

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 2, Lesson 34
River of Life; Tree of Life (Revelation 22:1- 5)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The book of Revelation is a prophetic vision of what would happen in the first Christian Church--of how it would gradually become perverted, as all the churches before it had been, through the selfishness and worldliness of its members, and of how it would finally be judged and brought to its end and a new church raised up to take its place.
- B. Our "holy city" is built of the principles we choose to rule our thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- C. The Lord alone is the light of the holy city, that is, of the New Church.
- D. Basic correspondences:
 - 1. Pure river of water of life = The Lord's truth which teaches us how to be good
 - 2. The street of gold = The path of loving service
 - 3. Tree = Intelligence and power from the Lord to do heavenly uses
 - 4. Fruits = Heavenly uses
 - 5. Leaves = Rational truths which have power to correct evil (heal nations)

II. Story Circle

- A. Introduction
 - 1. Last week we learned about John's vision of the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.
 - 2. The city and the wall around it were very beautiful, made of gold and many precious stones. The New Jerusalem certainly was a special city! Can you remember what the holy city is a spiritual picture of? (The New Church)
 - 3. Last time we read John's description of the outside of the city and its walls. Today we'll read what he wrote about the inside of the city.
- B. Tell/Read the Story
 - 1. Read Rev. 22:1-5.
- C. Ideas to Discuss
 - 1. Inside the city what does John see flowing from the throne of God? (A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal) [If possible, show a picture]

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2. What grows in the middle of the street and on either side of the river? (Tree of life)
3. Can you think of another story in the Word in which a river and the Tree of Life are mentioned? (Garden of Eden; Gen. 2:8-12) (There is no tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the holy city.)
4. Do you know of another story in the Word where we read about the water of life? (The woman of Samaria; John 4:10-14)
5. What grows on the Tree of Life? 12 fruits)
6. What were the leaves of the tree for? "For the healing of the nations")
7. Whose name will be on the foreheads of the people of the city? (The Lord's)
8. We know from our last lesson that there is never any night in the New Jerusalem. The people who live there don't need lamps or the sun. Why? (The Lord is the light of the city.)

D. Further Ideas

1. The beautiful river that John saw inside the city was flowing out of the Lord's throne. Did you know that in the Word, water is a picture of true ideas? The river is like true ideas flowing to us from the Lord in the Word. Anyone who really wants to know what's true can find it in the Lord's Word.
2. The Tree of Life was a beautiful, amazing tree. It had 12 different kinds of fruit, all growing on one tree!
 - a. You all know that nothing can grow without the Lord. When we think of the beautiful Tree of Life and its amazing fruit, we should remember that everything we have comes from the Lord.
3. We mentioned earlier that there was a river and the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, just as there were in the holy city. But the Garden of Eden had the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and there is no such tree in the holy city. Do you have any idea why?
 - a. The tree of knowledge stands for the idea that people can know what is true and do what is good with no help from the Lord. Is that a true idea? No! In fact, the tree of knowledge is just the opposite of the tree of life, which reminds us that EVERYTHING comes from the Lord.
 - b. There is no tree of knowledge of good and evil in the New Jerusalem, and people who believe the idea it stands for—that they don't need help from the Lord—live outside the holy city forever (i.e. in hell).
4. When we are innocent little babies, before we start to do bad things, it is like living in the Garden of Eden. But if we try to stop doing bad things as we grow up and when we are grown up, then when we die,

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we will live in heaven— in the beautiful holy city called New Jerusalem and be with the Lord forever.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Jerusalem, the golden," Hymnal #186
2. "New hope of every nation," Hymnal #179
3. "And I saw a new heaven," LORI'S SONGS FROM THE WORD I, Side 2, 5th song.

B. Activities

C. Project: THE TREE OF LIFE; THE RIVER OF LIFE

1. Provide children with a 12 X 18 sheet of construction paper (golden yellow, sky blue, or white are good choices) as background for their tree and river.
2. Make a tree of torn construction paper or cut from felt; be sure the treetop is large enough for 12 different fruits to fit on it.
3. Clear cellophane could be used to depict the river (clear as crystal). Perhaps blue crayon or marker could be used for "water color" under the cellophane.
4. Children could cut out fruits from scraps of different colors of felt to glue onto the tree

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Pictures of tree of life and river of life from Revelation coloring book, as well as ones available from Sunday School Resource Center (12 X 18).

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's *Bible Study Notes*, Vol. 6, "The Holy City" (Rev. 21:22), pp. 318-332.
- B. *The Sower*, Vol. VI, "The Time is at Hand" (Rev. 22): Spiritual Study - Intermediate, pp. 363-365.
- C. *Apocalypse Revealed*, "Chapter 22— The Spiritual Sense," between nos. 926 and 932, concerning Rev. 22:1-5 (about 1 ½ pages).