

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE SET FREE

YEAR: UNITE / FOCUS: LIVING IN COMMUNITY
SERIES: GOD'S PEOPLE ARE THE CHURCH

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S PEOPLE ARE SET FREE

Romans 6:7, 18; 8:2; John 8:34-36; 1 Peter 2:16; Deuteronomy 15:15; Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 15:56-57

BIBLE VERSE: GALATIANS 5:1; EXODUS 6:6-7

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

"Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.'"

BIG IDEAS

- Sin always leads us into captivity.
- Freedom from sin is only possible by becoming servants of the Savior.
- God sets His people free for the praise of His name.

BIBLE PASSAGE: EXODUS 5-14

UNITE: LIVING IN COMMUNITY

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 brought into the family of God- seen throughout the Old Testament as "God's People" and in the New Testament and today as the church (Exodus 6:7; Colossians 1:18). We are set free from our sin to walk in freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1) and use our influence to call others to do the same.

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- God has always been making and keeping a people for Himself
- In this age, the church is God's people
- Being a part of God's people should inform every aspect of our lives



Every student should strive to...

- Study the connections between God's people in the Old Testament
- and the church in the New Testament
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Invite others into God's people, the church



Every student should feel...

- Love for God and the people of God
- Accountable to God and to the church to pursue holiness
- Responsible to use their influence to make much of God alone



Every student should want...

- Be marked by their faith
- Talk about God every day, in every setting and circle of influence
- Live as a faithful member of their local church

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 captives free.

"For freedom Christ has set us free..."

- The sin nature of every person holds them captive. Because our sin natures lead us away from God and our hearts deceive us, we are slaves to sin. We are captives and have no way of setting ourselves free. Jesus is the only way for anyone to experience true freedom from our sinful natures.
- God sent His Son, Jesus to set people free. It is through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection that people can have freedom from their sin. Jesus' righteousness makes it possible for people to experience freedom from their sin.

God's people are set free for a purpose.

"...stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

"...and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment."

- God delivered the Israelites from the Egyptians and set them free from their captivity for His purposes. They were His people, and He had a purpose and plan to continue fulfilling His promise to Abraham through them.
- God sets His people free through Jesus for His own purposes, not random or haphazardly. Everyone who has saving faith is saved not just from an eternity in hell but for the good works that God has prepared for them.

God's people are redeemed to become his servants.

"...and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment."

- God sets His people free from the yoke of slavery and He gives them a purpose. The ultimate purpose of every person is to glorify God with their lives and to enjoy Him always. God has prepared works for every person He redeems and calls His own.
- It is His purpose that His redeemed people become His servants. Just as Jesus came and served those He taught and redeemed, God calls His people to serve Him by carrying out His Great Commission and by obeying His commands.

BIG IDEA #1: SIN ALWAYS LEADS US INTO CAPTIVITY.¹**[THIS]**

In Exodus 5-14, the Israelites are in captivity, living as slaves under terrible treatment from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Their daily lives become more than they can endure, and they cry out to God, asking for deliverance from their circumstances. Throughout Exodus 5-14, Pharaoh refuses to allow the Israelites freedom and God uses different plagues to show Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and Israelites the difference between Himself and the false gods they have been worshiping. In Genesis 3, we see that Adam and Eve, though they are enjoying the presence of God in the Garden of Eden, forsake this by sinning against Him. Their disobedience to His command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil leads to their broken relationship with God and results in every person having a sinful nature. Just as the Israelites were held captive by Pharaoh in Egypt, man's sin nature holds him captive. No person is able to please God while captive by his or her sin nature. John 8:34 reveals this when Jesus says that everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. Sin is enslaving.

[THEREFORE]

Since sin is enslaving, how can we live led by the Spirit and not by our sin natures? What does this look like in our everyday lives?

In Romans 7:8-11, Paul writes of the battle he faces between his flesh nature and redeemed nature—the two are at war with one another. By putting on the fruit of the Spirit and living in an awareness of the Spirit inside of us, we can walk in the Spirit and not live doing what our sin natures lead us to do.

[THIS]

The captivity that the Israelites faced was harsh and unbearable. They were forced to serve Pharaoh, to build bricks without straw, and to work under harsh conditions. Their slavery did not make their lives better, but made their lives unbearable. In their despair, they cried out to God to save them, and he raised up a deliverer for them. Our sin natures lead us down a path to destruction. Though it may seem as if our lives are going as we desire and we are receiving what we want, our souls are on a path to eternal death. Without God, we are empty and will spend our lives looking for things to fill our emptiness. This is a type of slavery that leads to despair and hopelessness unless we are awakened to the reality of our condition and believe in Jesus as our only hope for reconciliation.

[THEREFORE]

What attitudes and behaviors hold us captive and keep us in a cycle of seeking fulfillment from this world?

Galatians 5:19-21 gives us an overview of the works of the flesh. These works, attitudes, or behaviors are the things that enslave us without the presence of the Holy Spirit inside of us to help us overcome them. Earlier in Galatians 5:13, Paul reminds his hearers that they have a freedom, and they should use their freedom to live for Christ and not to give into these works of the flesh.

How have you noticed a pattern of sinful behavior repeating itself in your life or the life of someone else?

James 1:14-15 shows us that our desires tempt us and give birth to sin that leads us to death. This sin enslaves us and keeps us in a pattern of rebellion that leads to our destruction.

1. John 8:34: Sin makes every person a captive. We are captive to our sinful natures that lead us to disobey God's commands.

