

General Church Education



The Fifth Day

Genesis 1:20-23

Lesson 5

Youth Journey Program

Creation: Reflection of God

Level C: For ages 11-14 years

Teacher Background

Creation: Reflecting God through Correspondences

A Key for Understanding the Word

There is a New Church teaching that, “The Word of God is like a body with a living soul” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1408). Many readers have sensed this deeper level of meaning within the words and images of the Bible.

God wrote His Word so that every image contains multiple levels of meaning. The literal meaning focuses on the natural, physical world. A deeper symbolic meaning focuses on the world of the spirit, the world of the human mind. The relationship between the two levels is called “correspondence”. Natural images and symbols “correspond” to spiritual qualities.

We often make this connection between levels without thinking about it. For example, we may talk about not “muddying the waters”, or say that a child is “testing the waters”. When we say “not muddying the waters” we are not talking about water at all; we are saying that false or misleading ideas should not be brought into a situation. Similarly, a child “testing the waters” is experimenting with his or her behavior to see how others react. These sayings make connections between the way true ideas work in our minds with the way water works in the natural world.

Jesus made connections like this in His conversations with people. To a woman at Jacob’s well, He said, “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). Jesus was associating the true spiritual ideas He came on earth to teach with water. The connection is in how they are useful—how they work in our lives. True ideas from the Word cleanse our thoughts just as water cleanses our bodies.

Sometimes these connections are harder to see in the stories of the Old Testament. The key, according to the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church, is this concept of correspondences. Correspondences allow us to see more than the general allegory of the human journey to the “promised land” of heaven. They help us see who God is and what He intends for us in specific ways. A knowledge of correspondences can help us gain fresh insight into the stories of the Old Testament.

This is true for the creation story. The Heavenly Doctrine explains creation in terms of a person’s step-by-step spiritual progress along the path to heaven. Each “day” of creation pictures a new level of personal development. The seventh day is a beautiful picture of the restful state of heaven—a state free from the struggles against selfishness that we all deal with in this world.

The spiritual meanings of the days of creation are interwoven throughout this lesson. We hope they bring this familiar story to life in new ways.

Correspondences are natural truths in which spiritual truths are reflected as in a mirror. *Arcana Coelestia* 9300



The Fifth Day

Level C

Genesis 1:20-23

Ages 11-14

Life Focus: The Word and the created world reflect the Lord, the Creator.

Lesson Focus: The amazing variety of the Lord’s creation mirrors His infinity.

Reading: Then God said, “Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.” So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” So the evening and the morning were the fifth day (Genesis 1:20-23).

| Lesson 5 | | Materials Supplied | Materials Needed |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1. Getting Started (2-3 minutes) | Welcome Warm-up Activity | Watch Sea Creatures or Birds directions p. 4 choice of movies at www.bitly.com/WondersOfCreation | computer or other viewing device |
| 2. Focus on the Word Use all activities (5-7 minutes) | Read the Word | see <i>Reading</i> above | |
| | Talk About It discuss the reading | Talk About It discussion guide p. 4 | |
| 3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes) | First Activity discuss the ways the correspondences of fish and birds work in our minds; create a fun folding activity to illustrate this | Fish & Birds: Facts & Thoughts directions p. 5 <i>Facts & Ideas</i> p. 7 <i>Fish/Bird</i> p. 8 | scissors |
| | Ordering Activity identify the big idea in a group of sentences and discover why knowing the big idea is important | Big Fish, Small Fish directions pp. 5-6 <i>Big Fish, Small Fish Cards</i> pp. 9-13 | scissors or paper cutter; <i>optional:</i> stiff paper for printing |
| 4. Wrap It Up (2-3 minutes) | Take the Message Home introduce quotation for the week | Take Home Cards p. 14 | |

1. Getting Started

Welcome Warm-up Activity

Watch Sea Creatures or Birds Video Activity

Witness the miracle of ocean or bird life. Choose from a variety of videos in our playlist at www.bitly.com/WondersOfCreation. Encourage questions and discussion as you watch. For example,

1. What makes sea creatures unique? (many breathe in water, scales, salt environment, etc.)
2. What makes birds different from other animals? (flight, feathers, songs, build nests, etc.)
3. How would the world be different without sea creatures or birds?

