save ourselves leaves us lost, broken, and hopeless to save ourselves. Yet, God sent His Son to pay our sin debt and to make a way for us to be reconciled to Him. God's salvation of the world would be enough in and of itself, but God offers more than freedom from our sin nature. He offers us a place at the table in His family. We are not only redeemed, but we are brought into His glorious family as His child forever. We are no longer enemies of God, but we are His friends and children. Because of the work of Jesus on the cross, we owe no sin debt and we get to call God Father. We receive the benefits of being a part of God's holy and righteous family without earning them.

[THEREFORE]

What blessings have you received by being a part of God's family in your local body of believers?

Ephesians 4:16 teaches us that the body of Christ serves a purpose to build up one another. When we are part of God's family, we are part of His body, and this body serves as a means of encouragement and building up for us. Colossians 3:14-16 gives us a picture of what it means to be in God's family and the benefits of being His son and daughter.

[THIS]

God's family is eternal and secure. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus teaches that not even the gates of hell will overcome His body. One of the greatest things about being adopted into God's family is that we are eternally His children. Nothing can separate us from Him. This truth is a source of joy and hope for all who profess to be His followers. For the God of the universe to choose us as His children gives us a position and status that is impossible to have anywhere else. Being in God's family is the greatest thing that could happen to us because it changes our lives here on earth and it changes our eternity. Nothing is better than being in God's family.

[THEREFORE]

What earthly things do you find greater joy in than in your membership in God's family?

1 John 2:15 teaches us that if we love the world and the things of the world, we do not have the love of God in us. This means that if our hearts are given over to the world, we do not truly know Christ. This is true because knowing Christ is greater than anything we could possibly do or gain in this earthly life. Later in 1 John 2:16-17, we see that this world and all that is in it is passing away, but God's family is forever.

3. Philippians 3:8: Paul writes about the greatness of knowing Christ and how nothing compares.