

This is
the Feast

Preparing for
the Lord's Supper

Leader Guide

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Session 1

The Law and Giving Myself a Test

Key Verse

A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 1 Corinthians 11:28

Ask, **What do you think mirrors have to do with examining yourself before you receive the Lord's Supper?** Accept all responses. Then say, **Today we will answer that question. To begin our study today and each session, we will experience a drama. The drama today is entitled "If Mirrors Could Talk." After we experience the drama, we will discuss it.**

Have students and parents or the assigned drama team act out the play.

Drama

If Mirrors Could Talk

(NARRATOR [N] stands Stage R. Three players [M1, M2, M3] stand Stage L, facing the audience, each holding a large mirror. GIRL stands Center Stage.)

N: Once there was a girl who had three mirrors. These were not ordinary mirrors. These mirrors talked. The girl loved the mirrors because they always said something that made her feel good. When she didn't like the way she looked, she went to her first mirror and asked,

GIRL: *(Moves to M1; stands in front of it)* Tell me, mirror, what do you see?

M1: I see a very pretty person.

GIRL: Pretty, you say?

M1: The prettiest of all.

N: And the girl smiled, thinking herself to be the prettiest girl of all. *(GIRL moves to M2, standing in front of it.)* When the girl was feel-

*Before the session begins, place a large mirror in the front of the room. Or, if finances permit, purchase a small mirror for each student. Welcome participants as they arrive. Ask parents and their children to look into the mirror and write down what they see. When everyone has arrived, invite volunteers to share what they saw when they looked into the mirror. Accept all responses. You may want to add, **Tell me more**, after a student has shared what he/she saw in the mirror. This will increase the quality and the quantity of the students' responses.*

Pray that the Holy Spirit would strengthen the faith of parents and children as they study together the truth found in God's Word. Then invite a volunteer to read aloud the key verse for today's session.

ing very guilty about having done something wrong, she said,

GIRL: I feel just terrible. I shouldn't have done it.

N: And she looked into her second mirror with all her guilt, and the mirror said,

M2: Don't feel bad. You're a good person.

GIRL: Good, you say?

M2: The very best of all.

N: And the girl smiled, thinking herself to be very good even though she had done something bad. (*GIRL moves to M3, standing in front of it.*) When the girl doubted herself, when she wondered if she could do what she had to do, she thought,

GIRL: I don't think I can do this. I am too weak. I'll never be able to do it.

N: She looked into her third mirror with all her doubt, and the mirror said,

M3: Yes, you can. You can do it. You're strong.

GIRL: Strong, you say?

M3: The strongest of all.

N: The girl loved her mirrors, all right. They made her feel pretty and good and strong. Yet something inside of her made her wonder if she could trust these mirrors that always told her what she wanted to hear. (*GIRL moves to M1.*)

M1: The prettiest. (*GIRL moves to M2.*)

M2: The best. (*GIRL moves to M3.*)

M3: The strongest.

N: She wondered about the mirrors that talked and if they could be trusted.

Discuss the drama using the following questions. If your class is large, you may want to divide into small groups so that everyone has a chance to share.

- 1. Why do you think the girl loved her mirrors?** The mirrors told the girl only what she wanted to hear about herself. She loved to hear what they said because they affirmed her.
- 2. Why do you think she wondered if they could be trusted?** The mirrors only told the girl what she wanted to hear. How could she trust whether they were telling the truth?
- 3. What's wrong with only looking at the good in us and never seeing the bad?** Answers will vary, but may include the following: We will never know what we need to change. We will be led to believe that things are okay, when really they are not. It is not honest.
- 4. How do you know if you've done something wrong?** We know we have done something wrong if someone corrects us or if our conscience bothers us concerning something we have done. Conclude by telling the students that God's Law acts like a mirror that shows our faults or sins. Unlike the mirrors in the drama, the Law answers with brutal honesty.

The "Looking for Answers" section of the guide will give students and their parents the opportunity to explore what Scripture has to say about each of the concepts developed in the lesson. Studying Scripture and the chief doctrines associated with the Lord's Supper will prepare students to receive Holy Communion.

Looking for Answers

1. **Describe the three kinds of Law God gives in the Bible. How is each important?**

Curb—Timothy 1:9. The Law acts like a curb. The Law curbs violent outbursts of behavior.

Mirror—Romans 3:20. The Law shows us our sin and the fact that we are sinners.

Rule—Psalm 119:105. For Christians the Law acts as a guide for appropriate, God-pleasing behavior.

