

DIOCESE ON THE NIGER
CONFIRMATION PREPARATION STUDIES

FROM THE BISHOP'S DESK

In our Church of Nigeria Book of Common Prayer we are reminded that Confirmation as a rite *'is a solemn public confession of faith. It is the occasion in which the candidates confirm and ratify the promise made for them at baptism and rededicate themselves to God. The Church has thought it good to order that no one shall be confirmed until he/she has had instruction in...things a Christian ought to know and believe to his/her soul's health'* We owe it to everyone in this Diocese to make sure that everyone understands the faith in which he/she is baptised and confirmed. These studies are designed to do exactly that.

These materials are to be used primarily for Confirmation preparation but they also make excellent studies for individuals and groups who want to refresh their minds on the baptismal vows and thereby deepen their understanding of the same.

We commend these studies to the Diocese and we enjoin you all to prayerfully make good use of them. We also commend the person who worked so hard to produce the materials and we pray that, as many as study these materials will through doing so, come to know Jesus Christ personally as Lord and Saviour. *"Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27*

Finally, we are grateful to Diocese On The Niger for giving us the permission to publish and use these materials for our people.

Rt. Rev
Bishop

BACK TO BASICS - A GENERAL INTRODUCTION, LOOKING AT OUR BAPTISMAL VOWS.

In the New Liturgy of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), the Priest asks Parents and Godparents at baptism, to make a commitment on behalf of the child, declaring ***absolute allegiance to Christ and their total rejection of the devil and of all that is evil***; then he asks whether they are prepared to declare this allegiance and reject the devil in the presence of God and members of His Church. To this they reply that they renounce the devil and all his works. He then asks the following questions committing them to renounce evil and profess the Christian faith into which the children will be baptized, and within which they are committing them to serve the Lord:

Priest: Do you repent of your sins?

Answer: I do repent.

Priest: Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Answer: I do renounce them.

Priest: Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer: I do renounce them.

Priest: Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Answer: I do renounce them.

Priest: Do you turn to Christ Jesus?

Answer: I do turn to Christ.

Priest: Do you accept Him as your Saviour and Lord?

Answer: I do accept Him.

Priest: Do you put your whole trust in His grace and love?

Answer: I do put my trust in Him.

Priest: Do you promise to follow and obey Him as your Lord throughout your life?

Answer: I do so promise.

Priest: Do you believe in God the Father who made the world?

Answer: ***I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth.***

Priest: *Do you believe Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who redeemed mankind?*

Answer: ***I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Suffered under Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, and seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.***

Priest: *Do you believe and trust in His Holy Spirit Who gives life to the people of God?*

Answer: ***I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Universal Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.***

Priest: *This is the faith of the Church*

All: ***This is our faith, we believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.***

Priest: *Will you, then, love God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength, and your neighbour as yourself?*

Answer: ***I will, God being my Helper.***

Priest: *Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayer?*

Answer: ***I will, God being my Helper.***

Priest: *Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?*

Answer: ***I will, God being my Helper.***

Priest: *Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?*

Answer: ***I will, God being my Helper.***

Children born into Anglican families would have had these vows taken on their behalf either in the old or new form of Baptismal Service. However, it presupposes that parents and Godparents will teach the children what it all means, so that when the children grow up, they will understand and confess the faith for themselves. After this, they should be presented to the Bishop for that confession to be confirmed through the laying on of the Bishop's hands at the Confirmation service.

Throughout the period of these Confirmation preparation classes, we will remind ourselves of the meaning of those vows, the implications for us, as well as our spiritual responsibilities, to enable the candidates to understand and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Without this commitment, the laying on of the Bishop's hands at the Confirmation Service will be spiritually meaningless.

STUDY ONE: Commitment to Christ.

Introduction

As the introduction said, Parents and Godparents make a commitment of faith on behalf of all children brought for baptism. However, in keeping with Scripture, everyone has to believe in their heart and confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord, for them to be saved (*John 1: 11-12; 3:16; Rom. 10: 9-10*).

