

Lesson 1

God the Holy Spirit

Bible Lesson: John 14:16-18, Acts 2:1-13

Memory Verse: "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever." *John 14:16*

Enrichment Memory Verse: "...but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." *Acts 1:8*

Catechism Memory Work: "I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen."

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✚ The student will understand and believe that the Holy Spirit is God, and that He is a real Person, the third Person of the Trinity.
- ✚ The student will know that the work of the Holy Spirit is to work repentance and faith and to encourage, strengthen and sanctify the believer.
- ✚ The student will yield to the Holy Spirit and will know Him personally as Sanctifier, Helper, and Friend.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ the dove symbol representing the Holy Spirit
- ◆ artist's picture of Jesus

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that God will give you understanding of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, and enable you to teach it to your students with sensitivity to His leading.
2. Pray for your students as you begin this quarter's study. Pray that they may come to know the Holy Spirit as Helper and Friend.
3. Pray that your students may recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and may yield to Him as He leads them to repentance and faith.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

The Third Article provides to us, in short and succinct phrases, Scripture's teaching about the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's work is not new in the New Testament (He has always been). However, the reality is that the New Testament does clarify and unfold the work of the Holy Spirit to be ushered in after Christ's Ascension and the day of Pentecost.

In Acts 1 the disciples were told to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). They were promised that when the Holy Spirit came they would receive power and that they would be Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

As the pages of these lessons are read and considered be encouraged that the Holy Spirit is at work through the Words of the Bible to teach you and each student about the Holy Spirit.

Such a task would be impossible without the Scriptures, but they have been revealed to us to instruct us (2 Timothy 3:16-17). As we read in John 3:8 "**The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.**" So we are not in control of the Holy Spirit but God has promised us to be at work through His Word. He has promised that His Word is a means by which He bestows His grace.

He is one of the persons of the Trinity to whom we ascribe certain activities and actions. These activities (along with the work of the Father and the Son) are those whose goal and purpose is bringing us into relationship with Him. Showing us the person and work of Christ!

So, as your students hear about Jesus, they are hearing by the work of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus said to His disciples in John 14:26 **“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”** This great work of the Holy Spirit is also mentioned in John 15:26 which says, **“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about me.”**

In Acts, we see the extraordinary activity of the Holy Spirit. We hear about the speaking in tongues, the flames of fire, etc. These events are cementing in the minds of the Apostles the reality of Christ’s words and ministry. We do not need tongues of fire above someone’s head to know that they are speaking God’s word. When God’s word is open the Holy Spirit is at work. When you or a student recognizes their sin and repents; believing Christ’s words that is the Holy Spirit at work.

The Holy Spirit’s activities are sometimes believed to be only the extraordinary signs that we see and the Scripture, along with the Sacraments, are disregarded. This should not be! The Holy Spirit is active in the preached Word and the Sacraments. We confess that we believe in the Holy Spirit not because we have some great spiritual awareness or sensitivity. We state this belief based on the Words of the Holy Scriptures.

B. Creed Study

In the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, the person and the work of the Holy Spirit will be the focal point of our Sunday school lessons. In today's evangelical community there is a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding regarding the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We have listed five basic truths regarding the Holy Spirit:

1. The Holy Spirit is a person—the third person of the Trinity. He is not an impersonal force.
2. The Holy Spirit will convict people of their sin.
3. He will guide into truth.
4. He will glorify Christ.
5. He will be a helper, the Sanctifier, to the believer in his walk and service of Christ his Lord.

In understanding the Holy Spirit you need to realize four concepts:

1. At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit indwells the believer. One cannot be a Christian without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. *Every true believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit.*
2. Every Christian is baptized in the Spirit, but not all Christians are *filled* with the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means simply to allow Christ to be the Lord of one's life. Christians have a daily struggle in submitting to Christ's control. We always want to rule our own lives instead of allowing Christ to rule. Ephesians 5:16
3. Our Lord desires to produce His fruit of the Spirit within our lives. In Galatians 5:22-24 Paul lists the various attributes of a Spirit-filled Christian. These are actually character qualities of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is not up to us to produce these fruits but simply to abide in Him and be fruit bearers. John 15
4. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to God's children. Read Romans 12:1-8 and II Corinthians 12:4-18. These special gifts by definition are special abilities that God gives enabling us to accomplish His work. Our focus should not be so much on the gifts of the Spirit but our focus should be on abiding in Christ. Growth in grace and effective spiritual ministry are by-products of abiding in Christ.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Visit with students as they arrive; listen and seek to learn what they are thinking about and learn of their personal needs.

Open with Prayer

Ask for sentence prayers of praise and thanks for God's special care and goodness. Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and teaching during the class period.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:
From the Bible: Revelation 5:12

And

From the Catechism: And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; . . .

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; even as He is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Review

SHOW the covers of Quarters 1 and 2 books. **SAY** This year we are learning about what the Apostles' Creed teaches about our God, the one true God we believe in and trust. **ASK** What do these covers remind you of the things we've learned about God? (*He is one God in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*) **ASK** What did we learn about the Father, our Creator? (*He created us and the whole world and universe; He protects and cares for our bodies and souls so that we may have fellowship with Him, etc.*) **ASK** What did we learn about the Son, our Redeemer? (*He is true God and true Man, our Prophet, Priest and King; He redeemed us, bought us back from sin and death by His own death and resurrection, so we might be His own, live under Him in His Kingdom and serve Him, etc.*)

Introduce Wall Words

Symbolize—
empowers—
Pentecost—
stunned—
bewildered—

Introduce the Lesson

SAY This quarter we will learn about the third Person of the Triune God. We will learn about Him from the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, and from God's Word as it teaches us the truths taught in the Third Article. **ASK** What do you know about the Holy Spirit? Maybe not as much as we know about Jesus our Savior and about the Heavenly Father. **SHOW** the artist's picture of Jesus. **ASK** Is this what Jesus looked like when He lived on earth? Probably not. We don't know what Jesus really looked like because the camera hadn't been invented yet. This picture is an artist's idea of what he/she thought Jesus might have looked like. But this picture does look like a man and we know that Jesus was a real Man as well as the Son of God— true God. But nobody on earth has ever seen God the Father. We do know that He created us and keeps us and that He is a loving Father. Our own loving earthly fathers give us a little idea of what a perfect Father might be like. **ASK** What is the Holy Spirit like? The symbol on our books represents the Holy Spirit with a dove. The Holy Spirit is pictured as a dove in the symbol because when the Holy Spirit came down upon Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist, He came down as a dove. The dove represents peace and sacrifice. But the Holy Spirit is not a dove. He is a real Person, the Third Person of the Triune God. Even though you can't see the Holy Spirit, you can know Him as a wonderful Friend. He is a Friend you can't do without. He will help you know Jesus better. He can give you faith to repent and trust in Jesus as your Savior. He can make you more like Jesus. In this book you will learn what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit. I hope you will come to know Him as your Sanctifier.

Teach the Lesson

To be added later

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— John 14:16

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever."

CATECHISM—READ

"I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, The Communion of Saints; The

Forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen."

Activity Pages

Activity 1—What Happened?

ANSWERS

4, 3, 7, 1, 5, 2, 9, 6, 8

Activity 2—The Holy Spirit...**ANSWERS**

1. sin
2. confession
3. faith
4. forgiven
5. truth
6. leads
7. empowers
8. understand
9. God's
10. holy
11. Christ

CLOSING THE LESSON**Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus, we thank You that when we have You as our Savior, we have all we need. We have a heavenly Father who has created us and who cares for us every day. We have a Redeemer who paid for our sins. And we have the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts to bring us to know You and to make us holy and Christ-like. We pray that you will work in our hearts so we will accept Your work with faith. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Assignment

1. Remind students to complete any unfinished activities and review the lesson.
2. Encourage students to share what they have learned with family and friends.
3. Remind students to practice both their memory verse and the Third Article.

Lesson 2

The Holy Spirit Shows us Our Sin

Bible Lesson: Acts 9:1-18

Memory Verse: Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. *Romans 3:20*

Enrichment Memory Verse: For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. *Romans 10:4*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ Students will understand that the Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's Law and shows us that we are sinners who need God's forgiveness, and the Gospel shows us God's forgiveness through Jesus.
- ✦ Students will listen and read God's word and yield to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ Bibles for students who don't have them
- ◆ model or picture of the tables of the law
- ◆ list of classroom rules

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will teach you as you study and prepare to teach. Pray that you may gain a clearer understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in your own heart.
2. Pray that God will enable you to teach clearly and that He will hinder distractions and the work of the devil and the flesh.
3. Pray that students will be open to the work of Spirit through the law to bring conviction and sorrow for sin so that they might see their great need of Jesus.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

John's Gospel records for us the wonderful conversation that Jesus had with Nicodemus. There Jesus teaches Nicodemus saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:5-8).

We are told by our Savior that as we are not in control of the wind so also we are not in control of the Holy Spirit. We hear from Jesus that there is a sense of mystery for us in the activity of the Holy Spirit but we need not think that all His ways are hidden from us. He is about the work of making us holy. The conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus made it clear that the work of bringing someone to new life is wholly in the realm of God's work.

With joy in Christ's promises about the Holy Spirit we should humbly come and learn from the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures. We can have confidence that the means that God has provided will be used of the Holy Spirit that we might obtain the forgiveness of sins, and have our consciences comforted as long as we live (See the Large Catechism).

The Spirit's work is to remind us that it is not by "our strength or reason" but the love and mercy of God that we come to salvation and eternal life. So here we see again how the Creed is so different than the Commandments. The commandments declare what we are to do but in the Creed we are told what God has done and continues to do for us. Certainly in the Third Article we see that the work of God has not stopped. By His grace He continues His work of making us holy.

Part of that activity is God showing us something we don't want to see; namely, our sin. As children of wrath and enemies of God we have rebelled against God and stand dead spiritually. So through the Law the Holy Spirit shows us the sin which has so destroyed our relationship to God.

The Holy Spirit is not a force that we order around but one person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is not governed by us. So take notice that the teaching of His word will sometimes first bring feelings (which are shaky ground) which we might first attribute to the Devil.

We might feel confused, sad, or even angry as the Holy Spirit instructs us with the Word of God. However, the Holy Spirit is not at work to just emotionally manipulate us. Simply having certain emotions does not mean it is the Holy Spirit at work. The inspired Scriptures are where we place our confidence.

B. Creed Study

Titus 3 deals with how God calls us through the law. The Holy Spirit uses and works through the law to convict us of our sins. People can resist that work of the Holy Spirit - but if they do resist they become harder in spirit to the Lord's call to salvation.

Read Titus 3:3-7. Notice in verse 3 the description that Paul gives of himself before he became a child of God. Notice also that he uses the plural noun "we" - all of us have the old nature which is partially described in this verse. What we have in this verse is a list of the desires of the old self which are always selfish.