BIG IDEA #2: FREEDOM FROM SIN IS ONLY POSSIBLE BY BECOMING SERVANTS OF THE SAVIOR.²

[THIS]

In 1 Corinthians 15:56-57, Paul writes to the Corinthians about a freedom that is only possible through Jesus Christ. Jesus gives a freedom from the sin that enslaves every person. We are born slaves to our sin natures, and it is impossible for us to set ourselves free. No matter how hard we may try to overcome the sinful nature that leads us away from God, we cannot and will not produce a righteousness that pleases God. The story of the Israelites held captive in Egypt is a picture of the slavery we experience to our own sin. The Israelites were servants to Pharaoh and served the Egyptians. Their burden was great. Yet, God used Moses to lead them out of their captivity and instead of serving Pharaoh, they served God. The freedom they experienced was a freedom given to them by the one true God who could set them free from the burden they were under. God does the same for every person by providing redemption through His Son, Jesus.

[THEREFORE]

What attitudes and behaviors reveal that we are slaves to our sin nature?

In Galatians 5:19 we are provided a list of sinful behaviors and attitudes. These things are the fruit that our sin natures produce. These are enslaving to us and hold us captive. It is only through faith in Jesus as our Savior that we are set free.

[THIS]

In Galatians 5:13, Paul writes that believers are set free from their sin. This is good news to every person because without this freedom we cannot please God. We are not set free to use our freedom for ourselves. Instead, our freedom comes when we become servants of Jesus. We serve Jesus by serving one another as Paul states in Galatians 5:13. Becoming a servant of Jesus does not further enslave us, but instead, it gives us freedom from our sin and enables us to live fully as we were created to live. By living in service to Jesus, we are fulfilling our created purpose, and this is true freedom. We are no longer held in bondage by our sinful attitudes and behaviors. Instead, we are free to be exactly who God made us to be in Him as we serve His Son, our Savior.

[THEREFORE]

What does it mean to be a servant of Jesus our Savior? Why is being a servant countercultural?

Read 1 Corinthians 4:1. These verses show us that people are redeemed to serve Jesus and to serve one another. To serve Jesus is to give our lives to Him. Our culture tells us to serve ourselves and to live for ourselves. Being a servant of Jesus is a path opposite of what the world tells us to take.

What are some challenges you face in serving Jesus? How can you change your perspective to view serving Jesus differently?

Read 1 Peter 2:16, Romans 6:7, and John 8:34-36. Being a servant requires humility. Serving Jesus requires humility because we must humble ourselves to acknowledge that we need Him to save us and that He is our Lord and Ruler. A perspective change can happen when we really see the holiness and righteousness of Christ and realize that without Him, we are hopeless. This allows us to view service to Him and others as a gift and freedom.

2. Matthew 6:24: A believer can only serve Christ: no person can serve two masters.

BIG IDEA #3: GOD SETS HIS PEOPLE FREE FOR THE PRAISE OF HIS NAME.³**[THIS]**

In Exodus 14:16-18 and 14:31, the Israelites were saved from the Egyptians who were chasing after them when Moses parted the Red Sea. God used Moses to make a way for His people to pass on dry land, but He caused the waters to crash onto the pursuing Egyptians, drowning them all. God did this so the Egyptians might see His glory and know that He is the true God. In His doing of this great act and this show of His might and power, the Israelites also saw His glory and could praise His name. They were set free from their bondage to the Egyptians, and the result was praising God's name. God sets us free to praise His name. He reveals His glory and power to us that we might know He is the one true God, and so our hearts cry out in praise.

[THEREFORE]

How have you experienced God's might and power in a way that resulted in you giving Him praise?

Read James 5:13 and Psalm 150:6. When we see attributes of God's character, we will praise Him. When we experience His might and His power in our own lives or the lives of those around us, we will give Him praise if we are devoted to living for Him. The Israelites experienced the miraculous parting of the Red Sea, and they praised God for His mercy and His power.

[THIS]

Prior to the parting of the Red Sea, the Israelites had experienced God's power and might as He caused plague after plague to come upon Egypt. The plagues were purposeful and intended to show the Egyptians and all who experienced them that God is the one true God. God then set His people free that they might worship Him and praise Him freely. He gives freedom to those who do not yet know Him that they might praise Him. We are not set free to live for ourselves or to seek our own glory. We are set free to seek God's glory and to praise His name. Peter writes of our purpose as believers in 1 Peter 2:9-12. All who are called to Christ in salvation are a chosen race called to worship and praise God. This is why we are set free from the bondage of our sin.

[THEREFORE]

How do you overlook opportunities to praise God in your daily life because of distractions or being focused on other things?

We are often distracted by the things of this world. Our eyes become fixed on earthly things and not heavenly things. Matthew 6:24 reminds us that we cannot serve two masters. We will not praise God while we are distracted with earthly things. Psalm 119:15 teaches us to meditate on the Word of God that we might fix our eyes upon Him.

What are some specific ways you can use your freedom in Christ for His praise and glory rather than working to fulfill your own personal desires?

1 Peter 2:9 reminds us that all believers are a chosen race and royal priesthood. 2 Corinthians 5:18 teaches us that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation and all that we do, we do for the glory of God. God has redeemed us and set us free that we might serve Him and give Him praise for His glory and honor.

3. Colossians 3:17: *We are set free to praise Jesus. All that we do, we are to do for the glory of God.*