

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: I 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*

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

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CATECHISM—READ

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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.