The sons of Sceva (Acts 19:11-16) manifested these selfish desires. They wanted God's power, but only for their own selfish desires. The old self always seeks its own gratification. Notice the difference between verse 3 and 4. In verse 4 we have two words that introduce a definite contrast from verse 3. "But when the *kindness* and the *love* of God...appeared." Both kindness and love represent a *giving* attitude, as opposed to a selfish attitude. The ultimate expression of Jesus' love is His giving of Himself to die on the cross for us.

Notice the emphasis upon God's grace in verse 5. Our salvation is purely a result of God's work and not our own effort. Notice also the reference to the "washing of regeneration." We make a connection here to baptism. Lesson 4 of this quarter will focus on this topic. In verses 6-7 Paul refers to the outpouring of God's grace through Christ. In Romans 5:1-11 we see a further development of this emphasis. Through Christ we are justified (declared righteous) in the sight of God.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Visit with students as they arrive; listen and seek to learn what they are thinking about and learn of their personal needs.

Open with Prayer

Ask students to report events of the week to thank God for and topics to pray about. Encourage brief prayers of thanks and praise, as well as prayers for God's help. Thank God for the Holy Spirit's real presence and work in our class and in God's Word. Pray that the Spirit will work today and that each one, teacher and students, will listen carefully and really hear God speaking.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: John 14:16

And

From the Catechism: I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson, asking these or other questions. Name the third Person of the Trinity (*the Holy Spirit*). What is another name for the Holy Spirit? (*Helper, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Jesus*). When

Lesson 2

The Holy Spirit Shows us Our Sin

the Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's Word, who else is speaking? (*The Father, Jesus*) What does the Holy Spirit give us? (*Faith to believe in Jesus*) Why is the Holy Spirit called our Sanctifier (*He makes us holy and Christ-like*) Why is it so important to listen when the Holy Spirit speaks? (*We can believe in Jesus only when He convicts us of sin and gives us faith to receive Jesus as our Savior.*)

Introduce Wall Words

distinguished—
fanatical—
zealously—
persecuting—

Introduce the Lesson

ASK When your teacher wants to get your attention to tell you something, what does he/she do? (Allow students to respond.) Yes, he might call your name. Or he might ring a bell, or write a note on the board. Some teachers turn out the light. However she does it, your teacher wants to tell you something. If you have done something wrong, your teacher might show a list of class rules. **SHOW** list. **ASK** What do those rules tell you? (*What you should or should not do*) Would the list make you a better student? (*No, the list would only tell you that you had done something wrong.*) **SAY** God has a list of rules for us that tell us how we should think, act and speak. He tells us what is right and wrong. What is that list called? (*The Ten Commandments*) **SHOW** model or picture of tablets of stone. **SAY** The Ten Commandments are part of God's law. Show the first 5 books of the Old Testament. God's law is

explained in this part of the Bible especially, but also in many other places in the Bible, even in the New Testament. The Law is very good because it tells us God's will, and God's will is perfectly holy. **SHOW** your copy of Luther's Small Catechism. **SAY** In the catechism we find the Ten Commandments and many other Bible verses and words that explain what the Bible teaches about God's law. **SAY** Open your books to Lesson 2 and read the lesson title. **ASK** a student to read the title. **SAY** This title says something about the Holy Spirit and the Law. When the Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's Law, what is He doing? (*Showing us*) The Holy Spirit wants to tell us something; He wants to show us something.

Teach the Lesson

SAY This lesson is going to be about how the Holy Spirit showed a man his sin and great need of the Savior. **ASK** Saul was called by another name, what was it? (*Paul, the Apostle Paul*) **SAY** We learned about a man named Saul who hated Jesus and all Christians. But when Jesus called him and showed him his sin he was very sorry for his sins and repented of them, and Jesus changed his heart. Then Saul was completely changed. Now he wanted to live for Jesus and spend the rest of his life as a missionary bringing the good news of the Gospel to the Gentiles. **SAY** The last paragraph tells us why we should listen and pay attention when we hear God's Word. Read this paragraph and find out. **ALLOW** students time to read these the paragraph. Or have a student read it aloud.

More to be added later...

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— Romans 3:20

Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;...

Activity Pages

Activity 1—Law or Gospel?

ANSWERS

1. L, 2. G, 3. L, 4. L, 5. G, 6. G, 7. L, 8. G, 9. L, 10. G, 11. G

Activity 2—Saul and Paul

ANSWERS

1. underline
2. underline
3. circle
4. underline
5. circle
6. circle
7. underline
8. circle

9. circle

10. underline

CLOSING THE LESSON**Closing Prayer**

Thank you, heavenly Father, for Your Word that shows us our sins and shows us how much we need You, our Savior. Help us to have open hearts. Help us to listen when your Holy Spirit speaks to us. We pray that everyone in this class may listen. Help us trust in Jesus as our Savior. Amen.

Assignment

1. Remind students to complete lessons at home.
2. Challenge students to read their Bibles every day and to listen when the Holy Spirit speaks.
3. Remind students to bring their Bibles to class.

Lesson 3

The Holy Spirit Calls us Through the Gospel

Bible Lesson: John 3:1-6, Acts 2:37-39

Memory Verse: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." *John 6:63*

Enrichment Memory Verse: God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. *II Thessalonians 2:13b-14*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel,...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ Students will know that the gospel is the good news that Jesus died to save sinners, including the student.
- ✦ Students will understand how the Holy Spirit calls through the gospel to make it possible for them to believe and receive Jesus.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ Envelope with "GOOD NEWS" written on the outside containing slips of paper with items of good news
- ◆ New Word Chart

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will work through God's Word as you prepare for this lesson, to give you a fresh and deeper understanding of the gospel.
2. Pray for your students during this week. Pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to work in their hearts through the Law. Pray that they may see their sins and their need of the grace of God. Pray that they may be reminded to meet God in His Word each day.
3. Pray for the families and homes of your students. Pray for the Christian parents who seek to guide their children. Pray that God's Word may work through the lessons to draw families and homes to faith and a closer fellowship with God.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

In Acts 8 one of the disciples of Jesus Christ was used of God to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with an Ethiopian eunuch. Philip was told to go to a certain road. He did and found a man who was reading from the book of Isaiah. As Philip arrives the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip and told him to speak to the eunuch (Acts 8:29).

The eunuch was in need of a teacher and the Holy Spirit graciously provided one for him that day. The eunuch was reading the passage which reads: "Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: **'HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.'** IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH." (Acts 8:32-33). The Holy Spirit was at work doing what God's people need.

The Lord has made clear that He will provide the church with those who will preach and teach His Word (Ephesians 4:11). He did this in a wonderful way for the eunuch and is now providing for you and your students. Pastors are preaching to their congregations speaking of the Lamb of God and you too are pointing young children to the One who takes away their sins.

The words of Isaiah were proclaiming the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Philip was able to begin with this Scripture and go on to declare the good news about Jesus (Acts 8:35). This was the work of the Holy Spirit calling the Ethiopian. With this teaching from Philip the eunuch also heard about the promise connected with baptism and was baptized (Acts 8:37-38). The Holy Spirit then carried Philip to another place where he continued to preach and teach the Gospel.

In the events in Acts 8, we see how clearly the Holy Spirit was at work. But what might almost miss our notice is how the Scriptures were the center of what the Spirit used. It wasn't the miraculous carrying away, in fact that only happened after the Gospel was communicated.

This should encourage us as we teach. We have the promise that the Holy Spirit works through the Scripture to create faith and bring assurance. Our experiences can trick us, our feelings are fickle, but the Word of God is sure.

Many times someone has answered a ringing phone and said to someone nearby, "It is for you." The common question which quickly follows is, "Who is it?" We don't have to ask that question when the Bible is preached and taught amongst us. It is the Holy Spirit calling to us through the Word. We gladly proclaim that God graciously calls us through His Word. So, at the center of our teaching must be this Word. Most of us are not that eloquent, but it is not our wisdom or eloquence or even the great logic which we might use in explaining the teachings of the Bible that brings faith. It is the Holy Spirit whom we rely upon at all times.

B. Creed Study

In the third chapter of II Timothy we focus in on the example of Timothy. He was a young man whom the Lord led to help the apostle Paul. Paul discipled Timothy in the faith and in the ministry. Paul had a very warm and loving relationship with Timothy as evidenced in II Timothy 2:1 when he addresses Timothy as "my son." Paul recognized that Timothy tended to be timid and shy (II Timothy 1:7) and therefore needed to be encouraged. Thus Paul writes in II Timothy 2:1 that Timothy should be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Notice how Paul directs Timothy's heart and mind to the Lord.

Notice in II Timothy 1:4-5 the significant impact that Timothy's mother (Eunice) and his grandmother (Lois) had on his life. Timothy had a tremendous heritage of faith. His heart and soul were impacted by the presence of godly people.

Let us look at the phrase "genuine faith." The word genuine also can be translated as "unhypocritical." God's Word had penetrated Timothy's heart and life. We see a further explanation of this in 3:14-17.

Paul says that Timothy had known the "sacred writing" (the Bible) since he was very little. It was that Word that had enabled Timothy to be "wise for salvation." It was that Word that enabled Timothy to experience faith in Christ Jesus.

In verses 16-17 we see what the Holy Scriptures are able to do for us. First of all the Scriptures (all of them, Genesis to Revelation) have been inspired (literally "God breathed") by God Himself. Notice also that the Bible is profitable for:

1. DOCTRINE - Enabling us to know the truth.
2. REPROOF - The Scriptures convict us when we are wrong or living in sin.
3. CORRECTION - As we agree and submit to the Word then God gives us the power to get back on the godly path of life.
4. TRAINING - The Holy Scriptures show us how we are to live and then give us the power to live, to worship and to serve the Lord.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Visit with students as they arrive; listen and seek to learn what they are thinking about and learn of their personal needs.

Ask students to share answers to prayer and prayer topics. Encourage participation in brief sentence prayers of thanks. Lead the class in prayer for the Holy Spirit's leading in the class session. Pray for believing hearts.

Open with Prayer

Lesson 3

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: Romans 3:20

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson.
Questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

dependent—

mystery—

remedy—

despair—

Introduce the Lesson

SHOW the envelope, GOOD NEWS, and have students draw out and read the good news items. **ASK** What is the best good news you can think of? (Allow brief sharing.) I guess it might depend on what you needed. If you were very sick, it would be good news to hear you'd soon be well. If you needed money for an expensive operation, it would be good news to hear you had just won a million dollars. But to Saul, the enemy of Christians, there couldn't be any better news than that Jesus had died for him and taken away his sins. You see, when Saul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, Saul saw the sins he had committed and all the sins in his heart. He knew that in God's eyes he (Saul) deserved to die for his sins. And he couldn't think about anything else. That's what the law does to us when the Holy Spirit uses it to show us what we're really like. The gospel was the best news in the

The Holy Spirit Calls Us Through the Gospel

world to Saul. And it's the best to us, too, when the Holy Spirit shows us our sins. Today's lesson teaches us how the Holy Spirit calls us through the gospel.

