

Lesson 12: THE LIFE AFTER DEATH – INTRODUCTION
Micah 6:8

NOTE: This is lesson 8 from *Glenview Sunday School Curriculum, Phase II*, except that it is adapted for use with *Philip Learns a Lesson* by Clare S. Engelke.

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. There is no death, for life is eternal.
- B. Heaven is a wonderful place where good people go to live.
- C. Hell is a dismal place where evil people go to live.
- D. The world of spirits is where people stay for a while before they go to heaven or hell.
- E. It is the Lord's will that all people go to heaven, but He leaves us in freedom to decide for ourselves.
- F. The Lord will lead us to heaven if we look to Him and follow the teachings of His Word.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduce the Story

- 1. (Optional: Shut your eyes) Imagine a beautiful place: wonderful trees and flowers; great smells (use real fragrances--optional); gentle animals, beautiful people who are very nice and good; lovely homes for them to live in. You are imagining what heaven is like. Good people go to heaven.
- 2. Now imagine an ugly place, perhaps a swamp or desert. It smells awful. There are ferocious animals, and ugly people who are very bad. The people have shacks to live in. You are imagining what hell is like. Bad people go to hell.
- 3. There is a place between heaven and hell called the world of spirits. Let's imagine that. It's a lot like our world: plants and animals; houses and other buildings; some people who love the Lord; some people who love only themselves. People stay in the world of spirits for a while before they go to heaven or hell. The Lord gets their homes ready for them, and He gets them ready for their new homes.
- 4. Where do you think you would like to live, in heaven or hell? Everyone is happy in heaven, but everyone in hell is unhappy and frustrated. The Lord wants all of us to go to heaven so we can be happy.
- 5. Is it hard to go to heaven? What do you need to do to go to heaven? Let's read the Lord's Word to find out the answers.

B. Ideas for Presentation and Discussion

- 1. Micah 6:8: *Write this quote on the board and discuss:*

“He has shown you, oh man, what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you
But to do justly, To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?”

Micah 6:8

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2. Discussion:

We all want to go to heaven, don't we? And the Lord tells us what we need to do if we want to make heaven our home forever. In our first reading, the Lord is telling us how easy it is to get to heaven. There are only three things He requires of us:

- a) to do justly (to be fair with people);
- b) to love mercy (to be kind as well as just; we shouldn't be harsh);
- c) to walk humbly with our God (to know that everything good comes from the Lord, not ourselves).

After focusing on the ideas in this outline, read "*Philip Learns a Lesson*," explaining that it's a story Swedenborg wrote about an incident he saw happen. (*Philip Learns a Lesson* is out of print, but we have attached it at the end of the lesson.)

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

"You Shall Love the Lord Your God With All Your Heart and Mind," *FIRST SONGS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN*, p. 7.

B. Activities

C. Project

1. An abstract representation of heaven, hell, and the world of spirits (see attached project description).
2. If time permits, make a group mural with crayons or markers. Let children contribute appropriate details to sections allotted for heaven, hell, and the world of spirits.

IV. Teaching Aids

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

A. *Heaven and Hell*

B. *The Spiritual World* by Hugo Odhner

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PROJECT : An Abstract Representation of Heaven, Hell, and the World of Spirits

From *Glenview Sunday School Curriculum*—Primary Level, Phase II, lesson 8

Supplies:

9x12 red or yellow construction paper
gray or (pea) green torn tissue paper
white torn tissue paper
glue
crayons

Description:

Abstract representation of heaven, hell, and the world of spirits:

- White tissue paper represents good people (in heaven & world of spirits).
- Gray (or pea green) tissue paper represents evil people (in hell & in world of spirits).
- Red or yellow background because (1) Lord's love is present with all, both good and evil; and (2) white tissue paper wouldn't show up on a white background!

Procedure:

1. Provide a background sheet of yellow or red construction paper and divide into thirds, representing heaven (top), world of spirits (middle), and hell (bottom). The red or yellow color of the paper is to symbolize that Lord's love is present with all, both good and evil!
2. Use torn pieces of white tissue paper to represent good people (in heaven & world of spirits).
3. Use torn pieces of gray or (pea) green tissue paper to represent evil people (in hell & in world of spirits)
4. Glue a combination of gray (or green) and white torn tissue in the center section to represent the world of spirits. Both good and evil people are there, having recently arrived from the world.
5. Glue white torn tissue (good spirits, angels) in the top section.
6. Glue the gray or green torn tissue in the bottom section to represent evil spirits in hell.

Philip Learns a Lesson

Retold from Conjugal Love 461

by Clare Schnarr Engelke

Once upon a time, a young man named Philip arrived in the spiritual world after having lived in this world. Philip had thought a lot about heaven and hell when he was on the earth and as soon as he arrived in the spiritual world, he began to think about them again. He at once noticed something different! This time when he was thinking about heaven, he was happy, but when he thought about hell, he felt sad.

When Philip realized that he was in the spiritual world, he eagerly asked a new friend, Michael, "Where are heaven and hell and what are they like?"

Michael, who was an angel sent especially by the Lord to teach Philip, answered, "Since you are now in the world of spirits, heaven is above you while hell is below you. If you want to know they are like, ask the people you see around you what they like to do, and they will tell you what is fun for them."

So Philip asked different people, "What do you like to do for fun?"

Some said, "Fun is to be happy and glad."

Philip asked another person.

He said, "I love to laugh and the feeling I get when I chuckle."

A third person answered Philip's question by saying, "For me, it is fun to feast, eat and talk!"

Philip did not like these answers because they seemed silly to him. He felt that they did not give him an idea of either heaven or hell.

So, he decided that he needed to talk to some people who were wiser than the others, but where was he to find them?

Just then Michael appeared and said, "I see that you are not too happy with the answers to your questions about fun in heaven. Come with me, and I will take you to a place where some people are talking about what you want to know."

So Michael and Philip walked up a hill to where three groups of people were gathered talking.

Philip walked up to one group and asked, "What have you found in heaven or hell that you like to do?"

One man answered, "Fun, to a person, is what they love best in the spiritual world. This is true both in heaven and in hell."

Philip Learns a Lesson

Philip went up to the second group and asked them the same question.

This group answered, "Whatever you do that makes you happy is fun. Those in heaven have fun helping other people. Those in hell have fun trying to hurt other people."

The third group were people who told Philip that they had visited both heaven and hell. So they said to Philip, "Go and look at both heaven and hell and see for yourself what those spirits like to do."

Suddenly the ground opened up before Philip and three devils appeared!

Philip asked the three devils, "What do you like to do for fun?"

They answered, "We have fun stealing, cheating and saying horrible things about others. If we hurt someone we are thrown in jail where we cannot harm anyone nor have any more fun!"

Philip was horrified at their answer. He knew it was wrong to hurt others. He watched the three devils being pulled back into hell with a feeling of sadness.

Just then three angels came down from heaven, appearing in a brilliant light, circling down toward the three groups of wise men. They carried with them a wreath of flowers and placed on Philip's head.

"This gift is for you because you have thought about heaven and hell from your childhood," they told him.

Philip was happy because he learned that fun in heaven is both what one loves and what one does for others.

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It is the delight of everyone in heaven to share one's delights and blessings with others. Such sharing goes forth from the two loves of heaven, love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor. To share their delights is the very nature of their loves. *Heaven and Hell* 399