2. Focus on the Word

Read

Genesis 1:20-23

Talk About It

Where would you find the creation story in the Word? In Genesis, the first book of the Word, which means beginning.

What did the Lord create on the fifth day? Fishes, other sea creatures, and birds.

Fish correspond to basic true facts that “live in water”—practical knowledge of right and wrong and scientific ideas. People who are “hungry” for knowledge want facts—they ask others, do scientific experiments or go to the Word for answers. Since fish live in water, not air, they correspond to basic factual ideas, not higher spiritual ones.

Many of Jesus’ disciples were fishermen. They caught fish in deep water and brought them up out into the air. Jesus called His disciples “fishers of men” because they taught people true ideas from the Word that could lead them upward, to heaven.

A fish is sometimes used as a symbol of Christianity. Why is this? Jesus did miracles with fish, e.g. feeding of the 5000 (Mark 6:44), the great catch (John 21:6), etc. In Greek, the word “fish” is spelled using the first letter of some of the Lord’s names (also in Greek): Jesus, Christ, God, Son, Savior.

In what ways are birds different from fish? flight, live in air, view the world from high up, songs, etc.

Birds correspond to thoughts. Some thoughts are higher than others, just as some birds nest high in trees and soar up in the sky, seeing far and wide, while other birds nest and spend most of the day on the ground. Doves correspond to thoughts that are willing to be led by the Lord—innocent thoughts. A dove appeared when the Lord was baptized (Matthew 3:16).

The variety of fish and birds is amazing! In a similar way, each human thought is unique—no two are the same. The variety in creation reflects the infinity in the Lord.

3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Fish & Birds: Facts & Thoughts

Fish correspond to factual knowledge, while birds correspond to ideas or thoughts. Students discuss these correspondences and create a fun folding project to help them remember the distinction between facts and ideas and how our minds use both.

1. Fish correspond to factual knowledge. Often we are asked to memorize facts—about science or history or even about religious things, such as what happens in stories from the Bible. Brainstorm examples of facts.
2. Birds correspond to ideas. Ideas are thoughts *about* the natural facts we know and also thoughts about spiritual things such as the Lord and heaven. Ideas or thoughts allow us to see connections between facts, to analyze and compare them, and to find solutions to problems.
3. Hand out *Facts and Ideas in Our Minds* (p. 7). Read through the page with the students.
4. Ask students to create a scenario as a group and then identify what is a fact and what is an idea at each step. Start them off with one of the following statements.
5. Hand out Fish/Bird pictures (p. 8).
 - Some of your friends play in a community soccer league. **(fact)**
 - You notice that trash is piling up in your room. **(fact)**
 - Your friend has a new bike. **(fact)**
6. Fold the page along the lines, back and forth like a fan or an accordion. One way to do this is to pinch a line on either side of the page and continue pinching in, moving to the center.
7. Smooth the page out flat and trim off the white edges, then refold.
8. Hold the page in front of you and tilt it back and forth.
9. The picture shifts between the fish and the bird in a way that is similar to how our minds move back and forth between facts and thoughts!

Choice

Big Fish, Small Fish

Ideas can be divided into two kinds: big ideas and smaller ideas. Big ideas give us an overall perspective of what's going on and a framework in which we can understand smaller ideas. (For example, we have a body which serves our spirit; the body contains many organs and each organ has a special function.) The “great sea creatures” God created are like the “big ideas” that give us an overall understanding of a concept. Smaller sea creatures are the details that fill out these ideas and give us a more in-depth understanding of the concept.

Materials

for Each Student

copies of *Facts and Thoughts* p. 7 and Fish/Bird picture p. 8, scissors



New Church Concept Universal Truths

All of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem relate to the teachings about the Lord and the teachings about living according to His commandments because they are its universal tenets on which all of its particular ones depend, and they are the essential elements from which all of its outward expressions originate. Therefore they are, as it were, the soul and life in all of its doctrines (see *Apocalypse Revealed* 903).