Teach the Lesson

SAY Open your books to Lesson 3 and read the lesson title. **ASK** What will we learn about in this lesson? (*about how the Holy Spirit calls us through the gospel*) We just learned what the gospel is. Do you remember? (*the good news that Jesus died for our sins, and that we can be forgiven if we confess our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior*) There's only one way that can happen. Let's read this lesson and find out what it is. The Holy Spirit is working whenever God's Word is preached or taught.) **SAY** The Holy Spirit is working to create true and living faith. What is living faith? We have living faith when we trust in Jesus to save us from our sins. It doesn't mean just believing that God exists or even only that Jesus came to die to save people. Living faith means that God shows you your sins and leads you to ask God to forgive you. It means you trust in Jesus as *your very own* Savior. **SAY** Let's see what the Holy Spirit shows people when He calls them. When the Holy Spirit speaks to us, He shows us that the gospel is really true. When we trust in Jesus, God really forgives our sins. He shows us how much Jesus loved us when He died on the cross and paid for our sins. When we hear God's Word that tells us about Jesus' perfect life, the Holy Spirit helps us understand that Jesus kept the Law for us. It's as if the Holy Spirit shines a light on Jesus so we can see how wonderful Jesus is. You and I can read and read about Jesus, but we'll never see Him in this way unless the Holy Spirit shows us how much Jesus loves us and wants to give us eternal life and every joy and blessing.

More to be added later...

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— John 6:63

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life."

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;

But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel,...

Activity Pages

Activity 1—Words to Remember

ANSWERS

ACROSS

5. Nicodemus

8. God

9. news

10. baptized

Lesson 3

- 13. love
- 14. mystery
- 16. salvation
- 17. provides

DOWN

- 1. Spirit
- 2. creed
- 3. Jerusalem
- 4. Gospel

The Holy Spirit Calls Us Through the Gospel

- 6. sin
- 11. peace
- 12. glory
- 15. Savior

Activity 2—Who Does What?

ANSWERS

The *Holy Spirit* gives *faith*.
...calls me through the *Gospel*.

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for calling us through the gospel, and for giving us faith to receive Jesus into our hearts. We pray that we may listen and learn when the Holy Spirit speaks to us. We pray that You will keep on calling boys and girls and men and women. We pray that everyone in this class will trust You as Savior. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Assignment

- 1. Practice memory verse.
- 2. Review the lesson at home.
- 3. Share the gospel.

Lesson 4

The Holy Spirit Gives Faith Through Baptism

Bible Lesson: Matthew 28:19-20

Memory Verse: Baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *1 Peter 3:21*

Enrichment Memory Verse: "Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." *Mark 10:14b*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...
What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts,...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ Students will be able to define the concepts of grace, means of grace and sacrament
- ✦ Students will know that the Holy Spirit gives God's grace through the means of grace, the Word and sacraments.
- ✦ The believing student will thank God for faith given through baptism, and will respond by living in daily repentance and sanctification.
- ✦ Students outside of Christ, whether they have been baptized or not, will hear the Holy Spirit's call to confess sin and receive Jesus as Savior.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ pictures of babies of various ages.

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead you to a deeper and clearer understanding of God's grace and of the Holy Spirit's work through the Word and the sacraments.
2. During the week pray for each of your student's by name, remembering each one's particular spiritual need.
3. As you look ahead to Sunday's class session, pray that the Holy Spirit will work through God's Word and enable you to teach clearly.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

Most of us enjoy receiving gifts. Many gifts we receive are meant to be used once and then they are gone. Other gifts have a more lasting nature, but they too will be worn out at some point. Often the gifts with the most value are those that do not wear out and stay with us through our whole lives. They have been produced with good materials and by skilled craftsman.

We see pictures of the value and importance of God's gift of baptism to us in the Scripture. In Acts 8 we see the Ethiopian eunuch who did not want to delay but upon seeing water asked to be baptized. We also have the story of the Philippian jailer. Paul and Silas were in prison and were praying and singing around the midnight hour. An earthquake shook where they were and the following events lead the jailer to the point of killing himself. Paul and Silas were able to share with him the Gospel of Jesus Christ and he believed. We see the importance of baptism to Paul, Silas, and this man in that at the same hour of the night (around midnight) he and his whole household were baptized (Acts 16).

Beyond this we see the value of God's great gifts to us in what are promised with them. In baptism we have the promise of salvation, eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Spirit Himself (Acts 2, also see the Small

Catechism). So we need not think of baptism as something that is to be celebrated once and forgotten as if God's promises have only temporary value or that they wear out after a certain length of time. God's gifts and promises do not change.

So we who have been baptized can trust in the promises of God given to us in our baptisms. To see this great gift in another passage of Scripture we can turn to Romans 6. In those verses near the beginning of the chapter we see that having been baptized we are united with Christ in His death. But that is not the end. Having been united with Him in His death we are also promised the wonderful uniting together with Him also to new life (Romans 6:1-11).

So it is that this truly is a gift to us. We are enlightened with His gifts; through His means. For the Christian faith makes clear that we do not climb upward to God, but that God through the Holy Spirit comes down to us. He provides to us what we so desperately need; the forgiveness of sins.

We should not forget another reason a gift has value; because of the one it was that gave it to us. So the gift of baptism seems insignificant to many, just a short little part of a service with some water and a few words. But this gift is God's word of promise connected with the water; a sure promise from the Creator of the world who never lies.

B. Creed Study

The disciples of Jesus came to Him and asked Him, "who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" They had hearts that were selfish by nature -they were concerned about getting rewards and recognition. The heart and mind of Jesus was and is so different. He humbled Himself and sought only to give, not to receive.

In response to their question Jesus directed them to a little child. The disciples thought that one had to be an adult in order to really experience the working of God. But Jesus turned the whole picture around and showed them that they as adults needed to become like children.

This lesson deals with the subject of how God brings salvation to our hearts through *Baptism*. Jesus states that the "little ones who believe in Me" are capable of belief and thus proper recipients of baptism. R. H. Lenski writes: "To permit oneself to be called, led, loved, without pride and without doubt, in simple trust, that is childlikeness even as this is the nature of children who possess nothing but need everything; who are able to do nothing but receive everything..." (*Commentary on Matthew*, R.C.H. Lenski, p. 681). Children, even babies, become powerful examples of God working out His gift of salvation.

In Acts 2:38-39 we see a further development of this theme. Peter states that through the means of baptism one receives 1)the remission of sins and 2)the gift of the Holy Spirit. He goes on to write that the "promise is for you and for your children." Children are to be included in the sacrament of baptism. Notice also that Peter states that the promise of faith and salvation is for "all who are afar off." Little children are separated from the Lord but they also have the potential of knowing Christ in a personal way. The Lord desires to call all (young and old) unto Himself.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Use time available to hear memory work from early-arriving students.

Open with Prayer

Pray for the Holy Spirit's help in understanding today's lesson. Thank God for each student present; pray for students not present; ask that God may be in control as you learn and study, that He will keep teacher and students from resisting the Spirit's work.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:
From the Bible: John 6:63

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel,...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson.
Questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

Confirmation—
sacrament—
thrive—

Lesson 4

The Holy Spirit Gives Faith Through Baptism

Introduce the Lesson

ASK How many of you have had baby brothers or sisters? **SHOW** a picture of a newborn baby. **ASK** When a baby is this tiny, what can he do? Allow students to answer. Then **SAY** A tiny baby can cry and kick and do a few other things like looking at things, but he can't take care of himself at all. He lets people pick him up and feed him and bathe him, but he can't stop anyone from feeding him or taking care of him. He's pretty helpless, and he doesn't even know who he is, doesn't even know that he is somebody. **SHOW** pictures of older babies and toddlers. **SAY** As he gets older, the baby learns to do lots of things, but he's still not able to take care of himself. As he becomes older, a child becomes proud of all the things he can do. He might even think he's good enough and smart enough and strong enough to get along without any help from God. Some kids are like that. Or they might want to be Christians, but think they can be Christians without any help from God. Kids like that are proud. I guess all of us think that way sometimes. But the little baby isn't proud. **SHOW** a picture of a baby being baptized. When the pastor pours the water on his head and baptizes him, he doesn't say to God, "Let me alone, I can do it myself." No, he doesn't stop the Holy Spirit from giving him faith.

In today's lesson we'll learn how God gives us His grace and faith through baptism.

Teach the Lesson

SAY Open your books to Lesson 4. **CALL ON** a student to read the lesson title. **SAY** In our last two lessons we learned about two ways the Holy Spirit works to bring us to living faith. **ASK** Who remembers what they are? (*The Holy Spirit uses the Law to show us our sins, and He uses the Gospel to lead us to trust in Jesus.*) This lesson will teach us another way the Holy Spirit leads us to faith. What is it? (*The Holy Spirit gives faith through baptism.*) **ASK** How can little children, and even babies, believe in Jesus? (*The Holy Spirit gives them faith when they are baptized.*) The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to give faith to people. God's Word is one of the means of grace. God gives His grace when people hear and accept what God says. But babies can't listen to God's Word and get God's grace that way. God has another way of giving His grace. He gives it through the sacraments. Baptism is a sacrament and God gives His grace to babies through baptism.

More to be added later...

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE—*I Peter 3:21*

Baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

CATECHISM—**READ**

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts,...

Activity Pages

Activity 1—How's Your Math?

ANSWERS

BABY

FAITH

HOLY SPIRIT

WATER

FORGIVES

GODS WORD

SACRAMENT

**BABY, HOLY SPIRIT, BAPTISM, SACRAMENT,
WATER, GOD'S WORD, FORGIVES, FAITH**

Activity 2—What Does That Mean?

ANSWERS

1. G
2. A
3. H
4. I
5. J
6. L
7. K
8. B
9. D
10. F
11. C
12. E

CLOSING THE LESSON**Closing Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your grace and for the means of grace that give us faith in Jesus. Thank You that You gave us faith and eternal life through baptism. Thank You for working now in our hearts through the Word of God. Help us to pay attention to the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts that calls us to confess our sins every day. Help us to hate sin and to love You. We also pray for boys and girls who don't know You. We know that You want everyone to come to You. Help us to tell others about You. Thank You for your love and for the

Holy Spirit's work showing us our sin and calling us to come to You for forgiveness. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Assignment

1. Remind students to complete their lessons and learn the memory verse and catechism.
2. Challenge your students to read their Bibles everyday and tell others about Jesus.

Lesson 5

The Holy Spirit Preserves Faith Through The Lord's Supper

Bible Lesson: Matthew 26:26-28

Memory Verse: And while they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "take, eat; this is My body." And when he had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." *Matthew 26:26-28*

Enrichment Memory Verse: Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? *1 Corinthians 10:16*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith;...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ The student will indicate understanding that God's grace is His love that we do not deserve, and that God gives faith, forgiveness and eternal life by His grace.
- ✦ The student will show understanding that God gives His grace through the Means of Grace, and that the Means of Grace are the Word of God and the sacraments.
- ✦ The student will show understanding that God gives grace and forgiveness of sins through the Lord's Supper.
- ✦ The student will accept God's grace and daily forgiveness given through God's Word.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ communion tray with glass of grape juice and a plate with a wafer.

