



## PREPARING TO TAKE COMMUNION

A STUDY GUIDE TO BE USED TO PREPARE CHILDREN TO RECEIVE COMMUNION<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Used with permission from Grace Presbyterian Church, Sioux Falls, SD.

## ***Introduction***

We are so glad that the Lord has brought your child to this point. To be at this point shows that God has been active in loving your child and keeping His promises. It is only a work of God that has provided for your child to be ready to become a communicant member of Christ's church.

The Church is the body of Christ and is made up of all those who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, as well as their children. Jesus himself welcomed children to his presence, and throughout the Bible children of believers are included as part of the Church, or covenant community.

At Lakemont we gladly welcome children, seeking always to minister to them and disciple them in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are praying for you and are here to help you in any way we can.

## ***This Packet***

The session of Lakemont encourages you to use this material as a guide to teach your children in regard to this important matter. This packet will outline essential beliefs for the youngest members of the covenant community.

Each of the following lessons is designed to help children know the gospel, believe in Christ alone, and be confident in their salvation.

Lesson 1 – Who Is God? Or What Is He Like?

Lesson 2 – What is sin and why is it so bad?

Lesson 3 – How does Jesus save us from sin?

Lesson 4 – How are we to respond?

Lesson 5 – What are the benefits and responsibilities of being a member of a church?

Lesson 6 – Why is The Lord's Supper necessary?

Take the time to go through each lesson with your child. It would work best if you would go through the lesson ahead of time and then go through it with your child, making sure they are able to answer the main question that each lesson is asking. Don't be afraid to go through a lesson more than once. The lessons are short enough for a child to understand but thorough enough for a solid understanding.

### ***After You've Finished The Packet***

Once you have finished all the lessons and are satisfied with your child's understanding, please talk to pastor Bryan so you can schedule a time for your child to meet with the session to be interviewed to become a communing member.

During the interview the session will gently ask your child questions regarding the material in this packet to discern their faith and understanding. The tone of the interview is joyously seeking to celebrate and confirm the work of God in your child. It is not to trip your child up or ask questions that are beyond them.

### ***What does it mean to be "ready"?***

Many times, parents will ask, "how can I know if my child is ready". Here are a few indicators that we commonly see, which outwardly indicate the inward work of God (please consider all the following in age appropriate ways):

1. Your child has announced an interest in faith and demonstrated *faith*.
2. Your child has demonstrated *repentance* (turning from sin, sorrow for sin, and willing confession of sin).
3. Your child has sought to live from *a biblical world view* (they have answered cultural challenges or personal challenges from the bible).
4. Your child has listened to the sermon and participated in *worship*.
5. Your child wants to serve/help others, especially the church.

May God bless you and strengthen you as you nurture the faith of your children who are so precious in the sight of God that he loved them and sent his Son for them.

## LESSON 1 - WHO IS GOD?

### Big Question: Who is God?

A. The Bible is about God. What do the following verses teaches us about God?

1. Genesis 1:1 & Colossians 1:16
2. I Timothy 6:16 & Colossians 1:15
3. Psalm 147:5
4. Jeremiah 10:12
5. Isaiah 6:3 & I John 1:5
6. I John 4:8 & John 3:16
7. Matthew 28:19

B. Answer how do each of God's attributes help and encourage us?

1. God is **creator** and we are His creation.
  - In what condition did God create people and all things (perfect or imperfect)?
2. God is an **invisible spirit and is immortal**.
  - Was God ever born? Will God ever die?
3. God **knows and sees everything**.
  - Has God ever learned anything? What does God know about you?
4. God is **all-powerful**.
  - Will there ever be anything too hard for God? How does this help you trust Him?
5. God is **holy and pure** in all His ways.
  - Does God ever sin? Can God sin? Will God ever sin towards you?
6. God is **love**. We love because He first loved us.
  - How does God show his love for you and all people?
7. God is **triune**. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are equal in power and glory.
  - Is God more Father, Son, or Holy Spirit (careful for a trick question!)?

### Big Questions:

→ What do you believe about God?