Materials Needed

set of *Big Fish, Small Fish Cards* (pp. 9-13) for every two to three students, scissors or paper cutter

Prepare in Advance

Copy *Big Fish, Small Fish* cards (pp. 9-13) on stiff paper if possible and cut apart. Keep each set of 6 cards separate but shuffle the order of the cards in each set.

Big Fish, Small Fish continued

Students will identify big and small ideas and discover why both kinds of ideas are important. The Heavenly Doctrine tells us it is impossible for us to properly understand *specific* ideas in the Word unless we first understand the *general* principles that they are part of.

1. Have you heard the story of the blind men and the elephant? (Each blind man feels part of an elephant. They discuss what they feel and disagree on what the animal is like. A sighted man walks by and tells them all are correct!) This story tells us why it is important to have an overall view of something: simply knowing about the parts does not give us the information we need to really understand it!
2. Here is another saying you may have heard that illustrates this idea: “You can’t see the forest for the trees.”
3. The Heavenly Doctrine teaches that the same principle is true in our spiritual life. Knowing fundamental spiritual ideas is critical to understanding details in the Word.
4. We are going to look at statements on a variety of topics and identify which one is the general, guiding idea and which are smaller, specific ideas that support or increase our understanding of the concept.
5. Divide the class into groups of two or three. Give each group one set of the *Big Fish, Small Fish Cards* (pp. 9-13). Ask students to arrange the cards so the guiding idea is at the top. Once a set is organized, give the group another set. Start with the “natural ideas”, then move to the “spiritual ideas”.
6. Discuss responses as a group. Repeat.
7. How can knowing about general and specific ideas give us greater understanding of spiritual concepts? Some sentences and stories in the Word do not make sense. If we understand the larger framework they fit in, they are easier to understand properly.

New Church Concept Generals & Specifics

While a person is being formed for heaven...the general ideas within his mind are ordered by the Lord so that they correspond to things that are in heaven....The things which are general are first of all ordered in such a way that specific ideas can be gradually introduced into them by the Lord, and then those that are specific into these.

Unless general ideas are ordered, no order can come to...specific ideas and give light (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3057).

Big Fish, Small Fish Answers

“Big Ideas” are in the top left corner of each set of cards. Keep an original copy to check student answers.

4. Wrap It Up

Closing

What can we learn about the Lord from the amazing variety of fish and birds? He is Infinite! What does the variety tell us about our own minds? Human beings can have an endless variety of thoughts. No two are ever the same. We might also picture what thoughts are like—beautiful and graceful birds, or dangerous raptors.

Take the Message Home

Read this quotation aloud: “I have come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly” (see John 10:10). Why do you think the Lord filled the world with such abundance and variety? (to make us happy, to show the abundance and variety of the spiritual world)

Give *Take Home Cards* (p. 14) to the students as they leave and suggest they put them up somewhere they will see them this week to remind them of the wonder of the Lord’s creation.

Facts and Ideas in Our Minds

Facts and **ideas** both live in our minds. They work together. We need both of them in order to figure out what to actually *do*.

Here's an example:

- You need to write a science paper on an animal.
 - You like sea turtles so you choose them. (That's an **idea**.)
 - You research sea turtles online or in books. (The things you discover are **facts**.)
 - As you discover new facts about sea turtles, you come up with new ideas.
 - For example, you might find out that there are sea turtles in an aquarium near where you live. (That's a **fact**.)
 - You think about how much you would like to see them. (That's an **idea**.)
 - You decide to go to the aquarium. You needed both **facts** and **ideas** to make that decision.
 - You need both **facts** and **ideas** to write the paper, too. For example, you have to think (**ideas**) about what is the best order to present the things (**facts**) that you learned.
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FACTS