Prayer Preparation

1. Thank God for His grace which He gives freely through His Word and sacraments. Praise Him that He has given you faith to trust Christ as your Savior.
2. Pray that your Bible study will lead you to an understanding of grace and the means of grace.
3. Pray for a work of grace in the hearts of your students. Pray that God's Word will work repentance and faith and strengthen the faith of believing children.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

The people were a grumbling, murmuring bunch. They were aware of God's faithfulness to them but were yet ungrateful for His provision. They were wishing for the good old days of their time in...Egypt. You remember the great times they had right? When they were slaves; used and abused, making bricks under more and more difficult circumstances. Right, that doesn't sound like a golden age to me either. Yet, when the people had been safely brought out of Egypt's slavery this is what they looked back to.

They were in the desert for somewhere around a month when they began to grumble (Exodus 16:2-3). They grumbled against God because they didn't have the food that they thought they needed. They blamed God and

He heard all their grumbling. They didn't deserve God's help and mercy. But God does this great and gracious thing; He provides them with food. They call it "manna" which is Hebrew for "What is it?" They didn't know what it was at first but soon found out this was, "bread from heaven," provided for them. God provides strength through this nourishment for all the years of their wandering.

The attitude and actions of the people of Israel showed their rebellious hearts. The same type of hearts that we also have. We go astray so quickly. So God in His mercy acts to remind us **"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery"** (Galatians 5:1).

The Lord's Supper is God feeding us spiritually. He feeds us with Himself. The question sometimes comes, "Who should receive the Lord's Supper?" We answer all who believe and are baptized are invited to come and receive from Jesus Himself. We might think that our sin should keep us away from receiving from Christ His holy and precious body and blood. However, this is not the case. Those who know their need for forgiveness are exactly the ones who should gladly hear Christ's words, "Take, eat" and "Drink of it."

Luther years ago put together questions for personal preparation (See the Ambassador Hymnal p.15). In the final question, Luther tells the one who doesn't feel hunger or thirst for the Lord's Supper to do something a little silly. He says that such a one should "put his hand into his bosom, and feel whether he still have flesh and blood." It seems like he is saying something like "pinch yourself to make sure you are alive." You are in this world in which there is still sin. Your sin still remains, but Christ has provided His own flesh and blood for you. You still have a body of sin but Christ has provided for you His own precious body and blood for you. Your grumbling sometimes sounds a lot like those in the desert wandering around and God in His mercy says, "Here is My Body, the food to sustain you" and "Here is My Blood, that will quench your thirst." (John 4:14, 7:37-39).

B. Creed Study

Our Lord Jesus instituted the Sacrament of the Altar. The disciples were gathered to celebrate the Passover meal. During the eating of the meal, the Lord turned to His disciples, took the bread and the cup and spoke the words of institution. Christ, the Passover Lamb, ended the Old Testament Passover ceremony and instituted the New Testament Communion service.

As we examine the above Bible texts (along with I Corinthians 11:23-33) we see five aspects to the Lord's Supper.

1. The Lord's Supper is a *sacrament*. As Lutherans we believe that the body and blood of Christ are in and with the bread and the cup of blessing. Thus, the penitent sinner truly receives the real presence of Christ.
2. The Lord's Supper is a *memorial service*. Jesus said that we are to observe this supper in "remembrance of Me!" Too often we forget or take for granted the tremendous sacrifice (physically, emotionally and spiritually) that Christ made on our behalf.
3. The Lord's Supper is a *testimony meeting*. In I Corinthians 11:26 Jesus said we are to "proclaim His death until He comes again." When we gather to partake of the Lord's Table we acknowledge that He is our Lord and we eagerly await His second coming. The Lord's Supper also becomes a foretaste of the great marriage supper of the Lamb described in Revelation 19.
4. The Lord's Supper is a *self-examination time*. It is possible to eat and drink in an unworthy manner; if we fail to examine our hearts for sin; if we fail to confess our sin and come in repentance, we eat and drink condemnation upon ourselves.
5. The Lord's Supper is a *fellowship of believers*. When you come to the Lord's Table you are spiritually communing with all true believers worldwide.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Discuss with the class the work of the Holy Spirit for us, and the way the Holy Spirit uses God's Word to bring us to repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior.

Open with Prayer

Ask students to thank God in sentence prayers for the following ways the Holy Spirit calls us.

- a. Shows us our sins by the law.
- b. Calls us by the gospel and makes us able to trust in Jesus.
- c. Gives faith through baptism.
- d. Continues to show us our sins by His Word and calls us to repent and believe.

Ask for the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts through today's class.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: 1 Peter 3:21

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts,...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson. What is a sacrament? (*A sacrament is an act of God in which He uses visible means along with His Word to give invisible gifts.*) What is the visible means in baptism? (*Water*) Which Bible verse is used in baptism? (*I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19*)

More questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

sanctuary—
Communion—
resumed—
institute—
preserved—

Introduce the Lesson

Write words such as Stop, Go, Thank you, Please, I'm Sorry, and other powerful words across the chalkboard or large piece of paper. **SAY** Sometimes words are powerful. They can make people do things or stop them from doing something. They can make someone happy or sad. Can you think of other things words can do? (Allow students to

answer.) Some people's words are more powerful than other people's. **ASK** Whose words have the most power? (*In school, the teacher's; at home, your parent's words are powerful.*) **SAY** God's words have a different kind of power. When He created the world, God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. When God speaks, His words make things happen. God's Word has another kind of power. It is the power of His grace. When God's Word tells us about His love and what He has done for us, His grace comes to us through His Word. Then wonderful things can happen in our hearts. God's Word gives us the power to confess our sins and believe in Jesus if we do not resist His Word. God never forces us to believe, but He does make it possible for us to receive Jesus and to truly repent of sin if we are willing. We learned that God's Word used with ordinary water makes a sacrament by which God works in hearts and gives faith and forgiveness of sins to those who receive it. In today's lesson we will learn about the other sacrament, the Lord's Supper.

Teach the Lesson

SAY Open your books to Lesson 5. Will someone read the lesson title. The title says that the Holy Spirit preserves faith through the Lord's Supper. We had the word "preserves" in the first quarter books. We learned that God preserves our bodies and souls. Who remembers what the word "preserves" means. (*Preserves means to keep. The Holy Spirit keeps living faith alive and makes it stronger.*) **ASK** Who remembers where faith first came from. (*In baptism*) **SAY** This lesson explains why children your age do not receive the Lord's supper. **ASK** When will you receive the Lord's Supper? (*After you have learned more about Communion in confirmation class.*)

More to be added later...

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— *Matthew 26:26-28*

And while they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "take, eat; this is My body." And when he had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins."

CATECHISM—**READ**

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith;...

Activity Pages

Activity 1

Lesson 5

The Holy Spirit Preserves Faith Through The Lord's Supper

ANSWERS

1. f
2. a
3. h
4. b
5. i
6. g
7. d
8. j
9. c
10. e

Activity 2

ANSWERS

1. c
2. o
3. m
4. m
5. u
6. n
7. i
8. o
9. n

Communion

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that You loved us enough to die for us. Thank you for giving us the means of grace to strengthen our faith. May your Holy Spirit work in our hearts in such a way that we can repent of our sins, confess them and forsake them, and have true and living faith in our hearts. Make our faith strong so that we can love and obey You. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Assignment

1. Send home activity pages.
2. Encourage students to share their lesson with someone at home.
3. Challenge students to review memory work, learn the new verse and catechism.

Lesson 6

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies

Bible Lesson: Romans 7:15-25

Memory Verse: "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth." *John 17:17*

Enrichment Memory Verse: For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. *Philippians 1:6*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth,...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

✠ *To be added later*

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

♦ *to be added later*

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit may have His way in your heart, so that you will be a testimony to your students of His sanctifying work.
2. Pray that your students will see that God wants to do a work of grace in their lives too, that they may become more Christ-like by His grace.
3. Pray that daily confession of sin, forgiveness, and cleansing may be a reality in their lives.

Prayer Preparation

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

A young couple about to get married will often register for gifts they would like to receive for their wedding. Among those items are often dishes to be used in the new home. The dishes are special because they have been chosen for use by the couple as husband and wife. The dishes are purchased by some friend or family member and given so that they might be enjoyed. In many homes such dishes end up being only used for special occasions.

They are set aside for special use. This is the idea behind the Holy Spirit's work of calling us and making us holy. We are called and set apart for special use. But we should realize that special use doesn't mean that regular or consistent use is excluded. The work of the Holy Spirit is to use us for a special purpose day after day.

We are not set apart and forgotten in some cupboard. The Holy Spirit sets us apart day after day as He does His work of showing us our sins and leading us to repentance. The Holy Spirit uses us who have been set apart to be a blessing and help to those around us.

We live in a day and age in which everything is measured and quantified. Think of the various statistics we find when we explore the world of sports. We track averages and totals, speed and distance, and various goals of all sorts. This is true with the world of finance and investments as well. We can chart accounts as they grow or shrink over time and ratios of price to earnings are scrupulously studied by many.

So then there comes to us this desire to do the same measuring and charting in the Christian life. We try to see how holy we are. We set out to check our rate of growth this year over last year or compare this month's

growth to our neighbors. Such attempts are folly. With all these things comes the regular destinations of despair or pride.

In Matthew 25:37-39 it says, "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink? 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'"

Notice what Jesus says to the believers who have been told that they provided a cup of water when Jesus was thirsty? Food to the hungry? And clothing to the naked? They didn't know when they did it.

This shows us that we who are trusting in Christ will walk in the good works that Christ has prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10). We also see that there is no thought to measuring or quantifying the good works. They are done solely for the benefit of those in need; not so that someone can place another notch in their belt or mark another tally on the board. Our Gracious Redeemer, Jesus Christ, sanctifies us that we might be used of Him to bring help, hope, and peace to those around us. Thanks be to God!

B. Creed Study

Jesus had reached a very critical time in His ministry. He realized that His time of suffering and death was very near. Thus He gathered His disciples and He wanted to make sure they knew exactly *who* and *what* He was.

In response to the question of Christ, "Who do *you* say I am?" Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Clearly Peter understood who Christ was. That understanding came as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 16:17).

Notice what Jesus said in Matthew 16:18: "I will build My church." Those five short, brief words lay the foundation for understanding what the church is.

1." I" - When Jesus used that personal pronoun He was declaring that He and He alone is the foundation of the church. The entire fellowship of the church we recognize is built upon the person of Christ.

2." Will" - Jesus made a prophetic statement when He spoke that word. In the Old Testament, God worked through the nation of Israel. In His new covenant God would work through the church.

3." Build" - The focus here is upon the *process* involved in Christ building and growing the church. The work of God in calling, establishing and developing the church is a daily, weekly, monthly process. He faithfully works through His Word (even from one generation to the next) to build the kingdom of God.