→ Since God created all things perfect, what was God and creation's relationship like?

## LESSON 2 – WHAT IS SIN?

Big Question: Why does sin separate us from God?.

### A. God Has Told Us What Pleases Him

Read Exodus 20:1-17, Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 43-45, and 7:12. As you read the verses, put an X on the line that corresponds to what God is *positively* commanding people to do.

- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we worship Him and nothing else.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we use His name with respect rather than as a swear word.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we keep Sunday as a special day, set apart for Him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we respect, love and obey our parents.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we respect life and treat people with love rather than hate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we tell the truth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we are happy with His provisions and not envious of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we follow His design for marriage.
- \_\_\_\_\_ God is pleased when we love and help our neighbors and friends.

As you look at all the above commands from God, have you kept them all, and perfectly?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES      \_\_\_\_\_ NO

### B. No One Has Pleased God

1. When a person breaks God's law, it's called sin.
  - a. Look at Romans 3:23 – How did God originally make people? How is this the opposite?
  - b. Look at Romans 6:23a – What have we earned for our sin?
  - c. Read Ephesians 2:1-2 – What did we follow instead of God? Why is this bad and sad?
2. How are being physically dead and spiritually dead similar?
3. Why does God punish sinful people – why is this the just/fair thing to do?
4. What *good news* do we need to hear from God about our sin?

*Big Questions:*

→ What is sin?

→ What is the result of our sin against God? Physically, spiritually, and relationally?

### LESSON 3 – HOW DOES JESUS SAVE?

*Big Question: What did God do to rescue us from our sin?*

1. Why do people like super-heroes? What kind of *hero* do we need to escape our sin?
2. Read John 3:16 – Why did God send His Son? How does this solve our sin problem?

#### UNDERSTANDING HOW JESUS SAVES US

3. Read John 1:1 – How is Jesus like God? Think back to Lesson 1 to help you answer.
4. Read Phil 2:7-8 – How is Jesus just like all people (except for sin)?

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Jesus is perfectly God and perfectly human. Jesus perfectly represents God to people and people to God. He is the way for people and God to regain the peace that sin separated (Romans 5:1).

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5. Look up I Peter 3:18 and answer the following questions.

A. Who died for our sins?

B. *Righteous* means to perfectly keep all of God's laws.

- How is Jesus **righteous**? (Look back at lesson 2 and see how many of God's laws Jesus kept.)
- Who are the unrighteous? Why/How? (Remember Lesson 2)

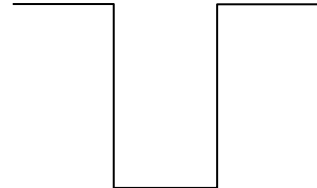
C. What is the result of Jesus dying as our **substitute**?

6. What makes Jesus an acceptable substitute for sinful people?
7. Can any person be saved from their sin without Jesus? Why not?

8. How could you draw the gap between God and people being bridged by Jesus?

*Big Questions:*

- Who sent Jesus and why?
- Why did Jesus need to be our substitute?



## LESSON 4 – HOW ARE WE TO RESPOND?

Big Question: Do you have faith in Jesus?

### ***FAITH & REPENTANCE***

1. Look up the following verses and write down what you see about *faith* in Jesus.

A. John 5:24 & 6:47

B. Eph 2:8-9

2. A person shows they have inward faith by outwardly repenting. Look up the following verses and write down what it means to *repent*.

A. 1 John 1:9

B. Isaiah 55:7

3. How might faith and repentance be connected? Can you have one without the other?

4. To be saved, means that we are saved *from* something and *to* something. What are we saved *from* (think back to the Lesson #2)? What are we saved *to*?

5. What new things does God grow in us (or transform us into) as we have faith in Jesus – see Gal 5:22-23, 25?

→ How does this restore/redeem/renew what was lost when God created all things good?

6. Read John 10:14-16. See how Jesus is the Good Shepherd that we are to follow by faith.

A. What does a shepherd do for sheep? What did Jesus do for His people (verse 15)?

B. Why do sheep follow their shepherd? How do all Jesus' sheep respond to His voice?

7. What is our hope if/when our faith ever gets weak?

*Big Questions:*

→ What do you believe about Jesus?

