

General Church Education



The Birthday of the New Church

True Christian Religion 791

Lesson 36

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

The Birthday of the New Church

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For Parents and Teachers

The Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem is the fullest revelation the Lord has ever made. This revelation completes or infills the previous revelations, the Old and New Testaments, and makes their message entirely new. The Lord has come again, as He promised, not in Person as when He was born in Bethlehem, but as “the Spirit of truth” (John 16:13).

Many believe that the Lord will return in the clouds of heaven and in the flesh. The New Church teaches His Second Coming is now available in the “Writings”—thirty volumes in which the Lord has revealed Himself so that we can understand Him as never before. As a result of the Lord’s Second Coming the potential for human happiness is astounding! Now we can see the Lord with the “eye of love,” that is, faith. We can see Him in our minds (which is where all seeing really takes place) because the Writings enable us to understand the Word and behold Him there in all His glory. In the *True Christian Religion* the Lord speaks of a historic spiritual event. He gathered together His twelve disciples who had followed Him during His life on earth and then sent them out to tell everyone in the spiritual world that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns (*True Christian Religion 791*). By this announcement the greatest of all truths, a final prophecy was fulfilled. The tree of life which grew in the garden of Eden would grow again in the New Jerusalem.

Ideas for Children

- The Heavenly Doctrine can open our understanding of the Old and New Testaments so we can see the Lord there.
- The Heavenly Doctrine is for the whole world.
- The Lord wants us to spread the news of the Second Coming.

From the Writings

The Lord has mercy toward the whole human race, and wills to save and draw to Himself all who are in the universe. The mercy of the Lord is infinite, and does not allow itself to be limited to those few who are within the church, but extends itself to all in the whole world.

Angels in heaven love everyone, and desire nothing so much as to render service, to teach, and to lead into heaven. This is their highest delight. Angels do not regard those who are outside the church as enemies, but they instruct them, and lead them to Christian good. They think of them as friends who are to be instructed. *Arcana Coelestia* 1032, 9255 and *Heaven and Hell* 450

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Words to Understand

gospel—the good news of the Lord’s life as told in the New Testament

prediction—a foretelling of some future event; prophecy

the elect—people who have been chosen or selected

The Coming of the Lord

At Christmastime we learned how the Lord was born on earth to teach people the way to live in order to be truly happy and to live in heaven forever. His disciples told the news to all who would listen. So the Christian Church spread over the earth to many nations. Many people were baptized and became known as Christians, that is, followers of Jesus Christ.

In time, though, the Christian church began teaching the ideas of people instead of the Word of God. So the Lord came again on this earth but in a different way. He prepared His servant Swedenborg to write books telling the truth about Him and His kingdom. He guided Swedenborg in the writing of these books. Swedenborg was like the prophets of the Old and New Testaments. The



Lord spoke through him. These truths contained in the books written by the Lord through Swedenborg make up the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem and are the third part of the Lord’s holy Word. We often call them “the Writings.” The Lord came again through these “Writings.” Now we know more heavenly truths than the world has ever known.

You may know about some of these truths such as the special love of a husband and wife who look to the Lord, called conjugal love. Now we have many details about such things as the life after death and how people live in heaven and hell. And most importantly, we can know that the Lord God Jesus Christ is our Creator and Savior and that there is no other God beside Him.

Disciples Sent Out

In the year 1770 a most remarkable event happened in the spiritual world. By that time all of

the teachings for the New Church had been given and the books containing the Heavenly Doctrine were published on earth. It was now time to announce this wonderful news to all the angels in heaven. So the Lord called together his disciples in the spiritual world. He gave them a mission to tell everyone that people on earth could now read in the Writings that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns.



Read True Christian Religion 791 (below).

“After this work was finished the Lord called together His twelve disciples who followed Him in the world; and the next day He sent them all forth throughout the whole spiritual world to preach the Gospel that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, whose kingdom shall be for ages and ages, according to the prediction in Daniel (chapter 7:13, 14), and in Revelation (Chapter 11:15). Also that blessed are those that come to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9).

This took place on the nineteenth day of June, 1770. This is what is meant by these words of the Lord: He will send His angels and they will gather together His elect, from one end of heaven to the other (Matthew 24:31).”

The prediction in Daniel 7:13, 14 tells of an everlasting kingdom that will not pass away. It is the same kingdom represented by the stone which grew into a mountain and filled the whole earth, destroying the big statue. Revelation 11:15 also predicts that the Lord’s kingdom will last forever and ever.

