

# 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 (I 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.