IDEAS

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Cars are machines designed to transport people and things from one place to another.</p> | <p>Cars can move quickly or slowly depending on what the driver chooses.</p> | <p>Cars come in many sizes. Some cars can transport many people, some transport only a few.</p> |
| <p>Cars come in many styles and colors.</p> | <p>Cars are expensive. They require upkeep and maintenance.</p> | <p>Some cars are fueled with gasoline or petrol. Others run on solar power or electricity.</p> |

The “Big Ideas” are in the top left corner of each chart.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Computers are machines that process large amounts of information quickly.</p> | <p>Computers make it possible to communicate with people who are far away.</p> | <p>Computers give access to a lot of information.</p> |
| <p>Computer games can provide hours of entertainment.</p> | <p>Computers allow us to communicate with others without having to go anywhere.</p> | <p>Computer technology provides jobs for many people.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Clothes are made from cloth or other materials. Clothing is shaped to fit the body, and gives protection from sun and cold.</p> | <p>Some uniforms allow us to identify a person's job, e.g. ipolice.</p> | <p>Clothes may be changed to suit the weather.</p> |
| <p>People wear special clothes for special occasions, e.g. weddings.</p> | <p>Clothes come in many Colors and sizes, allowing us to present ourselves to others in the way we want them to see us.</p> | <p>Clothing tells people around us if we are relaxing, working or attending a special event.</p> |

The "Big Ideas" are in the top left corner of each chart.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Music is made up of sounds and silences and communicates ideas and feelings.</p> | <p>Musical rhythms are mathematical divisions of time.</p> | <p>Music engages both the left and right sides of the brain.</p> |
| <p>Fast music makes you move fast.</p> | <p>Happy music makes you feel good.</p> | <p>People like many different kinds of music.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| There is one God who created and sustains the universe. He is all-loving and all-wise. | The Lord wants everyone to go to heaven. | The Lord is never angry with a person. |
| The Lord was born on earth to redeem and save us. | The Lord leads each person in freedom. | The Lord protects us from hell at every moment. |

The “Big Ideas” are in the top left corner of each chart.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| The Lord communicates with people through the Word. | Angels are close to us when we read the Word. | The Word expresses true ideas in ways that people can understand them. |
| Sometimes it is difficult to see the Lord in His Word. | Angels in heaven read the Word. | The Word is written in parables. |

| | | |
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| <p>Heaven is a state of mind. We experience heaven when we are joined with the Lord by doing His will.</p> | <p>People of all faiths go to heaven after death if they do what their religion teaches.</p> | <p>A person's mind can be in heaven while he or she is living in the world.</p> |
| <p>There are three heavens: celestial, spiritual and natural.</p> | <p>In heaven a person's surroundings reflect what is happening in his or her mind.</p> | <p>Babies who die go directly to heaven.</p> |

The "Big Ideas" are in the top left corner of each chart.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>The Lord leads each person by means of His Divine providence.</p> | <p>The Lord leads us in freedom so we can choose good or evil.</p> | <p>Nothing happens by accident.</p> |
| <p>The Lord does not prevent us from making bad choices.</p> | <p>The Lord wants us to go to heaven, but He does not force us to go there.</p> | <p>Each choice a person makes has a series of consequences to eternity.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Charity is loving others. Genuine charity involves looking to the Lord and not doing evils because they are sins.</p> | <p>Charity is speaking well of others.</p> | <p>Wisely giving money to the poor is one form of charity.</p> |
| <p>Charity is doing useful services for others.</p> | <p>Charity is doing your work faithfully, honestly and to the best of your ability every day.</p> | <p>Relaxing and doing fun things with others is a form of charity.</p> |

The “Big Ideas” are in the top left corner of each chart.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Conjugal love is a marriage between what is truly loving and truly wise in the Lord.</p> | <p>A single person can experience conjugal love.</p> | <p>Conjugal love is experienced deeply in a marriage between one man and one woman.</p> |
| <p>Conjugal love in marriage is only possible between members of opposite sexes.</p> | <p>Happy marriages continue to eternity.</p> | <p>Angels in heaven are married.</p> |

Take Home Cards
Make a copy for each student.