4." My" - The church is the personal possession of Jesus Christ. He has purchased the church with His own shed blood on Calvary.

5." Church" -The basic word for church means "called out ones." We are called out of the world (out of the darkness) and into a personal union with Christ. We are then sent (John 20:19-21) back into the world to represent Christ as Lord and Savior.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Enlist the help of early-arriving students in preparing the class space, at the same time visiting with each student to learn what his/her concerns and needs are. If you have cards with memory verses written on them (references on reverse side) invite students to work with others in reviewing memory verses.

Open with Prayer

Briefly discuss with the class what the Holy Spirit does for us, including His work through the means of grace. Ask for sentence prayers of thanks for each of these, one at a time.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: Matthew 26:26-28

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith;...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson. What is a sacrament? (*A sacrament is an act of God in which He uses visible means along with His Word to give invisible gifts.*) What visible means do we use in the Lord's Supper? (*bread and wine*)

More questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

sanctified—
intend—
sanctification—
process—
eventually—
assure—

Introduce the Lesson

To be added later.

Teach the Lesson

To be added later.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— John 17:17

“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth...

Activity Pages

Activity 1 - Check Your Memory

ANSWERS

REASON, STRENGTH, LORD, HOLY, SPIRIT, GOSPEL, GIFTS, SANCTIFIED, FAITH, CALLS, ENLIGHTENS, CHURCH

Activity 2 - True or False

ANSWERS

1. F (holy)
2. T
3. F (life-time)
4. F (every part)
5. T
6. F (righteous)
7. F (all)
8. T

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us Your Holy Spirit to sanctify us. Thank You for showing us our sins. We confess them to You now, while we are quiet. Forgive our sins because Jesus died for us and we accept His gift of salvation. Make us more like Jesus. Help those who don't trust You as Savior to see their sins, and confess them to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Assignment

1. Challenge your students to complete any unfinished activities and work on the memory passage.
2. Ask the students to bring finished pages to be checked and acknowledged along with the memory work.

Lesson 7

The Holy Spirit Gathers and Unites the Church

Bible Lesson: Matthew 16:13-19

Memory Verse: So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone. *Ephesians 2:19-20*

Enrichment Memory Verse: "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." *Matthew 16:18-19a*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth,...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

✦ *To be added later*

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

◆ *to be added later*

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that God's Holy Spirit will teach you through His Word and keep you in close touch with Him and His will.
2. Pray for each of your students during this week. Pray that each one may be sensitive to the calling and leading of the Holy Spirit through the Word.
3. Remember each student's individual spiritual need as you have seen it. Pray specifically that each student's need may be met.
4. Pray that the Holy Spirit may have control of the class period, and that Satan's work may be frustrated.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

Have you ever invited a bunch of people to a party and then went about eagerly and diligently preparing so that it might be a fun event for everyone? Imagine the day of the party comes and you are expecting people to begin arriving. But no one pulls in your driveway or walks up to your door. Suppose you waited and began to wonder if you had accidentally written a different time or place on the invitation. You might think that some were just late but then more time passed and still no one came. It would be heartbreaking.

The good news of the Christian Church is that the Holy Spirit keeps calling, enlightening, and gathering His people. His invitation through the Word of God is heard and the church is gathered. People are being brought into something much greater than any party we could ever throw. They are being called out of darkness and the kingdom of this world into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Sometimes in our specific locations we might not see the growth we expect yet Christ is building His Church.

He has been doing so for generations through His means: The Word and Sacraments. Preachers have been preaching and teachers have been teaching. Faithful parents have prayed for their children and raised them up in the faith. Neighbors have cared for neighbors and spoken to them about the reason for the hope that they have (1 Peter 3:15). The faith entrusted to the saints is being passed down; the baton has not been dropped because through all these things the Holy Spirit is building and gathering His people.

The Christian Church is made up of those who have been brought to the "party." They come, sometime in large groups like at Pentecost (Acts 2) or sometimes as a group gathered for worship. Other times they are gathered one by one as a child is baptized or a friend shares the Good News with another. When the means of grace (Word and Sacraments) are used the Holy Spirit enlightens us. That is, the Holy Spirit, leads us out of darkness into the light. The light of the truth. The Word shows us our common need because of our sinful nature and the Savior who paid the price for us all. The light of the world is Jesus, the Holy Spirit brings us to see this.

Unity is a precious gift given by the Holy Spirit. It is the work of God of bringing together people not based on the outward things by which people have brought division but by a common Savior who has redeemed us. Isaiah 54:7 says, **"For a brief moment I forsook you, But with great compassion I will gather you."** His great love for us is shown in drawing us together around His Word, around His promises. So that after being broken by the Law's work we can be gathered into the Christian Church around the covenant of peace (Isaiah 54:10) which ultimately was put into effect by Christ's death on the Cross.

B. Creed Study

In Acts 2:42-47 we see how the early believers came together for fellowship and encouragement. In Acts 2:41 God's Word says that 3000 souls came to know Christ in a personal way. They each needed to be grounded, to grow and to reach out with their new found discovery of Christ's forgiveness.

In Acts 2:42 we see the focus of the early believers:

1. They committed themselves steadfastly to the "Apostle's doctrine." In other words they took the Scriptures and read, studied and searched them.
2. They committed themselves to "fellowship." These early Christians knew that they needed each other for support and encouragement.
3. They committed themselves to the "breaking of bread." They ate their meals together - they spent time together.
4. They committed themselves to "prayer." What a key part of the fellowship of all believers - to pray with and for one another.

These early Christians actually sought to help each other and to share whatever possessions they had with each other; this shows their oneness of Spirit.

The Lord God enabled these early Christians to grow in grace and holiness. In Acts 4:31-35 we see an example of how the Lord cleansed the people. God wanted them to be set apart, sanctified, for His glory and honor.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Enlist the help of early-arriving students in preparing the class space, at the same time visiting with each student to learn what his/her concerns and needs are. If you have cards with memory verses written on them (references on reverse side) invite students to work with others in reviewing memory verses.

Open with Prayer

Briefly discuss with the class what the Holy Spirit does for us, including His work through the means of grace. Ask for sentence prayers of thanks for each of these, one at a time.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: John 17:17

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth,...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson.

More questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

congregation—
ekklesia—
kingdom of heaven—
administered—

Introduce the Lesson

To be added later.

Teach the Lesson

To be added later.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— Ephesians 2:19-20

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone.

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like

manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth...

Activity Pages

Activity 1 -

Student will draw a picture of the inside of their sanctuary

Activity 2 - Do You Know Greek?

ANSWERS

1. Congregation
2. Ekklesia
3. Church
4. Faith
5. Believers
6. Corner stone

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Thank You, Lord, for sending your Holy Spirit to call us and give us living faith. We want to be "living stones" in Your Church. Make us Christ-like and help us to be your witnesses. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Assignment

1. Challenge your students to complete any unfinished activities and work on the memory passage.
2. Ask the students to bring finished pages to be checked and acknowledged along with the memory work.

Lesson 8

The Holy Spirit Preserves the Church

Bible Lesson: John 15:1-11

Memory Verse: "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." *John 15:5*

Enrichment Memory Verse: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *1 Thessalonians 5:23*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

✝ *To be added later*

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

♦ *to be added later*

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that God's Holy Spirit will teach you through His Word and keep you in close touch with Him and His will.
2. Pray for each of your students during this week. Pray that each one may be sensitive to the calling and leading of the Holy Spirit through the Word.
3. Remember each student's individual spiritual need as you have seen it. Pray specifically that each student's need may be met.
4. Pray that the Holy Spirit may have control of the class period, and that Satan's work may be frustrated.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

We know that in this world everything has a tendency to fall apart. We might build a nice fence and come back sometime later and see it needs repairs. Even the books that you may have handed out at the beginning of the year have the many marks of use; lots of wear and tear. We notice that we ourselves are not immune. Our physical bodies age and are susceptible to sickness and disease. We can see that huge amounts of time, energy, and money has been poured into trying to change this reality.

Whatever we see around us is marked, stained we might say, by the presence of sin in this world. We also note that we have enemies at work which will seek to destroy what has been made or put together. Have you seen what birds do to strawberries when they find a ripe patch? Or what a deer does to all the tender shoots in your garden? That which was planted, fertilized, kept clear of weeds, can all be lost very quickly.

God is not a gardener who cannot keep track of his garden or has left it unattended. The Holy Spirit is at work not just creating the Church, but in preserving His Church. He will do this merciful work until our Savior returns.

When we preserve things, what we are really trying to do is stop decay or keep something whole. For example, we try to preserve precious old paintings by monitoring things such as temperature, moisture, and light. Making sure that these elements do not destroy the colors of the paint in some great masterpiece. We might find it difficult attempting to stop it from spoiling so that the flavors will be kept and we can enjoy it months in the future.

What we notice in the Christian Church is that Christ's work of preservation is such that His bride is always pure because it is covered by the righteousness of Christ. The enemies, the elements we might say, are trying to degrade the Christian church; to tear us away from Christ.

We are the kind of people who are so regular in our wandering that we need a faithful and intimate guide to lead us and carry us to where we should go. This is the great work of the Holy Spirit. We wander, and our enemies pull at us but God is continually at work in His Word that He might protect us and preserve us. The Holy Spirit protects us by being with us. Acts 2:38 says, "**Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'**"

The proclamation of Good News coming from Peter that day left no doubt in the mind. "You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." It was not stated as a possibility but as something that will come to pass. As we speak today believers in Jesus have that same confidence. We have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

B. Creed Study

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Enlist the help of early-arriving students in preparing the class space, at the same time visiting with each student to learn what his/her concerns and needs are. If you have cards with memory verses written on them (references on reverse side) invite students to work with others in reviewing memory verses.

Open with Prayer

Pray for the Holy Spirit's work in helping us to understand today's lesson.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: Ephesians 2:19-20

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens,

and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth,...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson.

More questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

pronounced—

nurtured—

vine-dresser—

vineyard—

prunes—

abide—

indestructible—

Introduce the Lesson

To be added later.

Teach the Lesson

To be added later.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— John 15:5

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

Lesson 8

The Holy Spirit Preserves the Church

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;...

Activity Pages

Activity 1 - The Fruit of the Spirit Is...

ANSWERS - (these answers may vary depending on the dictionary. The answers below were taken from Dictionary.com)

1. "a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person."
2. "the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying; keen pleasure; elation."
3. "a state of mutual harmony between people or groups, especially in personal relations"
4. "the quality of being patient, as the bearing of provocation, annoyance, misfortune, or pain, without complaint, loss of temper, irritation, or the like."