2. **Because God is holy and just, what does He require of every person? Read Matthew 5:48. Evaluate how well you have lived up to God's standard.** God demands perfection. Jesus says, "Be perfect." Answers will vary. If honest, we must all admit that we have failed miserably to keep God's Law. Everyone will have to admit that he or she is not perfect.
3. **If honest, what must we confess? See 1 John 1:8.** We must confess that we are sinners.
4. **What do we deserve because of our sin? Read Romans 3:23.** We deserve eternal death because of our sin.
5. **What does God teach us in His Word concerning sin?**
 - a. **1 John 3:4**—Everyone who breaks the Law sins.
 - b. **Psalm 51:5**—We were sinful from birth, sinful from the time we were conceived. We call this hereditary sinfulness *original sin*.

c. **Romans 8:7**—The sinful mind is hostile to God. Sinners cannot and will not please God.

d. **Galatians 5:19–21**—The acts of the sinful nature are sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, self ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

6. **Why is using the Law as a mirror so important as we prepare to receive the Lord's Supper?** We need to recognize that we are poor, miserable sinners in order to realize our need for the forgiveness Jesus won for us on the cross. If we do not admit sin, we lie to ourselves and to God. If we confess our sins, God forgives us for our sins for Jesus' sake. Without acknowledging that we are sinners, why would we ever need to receive the body and blood of Jesus through which we receive the forgiveness of sins?
7. **What does using the Law as a mirror show me about myself?** Answers will vary. If honest, we must admit that the Law shows us our sin and our need for a Savior.
8. **What do you conclude about yourself as you look into the mirror of God's Law?** We conclude that we are sinners.
9. **Considering your conclusion, why is the Lord's Supper important for you to receive? See Matthew 26:26–28.** In the Lord's Supper Jesus provides us His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.

What Do You See?

1. **Why might the artist show God covered with a cloud as He gives the Law to Moses?** God is too great and holy to be approached by man. Clouds in the Bible and biblical art often signify the barrier between holy God and sinful man.
2. **What are the people doing as Moses receives the Law?** Worshipping the golden calf, reveling, and so on.
3. **Contrast the light coming from God's presence and the light of the lamp held by the man in the lower right corner. What might this difference say about humankind's relationship with God?** The light of God's presence overwhelms the scene. The light held by man cannot compare. (Just as man's holiness cannot compare to God's holiness.)



**Moses Receiving the Tablets from the Lord
by Marc Chagall**

Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY
©2001 Artist Rights Society (ARS),
New York/ADAGP, Paris

Taking It Home

Urge parents and students to complete the "Taking It Home" section prior to the next session. Questions are designed to personalize what was taught in the session. The study of Luther's Small Catechism will reinforce what students have learned from Scripture.

Students should spend at least 10 minutes during the next week discussing with a parent the following questions:

1. How is God's Law important to you?
2. How do you prepare for the Lord's Supper?
3. What do you receive from God when you eat His body and drink His blood in the Lord's Supper?
4. Share a time when going to the Lord's Supper was especially important to you.

Before the next session, students and their parents should review together questions 74–85 in Luther's Small Catechism. This will provide them an opportunity to review what God's Word says about His Law and prepare them to study what God's Word has to say about His Gospel.

Close with a prayer thanking God for His Law, which shows us our sin and our need for our Savior.

Session 3

How God Gives Me Gifts

Key Verse

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. Galatians 3:26–27

Ask, **What great gift does St. Paul describe in these verses? When did you receive this gift?**

Say, **Today, our short drama is entitled “Come, Lord Jesus.” After we experience the drama, we will discuss the questions that follow it.**

Before students and their parents arrive, write the words Come, Lord Jesus . . . on a sheet of newsprint. Greet parents and children as they arrive. Ask them to take a marker and write endings to the sentence starter written on the sheet of newsprint. When everyone has arrived, ask for volunteers to share what they wrote on the newsprint and why they wrote what they did. Pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit working through God's Word, all may be strengthened in the saving faith and realize the great gifts God has given and continues to give to us today.

Then invite a volunteer to read aloud the key verse.

Drama

Come, Lord Jesus

(MOM, DAD, JEFF, and ANN sit Center Stage at a table, facing the audience. The table may be set for dinner.)

DAD: Looks great, honey. So who would like to say grace?

ANN: I'll go, Dad.

DAD: Great, Ann.

ANN: Let us pray. *(ALL bow heads.)* Bless this food, Lord, and bless our family. Thanks for the love we share and for the new TV you're going to give us. Now hear us as we pray:

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest and let these gifts to us be blest. Amen.

JEFF: Way to go, Annie. I like that part about the TV.

DAD: You want to tell us about that?

MOM: Yes, Annie, please. I didn't know we were looking for a new TV.

ANN: Are you kidding, Mom? Have you seen the picture lately? And we only have a 27-inch set. Everybody I know has at least a 32-incher.

JEFF: Little Annie here knows her TVs.

MOM: So you thought you'd mention it in your prayer? You thought you'd thank God for it before you even had it?

ANN: I just thought if I got God listening . . .

JEFF: He might start making things happen. I like that!

ANN: Which makes me wonder, Mom and Dad—why do we always say, “Come, Lord Jesus”?