Jesus Himself told Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, a very senior religious leader, that he must be born again in order to see the Kingdom of God (*John 3: 3*). This puzzled Nicodemus as it has puzzled many deeply religious people since. What did Jesus mean and why do so many well-meaning religious people oppose the call to be born again even though Jesus Himself was emphatic that without it we cannot even see the Kingdom of God, let alone enter it? Jesus told Nicodemus that to be born again means to experience a spiritual rebirth (v. 5); to know an inner transformation of our sinful hearts; to experience a redirection of our lives toward God. In Ezekiel 36: 26-27 God said to the Israelites *I will give you a new heart of flesh and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit in you and move you to follow My decrees and be careful to keep My Laws.*

Check out the following verses to confirm that to be born again involves the following.

To:

- *Acknowledge that you are a sinner in need of God's help (Rom. 3: 23).*
- *Acknowledge that the penalty of your sin is eternal separation from God (Rom 6: 23; Rev. 21: 27).*
- *Realise that all your efforts cannot make you right with God (Is. 64: 6).*
- *Believe that Christ's death has paid the penalty for your sins (Rom 5: 8).*
- *Ask Jesus to come into your life as your Lord and Saviour, in response to His offer (Rev. 3: 20; Jn. 1: 11-12).*

If you have not asked Jesus to come into your life as your Lord and Saviour, you need to do so today before you continue with these preparation classes for your confirmation. Only those who have taken this step can claim to be God's children in truth (Jn. 1: 11-12). Without it, when the Bishop prays at your confirmation that God should defend you, His child, with His heavenly grace, the prayer will be meaningless! Giving your life to Christ is the fulfilment of the vows taken on your behalf at baptism, that you will turn to Christ, repent of your sins, renounce evil and believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is the essence of the Anglican faith.

Questions for Study:

- 1) *What do these vows mean for us in our daily lives – at home, school, work or business. The following verses will help you find out.*

➤ <i>Matthew 5: 13 – 16</i>	➤ <i>Ephesians 2: 10</i>
➤ <i>Matthew 22: 36 – 40</i>	➤ <i>Colossians 3: 1 – 10</i>
➤ <i>Galatians 5: 16 – 24</i>	

- 2) *How can prayer and Bible reading deepen our baptismal commitment? Find out from the following verses.*

➤ <i>Joshua 1: 8</i>	➤ <i>Luke 11: 1 – 13</i>
➤ <i>Psalms 1; 19: 7 – 11</i>	➤ <i>Acts 4: 23-31; 12: 1-10; 13: 1-3</i>
➤ <i>Matthew 18: 19 – 20</i>	➤ <i>2 Timothy 3: 14 – 17</i>

Application

Knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour is the foundation you need to live your life as a true child of God. You will then receive the Holy Spirit who will enable you to fulfil your vows. If you are not sure that you have taken this all-important step, now that you are being prepared for Confirmation is a good opportunity for you to do so. Then you will truly understand and appreciate the meaning of the Confirmation ceremony. Following your commitment of your life to Christ, your preparation leader will help you to work out a plan for your daily quiet time of Bible reading and prayers. Secondly, make sure you join a Bible study group so that you can grow in your faith and get the support and fellowship you need for the times ahead.

STUDY TWO: *Obedience*

Introduction

As the general introduction shows, the Parents and Godparents make many promises on behalf of children brought for baptism and these are in three parts: to renounce the devil and all his works; to believe all the Articles of the Christian faith, and to keep God's holy will and walk in it all the days of their lives. All these are actions of someone who is truly a child of God, and Study One has shown you how you can become one.

