



GOD'S PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

God's Incredible Plan • U10#4 1st-3rd Grade • May 17, 2026

Concept

God has prepared a perfect eternal dwelling place for His children.

Goal

Students will learn that heaven is a real and amazing place where God and his people live forever after this life.

Passage

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Revelation 21

Key Verse: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain, because all the old ways are gone." Revelation 21:4

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lyrics to "I Just Can't Wait to See the King", 1/student <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ball</i> <p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Excerpts from The Last Battle, 1/student</i> <p>Learning Activity #3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Heaven for Kids, Randy Alcorn</i>	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "The Next Life," 1/student• Bibles• Markers & pencils• Drawing paper• Scissors• Yellow & white construction paper, 1 sheet/student• Glue sticks• Assorted bright collage materials, such as sequins, gold & silver foil, paper doilies, ribbon

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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God's incredible plan of redemption is drawing to a close. Soon, Jesus Christ will return not in humility and obscurity, but in great glory and power. "The same Jesus who ascended to heaven will again visit the earth in personal presence (Acts 1.11) at the end of the age (Mt. 24.3) in power and glory (Mt. 24.27) to destroy antichrist and evil (2 Thes. 2.8), to raise the righteous dead (1 Cor. 15.23), and to gather the redeemed (Mt. 24.31; 2 Thes. 2.1. . .). His return will also be an . . . 'unveiling' or 'disclosure,' when the power and glory which are now His by virtue of His exaltation and heavenly session . . . will be disclosed to the world. . . .[1]

Have you ever really considered heaven? "For a moment please put yourself in the place of a person who has lived in the slums of the most polluted city in the world. Put yourself in the place of a person sitting on ragged scraps as their only 'house' with no cover to protect them from flies or heat or cold. Put yourself in the place of a person who has never seen a clean, light, beautiful home in his or her whole existence, who has never eaten pleasant food, nor felt soft, clean beauty, not been presented with a gift of any sort, and has never known kindness. Then imagine trying to understand a description of an opposite kind of situation. Imagine trying to understand a description of the Swiss Alps, at sunrise or sunset, with the most delicious of food set on delicately perfect china, spread on a marvelously crisp, beautiful tablecloth-with an orchestra playing the most beautiful music that you could not imagine because you had never seen or heard an orchestra. Try to imagine sitting in your filth and squalor and feeling a reality about a description of the most wonderful combination of things in this world's nature and possible gifts of things to see, smell, taste, feel and hear. Could it easily be made real?

"This is where we are as we listen and consider what God is telling us through John (see Revelation 21). It is only a partial description He is giving us of a small fraction of all that is ahead, but it is a glimpse of something real. God, who attends to details throughout history, is not describing more than exists, but is promising that it will be the other way around. 'No eye has seen, nor ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him'"[2] (see 1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

[1] J. D. Douglas, ed., *The New Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1962, 1977), p. 387.

[2] Edith Schaeffer, *Christianity is Jewish*, 1975, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, p. 219.

Activity Stations

- **Craft – Imagine Paradise**
 - **Instructions:** Have you ever heard anyone say “This is paradise!?” Paradise is a place where there is great joy and everything is perfect. If you could create your own paradise, what would it look like? Using the provided materials, create a picture of what paradise would look like to you. Play the provided tape as the students work.
- **Research – “The Next Life”**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a copy of the questions with verses and a Bible. Have a teacher work together with the students to find the answers to the questions and to discuss the implications.
- **Music - “I Just Can’t Wait to See the King”**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a copy of the words to the song and have them sing along to the tune of "I Just Can't Wait to Be King" from the Lion King movie.
- **Missions Prayer**
 - **Instructions:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving campaign.

Let’s begin our class today with prayer. (Ask for requests. Ask the students to think of prayers that God has answered this year. Offer your own as appropriate.)

This week, we come to the last lesson of the year. Last summer, we began our study of God’s Incredible Plan. Who can tell me what God’s Incredible Plan is? (His plan is to bring people back to a relationship with Him.) Adam and Eve’s choice to disobey God plunged the whole world into sin. But Jesus’ death for the sin of all people made it possible for us to be God’s children. This week, we’re going to learn about how God’s Incredible Plan will be completed and where we will be forever.

What is your favorite fantasy book or movie? Peter Pan, Lord of the Rings, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe? We all know that Never Never Land, Middle-earth and Narnia don’t exist, but we do like to imagine what the perfect place would be like. How many of you made a picture of paradise when you came in to class? What would the perfect place look like, feel like? What would the people be like? How would they treat each other? (Give students lots of time to think about and answer these questions.) Do you know that another word for “paradise” is “heaven?” What do you think heaven will be like? Our key verse for today is, “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain, because all the old ways are gone” (Revelation 21:4). Can you imagine a place where there is no sadness, no sickness, no death? Well, that is what heaven will be like.

Do you ever think about what it will be like in heaven? Why? Why not?

Lesson Continued

Imagine you're planning to go to Mars for five years with a NASA team. After spending a couple of years in intense training, it's finally lift-off time. As you are soaring up into the clouds, one of the other astronauts asks you what you think it will be like. Do you think you would just shrug your shoulders and say, "I have no idea, I guess we'll find out when we get there."? Of course, you wouldn't. You'd have learned as much as you could about the place you would be living for 5 years and be very excited to see it for real. 2 Peter 3:13 says, "we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth He has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness." Heaven really does exist and if you know Jesus, you will spend all of forever there.