The Birthday of the New Church

Since the Lord sent out His disciples on June 19th, 1770, we celebrate the birthday of the church on that date each year. New Church Day is a day of worship, celebration, and gratitude for the New Church. Although the church on earth is still small in numbers, all the angels in heaven join us in rejoicing because they know that we celebrate the coming of the Kingdom that will last forever and ever. As more people learn about the beautiful teachings in the Heavenly Doctrine, the New Church will grow larger and larger until one day it will have spread throughout the whole earth.

Growing the New Church

Who is the New Church for? Do you think the Lord wants just a few people to learn the Heavenly Doctrine and know about His Second Coming? Remember that His love is infinite. This means

that He wants everyone to learn about heaven and to live there with Him forever. So this revelation is not just for a few. It is for the whole world.

How can this wonderful news spread over the whole world? The Christian Church spread to many nations because the disciples went out sharing the gospel of the Lord's life and teachings all over the world. Some listened and others did not, but the disciples talked to everyone who would listen and many lives were changed. Then others began to spread the good news.

How can we be disciples of the Lord's Second Coming and spread the news throughout the earth? We can be sure that the Lord wants us to share His truths with anyone who wants them. One way is to choose to obey the Commandments, and do our work honestly and faithfully and as well as we can. In this way we are being an example to others of what the heavenly life can be like. These are some of the best ways to be a disciple and spread the truth to the world. Can you think of other ways?



Discussion Ideas

- How do you think the New Church might grow? In some places the Writings talk about the Heavenly Doctrine being received in Africa. Swedenborg also wrote that universities would some day teach about the New Christianity. Bryn Athyn College does just that! What can we do to help the church grow where we live?
- Do you have suggestions for good ways to celebrate New Church day?
- The dreams of the prophets are different from the dreams we have today. The Lord no longer needs to send us messages in that way because we have the Word now.

Activity Overview | The Birthday of the New Church

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:1, 2

Songs

Lord, for Countless Gifts We Thank Thee

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-lord-for-countless-gifts-we-thank-thee/>

New Hope of Every Nation

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-new-hope-of-every-nation/>

Peace Be to This Congregation

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-peace-be-to-this-congregation/>

The Lord God Jesus Christ Reigns!


Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-lord-god-jesus-christ-reigns/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Activity 1 | Open the Pearl Gate and See an Angel
- Activity 2 | New Church True or False?
- Picture to Color—Sending out the Twelve Disciples in the Spiritual World (*True Christian Religion* 791)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Make a special cake decorated with a design from a scene in the book of Revelation such as the Holy City, the Woman clothed with the Sun, the White Horse, etc.
- Make a New Church flag out of paper or cloth. This is what the flag looks like. The red on top represents the Lord's love; the white represents the Lord's wisdom.

- When the disciples began to do the Lord's work after his resurrection, they became His apostles. Apostles teach others about the Lord and His Word. Talk about ways you can be an apostle. Think of ideas you would like to tell others about the Lord and His Word.

Lesson 36 | Open the Pearl Gate and See an Angel

The Holy City has twelve gates. Each gate is made of a single, beautiful, pearl. And at every gate there is an angel, making sure that only those who are good can enter the holy city.

Materials

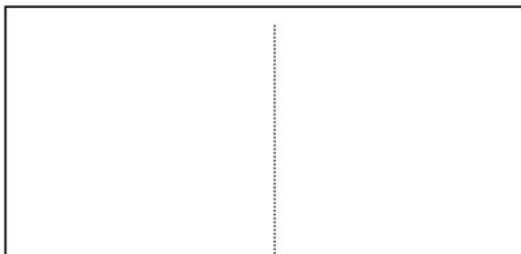
pictures of a pearl and angel (provided)
glue
scissors
white or gold paper
optional: pearlescent glitter

Directions

1. Cut out the large circle in the shape of a pearl on the following page.
2. Cut out the angel below using the dotted lines, or draw your own angel.
3. Cut out the hinge for the gate below and fold along the dotted line.
4. Glue one half of the hinge to the inside of the pearl gate. Glue the other half to a piece of white or gold paper. The pearl gate should be able to open and close.
5. Open the pearl gate and glue the angel on to the paper so that he is hidden when the gate is closed and may be seen when the gate is opened.
6. *Optional*: Glue pearlescent glitter on the pearl to make it shine.