According to our Catechism, the Articles of the Christian Faith are:

- *Belief in God the Father who made the world;*
- *Belief in Jesus Christ who redeemed the world;*
- *Belief in the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God.*

These three beliefs are basically the contents of the Apostles' Creed which we say, often without thinking, every Sunday. However, when we say we believe in God, we must understand what it means because James 2: 19 tells us that even demons believe in God and tremble! To truly believe, therefore, is to do what we studied last week about being born again. It is to gratefully accept all that Christ did for us on the

Cross of Calvary personally by asking Jesus to come into your life as your Lord and Saviour, because it is only through Him that we can come to God the Father. Secondly, it is to so trust in God that you hand over your life to Him so that He can direct it as He wills. Thirdly, it is to desire and strive to obey all those things which the Bible tells us that the children of God should do. Fourthly, it is to ask for and receive the companionship of the Holy Spirit as your daily Guide. Only then can we truthfully claim to believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Now, we know what it means to believe. But what does it mean to keep God's holy will and commandments and to walk in them? It means to live by the standards Jesus gave us in order to show that we are truly children of God. In other words, we obey God and continue to obey Him all the days of our lives. It was important to Jesus that we did the will of His Father in order to be truly His disciples. Check out the following verses:

- *John 8: 51-52, 55*
- *John 13: 34-35*
- *John 14: 15, 23*
- *John 15: 1-10*

In the Old Testament, God gave the Israelites 10 commandments; and after that, many other Laws pertaining to worship, relationships, and order in society. The Pharisees came along later and increased these to a total of (613) six hundred and thirteen laws. However, when Jesus appeared, He summarized all these laws into two main commandments: to love God with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our minds and with all our strength; and to love our neighbours as ourselves. The following verses will help you understand some ways in which you can keep these two commandments. As you read them, try and answer this question:

What is the commandment Jesus is asking me to obey to show that I love Him and my neighbour?

- *Malachi 3: 10*
- *Matthew 5: 43-48*
- *Matthew 6: 12, 14-15*
- *Matthew 25: 31-40*
- *Matthew 28: 19-20*
- *Luke 6: 38*
- *I Corinthians 13: 1-8*
- *Ephesians 6:18-20*
- *I Thessalonians 5: 17*
- *Hebrews 10: 25*

Conclusion:

We have only touched briefly on our duty to God and to our fellow Christians. Obedience to God is a life-long journey and we will not always obey. When we fail, we must go to God and ask for His forgiveness and help so that we will continue to grow and mature in our relationship with Him. Obeying God is not just coming to Church on Sundays and attending mid-week meetings. These are important; however, the most important thing is to show in our lives where we live, work, go to school, or do our business, that we are genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself warned his followers of the dangers of saying the right things without having a solid relationship with Him. *Read Matthew 7: 15-28 very carefully.* These verses will warn you of the serious consequences of paying lip service to Christ, without having Him in your life as Lord and Saviour, and obeying Him in your daily life and activity.

➤ **Homework:**

I Corinthians 3: 10-15 tell us that every child of God is involved in building with his / her life. Obedience to God will enable us to build with spiritual materials that will last – what Paul called gold, silver and precious stones. Also, Psalm 119 has a lot to say about listening to and obeying the Law of the Lord, as well as the consequences of not doing so. Ps. 119: 2 promises blessings for obeying God’s commands. Some of these are:

1. *A solid foundation for our faith (vs. 66, 89-90)*
2. *Protection and peace (vs. 114, 165)*
3. *Avoiding and / or learning from God's rebuke (vs. 21-22, 118)*
4. *Fellowship with like-minded believers.*

There are many more benefits in this very long Psalm. Spend the rest of this week discovering some of them in the following verses.

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verses 3, 11, 36</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verse 45</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verse 9</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verses 136, 138-139</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verses 24, 66, 105, 130</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Verses 173-174</i>

STUDY 3: Temptations

Introduction

At baptism, parents and Godparents promise three things, the first of which is that the child would *renounce the devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of this wicked world and all the sinful lusts of the flesh*. Society today challenges our commitment to Christ and the values of the Kingdom of God. Church people often seek solutions for problems from sources other than God, in contradiction of their vows. The Church and the worshippers within it exhibit sinful, worldly attitudes which tarnish the image of the gospel. We claim that the temptations are too hard and that life is too tough. Jesus' experience shows that He understands real life. He faced and overcame these temptations so He can help us do the same if we ask His help.

