

heart to Heart

Lord Jesus Christ, open our hearts today to understand how you died and rose from the dead to sit at the right hand of the Father. Help us understand how this changes everything we once knew about life and death. Teach us to become your true children so that we can be who you always intended us to be and so we can know you now and forever. Amen.



A Backward Glance

1. What were two events in Jesus' life during which God the Father's voice could be heard saying "This is my son in whom I am well pleased"?

- a. baptism and presentation
- b. transfiguration and crucifixion
- c. baptism and transfiguration
- d. baptism and crucifixion

2. The Armenian Church and other Oriental Orthodox Churches split from the larger Orthodox family over the issue of

- a. the celebration of Easter
- b. the nature of Christ
- c. proper vestments
- d. whether Mary was a saint or not

3. Examples of Jesus' human feelings are well documented in

- a. every book of the Bible
- b. Matthew Mark, and Luke
- c. the Old Testament prophets
- d. all four gospels

4. An example of when Jesus was moved to tears was when

5. Who Am I? I lived in the 13th century and wrote prayers, converted pagan Armenians to Christianity, healed the sick and ended up living a quiet life of prayer.



Scenic Overlook

The Feast of the Ascension in the Armenian Church is called *Hampartzoum*. It always falls on a Thursday, 40 days after Easter. The Feast is linked to a popular Armenian custom called *vijag* (or lots), a game which may be connected to how St. Matthias was selected by lots to replace Judas. Young men and women would place items of value (a bracelet, an earring, a ring) in a bowl of water. The *vijag* interpreter would then draw out each item and predict the person's destiny.



Creed Statement #6

He suffered and was crucified and was buried and rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven with the same body and sat at the right hand of the Father.

Charcharyal, khachyal, taghyal, herrort avoor harootsyal, yelyal ee hergeenus noveen marmnovun, nusdav unt achmeh Hor.

Չարչարեալ, խաչեալ, թաղեալ, յերրորդ ատուր յարուցեալ ելեալ ի յերկինս նովին մարմնովս, նստաւ ընդ աջմէ Հոր:

He suffered

And was crucified

And was buried

And rose again on the third day

And ascended into heaven with the same body

And sat at the right hand of the Father.

The End That Was the Beginning

Prays in Gethsemane

1. Matthew 26:36-46
2. Mark 14:32-42
3. Luke 22:39-46

Trial and crucifixion

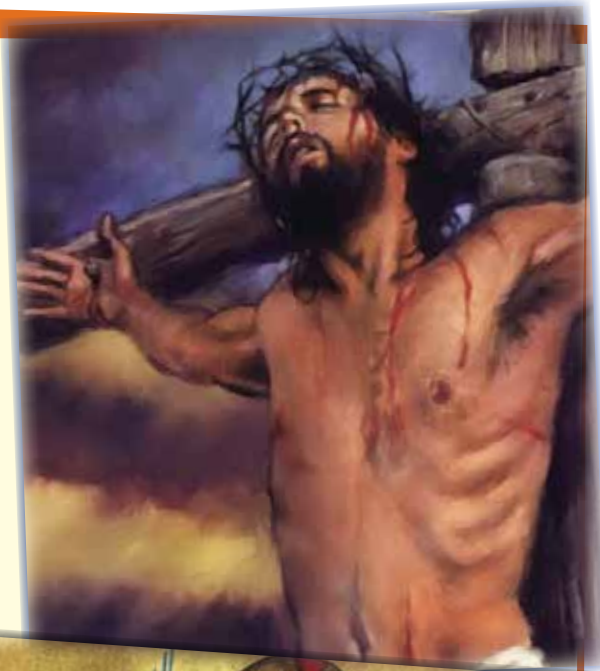
4. Mark 14:43-15:47
5. Matthew 26:47-27:66
6. Luke 22:47-23:56
7. John 18
8. John 19

Resurrection

9. Matthew 28:1-10
10. Mark 16
11. Luke 24:1-12
12. John 20

Ascension

13. Luke 24:50-53
14. Acts 1:1-11



On the Right Hand

Sitting at the right hand of a king meant sharing in his power and authority. Even today it is considered an honor to be seated to the immediate right of the host at a banquet or dinner. It is important to remember each time we repeat the Creed that Jesus returned to the right side of the Father to share once again in God's glory and power.