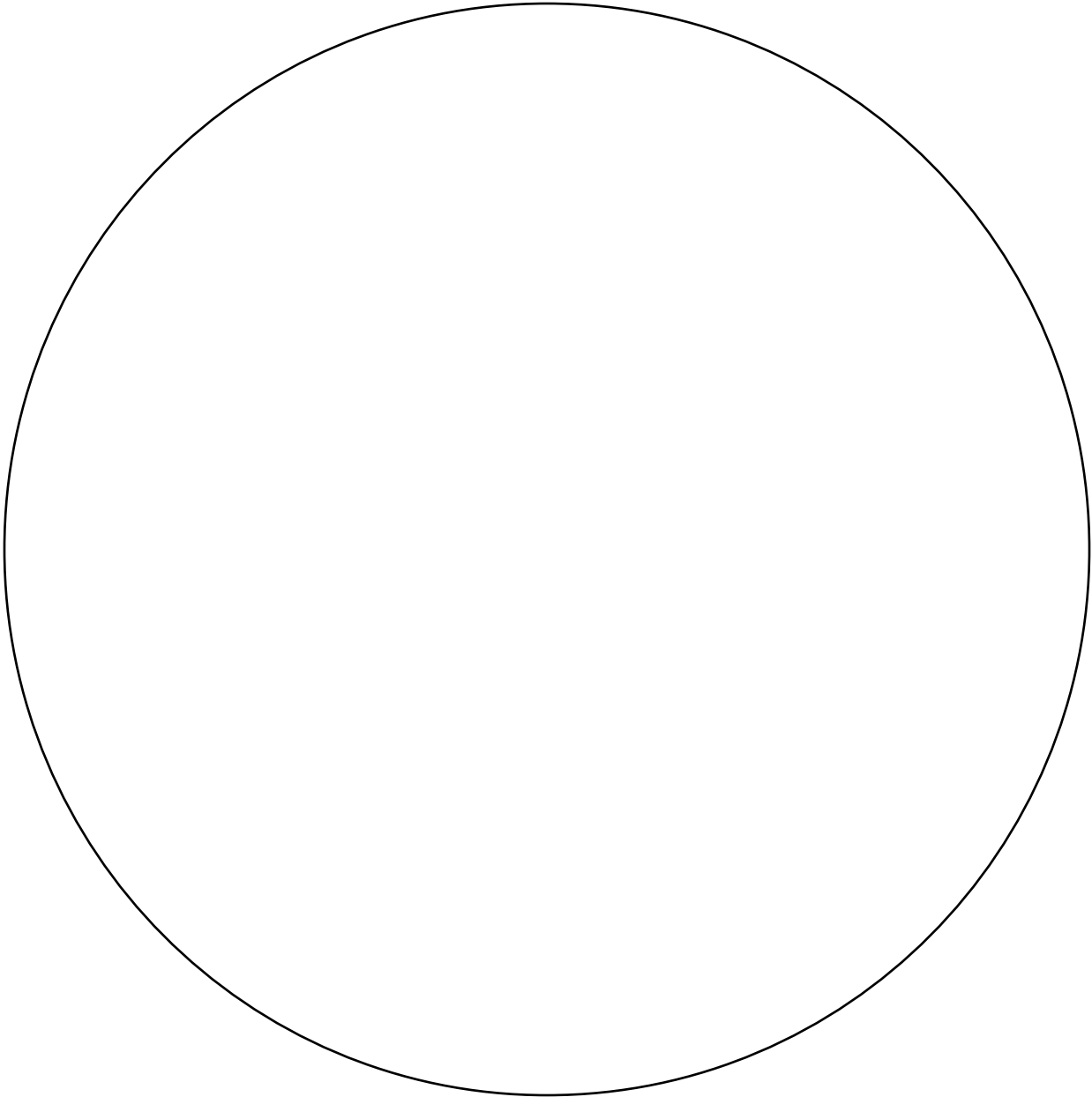


Angel standing guard at the gate



Gate Hinge

Pearl



Lesson 36 | New Church True or False?

Read each statement. Put “T” for True or “F” for false on the line before each question.

- ___ 1. The Heavenly Doctrine is for the whole world.
- ___ 2. The gospels are found in the Old Testament.
- ___ 3. Revelation is the first book of the New Testament.
- ___ 4. John had visions of the Holy City New Jerusalem.
- ___ 5. The book of Revelation was written by John.
- ___ 6. Emanuel Swedenborg wrote the books of the Heavenly Doctrine.
- ___ 7. Heaven is only for a few select people.
- ___ 8. People in the New Church should not share news of the Lord’s Second Coming.
- ___ 9. June 19th is a special day for the New Church.
- ___ 10. The New Church was prophesied in both Daniel and Revelation in the Word.

Answers:
1. T
2. F
3. F
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. F
8. F
9. T
10. T