→ What are faith and repentance?

## LESSON 5 – WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MEMBER OF THIS CHURCH?

Big Question: What are the benefits and responsibilities of being part of a church?

### **A. What Is The Church**

1. What do Matthew 28:18-20 & Ephesians 1:22-23 say about Jesus being head of the church?
2. Jesus gathers His people into churches. Read 1 Cor 12:12-19, 27 – What metaphor does Paul use to describe a church? What does it mean for you to be a member of a church?
3. Jesus has appointed leaders of His church. Read Ephesians 4:11-16 and tell what the leaders are to be like and do. How can this help you and your faith?

### **B. The Benefits & Responsibilities of Membership**

4. What are some *benefits* of growing up in/around the church?
  - What are some *benefits* of hearing the *bible preached and taught*?
  - What are some *benefits* of being *prayed for*?
5. In turn, as you have benefitted, what might be some of your responsibilities?

### **C. The Vows of Church Membership**

Read each vow slowly, then answer, what is this question asking you to agree with?

1. Do you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope, except through His sovereign mercy?
2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and trust Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?
3. Do you now resolve and promise in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?
4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?
5. Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the church, and promise to study (seek) its purity and peace?

*Big Questions:*

- Who is the *Head* of The Church?
- What are the *benefits* and *responsibilities* of membership?
- Can you affirm (agree to/with) each membership question/vow?



## LESSON 6 – WHAT IS COMMUNION?

Big question: Why is it good to take communion?

### I. The *Sacrament* of The Lord's Supper

When something is called a *sacrament* that means that Jesus started it. Jesus began the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's to communicate (express/convey) the Father's grace to us. One great summary of a sacrament is that it is *a visible picture of the invisible grace that God gives His people*.

### II. Examining Ourselves

Carefully read I Corinthians 11:23-32 and then answer the following questions.

1. Who does Paul, the author of Corinthians, receive this from?
2. What does Jesus say the bread and the cup (juice) represent?
  - How does the Lord's Supper fulfill what Passover pointed to (refer to Exodus 12:1-13)?
4. In vs. 28, we are told to "examine ourselves". This means to review/test ourselves. Here are some things we can examine:
  - Examine if you are resting/*believing* in Christ alone and not any idols. How can you do this?
  - Examine to confess any *sins* you have not confessed or repented of. How can you do this?
  - Examine to see if you have *forgiven* others. How can you do this?

→ Why does Jesus want us to examine ourselves before we take communion?
5. It is important to understand that no one is worthy of communion. We are all sinners who fall short of God's glory but by grace, *we are made worthy by God, as a free gift, through Jesus*.
  - Do you have to be perfect or sinless to take communion?
  - Do you have to want to follow Jesus and fight sin better?

#### ***Signs & Seals***

The *sacraments* are also spoken of as *signs* and *seals*.

*Sign* – A sign points to something beyond itself. For example, a road sign points to an upcoming city. What is communion pointing to?

*Seal* – A seal is a pledge or guarantee of the thing signified. What does Jesus' death and resurrection seal/guarantee for us?

### ***III. Discerning The Body of Jesus***

6. As we take of the bread and cup, we are to *remember Jesus' suffering* and dying on the cross to pay the price of our sins. What can we be thankful for about Jesus suffering and dying for us?

Other thoughts can/may come into our minds during communion but if they are not centered on Jesus and His death then we should *fix our thoughts on Jesus* before partaking.

7. When God's people observe this special sacrament, He mysteriously and ***spiritually*** pours out His grace through the elements. There is nothing magic or special about the bread or wine/juice – the bread and wine do not change or transform into anything. God uses these ordinary things to specially and spiritually grow our faith.

- How does taking communion help/strengthen our faith?

8. Is there anything that Pastor Dave or Pastor Bryan say before communion that you don't understand or have questions about?

#### ***Big Questions?***

1. What are we to examine about ourselves and why?
2. What happens to the bread and juice during communion?
3. How does God use communion to help our faith?