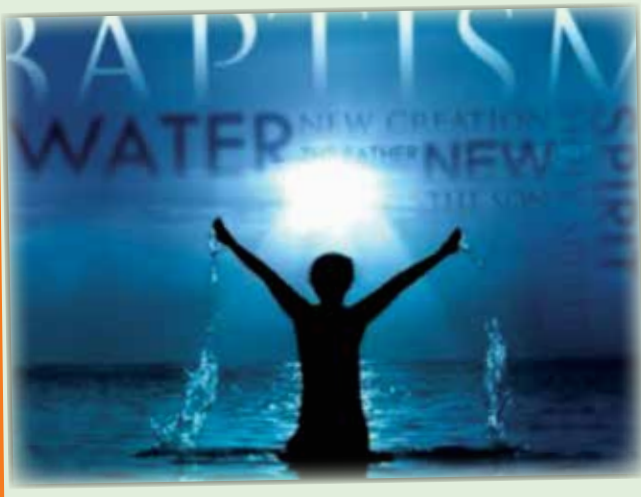
Surprise! We Died and Rose with Jesus

Do you know when *that* would have been? If you answered at your baptism, you are correct! Let's go back in time to a moment in your life you couldn't possibly remember. Think back to when you were a little baby, maybe two months old. The priest is holding you in his arms and places you into the font of water. As he does he says

“___this servant of God, coming from the state of catechumen to baptism, is now baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Saved by the blood of Christ from being a slave of sin, he (she) received adoption as a child of the heavenly father, to be joint-heir with Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit.”

Romans 6:3-4

3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.



Objectives

During this session students will

1. Review the creed statements learned so far and clarify their meaning by paraphrasing and discussion.
2. Interpret Scripture stories in terms of Jesus' human emotions and experiences.
3. Share similar experiences they have had and reflect on how Jesus' experience impacts on theirs.

Procedure

1. Open with "Prayer for a Safe Journey" on p. 31 of *Here I Am, Lord*. Have them answer questions. (12th-13th century; a town near Yerevan, Armenia's capital; he healed, preached, traveled to convert people, and lived in prayerful solitude). Tell students: "You know, this is a prayer for a journey. What are the four journeys described in the prayer? (Joseph to Egypt, Israelites through the Red Sea, Moses to Mt. Sinai, and the Israelites to the Promised Land) But we are all on a journey, aren't we? Each day of our lives is a journey in a way – we can really be said to 'travel' through the day. So this is a good prayer for not only trips but for first thing every morning." Pose the question: "When you pray the words 'lead me in peace,' what does this mean to you?" Discuss the question at the bottom of the page. 15 min.
2. Do a quick review of the creed so far, by having students flip back to the first lesson of Unit Two and continue to the first pages of each subsequent lesson. After a group recitation of each in Armenian and English, stop each time and ask for volunteers to share the statement in their own words. 10 min.
3. Review today's creed statement in Armenian and English. Ask students what it means that he took body, mind, and soul, "truly and not in semblance." (Jesus experienced every human experience and emotion.) Read **Jesus was Fully Human: He Felt What I Feel!** Have students look up Bible passages and answer the questions. You can have them work singly or in pairs. Time will probably not permit students to read every scripture passage, so assign different stories to different students or pairs. When they have completed their reading, have each report

on their stories; do the matching exercise together as you go along. Answers: 1.h, 2.e, 3.b, 4.f, 5.d, 6.l, 7.j, 8.i, 9.k, 10.g, 11. a, 12.c 25 min.