5. "friendly feeling; liking"

6. "moral excellence; virtue"

7. "true to one's word, promises, vows, etc"

8. "kindly; amiable"

9. "control or restraint of oneself or one's actions, feelings, etc"

Activity 2 - Word Search

ANSWERS

C	S	J	F	T	M	H	H	E	Y	P	R	B	Y	T	P	H	G	B
M	Q	R	B	H	W	T	J	P	P	E	M	B	J	B	T	S	D	Z
V	Q	D	W	F	I	B	B	U	S	V	C	V	D	K	S	S	D	D
Q	Y	S	P	A	Y	E	O	S	W	I	X	E	O	M	I	Q	J	G
N	T	T	F	L	B	A	E	I	Q	N	E	T	T	U	R	B	R	S
U	K	W	F	R	K	R	J	D	N	E	Y	K	Y	C	I	D	U	W
R	X	C	W	U	D	F	I	F	G	Y	G	P	R	A	N	K	V	B
T	C	C	L	E	Z	R	V	P	H	A	C	Y	A	A	D	M	A	V
U	D	M	N	K	Q	U	T	R	U	R	T	G	Y	D	E	N	B	A
R	F	I	V	X	T	I	L	U	V	D	Z	U	Q	H	S	J	I	W
E	V	P	O	T	R	T	A	N	K	S	Z	N	M	W	T	F	D	I
D	I	Q	P	R	X	N	Z	E	Z	P	R	E	S	E	R	V	E	D
M	E	X	X	U	N	T	C	S	D	L	Y	Z	M	A	U	J	G	B
R	C	W	I	E	F	Y	R	G	T	Z	R	C	W	R	C	P	Y	E
H	L	M	I	V	F	B	Y	J	T	T	R	J	O	L	T	W	F	C
W	C	N	R	I	C	B	M	W	W	U	T	E	W	K	I	L	L	G
P	P	H	W	N	I	S	M	X	P	T	B	Z	H	W	B	K	K	D
D	Q	B	O	E	X	S	X	W	R	N	W	V	V	A	L	L	Y	W
T	A	W	F	W	M	J	M	H	E	C	E	C	V	Z	E	W	Q	F

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Assignment

1. Challenge your students to complete any unfinished activities and work on the memory passage.
2. Ask the students to bring finished pages to be checked and acknowledged along with the memory work.

Lesson 9

The Church: One in Faith

Bible Lesson: Acts 8:26-40

Memory Verse: What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. *1 John 1:3*

Enrichment Memory Verse: For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. *1 Corinthians 12:13*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...
What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✠ The student will understand that God wants people all over the world to hear His gospel and to become members of His Church.
- ✠ The student will accept Christians of all lands and all races as one in faith and in the Holy Christian Church.
- ✠ The student will understand that the Holy Spirit wants to lead all Christians to serve God in taking the gospel to the world, by prayer, giving, and/or becoming His witnesses in the world.

- ◆ scroll for the skit
- ◆ map showing the Holy Land, Gaza and Ethiopia
- ◆ a world map
- ◆ pictures of chariots

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray for the work of missions around the world. Pray that God's Word may be preached clearly. Pray that the Holy Spirit will open the hearts of many to the gospel.
2. Pray for your church and Sunday School, that they may be active participants in the work of taking the gospel to the world.
3. Pray for yourself and your class, that together you may gain a clearer vision of God's work in the whole world.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

There is a great and awesome aspect of the Apostles' Creed that we might take for granted. When we confess the Creed, we are joining together with the Christian Church. This includes not just those that we see with us in our church building. It includes believers in places all around the world and also believers from all time. When we gather in our churches we see just a small slice of that which makes up the church here and now and that is only a slice of what is the true Christian Church.

The Christian Church is an answer to Christ's prayer for unity in John 17. As Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane he prayed, "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." The Apostles wrote what they saw and what Jesus

said by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Through their witness we hear of Jesus Christ and are given the gift of faith (Romans 10:14-17).

We live in a world in which people declare how independent they are but their actions show something quite different. People find themselves gathering together with people of like minds, whether it be in their hobbies or their political views. But the Christian Church should not be simply cliques who have a common interest. The local congregation is not a club that insulates itself from the world but is God's Kingdom on earth. We are gathered around the one true faith. We are gathered by God's work so that we might receive from Christ His good gifts to us.

The enemies of the Christian Church will sometimes talk about faith. However, when they do this it will often be a discussion about "sincere" faith being enough to save us or simply "faith in faith" language. In contrast to this, we must make clear that faith in something that doesn't exist does us no good. The prophets of the Old Testament do a wonderful job mocking faith in false gods (e.g. 1 Kings 18:27; Isaiah 44:6-20). So, we will point directly to the one in whom we place our faith. We put our faith in Christ who is always the focus of the Christian Church. We focus on Christ and Him crucified as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:2, **"For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."**

We are thankful that God in His mercy has formed for Himself His bride, the Church. We are able to know Him as He has revealed Himself to us and, perhaps in an even more mind boggling way, God knows us (Galatians 4:9) and calls us His children (1 John 3:1). We know where the Church is because there the Gospel is preached; forgiveness of sins is proclaimed, and troubled consciences are given peace. This the Holy Spirit has done for you.

B. Creed Study

Philip was a man that the Lord used to communicate His love and grace. According to Acts 6:5, Philip was recognized by the early church as a mature believer, full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit. In order for us to be effective witnesses for Christ we need to pray that the Lord would develop our character so that our witness in word is backed up by a life example.

Philip was willing to obey the voice of the Lord. God led him to go to a place others wouldn't have gone. Philip was faithful to the Lord's call. The lesson we learn here is that God is not so concerned about the abilities we have, but He is looking at our hearts.

Philip took the initiative to talk to the man from Ethiopia. As Christians we need to look for opportunities to share our faith. We must not simply sit back and wait for people to come to us, but we must look for opportunities that the Lord has prepared for us to share His love.

Philip was very clear about what the focal point of witnessing is all about, namely to tell others about Christ. In verse 35 the Bible says that Philip "preached Jesus" to the man. Christ is the message we bring.

Philip gave the man the invitation. He said to him, "If you believe . . ." God calls us to extend the invitation to come to Christ. That message is to be extended to all nations, all tribes and all people groups. Today there are many, many people who are just like the man from Ethiopia. They are searching for meaning to life which can be found only in Jesus Christ.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Discuss with the class experiences the students may have had in seeking opportunities to serve God.

Open with Prayer

Encourage students to thank God for His call to them to serve in His Church. Ask for brief sentence prayers that God will bless the words of witness they have shared.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: John 15:5

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson.

More questions to be added later.

Introduce Wall Words

displayed—
representing—
ethnic—
commission—
foreigner—
countrymen—
oneness—

Introduce the Lesson

SAY Have you ever been asked to do a very important errand for someone? Maybe your teacher or school principal asked you to take a very important message to someone. I'm sure you took your errand very seriously. But what if the President asked you to take a message to another officer? You'd probably stop whatever you were doing to take that message. And you'd most likely think you'd been given a very special job to do. In today's lesson a man named Philip was given a job to do that was so important that God sent an angel to Philip to give him his orders. It turned out that the person Philip would see was a very important person, but Philip didn't know that at the time. And Philip's errand was to a foreign country. We'll find out what it was.

Teach the Lesson

SAY Open your books to Lesson 9. The title tells us the lesson is about the Church being one in faith. What do we say we mean by one in faith? How is the Church one in faith? (*We mean that all Christians have the same faith in Jesus.*) **ASK**

Where can we find believers who have the same faith in Jesus as we have? (*We can find these believers all over the world.*) **SAY** Look at the picture on this page. What countries or continents do we find represented here? The AFLC has missionaries in Mexico and in a country of South America call Brazil. Can you find these flags? (Allow students to point out these places.) **ASK** Why should we pray for believers around the world? (*They confess the same faith in Jesus that we do.*) We should pray that God will bless them and keep them in their faith. We should pray that God would help them win other people to trust in Jesus. **SAY** Now we'll read the story of how an angel told Philip to go on an errand for God. Let's read it to find out why the errand was so important. **READ OR TELL** the story from the second half of the lesson. **ASK** Why was this errand so important that God told Philip to go? (*The Ethiopian officer was reading God's Word but needed help to understand it and to tell him how to believe in Jesus. The gospel was to be brought to a new country where the gospel hadn't been preached yet. Now there would be Christians in the country of Ethiopia.*) **ASK** What was the Ethiopian reading? (*Something Isaiah the Prophet had written about the promised Savior.*) Isaiah didn't mention Jesus' name in this verse but we know he was writing about Jesus. The Ethiopian didn't know who Isaiah was writing about but he wanted to know. The Holy Spirit had been working in his heart and making him ready to hear the gospel. **ASK** How did the Ethiopian learn about Jesus? (*Philip told him that Jesus had died to save sinners.*) **ASK** How did the Ethiopian come to believe in Jesus as his Savior? (*The Holy Spirit worked in his heart to show him his sins and help him repent of them and confess them.*)

More to be added later.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE—1 John 1:3

What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

CATECHISM—**READ**

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;

But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;...

Activity Pages

Activity 1 - Crossword Fun
ANSWERS

Across

1. GAZA
6. CHARIOT
7. HOLY
9. FELLOWSHIP
11. ONE

Down

2. AFRICA

3. UNITY
4. BAPTIZED
5. FOLLOWERS
8. ISAIAH
10. GOD

Activity 2 - Good News! (skit)**CLOSING THE LESSON****Closing Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank You for bringing us the gospel so we may trust in You and become part of Your Church. We ask that You will use us in building Your kingdom. We pray that we may have the fellowship with You that will make us love You enough to be Your witnesses and lead others to know You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Assignment

1. Remind the students to complete the assignments not yet finished and to learn memory verses and the catechism.
2. Remind the students to bring Bibles and completed work to be checked.
3. Review memory work from past lessons.

Lesson 10

The Church: Where Forgiveness Reigns

Bible Lesson: Matthew 18:19-35

Memory Verse: So as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. *Colossians 3:12-13*

Enrichment Memory Verse: "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." *Matthew 6:14-15*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...
What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ Students learn that when forgiveness reigns in the church, the members are loving, kind, and forgiving to each other and to other people.
- ✦ Students will know God's forgiveness to him/her personally, and will be forgiving.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ Past memory verse strips cut into parts.

Prayer Preparation

1. Thank God that He has given to His Church love and forgiveness and all the gifts and blessings that come through His grace.
2. Pray for growth in grace, love, and forgiveness among God's people.
3. Pray for your class, that teacher and students alike may know the saving and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Pray that you may show the love of Christ and His forgiveness as a witness to your students.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

Have you ever gone to the airport checked all your bags at the front counter and watched as they disappear? You hope that they will arrive at the plane you will be getting on and arrive with you at your destination. You hope that they will come shooting out of the darkness onto the conveyor in the baggage claim area. If you have multiple bags you keep your eyes on all the bags until you see your last piece come up and you can relax. They are all there!

