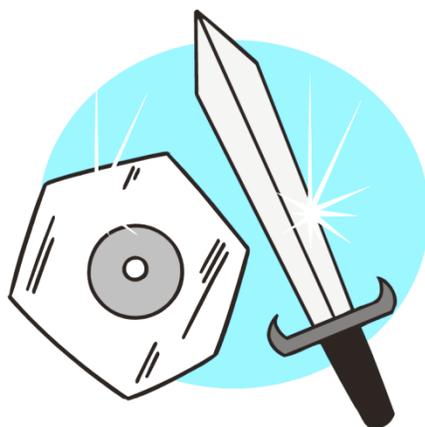


PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

A 5-DAY JOURNEY TO THE CELESTIAL CITY

TEACHER'S GUIDE



Catechism for Kids

www.catechismforkids.com

Pilgrim's Progress: A 5-Day Journey to the Celestial City

Teacher's Guide

Overview

Pilgrim's Progress is a 5-Day overview of the basics of the Christian faith. It is designed for use in a VBS program, summer Sunday School class, or other short-term children's program. Each lesson consists of two parts: (1) an introductory story based on the allegorical tale *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan (2) a discussion of the meaning of the story relating it to salvation and Christian life.

Stories about the journey of Christian are selected to especially convey the concepts of salvation in Christ, making the 5-Day Fun series an excellent tool for evangelism and outreach programs among children. Topics include:

1. **The Gate:** Christian learns about the coming judgment and seeks deliverance
Theme: Scripture
2. **The Slough of Despond:** Christian falls into despair when he cannot deliver himself from his burden – Theme: Sin
3. **The Cross on the Hill:** Christian loses his burden at the cross – Theme: Salvation
4. **Apollyon:** Christian battles the monster Apollyon – Theme: Sanctification
5. **The Celestial City:** Christian and Hopeful cross the river – Theme: Eternal Life

DAY 1 – The Gate (Theme: Scripture)

Begin the day by introducing yourself and asking the children to tell you a little about themselves. Once everyone is acquainted, talk briefly about the story of *Pilgrim's*

Progress. Explain to the children that the story is an allegory: the main character Christian could be any of us on our journey through life.

Read the story to the children. If you have enough time, you may even have the children act it out, assigning roles for Christian, Evangelist, and the townspeople. Discuss the symbolism of the story. Explain that the book that Christian reads represents the Bible. Through Scripture, we learn God's laws, but we also learn that we have broken God's laws and we deserve punishment. However, God gives us a wonderful promise—that He has provided us a way to escape the punishment for sin.

Discuss the catechism with the children. Read the questions aloud, and ask them to read the answer in response. If there is sufficient time, you may even work on memorization of the catechism. Emphasize to the children that only through the Bible can we know who God is and how we should honor and obey Him.

Review the memory verse with the children. Ask them to repeat it after you, and then recite it together. Finish today's lesson by asking the class the review questions. Choose among the volunteers to answer the questions, trying to give as many opportunities as possible. To encourage participation, you may even give small rewards (candy or small toys) for answering questions.

ANSWERS TO REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible was written by holy men who were taught by the Holy Spirit.

2. What do we mean when we say that the Bible is inspired by God?

It is the word of God. God directed certain people throughout history to write His word.

3. What does the Bible tell us about God?

It tells us that God made everything. It tells us that God is wise, powerful, and good—that He always does the right thing and always speaks the truth.

4. What does the Bible tell us about ourselves?

It tells us that we are sinners and that we need salvation.

5. According to 2 Timothy 3:16-17, how is Scripture profitable?

It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

6. Look at Question 3 in the catechism. Name two things that Scripture principally teaches.

The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.

DAY 2 – The Slough of Despond (Theme: Sin)

Briefly review the previous lesson with the children. Remind them that the Bible is the word of God, and only through God's word can we know about God and how to honor and obey Him. Also review the story of the previous day, especially for children who may not have been present for the first day of lessons.

Read the next part of the story to the children. If you have sufficient time, you may ask the children to act it out, assigning the roles of Christian and Help. The rest of the children can play the role of the Slough of Despond, moving their arms in slow wavy motions and making "mud" noises. Explain the symbolism of the swamp, emphasizing that we are sinners weighed down by sin until Christ sets us free. We are unable to save ourselves from sin.

Discuss the catechism with the children. Read the questions aloud, and ask them to read the answer in response. If there is sufficient time, you may even work on memorization of the catechism.

Review the memory verse with the children. Ask them to repeat it after you, and then recite it together. Finish today's lesson by asking the class the review questions. Choose among the volunteers to answer the questions, trying to give as many opportunities as possible. To encourage participation, you may even give small rewards (candy or small toys) for answering questions.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What is sin?

Sin is breaking the commandments of God (doing wrong things).

2. Give some examples of things people do that are sins.

Examples include theft, murder, telling lies, and coveting.

3. According to Question 84 in the catechism, what does every sin deserve?

Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse.

4. Can we save ourselves from sin?

No, we cannot save ourselves from sin.

5. Who saves us from our sin?

Jesus saves us from our sin.

6. What does it mean to **repent**?

We must be sorry that we have sinned and turn away from sin. We must endeavor to obey God.