DAD: You're changing the subject, Annie.

ANN: No, really, doesn't Jesus come anyway? Isn't He “wherever . . .”—how does it go?

JEFF: “Wherever two or three are gathered.”

ANN: Yeah, that's it. Doesn't He just come to every meal?

MOM: He does, but we say, “Come, Lord Jesus,” to let Him know how much we love Him, how much we'd be honored to have Him join us again.

DAD: Sort of like when we pray, “Thy kingdom come.” He comes without our prayer, but we want Him to know that we'd be thrilled to have Him come right among us.

JEFF: Like in church—with the sermon. He comes there.

ANN: And the Lord's Supper. He comes there too.

DAD: Exactly.

ANN: So what about TVs? What about 32-inch TVs?

MOM: That may be another story, young lady.

DAD: We'll have to leave that one to God.

JEFF: You gotta admit, though, it was a nice try.

1. Why do meals and prayers seem to go together in so many families? Mealtime is one of the few times when families gather together. It is a terrific time to thank God for all that He has provided, including the food you are about to receive. When you say, “Come, Lord Jesus,” you are not only inviting Jesus to be present at your meal, but also acknowledging that He came once to earth to live, to suffer, to die, and to rise again to win for you forgiveness of sins and eternal life. You also proclaim that He will come again on the Last Day to take you to heaven to live with Him forever.

2. What does saying the “Come, Lord Jesus” prayer before a meal mean to you? Answers will vary. See the response to question 1.

Discuss the following questions. If your class is large, you may want to divide into smaller groups so that everyone has a chance to share.

Looking for Answers

1. How does God offer the gift of His forgiveness?

a. Romans 1:16—God offers His gift of forgiveness to all who believe in Christ Jesus as their Savior.

b. John 3:16—God sent His only Son so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

c. Ephesians 1:7—Through the blood of Jesus shed on the cross, God provides the forgiveness of sins.

2. The written and spoken Word of the Gospel and the Sacraments are the means of grace.

- a. **How does the Bible describe the spoken and written Word of God? Read Luke 24:27 and 2 Timothy 3:16–17.** God reveals Himself in Scripture. All Scripture is God-breathed—comes from God.
 - b. **How does the Bible describe the Sacraments? Read Acts 2:38 and 1 Corinthians 10:16.** Peter says, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” Christ’s body and blood are truly present in the bread and wine.
3. **What does God provide to us in His Sacraments?**
 - a. **Acts 22:16**—Through Holy Baptism God provides the forgiveness of sin.
 - b. **Matthew 26:28**—In the Lord’s Supper God provides the forgiveness of sin.
4. **Besides forgiveness, what other blessings does God give us in Baptism?**
 - a. **Titus 3:5**—God provides eternal salvation through Holy Baptism.
 - b. **John 3:5**—God provides us the Holy Spirit through Baptism.
 - c. **Romans 6:4**—God provides us a new life on earth and eternal life in heaven through Baptism.
 - e. **Galatians 3:26**—God makes us all one in Christ. We share unity in Christ through Holy Baptism. We are one family—the Christian family.
 - f. **1 John 3:1**—We are all God’s children through Holy Baptism.
5. **When Jesus began (instituted) the Lord’s Supper, He was celebrating the Passover meal with His disciples.**
 - a. **What did people remember when they celebrated the Passover? Skim Exodus 12–14.** The people of Israel remembered God’s deliverance from Egypt and the cruel hand of Pharaoh.
 - b. **What do we remember when we receive the Lord’s Supper? Read 1 Corinthians 11:26.** We remember the deliverance God provided us through His only Son’s death on the cross.
6. **Compare and contrast the Passover meal and the Lord’s Supper.** The Passover meal was celebrated to commemorate God’s deliverance of His people from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. In the Lord’s Supper we celebrate the deliverance Jesus won for all people from the bondage of slavery to sin through His death on the cross.

What Do You See?

1. **How do the persons down the center of the picture connect with the names we use when someone is baptized?** The artist shows the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in whose name we are baptized.
2. **Describe the expression on the people's faces. What does this say about Baptism?** The people appear serene, at peace with God through Baptism.



The Baptism of Christ by Giovanni Bellini

Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome, Italy/Canali Photo Bank, Milan/Superstock

Taking It Home

Students should spend at least 10 minutes during the next week with a parent discussing the following questions:

1. What traditions does our family have to celebrate holidays and special days?
2. What do you remember about my Baptism day?
3. What does it mean to you when you receive the Lord's Supper?
4. How does the Lord's Supper strengthen us as a family?

Before the next session, students and their parents should review the questions and answers from the Sacrament of Holy Baptism section of Luther's Small Catechism. Parents may want to have their children memorize portions of the Holy Baptism section of the catechism.

Close by offering a prayer giving thanks for the means through which God continues to provide His gifts of forgiveness of sins and eternal life—His Word and Sacraments.