With the very opposite of that in mind, we consider the place of the Holy Spirit's work of forgiveness. We don't want to take any of our sins with us. We want them gone but often the old nature keeps clinging to them. By God's grace we come to church and hear that Jesus Christ paid for all of them at Calvary. We confess our sins and hear that we are forgiven. That not only a few but all of our sins are washed away. As we sing in the

hymn, “*There is a fountain filled with blood Drawn from Immanuel’s veins, And sinners plunged beneath that flood Lose all their guilty stains: Lose all their guilty stains, Lose all their guilty stains; And sinners plunged beneath that flood Lose all their guilty stains*” (Ambassador Hymnal #412 v. 1). So with forgiveness comes peace that when the time of our departure from this world comes we will be leaving the presence of sin never to have to deal with it again. Our sin might be compared to baggage lost; completely lost. Thrown into the depths of the sea lost. Isaiah the prophet says it this way: “**Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.**” Isaiah 1:18).

We are thankful to God for the Holy Spirit’s work of convicting us of sin. We might sometimes feel a bit of nagging doubt about whether all our sins have been confessed. “Have I repented of every sin?” With great confidence we look again to the Holy Spirit to convict us of individual and specific sins that we might confess them. With great peace we can look to the Scripture praying that the work of convicting us will be done there. When the Holy Spirit brings it to mind; confess it. If it hasn’t been specifically brought to mind do not fret. We have many opportunities to confess our sinfulness and repent of our sin in its very general sense. As an example, we often pray in the Lord’s Prayer, “forgive us our trespasses.”

So we gather in our congregations to hear the proclamation of God that our sins have been forgiven. Not only, or even primarily, to hear about what we should be doing but to hear the Gospel; the news of what Jesus Christ has done for us. He has taken away our sin.

B. Creed Study

1. King David had assumed control of Israel. He had been victorious over the men of Saul and was now in a position of power and control. Instead of being hard-hearted and cruel, he exhibited love and kindness.

2. David sought to find anyone left from Saul's family. Mephibosheth, a young son of Jonathan, was found. He was in need of care and help because he was lame in both feet due to an earlier accident. David made sure that Mephibosheth had all he needed.

3. It is always easy to be vindictive and cruel. But God wants us to be kind-hearted. In Ephesians 5:1-2 we have these words: “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave His life for us....”

In Ephesians 4:32 God's Word says: "And be kindhearted to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

The highest expression of God's love was found in Christ when He hung on the cross and said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." May we use the example of Christ and even of David to remember to always have a forgiving spirit. In the Lord's Prayer we ask our Heavenly Father to forgive us just as we forgive others who have sinned against us. May His love enable us to walk in the spirit of forgiveness.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Early arrivers may work with memory verse strips which have been cut into parts for assembling and review. Welcome each student, taking an interest in each student's activities and interests.

Open with Prayer

Thank God for each student in class. Pray that God may bless each one through this day's lesson. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach each one what He wants them to learn. Pray that the Holy Spirit may be in charge of the class.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: 1 John 1:3

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson. Review the work of the Holy Spirit: What is the title of our third quarter book? (*The Holy Spirit - Our Sanctifier*) What do we mean by saying the Holy Spirit is our Sanctifier? (*He makes us holy.*) How does the Holy Spirit make us holy? (*He uses God's*

Lesson 10

The Church: Where Forgiveness Reigns

Word to bring us to faith in Jesus. When we have repented of our sins and asked Jesus to be our Savior, God sees us as holy in Jesus; He sees us holy as Jesus is.) How does the Holy Spirit work to make our lives holy? (He shows us our sins and leads us to confess them and ask God to forgive us because Jesus died on the cross for all sinners. When we are forgiven we can call upon Him for the strength to live as Jesus wants us to. The Holy Spirit will use God's Word to encourage us to do what is right and we will want to do what is right as long as we remain in Christ.) The Holy Spirit does something else. He is building something. What is He building? (God's Church, the fellowship of believers.)

Introduce Wall Words

talents—
debt—
compassion—
torturers—

Introduce the Lesson

SAY We learned that when the Holy Spirit leads us to be believers in God's Church, He helps us to be loving and kind, to help other people, to listen to His Word, to love Jesus and to worship Him. That's the kind of fellowship God's Church is. Open your books to Lesson 10 and read the title. Our title says that the Church is a place where forgiveness reigns. **ASK** What does that mean? Do you know what the

word "reigns" means? "Reigns" means "rules." When we talk about reigning (spelled this way), we think about kings and other rulers—rulers of countries. Someone who reigns is in charge; he tells people what to do and they do it. But here we are talking about something that reigns in the Church. What reigns in the Church? (*forgiveness*) Write the word "Forgiveness" on the chalk board - or display a tag-board sign with "Forgiveness" written in advance on it. **ASK** So what should be the "rule" in the Church? (*forgiveness; because Christ has purchased our forgiveness and the Holy Spirit would desire to work in our hearts forgiveness toward others. Everyone who is a member of God's invisible Church has had his sins forgiven for Jesus' sake. Jesus wants His forgiven people to forgive other people.*) **ASK** Do you remember a petition in the Lord's Prayer about forgiving? (*Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.*)

Teach the Lesson

More to be added later.

ASK Do you ask God to forgive your sins every day? How much has God forgiven you? When the Holy Spirit shows you your sins and you confess them, God will forgive you. When you know how much He has forgiven you, you will want to forgive anyone who has hurt you. The Holy Spirit will help you. He is your Sanctifier. **ASK** Can you think of ways you can be kind to someone who has hurt you? Would you like to tell about it?

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE—Colossians 3:12-13

So as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and

sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers...

Activity Pages

Activity 1 - What Word Is That?

ANSWERS

1. O
2. N
3. C
4. P
5. O
6. A
7. I
8. S
9. M
10. S

COMPASSION

Activity 2 - Think About It

Answers will vary for each student

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your love and forgiveness. Help us to know how much we have sinned and need to be forgiven. Help us to confess our sins to You. Help us to love You and to forgive others for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Assignment

1. Finish activities.
2. Encourage students to do the memory work.
3. Remind students to ask God to help them be forgiving when things happen that are bad.

Lesson 11

The Church: Raised to Life

Bible Lesson: John 11:1-45

Memory Verse: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"
John 11:25-26

Enrichment Memory Verse: For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. *1 Corinthians 15:21-22*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...
What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ Students will know that Jesus Christ is the One who gives life and that He is alive forever.
- ✦ Students will know that believers in Jesus Christ as their Savior have eternal life now and will live forever with Him in heaven.
- ✦ Students will receive Jesus as his/her personal Savior and will look forward to Jesus' return.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ New Word Chart prepared for this lesson
- ◆ map showing Galilee, Jerusalem, Bethany

- ◆ tulip bulb (or bulb of another flower)

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray for each of your students by name. Make each student a special prayer matter on one day of this week.
2. Pray that God's Word, which your students have learned during this year, may have a lasting place in their lives, and that it may bear fruit unto eternal life.
3. Thank God for eternal life in Christ, and for the resurrection to come. Pray that Christ's life in you may grow and be a witness to your students.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

We are confident of God's mercy and love even when we come to the end of life. We, through the years of our lives, experience more and more of the effects and consequences of sin. However, as we come to the end of life we can be all the more thankful that we will be removed from the presence of sin and its consequences even in our own lives and bodies.

One of the great promises of Scripture is that we will be raised with bodies "incorruptible" as we are told in 1 Corinthians. We might, in fact, say that there is even in our death, God's activity of mercifully allowing that we might not always and forever deal with our sinful nature. This is where we might say that the resurrection which we look forward to is not exactly the same as those who were raised from the dead in the Scriptures.

Lazarus and others were dead and brought back from the dead. However, they eventually died again. The resurrection we are speaking of and look forward to is a resurrection in which we receive bodies that will never die again.

There is so much confusion about what happens to us after we die. There are, of course, unbelievers who deny that anything happens. There are also false religions that speak about us being reincarnated over and over again until we no longer exist as individuals. False teachers proclaim that when we die we forever shed our physical existence and are only and forever simply spiritual beings.

Against all of these false teachings stand the true teachings of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible declares that we who believe will be bodily raised to eternal life and those who do not believe will be bodily raised to eternal condemnation. Perhaps the confusion comes because we so often hear people embellishing or speculating on things that Scripture does not describe for us. When we consider what our resurrected bodies will be like we should limit our discussions to what God has revealed and not start fanciful discussions based on what we would like to think about the resurrection.

Even the word "incorruptible" points to the inability of mankind to comprehend the reality of what our resurrected bodies will be like. It is a negative term simply telling us that they will not be susceptible to corruption. They are so much more! Our bodies will not be like Frankenstein's monster; somehow reanimated, but with all sorts of the marks of death and corruption remaining. Our bodies will put on "immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:53). They will be different in ways that we simply cannot fully comprehend now.

So we continue to be mindful that the Scripture tells us that the resurrection is central to our faith as Christians. As Paul said, if Christ is not raised from the dead we are of all men most to be pitied (1 Corinthians 15:19). But Christ has been raised and we who believe will be raised (1 Corinthians 15:23).

B. Creed Study

Lazarus was a friend of Christ. In John 11:3 the sisters made a special reference to "he whom You love." Jesus Christ loves each of us with the same love. His concern for us is expressed in John 11:35 where the Scriptures declare that "Jesus wept." His weeping dealt with the sorrow He had over what sin and its results could do to man. In Romans 5:12 God's Word says "death spread to all men because all sinned."

When Jesus came to the tomb, Lazarus had already been dead for four days. There was no doubt that Lazarus *was* truly dead. It is interesting to note the unhurried manner of Jesus. When Jesus had heard that Lazarus had been sick, He had stayed two more days (note verse 6). Martha made the comment in 11:21, "Lord if you had been here." Implied in the text is a sense of disappointment in the timetable of Christ. But we can see from this account the Lord always works out His will in His own perfect timing.

In a powerful way Jesus calls forth Lazarus from the tomb. He first prays to the Father in verses 41-42. Then He calls out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" Notice the means of this tremendous miracle—His Word!

Since Christ showed His power over sin and death we have the hope of living again even though we may experience death. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 we see the following truths:

1. Verse 13 - As believers we have a confident *hope*.
2. Verse 14 - When we die (if we are true believers) we go to be with the Lord. Remember the thief on the cross who was told, "Today you will be *with Me* in Paradise."
3. Verses 16-18 - Christ will come again - therefore we can be comforted in His promises.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Provide memory work strips for students to help each other review previously learned Bible verses. Check completed work on activity pages brought back.

Open with Prayer

Ask for sentence prayers of thanks for what God, the Holy Spirit is doing in building the students' faith and giving strength to forgive and be kind to

others. Pray that the Holy Spirit will teach the class today, and lead each one to ask and thank Him for eternal life in Jesus.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: Colossians 3:12-13

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called

me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson.