Read Luke 4: 1-13

1. *Jesus ... was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted ... by the devil.*
 - (a) *What is our modern day wilderness*
 - (b) *Why does the Spirit lead us into the wilderness?*
(James 1: 2-4)

2. *Sometimes we feel we cannot help ourselves when we fail the tests of life and yield to temptations. What is wrong with this attitude and how can you help someone who feels that way?*
Rom 7: 21-25; 2 Cor. 5: 17; 12: 7-9

3. *Look at each of the temptations of Christ.*
 - (a) *In each temptation, what was the devil trying to get Jesus to do?*
 - (b) *In what ways are these temptations similar to the ones we face?*

4. *Look at these passages for examples of temptations we face, and discover how we should deal with them.*
 - (a) *Prov. 4: 14-15; 1 Cor. 10: 13*
 - (b) *1 Cor 6: 8; 1 Tim 6: 9-11*
 - (c) *James 4: 7; 1 Pet. 5: 8-9*

Application

We learn from Jesus how to face and defeat the temptations we face. Both Matthew and Luke tell us that **(a) Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and (b) He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.** This shows that for us to successfully resist temptation, we have to be filled with the Spirit. However, the temptation must not be a result of our own sins. If the Spirit chooses to lead us into situations of stress and difficulty, He will sustain us through it. God will not lead us into temptations or situations He has not prepared us for.

Secondly, part of Jesus' preparation for His ordeal in the wilderness was the public acclaim by His Father at His baptism. It is important for us too that we know we are children of God and that in His love, God will protect and sustain us in all circumstances.

Thirdly, the temptations began after forty days of solitude in which His Father had His full attention. This time of separation from the world provided the opportunity for Him to bond with His Father. For us too, nothing can replace time with God from which we draw strength to successfully withstand the assaults of the enemy.

Fourthly the wilderness figuratively represents death to the world and fasting, death to the flesh. So we can say that Jesus succeeded against the devil because He died to the world and the flesh. If we must fulfil the vow to renounce the devil and his works, the pomp and vanity of the world and the sinful lusts of the flesh, we too must die to the world and the flesh. If we must fulfil the vow to renounce the devil and his works, the pomp and vanity of the world and the sinful lusts of the flesh, we too must die to the world and the flesh *Rom 6: 6; Gal 2: 20*. Remember, dead people do not sin.

Finally, we must distinguish between three types of temptation.

- (a) *When Satan tempts, he lures people into doing evil, for example, Adam and Eve (Gen 3). However, he tried in the wilderness with Jesus (Luke 4) and failed.*
- (b) *When we tempt God (Duet. 6: 16) as Satan tried to get Jesus to do and failed, we act contrary to faith. This is sin because we are asking a faithful God to prove Himself to us.*
- (c) *When God allows difficult situations in our lives within which we are tempted to sin. He does so to test our faith and enable*

us to grow stronger and closer to Him. He never tempts us to trip us up and make us sin (James 1:13).

May God help us to learn from Jesus how to overcome temptation so that we can truly fulfil our vows to renounce the devil and his works, all pomp and vanity and the sinful lusts of the flesh.

STUDY 4: Saved To Serve.

Introduction:

At baptism, after parents and Godparents have taken the vows, the Priest and the congregation pray that the children may ***fight valiantly under the banner of Christ against sin, the world and the devil and continue His faithful soldiers and servants to the end of their lives.*** Our responsibility to the baptized is in two parts. First we must help them develop Christian maturity without which none of us can fight effectively as a faithful soldier of Christ. This maturity is not about knowing, memorising and quoting Scripture. Nor is it a difference between superficial or comprehensive knowledge of Christian doctrine. However, it lies in the conscious effort to distinguish between good and evil using the Word of God. It is also about how we process Scripture. If we do not apply the truths of Scripture, we are feeding on milk; but if we do, those same truths become solid, sustaining meat *Hebrews 5: 11-14.*