DAY 3 – The Cross on the Hill (Theme: Salvation)

Briefly review the previous lessons with the children, reminding them of the themes of the lessons—that we are sinners who need God, and that we can learn about God only when we accept Scripture as the word of God and apply it to our lives.

Read the story to the children. The section for today does not contain multiple roles for acting it out, but you can ask the children to express how they would react if a heavy burden suddenly fell off and rolled away. Discuss the symbolism of the story.

The theme for the day is the turning point of the 5-Day Fun series. Today the children learn about Christ and His death on the cross that paid for our sins. Be sure to take adequate time to help the children understand this important concept. Explain that Jesus died to pay for our sins and that His righteousness has been given to us. Now we who are God's people have peace with God.

Discuss the catechism with the children. Read the questions aloud, and ask them to read the answer in response. If there is sufficient time, you may even work on memorization of the catechism.

Review the memory verse with the children. Ask them to repeat it after you, and then recite it together. Finish today's lesson by asking the class the review questions. Choose among the volunteers to answer the questions, trying to give as many opportunities as possible. To encourage participation, you may even give small rewards (candy or small toys) for answering questions.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Does God turn away someone who comes to Him asking for salvation?
No, God never turns away someone who comes to Him sincerely asking for salvation.
2. How did Jesus pay for our sins?
He died on the cross to take on Himself the punishment of our sins.
3. What does **justification** mean?
God forgives us and accepts us because Jesus paid for our sins and gave us His righteousness.
4. What is **faith**?
We trust Christ to save us.
5. What is **repentance**?
We turn away from sin and endeavor to obey God.
6. How are we saved from our sins?
God saves us from our sins. The Holy Spirit causes us to repent of our sins and put our faith in Christ who died to save us.
7. According to Romans 5:1-2, what do we have now that we have been justified by faith?
We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

DAY 4 – Apollyon (Theme: Sanctification)

Briefly review the previous lessons with the children, reminding them of the themes of the lessons. Make sure they understand the lesson from Day 3—that Christ died to save us from our sins.

Read the story. Children love the tale of Apollyon. It is recommended that you bring foam swords for the children to “battle Apollyon.” The teacher may choose to play the part of the monster, giving each child (or various volunteers) a chance to battle and win.

The theme for today is sanctification. Thoroughly discuss the meaning of this word, emphasizing that sanctification is a life-long process. Tell the students that no one is perfectly sanctified in this life, but that over time the Holy Spirit makes us more and more able to resist temptation to sin and more and more willing to obey God.

Discuss the catechism with the children. Read the questions aloud, and ask them to read the answer in response. If there is sufficient time, you may even work on memorization of the catechism.

Review the memory verse with the children. Ask them to repeat it after you, and then recite it together. Finish today's lesson by asking the class the review questions. Choose among the volunteers to answer the questions, trying to give as many opportunities as possible. To encourage participation, you may even give small rewards (candy or small toys) for answering questions.

ANSWERS TO REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What do we mean when we say that God **adopts** us?
God accepts us as His children.
2. What do we mean when we say that God **sanctifies** us?
By the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, we turn away from sin more and more, and we obey God more and more.
3. How is Christian life sometimes like a battle?
We fight against temptation and fear as we endeavor to be faithful to God.
4. What should we remember to encourage ourselves when we feel weak in the battle against sin?
God is always faithful to us, and He never leaves us.

DAY 5 – The Celestial City (Theme: Eternal Life)

Briefly review the previous days' lessons with the children. Today, the last lesson will teach the importance of perseverance in faith and our hope of heaven.

Read the story to the children. You may have the children act out the story. Choose two volunteers to play the roles of Christian and Hopeful. Two more volunteers may be designated as "angels" on the other side of the river. The rest of the

group can play the role of the “river.” They should make wavy motions with their arms and “water” noise.

Discuss the symbolism of the story. This can be a difficult topic because of its serious nature. Make sure the children understand that Jesus defeated death and that His people have eternal life in glory. The river may seem deep and dark, but God has provided firm ground through His word and the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We do not need to be afraid. Death will not overcome us. We will reach heaven safely and be welcomed into glory.

Children (and many adults) often picture eternal life as an ethereal existence among clouds. Make sure they understand that we will not live forever as spirits. At the resurrection, God will give us new bodies that will never die, and then we will dwell on the new earth with God forever.

Discuss the catechism with the children. Read the questions aloud, and ask them to read the answer in response. If there is sufficient time, you may even work on memorization of the catechism.

Review the memory verse with the children. Ask them to repeat it after you, and then recite it together. Finish today’s lesson by asking the class the review questions. Choose among the volunteers to answer the questions, trying to give as many opportunities as possible. To encourage participation, you may even give small rewards (candy or small toys) for answering questions.

ANSWERS TO REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Why do we not need to be afraid of death?

Jesus Christ conquered death, and so it has no more power over us.

2. Will we live in heaven as spirits without bodies forever?

No, we will receive glorified bodies at the resurrection.

3. What is the resurrection?

All those who have died will be raised up with new bodies that will never die.

4. What will be our final home?

The new earth is where we will live forever with God.

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Check out our website: www.catechismforkids.com!