

Communion Preparation

A Guide for Parents to Use to Prepare your Kids

When you finish this material with your parents, you will talk to our pastors and elders to help you understand if you are ready to take communion. They will ask you some important questions. These questions will be like the ones below.

1. Who is Jesus? _____
2. When you die, are you sure that you will go to live with God in heaven forever? _____
3. How would you answer if God asked you, "Why should I let you live with me forever in heaven?" _____

4. How is God working in your life now? _____

What Does It All Mean?

Mirror Time

The first two people God made were _____ and _____. God made them perfect. Adam and Eve were made in His image (Genesis 1:27). Like beautiful mirrors, they reflected God's love and goodness in everything they did. They lived in a perfect garden where they talked to God everyday. There was no sickness, sadness, no fights or trouble, and no one could die. What would you like best about living in such a perfect place?

Do you remember what went wrong with God's perfect world? _____

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God (Genesis 3), their friendship with Him was broken. Their sin separated them from God. The world became a place with thorns, tears, and death. There was all kind of trouble. Adam and Eve were dead on the inside. They no longer had hearts that loved and obeyed God. One day, their bodies would die, too. There was nothing they could do to fix things. Instead of being like beautiful mirrors that reflect God's goodness, they were broken and shattered.

They had run away from being friends with God. Instead, they acted like His enemies.

Adam and Eve are our great, great, great...grand parents. Just like our parents pass along certain traits to us, (like your hair color, or you ability to be a good athlete), Adam and Eve passed down some traits to us (Romans 5:12-21). We have a sinful nature, just like they did. That means that our hearts are dead inside and we disobey God. Like them, we are broken and shattered.

The good news is, God made a special promise to Adam and Eve. God always keeps His promises. God told them that one day He would send someone to fight and beat Satan. He would make things right so that you and I could be friends with God again! Who do you think that was? _____

Picture Time

Let's do something special that helps us understand the gospel—Do you know what gospel means? _____ It means "good news"—the news of what Jesus did for us. Let's put together the pieces of the gospel. Here are some pictures to help us.

What is God like?

1. God is **holy**. What do you think that means? _____

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty." Isaiah 6:3



"...for our 'God is a consuming fire'". (Hebrews 12:29)

2. God is **just**. He cannot pretend that we have not sinned. When His law is broken, someone must be punished.

"He does not leave the guilty unpunished." Exodus 34:7.



3. Look at this verse. How does God feel about us? _____
"For God so loved the world that He gave his One and Only Son
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."
John 3:16



What are you and I like?

4. This verse says have _____. We have all broken God's _____.
"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23



5. JUDGMENT IS CERTAIN.

"...man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment."
Hebrews 9:27



6. SEPARATED FROM GOD

"Your iniquities have separated you from your God, your sins have hidden His face
from you." Isaiah 59:2



What has our sin done to our friendship with God? _____

If this guy was trying to jump over the Grand Canyon, would he make it? _____

How big do you think the separation is between us and God because of our sin? _____

****God is our judge. We are all guilty of sin and deserve punishment.**

Can God love us and be our judge at the same time? _____

Is it unfair for God to judge us for our sin? _____

What is the penalty for breaking God's law? _____

Remember this picture. What does it remind us of? _____



Jesus died for us so that we will not be separated from God! Jesus gave His life to fill the gap.

GOD ←-----JESUS-----→YOU



"For Christ died once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." 1 Peter 3:18

What did Jesus do for us? _____

Jesus Trades Places with Us

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus took our ____ and gave us His _____.

(Optional Object lesson) T-shirt Time

Project: Use 3-D paint and clean, plain t-shirts. Can be done with two children, or a child together with a parent.

**Make one t-shirt that represents sin. Write or draw all the sinful things you can think of that you have done, said, or thought about. You can include the things we don't do that we are supposed to do.

What is sin? _____

Sin is breaking God's law (1 John 3:4). It includes things we do, and things we say, and things we think about. Did you know that being angry and hating someone is like

killing them in your heart? Our sins are not just what mom and dad see that get us in trouble. Sin is also the wrong things that we feel and think on the inside. We are all sinners! Oops, except for ONE person. Can you name the only person who has never sinned? _____

**The second shirt represents Jesus' righteousness.

What do you think righteousness means? _____

Jesus was righteous (Hebrews 4:15). He had a right relationship with God, and everything He did, said, and thought was right. He is the only person who ever lived who perfectly obeyed God's law.