Secondly, God calls us to a life of integrity, commitment and service. Paul tells us in *1 Cor 12: 12* and *Eph. 4: 4* that we are the body of Christ. He has to do His work of showing the love of God to the world and extending His Kingdom through us. He is successful today only to the extent to which we are successful in carrying out His command. To fight valiantly under the banner of Christ means to live in integrity in all areas of our lives. It is a question of spirituality – that is, the capacity to know, experience and respond to God. This is not an issue for those in full-time ministry like the clergy and other Church workers alone. It is also for every Christian whether they are bosses or servants. If Christ is Lord of our lives, He must be Lord of our work too.

Read Ephesians 4: 25-32; Colossians 3: 1 – 4:1

1. *According to the prayer above:*

- (a) *What does it mean to fight valiantly under the banner of Christ?*
 - (b) *How can we do this in our present environment? Eph. 6: 10–18*
2. *How can we put Col. 3: 17 into practice?*
 - (a) *What changes do you think will be necessary in the way we live and work?*
 - (b) *What will be the evidence of that change?*
 3. *What will it cost us to live in obedience to this command to expose the works of darkness – Eph. 5:11, as part of our service of Christ?*
 4. *How does the Lordship of Christ over your life affect your Christian service? Rom 12; 1-2; I Cor 6: 19-20*
 5. *A soldier is taught discipline as well as obedience to authority. Matt 5: 29-30; 2 Tim 2: 3-4*
 - (a) *As soldiers of Christ, what do you see as our disciplinary problems?*
 - (b) *In its conduct, does the Church show herself to be truly under the authority of Jesus Christ? If not, what can we do to make things better so our service can be more effective?*

Application

In *Leviticus 22: 20-23* God commanded the Israelites that they must bring Him their best animals, those without any blemish, for sacrifice at His altar. This was because God is holy, perfect and worthy of the best we can offer. It follows, therefore, that as people who have received grace through Christ, our service must be of the best quality. As we saw in our Study 1, we should be salt, flavouring the world – our homes, businesses and communities - with His love. We should also be light, bringing His truth into the dark areas of our own lives and situations around us.

To give service without blemish means that we should honour God with the best we can offer – in terms of our time, talent and resources, rather than giving Him our leftovers. Our worship should be offered wholeheartedly, with all of our hearts, minds and emotions. Moreover,

in our relationships, we should show the greatest respect and love towards others for His sake. We should care for the poor, weak and defenceless as He would, so that through our service, they may come to know Him as their Lord and Saviour. Finally, we must remember that the fight we are engaged in is primarily against the devil; therefore, to engage in it successfully, we have to fight it God's way, using as Paul commanded in *Eph. 6: 10-18*, the whole armour of God.

STUDY 5: Welcome to the Lord's Family

Introduction

At the end of the baptismal service, the Priest and the congregation representing the whole Church, receive the baptized babies with these words: ***We welcome you into the Lord's family. We are members together of the Body of Christ; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we are inheritors together of the Kingdom of God. We welcome you.*** First, the baptized are welcomed into the Lord's family. This implies that they enter a new set of relationships. In our natural experience, we know that there are good and bad families within our communities. This judgment is based on the characteristics they exhibit. Jesus talked much about His spiritual family and how He wanted it to project Him to the world. There is a communal responsibility to help the baptized to fulfil this obligation.

Secondly, the baptized children officially join this living organism called the Body of Christ. The fundamental thing about anybody, whether human or animal, is that it is alive and it communicates to the world around it. The Body of Christ is no different; it is called to do the same. Jesus Himself called the Church the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Our two basic functions are to flavour lives, situations and environment / communities, and to bring truth, enlightenment, understanding and positive change into them, much as light does in a dark room. The Holy Spirit is the one who makes it possible for us to become, and exist fruitfully as, part of this Body of Christ.