Introduce Wall Words

pneumonia—
ordained—
grief—
mourn—
mourners—
objected—

Introduce the Lesson

Show the tulip bulb. Talk about how it comes from the root of the tulip after the flowers have withered and died. The bulb looks as if it might be dead, but it isn't. Life is inside of it. When bulbs are planted in a garden in the fall of the year they lie there all winter. But in the spring the life in the bulb will start to grow, and eventually we have a beautiful tulip plant. Jesus has taught us that Christians have life in them. It is life that the Holy Spirit gives the believer when he becomes a Christian. The Holy Spirit works in all believer's hearts through God's Word and makes the life in them keep on living and growing. As long as that life is fed on the Word of God and the person remains in Christ, that life will never die. We have learned how good it is to be part of God's Church and have fellowship with God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, and other believers as long as we live. Today's lesson is about

something even better that will happen to all Christians.

Teach the Lesson

More to be added later.

What happens to the souls of Christians when they die? (*they go to heaven*) But their bodies are buried. Will their bodies be dead forever? (*No. They will be raised from the dead and come alive again.* Everyone, Christian or not will be raised from the dead.) The Bible teaches us that the bodies of Christians who have died will be raised as new bodies, which will never become sick or die. Christians who are still alive when Jesus returns will have their bodies changed into bodies that will never die or have pain. That will be an instant miracle.

Find John 11 in your Bibles. **CALL ON** a student to read verse 1. What was the problem? (*Lazarus was sick*) **READ** verse 3 through 6. Discuss what the sister did, what they expected Jesus to do, etc. What did Jesus do? Do we know why? The student lesson explains why Jesus didn't go right away. Read and find out. Some questions to discuss: How long did Jesus wait? Who was surprised? Why did Jesus wait? Do we always understand Jesus' answers? **SAY** But Jesus and His disciples finally did go to Bethany. In verse 17 of John 11 we can read what Jesus found. Read and find out what He found. (*Lazarus had been in the grave for 4 days.*) There are two things Jesus said to Martha. Discuss them. (Note: Jesus is eternal life and will give eternal life to all believers; true Christians already have eternal life; Jesus is the resurrection.) What did Jesus do? (*Called Lazarus*) What did Lazarus do? (*He came alive*) Why? What happened because of this miracle? (*Many believed in Jesus.*) Lazarus was raised from the dead to reveal God's power and glory over death. The last day, the day when Jesus comes again, will be a happy day for all those who have believed on Jesus, asked Him to be their Savior, and are living for Him. Read and discuss the last paragraph with the class.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

CATECHISM—**READ**

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and

preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead...

Activity Pages

Activity 1 - From Death to Life

ANSWERS

1. Bethany
2. So that His disciples may believe
3. He had died. Bringing people back to life is just as easy for Jesus as waking someone who is sleeping.
4. four days
5. yes
6. resurrection, life, believes, live, dies, everyone, believes
7. yes, many believed

8. in paradise

9. "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."

Activity 2 - Who's Who?

ANSWERS

1. g
2. d
3. h
4. f
5. a
6. i
7. e
8. c
9. b

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Jesus, who died and rose again so we may have eternal life. We ask You to show us our sin everyday and work within us true repentance and sorrow for sin. May each one of us be a true Christian. If someone is not sure whether he is a child of yours help that person to repent and forsake sin, and to receive Jesus as his Savior. Thank you for the promise that believers in Jesus

will never die. Give us your joy and happiness as we wait for Jesus to come again for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Assignment

1. Ask students to share today's lesson with one other person.

Lesson 12

The Church: Living Forever

Bible Lesson: Ephesians 2:4-6, John 14:1-3

Memory Verse: But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. *Ephesians 2:4-6*

Enrichment Memory Verse: If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. *John 14:3*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ Students will understand that Jesus is preparing a heavenly home for all Christians.
- ✦ Students will know that heaven is a perfect and beautiful place where believers will be with their Savior forever.
- ✦ Each student will know Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, be living in fellowship with Him and look forward to his/her heavenly home.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ copies of student books from first and second quarters
- ◆ sleeping bag or suitcase

Prayer Preparation

1. Thank God for the home He has prepared in heaven for those who have come to faith in Christ.
2. Pray for your students: that the Holy Spirit will speak to them through the law and gospel they have learned; that God's Word will continue to work within their hearts to bring each one to conscious, true and living faith in Christ; that each student will be in a living relationship with Christ and if they aren't that they will come to a knowledge of their sin, and see their need to repent and confess that sin to God and receive Christ as Savior from sin.
3. Pray for this Sunday's class time, that it will be a time of special challenge and blessing to each class member.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

We are reminded of the universal appeal of the Gospel at the end of the Apostles' Creed and Luther's meaning. This promise is for who? Me and all who believe. Christ died for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). So my neighbor who believes will be raised to eternal life. The believers who gather in various countries

all around the world will be raised. Believers who have already finished their lives and run the race will be raised as well.

Again we are reminded that this is granted to us not as something we have earned but as a great and amazing gift given to us out of God's divine grace and mercy. We are also reminded that Jesus was acting in mercy in sending the Holy Spirit. The Lord said that the Holy Spirit would come to them that they might speak the truth; that they might be witnesses to the people in Jerusalem, Judea, and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Eternal life takes us beyond the "sufferings of the present time" (Romans 8:18) which we endure now "for a little while" (1 Peter 1:6). Eternal life provides us with hope and courage to face the trials of today knowing that we are going to be removed from them at some point and that even the most difficult situations can be used by God for good (Romans 8:28).

Luther's words at the end of the meaning are resounding; "This is most certainly true." The truth has been under attack ever since the Garden of Eden. If there is no truth there can be no confidence or assurance. But we are confident. Such confidence is mocked in this relativistic, pluralistic, postmodern culture. However, to this disregard for certainty and confidence we have the proclamation of God's Word. We look to what God, who does not lie, says to us.

Why did John write the letter of 1 John? That we might have confidence and peace. 1 John 5:12-13 says, **"Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life."** Our confidence comes from the strong foundation that is the Word of God. Our confidence comes from the strength of the Holy Spirit at work. Our confidence is a fruit that comes through the Holy Spirit's merciful work for us.

As this study of the Apostles' Creed draws to a close, remember that this creed is a gift to us from generations of believers who have come before us. But above and beyond that it is the truth passed on from the Scriptures inspired by God and revealing to us the mercy and love of God. In the Creed, we are told about the work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The works of creation, redemption, and sanctification. What a great gift God has given to us in the Apostles' Creed! The Holy Spirit has graciously worked through the Scriptures and will do so until the end of time. Thanks be to God.

B. Creed Study

In John 14:1-3 note that Jesus told the disciples not be troubled. Yet in the situation that they found themselves, they had every opportunity to be troubled. Jesus had just told them that He was about to leave them! He admonished them to "believe" - in other words to continue to trust in Him even as they trusted in God the Father.

Jesus shared with His disciples the tremendous promise of heaven. He spoke of a great mansion in which He was preparing a place for every believer. Jesus wanted His disciples to be assured that He would come again and bring them to heaven.

In Revelation 7:9-17 we have a picture or glimpse into the scene of heaven. The great "multitude" is gathered. This multitude of all nations is so great that no one could number the size. They all stand in front of the Lamb (Christ) and sing out with all the angels praise and adoration to the Lord. In verses 13-17 we see how even though we suffer in this life we shall one day experience God's presence and joy in heaven.

In Revelation 21-22 we have a description of the uniqueness of heaven. In 21:1-8 we see who will be in heaven and also a description of who will be in hell (verse 8).

The vision or picture that God gives John is tremendous. The size of the city is 1200 miles high, 1200 miles wide and 1200 miles long (verse 16). The beauty of the city is beyond description although God uses the example of beautiful stones and diamonds to describe heaven and the city.

Note in verse 22 that there is no temple for the Lord God and the Lamb is the temple. Note also that there is no need for a sun (verse 23) since the Lamb is the light.

In examining Revelation 21-22 we see the principle of inclusion and exclusion. All those outside of Christ are excluded. They are in hell (Rev. 20:15). But for each person who is in Christ, he has the hope of being with the Lord for *all* eternity in heaven and he is able to enjoy all the riches of Christ forever!

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Discuss with students what has been learned that the Triune God has done and still does for them.

Open with Prayer

Encourage brief sentence prayers of thanks for God's work of creating, keeping, redeeming and sanctifying them. Thank God for each student and ask for God's blessing on each one's life.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: John 11:25-26

And

From the Catechism: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead...

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson. Ask students to share their favorite verses. Review the year's work, using the following questions: What is the Trinity? (*One God in three Persons, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit*) What has God the Father done for us? **SHOW** first quarter book cover (*Created us, protects and keeps us*) Why did God the Father create us? (*So that we could have fellowship with Him*) God's Son is called our _____? (*Our Redeemer*) **SHOW** the second quarter book cover. What is meant by Redeemer? (*Our Redeemer bought us back from sin, death and the power of the devil*) How did Jesus redeem us? (*By His innocent suffering and death on the cross*)

for our sin and rising again from the dead. He made the only payment for sin that was acceptable to God the Father.) What does the Holy Spirit do for us? (He shows us our sinfulness and need of the Savior, Jesus; He shows us that only Jesus can forgive sin and make us acceptable to God; He leads us to admit we are sinners, confess our sins, and ask Jesus to forgive our sin, come into our hearts and be our Savior; He gives us strength to live lives pleasing to God; He sanctifies us, makes us holy. The Holy Spirit does all this and more through the Word of God. We can only come to Christ and grow in Christ through the Word of God, the Bible.)

Introduce Wall Words

mankind—
intently—
devastated—

Introduce the Lesson

SHOW sleeping bag or suitcase. Talk about the fun of preparing for and going camping or visiting a friend or new place. Bring out the fact that it's fun to go somewhere but it is always good to go home again. Why is this? Home is where we belong. Family is there; they love you most and understand you and your need, etc. The Christian's home is like that. Heaven is the Christian's home. The Bible says, "Our citizenship is in heaven." That means that heaven is where we belong. Our Savior is there as well as all the people who have believed in Jesus in the past and have now gone to heaven. All our friends who love Jesus will be there someday. Last week we learned that the trumpet will sound and the dead who have believed in Jesus will rise with new bodies. Living Christians will also get new imperishable bodies. Then all Christians will live in heaven forever. Today's lesson will teach us about heaven.

Teach the Lesson

More to be added later.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— Ephesians 2:4-6

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were

dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Activity Pages**Activity 1 - Do You Remember?****ANSWERS**

1. a
2. a
3. a
4. b
5. b
6. b
7. a
8. b
9. a

Activity 2 - Let's Review**ANSWERS**

cannot, reason, believe, come, called, Gospel, sanctified, preserved, calls, sanctifies, church, preserves, one, forgives, sins, believers, raise, life, believe

CLOSING THE LESSON**Closing Prayer**

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the dwelling place You have prepared for us in heaven, by Your death and resurrection. Make us ready for heaven by Your grace. May each one of us be truly sorry for our sinfulness and ask You to forgive us, come into our hearts and live with us forever. We know that when we have Jesus living in our hearts we are ready for

heaven. We look for You to come very soon and take us to Your home in heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Assignment

1. Send student books and all projects home.