4. In the time remaining, discuss the final question in their text. Dismiss class with the prayer. "Lord, we thank you for this chance to grow closer to you today. Remind us always of how every moment and every experience of our lives is made holier because you share it all with us. Amen." 10 min.

Unit Two

What Do We Believe? What Do I Believe? Lesson 6 Why Did God Have To Die?

Key Concepts

1. Jesus' death and resurrection assured us the possibility of knowing God once again and living with him forever.
2. The suffering and death of Jesus was prophesied in the Old Testament.
3. We share in Jesus' death and resurrection in our baptism.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Complete a review quiz.
2. Define all the terms in this week's Creed statement.
3. Read about some of the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus' death and resurrection.
4. Review the narrative of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection in Scripture.
5. Participate in a brief group reading from the Armenian baptismal service.

Procedure

1. Open with the prayer in the student text. Have students take the review quiz. Answers: 1. c; 2. b; 3. d; 4. Jesus approached the tomb of his dead friend Lazarus (John 11:35) 5. St. Hovhannes of Garni. 10 min.

2. Call on a student to come up and write the first two words of today's Creed statement on the board. Ask students what they think "he suffered" refers to. Discuss. Continue to reflect on each phrase together and discuss. Ask them to take notes on the discussion in the space in their textbooks.

He suffered: was deserted by his friends and followers; betrayed by a friend; humiliated by the authorities and the crowds; was beaten; was nailed to a cross to die.

And was crucified: crucifixion was a painful and degrading punishment meant to cause pain and public humiliation. Criminals who were crucified were left on display; they would eventually suffocate from the weight of their bodies but it would take a long time for death to come.

And was buried: Joseph of Arimathea, a follower, contributed his cemetery space and family tomb.

And rose again on the third day: After three days, when the women went to the tomb to anoint his body with spices as was the custom, they found the tomb empty; angels there told them he had risen from the dead.

And ascended into heaven with the same body: we read about the actual ascension, when Jesus rose into heaven (as opposed to from the grave) in two places: Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:3-9. That he rose with the same body declares that Jesus' humanity was taken up into heaven as well.

And sat at the right hand of the Father. Have students read **On the Right Hand** for more about this. 20 min.

3. In **The End That Was the Beginning**, start by reading one Scripture verse under each heading together as a class. Add readings as time permits; these can be given to students to read silently or aloud. There is a lot to read in 25 minutes so you might prefer to start with 1, 4, 7, 9, and 13. Periodically ask questions such as: "In this reading what word or words strike you, speak to you personally? Any questions about what we just read? How might you have felt if you had witnessed/heard this? How do you think _____ felt about what was happening?" Add readings as time permits. 25 min.

4. Read **Surprise!** Explain the word "catechumen" (cá-tuh-cue-mun) which means someone studying to

be a Christian. Then have students read the priest's prayer together, inserting their own name in the beginning (it's okay if you hear different names at the same time – it will be beautiful). Then tell students that as this is happening, the instructions in the service book say that the priest will immerse the child three times in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, symbolizing the three days Jesus was in the tomb. Call on a volunteer to read from the epistle to the Romans from their texts.

5. Dismiss class as follows: "Great. Let's end class today with the final prayer of the baptismal service: "Guard us, O Christ, under the shadow of your holy and precious cross in peace. Save us from the evils we can see and those we can't. Make us worthy to know you and give thanks. Amen." 10 min.

Unit Two

What Do We Believe? What Do I Believe? Lesson 7 Uh Oh...Judgment Day

Key Concepts

1. Jesus will return in the fullness of time, an event known as the Second Coming.
2. When he returns, in the glory of the Father, he will judge the living and the dead.
3. We live good lives in anticipation of this event.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Participate in a prayer activity.
2. Recite the next Creed statement of faith.
3. Play a review game on the Creed statements learned so far.
4. Read about The Second Coming.
5. Complete a values exercise on Creed statements.

Materials Needed

Lined paper, a sheet for each team (see procedure # 3)