



SERIES BIG IDEA:

The Church doesn't have a mission. God's mission has a church.

God's mission has always had a temple.

- **God's temple is where heaven meets earth so humanity can connect with God.**
- **The temple was also a picture of the holy force of God to bring life to those who repent and judgment on those who do not.**

Jesus declared that His body is the true temple where heaven meets earth so humanity can connect with God.

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." ²⁰ They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" ²¹ But the temple he had spoken of was his body.

John 2:19-21 (NIV)

In his kindness, God took the eternal judgment of sin upon himself by becoming the one sacrifice for every sin of everyone who would repent and trust in Him.

The temple makes what is unholy, holy. (see Matthew 23:17-20)

The Apostle Paul identified our bodies as the temple where the Holy Spirit of God resides.

¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

Jesus is the High Priest of a new temple—the people of God.

A priest represents the people to God and represents God to the people. (see Hebrews 4:14-5:10)

⁴ As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." ⁷ Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," ⁸ and, "A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

1 Peter 2:4-12 (NIV)

TEACHING BIG IDEA:

I am a holy priest who represents God's life-giving goodness, grace, and mercy to others.



HOW TO BE THE PRIEST OF MY PARISH:

- Do good to those who are close to me but far from God.
- Be gracious. Give others what they don't deserve.
- Be merciful. Do not give others what they do deserve.

The Church is a royal priesthood who represents God to those around us by treating others the way God through Christ has treated us.

Do the riches of his extraordinary kindness make you take him for granted and despise him? Haven't you experienced how kind and understanding he has been to you? Don't mistake his tolerance for acceptance. Do you realize that all the wealth of his extravagant kindness is meant to melt your heart and lead you into repentance?

Romans 2:4 (The Passion Translation)

We represent God's kindness to a world who needs to repent to find life.



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TEACHING SUMMARY:

A wise pastor once said that we are all called, we are all sent, we are all meant to be Jesus with skin on for others in today's world. What he was saying is that we, as Christ followers, are called to be priests in our parish. We are called to be representatives of God. We are called to bring a little heaven here to earth where we live, work, study, or play.

But what does that look like? How do we do it? We look for opportunities to do good in the lives of people around us.

We are gracious in all our relationships by extending love when it isn't warranted, compassion when it is hard, and speaking truth in a loving way even when it puts relationships in jeopardy.

We are merciful with others by forgiving, fighting for relationships, and in as much as it depends on us living at peace with those around us.

We do this because this is what our High Priest, Jesus, did for us. This is how we are a priest in our parish. This is how we are Jesus with skin on.

TALK-IT-OVER:

What "parish" do you have that you need to extend goodness, grace, and mercy?

Who is someone that needs you to be Jesus with skin on and what is one small thing you can do for them today?

What is one next step you can take today?

Who is someone I need to tell about this?

DAILY SCRIPTURE READING:

Day 1) Matthew 28:18-20

Day 2) John 14:15-21, Matthew 15:8

Day 3) Isaiah 29:16, Isaiah 10:15

Day 4) John 14:23-27

Day 5) Colossians 3:12

Day 6) John 15:7-9