Once the shirts dry, have one child (or adult) put on the sin shirt and one put on the righteousness shirt. The person wearing the Sin shirt is wearing all our sins. He represents you and me. We have all sinned. The person wearing the righteousness shirt represents the perfect life of Jesus.

Which of these two people deserves to be in God's holy presence forever?

Which one deserves to be separated from God and to have punishment forever?

Let's see what happens when we believe in Jesus' death for us on the cross. (Trade shirts). Jesus takes your sins away and He accepts the punishment you deserve. And you have traded places with Jesus. You now have His righteousness covering you. When God sees you, He sees the perfect life Jesus lived! You are JUSTIFIED. That means "called righteous". You are called righteous because Jesus gave His perfect life of obedience to you (Galatians 2:15-16). You are also ADOPTED. God calls you his loved child (Galatians 4:4-7). You can come into His holy presence without fear. He loves you and treats you like His own child. Everyone who trusts Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins is a child of God.

What does it mean to be justified? _____

What does it mean to be adopted by God? _____

How does it make you feel to know your sins are taken away, you have the perfect life of Jesus given to you as a gift, and you are God's child?

Remember, our great, great, great...grandparents passed down some bad traits. We are all born with what kind of heart? _____

In order for us to believe in Jesus as our Savior and receive forgiveness for our sins, God has to take out our old, sinful heart and give us a new heart that is willing to follow him. This is called being _____ (John 3:3).

With this new heart, we want to turn away from our _____, and trust Jesus who died in our place. Our new heart wants to follow God and obey Him. Yet, even though we have a new heart, we can still struggle to obey (Galatians 5:16-18). The Holy Spirit helps us to obey and not to give in to temptation.

If you've grown up in a Christian home, you may not remember the exact time that God changed your heart and you became a Christian. That's ok!

What is important is to look at your life now and ask yourself:

Does my heart trust Jesus for dying for my sins and giving me His righteousness? _____

Does my heart want to obey God, even though I often fail? _____

Growing to be More Like Jesus

As His child, God has given you some special things to help you grow up to be more like Him. Some of these things are reading His Word, prayer and participating in the Sacraments. Remember that old broken mirror, God is picking up the pieces, filling in the cracks, and making you just like new. Why? So that you can reflect His goodness to the rest of the world. When people look at you, they will see things that remind them of Jesus!

Sacraments

Two of the things God gave us to help us grow are called sacraments. They are baptism and communion (or the "Lord's Supper"). These sacraments involve signs. Signs are things we can see with our eyes, and they help us to remember something very important.



Have you ever seen this sign? What important thing does it help you to remember? _____

There are two parts of a sacrament:

- a. The physical (what we can see and touch)

- b. The spiritual (what we understand by faith).

The sacraments contain important signs to help us remember what Jesus has done for us. They also serve to seal our belief, the presence of the Holy Spirit to help us believe that God's promises are real.

The Lord's Supper (Communion)

Two signs are used in the Lord's Supper—bread and wine (or grape juice). The bread reminds us of Jesus' body and the wine reminds us of His blood.

Read Matthew 26:26-29.

*What did Jesus say about the bread He gave to His disciples?

*What did Jesus say about the cup He gave to His disciples?

These two signs help us to remember something very important: Jesus suffered and died on the cross for our sins. Jesus is alive, even though we cannot see Him. One day, He will return to earth and we will be able to see Him! Until then, He gives us these special signs that we can see, to remind us of what He did for us on the cross.

* What two signs are used in the Lord's Supper? _____

* What do the bread and wine reminds us of? _____

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-32.

*After repeating Jesus' words in verses 24 and 25, what warning does Paul give in verses 27-30? (Note: "Without discerning the body" means not realizing the spiritual, sacred meaning of Jesus' action.)

In receiving the bread and cup, followers of Jesus Christ:

- a. Remember His death.
- b. Set themselves apart from those who do not follow Him.
- c. Receive spiritual nourishment and strength to grow in Christ.

d. Look forward to His coming again.

The presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper: Just as the bread and cup are physically present, so the body and blood of Christ are spiritually present.

You should examine yourself and your relationship with your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Are you growing in your knowledge of and love for Him?

Is your relationship with Christ having an impact on your relationship with:

Members of your family?

Your friends?

People who do not follow Jesus Christ?

Wrap Up

Look back at your answers to our first three questions under "Understanding the gospel". Have your answers changed? _____

Are you ready to talk to one of the pastors about your answers? _____

Your Dad or Mom may call the church office and set up a time to meet with a pastor! (434/846-3441)

Some materials based upon materials from First EPC, Renton, WA, and Covenant Community PCA, Scottsdale, AZ.