Good News

Heaven sounds unbelievable and it will be better than we can imagine. How do you know if you'll go to heaven when you die? The most important thing to know is that God gives us the choice. God promises that every person who trusts Jesus to take away their sin will go to heaven. Jesus is the only one who can take away our sin because He is God. When He died He took the punishment we deserve. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can get to the Father except through me." The choice we have is to admit to God that we know we sin and need the forgiveness that Jesus bought for us on the cross. When we do that, He forgives us. We then have the promise that we will go to heaven.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Game -- What I Like About Heaven

Goal: Review characteristics of heaven and get the students up and moving.

Instructions: Have the students stand in a circle. A teacher will throw the ball to one student who will tell what most excited him/her about what he/she heard about heaven. That student will toss the ball to a student who has not had a chance. Continue until all students have a chance to share.

Transition

Heaven sounds pretty cool, but what if you don't want to leave your friends and family to go to heaven? Listen while I read a story.

Learning Activity#2 Lg. Group

Story

Instructions: Read excerpts from chapter 16, pp.172-184, The Last Battle. C.S. Lewis imagines and tries to capture heaven in his mind from his understanding of the Bible. Discuss or draw your thoughts about what heaven will be like.

BUT, let's think for a minute. What about the people who don't choose to ask Jesus to forgive their sin? Where will they go? (They will go to hell). The Bible tells us that hell will be a place of loneliness, darkness & sadness.

Learning Activity# 2 Continued

Since God is the Creator of all things good, hell will be absent of everything good. There is no laughter, fun, joy or love in hell. Some people make jokes about hell, but it is a real place that no one will want to be. The Bible tells us that everyone who has not asked for God's forgiveness through Jesus are deserving of separation from him. But, EVERYBODY can choose to go to heaven. Those who know about Jesus but choose not to ask Him into their hearts will choose to go to hell. God says in 2 Peter 3:9 that He doesn't want anyone to perish, but all to have eternal life with Him. If you don't have Jesus in your heart, you can ask Him to forgive your sin at any time. For those of you who do have a relationship with Jesus, you have great news to share with your friends and family who don't have Jesus in their hearts.

Transition

Let's get into our small groups so we can talk about heaven.

Learning Activity# 3 Sm. Groups

Instructions: Use "The Next Life" handout and Heaven for Kids to discuss their questions about heaven. Spend time praying together that they will learn to live for the future and to share this good news with those who don't know Jesus.

Optional Activity

Game

Instructions: Play a version of "Pictionary." Choose various Bible characters we have learned about this year and have the teacher whisper the name of that character to a student to draw a caricature and identify objects to go with it. Whoever guesses is the next "artist."

Heaven ---- An Amazing Place

[Bible Guy and Mrs. Bible Guy enter and walk around as if they are examining their house, talking about the work that needs to be done on it. He is carrying tools, rope, etc.]

B.G. : This house is so much work. There is always something that needs to be done. Sometimes I feel like I just fix one thing and another thing breaks.

Mrs. B.G. : I feel that way about housework. I just keep doing the same work everyday. I wash out the clothes and the next day they're dirty again. I feel like I spend hours making bread and cooking and in no time we have eaten all the food and I start over. But you know what? This morning while I was at the river washing, I got to thinking about heaven and what an amazing place it is. Do you know that we will actually enjoy the work we have in heaven? We will have jobs to do that will be picked out just for us.

B.G. (barely listening, looking through his tool box) : Mm-hmm... Oh no! Wouldn't you know, the one thing I need I don't have in my toolbox? Maybe I left it in here.

[He goes in the other room to look, but it is dark and he is bumping into things]

It's dark in here. I can't see a thing! OW!

Mrs. B.G. : (to the open door) You know what else? There won't be any darkness in heaven because God's glory will light up the whole place.

[B.G. emerges from the other room scowling and rubbing his head and holding a hammer]

B.G. : Okay. I found the hammer. Now where were those loose boards?

[walks around as if going outside. He begins to sneeze uncontrollably]
These allergies! Sometimes I really hate spring.

[He begins hammering and hits his thumb He jumps and stamps around]
OW! OW! OW! ACHOO!

[Mrs. B.G. hurries to get a cold cloth and a bandage for his thumb. While she's at it she brings a cold cloth for his bumped head, too. As she bandages his thumb, he is continuing to sneeze]

Mrs. B.G. : I am especially glad that there is no sickness (or allergies), no pain or sadness in heaven. Can you imagine?

B.G. : No, I can't. In fact right now I'm so mad I can't even think about heaven. My thumb hurts. ACHOO! I feel terrible. And I get tired just looking at all the work I have to do... I know it's wrong for me to be so grumpy, but...

Mrs. B.G. : I know. Lots of times I get grumpy or angry, too. We just need to keep praying, asking Jesus to make us more like him. It will be great in heaven when we'll be with him all the time. We can actually see him and talk to him. And he says there will be rewards for us in heaven because we follow and obey him now.

B.G. : (jumping up) WOW! Now let me get this straight.
No Pain. [holds up bandaged thumb]
No sickness [sneezes]
No sadness.
No darkness [rubs head]
I have a fun job to do
I get rewards
AND I get to hang out with Jesus.

Mrs. B.G. : And the best part is... it's forever

B.G. : Does everyone get to go to heaven?

Mrs. B.G. : Everyone is invited, but not everyone will go to heaven. Everyone has to accept the invitation. It's very easy... ask Jesus to take the punishment for the wrong things you have done and ask him to come into your heart to live. Not only will you go to heaven to be with Jesus forever when you die, but He will be here with you the rest of your life here on earth.

B.G. : That is easy. WOW I can talk to Jesus all day for the rest of my life. And heaven is such an amazing place, I hope all of you will choose to ask Jesus into your heart and be with God forever.

Well, as you know, I got a lot of work to do. See ya!