Thirdly, the baptized become co-inheritors of the Kingdom of God. They not only acquire a new set of relationships; they come into an inheritance – the Kingdom of God, with all its privileges and responsibilities.

Read I Corinthians 12: 1-31; 13: 1-8a

1. *Since the Holy Spirit is the key to a truly happy family, it is important for each person to know that they have the Holy Spirit.*
 - (a) *How do we get the Holy Spirit? John 3: 3-5*
 - (b) *What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives? John 14: 26; 16: 5-14*
 - (c) *What are the benefits of the presence of the Spirit (i) in our individual lives (Rom 8: 1-17 – you should pick out at least six in these 17 verses), and (ii) in the Church (I Cor 12)?*
2. *What characteristics of the family are there in I Cor 12 and 13: 1-8?*
3. *In John 13: 33-34, Jesus commanded that we should love one another.*
 - (a) *Why is love among Christians especially important to Him?*
 - (b) *What happens when Christians do not obey this command?*
4. *Jesus prayed for unity in the Church - John 17: 11-12 etc. Paul also taught extensively about unity- Gal 3: 28; Eph 4: 1-4. How can we demonstrate this unity today especially within our own Diocese?*
5. *As inheritors of the Kingdom of God, we are joint heirs with Christ. Eph 1: 3-5 tells us that **all** spiritual blessings in the heavenly places are ours in Christ. Why do we not successfully claim these blessings? Eph 6:12; James 1: 2-8; 4: 1-6 – at least three reasons.*

Application

Good families attract many friends. The Church family is no different. This is why the Bible consistently admonishes us to live the life of Christ, so that the world may know that we are His disciples. As long as we exhibit the love and unity Jesus prayed for, people will be convinced and want to experience that love for themselves. Our primary task is the great commission in Matt 28: 19-20, to go and make disciples of all people, baptising them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

However, for that preaching to be effective, it must be backed up by lives that exhibit the high standards of the Kingdom of heaven.

STUDY 6: Destination – Heaven!!!

Introduction

When the Priest stands in front of the water of Baptism to consecrate it, part of his prayer reads ... ***Send your Holy Spirit upon them to bring them to new birth in the family of your Church, and raise them with Christ to full and eternal life.*** This prayer recognises clearly that it is very wrong for anyone to assume that every baptised person is born again. New birth as we have seen over the past six weeks, is the work of the Holy Spirit and happens when we acknowledge our sins before God, confess and forsake them and ask Jesus to come into our lives as Lord and Saviour. Secondly, new birth is the ticket to eternal life and heaven (*John 3: 3-5, 16-18*), one we must receive here before we start on the final journey of life.

***Read John 14: 1-6; Revelation 21: 1-4,
22: 1-5; I Corinthians 15: 14-19***

1. *What does Easter teach us about life after death? I Cor 15: 20-26; 51-58*
2. *Paul said in I Cor 15: 17 that if Chris is not risen, our faith is vain. Why? I Cor 15: 14-19*
3. *John 14: 6 is one of the most popular verses in the Bible. Why is it important for Jesus to be the Way, the Truth and the Life?*
4. *John 14 gives the promise of heaven and the Book of Revelation describes it. In Rev 21: 1-4, 22: 1-5, what are the characteristics of heaven?*
5. *How should we prepare ourselves for life in heaven? Gal 5; 19-24; Rom 6: 6-14; Rom 12: 1-2, 9-21.*

Application

We accept children into the Church through baptism, to hold on to them and teach them the Word of God. When they are old enough to understand and accept Christ into their lives, we bring them to the Bishop so that he can confirm the faith they have confessed. The purpose of these Confirmation Preparation Studies has been to enable you to review the vows taken on your behalf, so that you can understand them, commit your lives to Christ if you have not already done so, or renew your commitment. There is no better time to renew your commitment than at this time when you are preparing for confirmation. Our prayer is that God will enable every one of you to accept Jesus as Lord of your lives so that the same power, which brought Jesus back to life, will work in your own lives to prepare you for eternal life with Him in heaven.

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