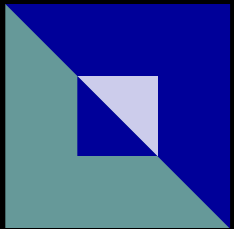


The Road to Canaan...

You are Going Home

Lesson Twelve



The Road to Success in Christian Living

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COMMITMENT

I believe:

- that God the eternal Father, creator of all things, loved me so much that Jesus came to earth to be my Savior.
- that Jesus was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died to pay for my sins, was buried, rose from the dead on the third day, appeared to many people, ascended to Heaven where He sits at the right hand of God, and will one day return to earth taking all believers of all the ages to be with Him in Heaven forever.
- that when I made declaration of this, my belief, to God, I became His adopted child and His Holy Spirit came to be with my spirit forever.
- that my relationship with God is in His hands, and He will never let me go.

The Road to Canaan...You are Going Home

Lesson Goal: To encourage believers to look forward to Heaven.

Scriptures: Genesis 12:1-9; Deuteronomy 34:1-4; John 14:1-4; Revelation 21:10-22:5;

Memory Verse: "...if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." John 14:3

A long time ago, Terah left his home in the land of Ur, taking with him Abram, his son. They got as far as Haran and settled down. Later, after Terah died, God told Abram to leave Haran and take his family to a place God would show him. So, Abram and his family set out for Canaan. When they arrived, God told Abram that all he could see would be given to him and his children. It was going to be their homeland, forever. God renamed Abram. He was now to be called Abraham.

It took a while for that promise to be fulfilled. There was trouble in the family, trouble with neighbors, a famine and a sojourn in Egypt for many, many years.

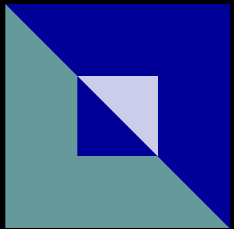
Finally, 400 years later, God brought Abraham's family out of Egypt and pointed them to their homeland, Canaan. Abraham's family had grown in those years to many thousands...some think as many as two million, It took another 40 years for them to decide that they could conquer the people who lived in Canaan and several more years to fight those battles.

Through it all, God was with them. He helped them, sometimes fighting their battles for them. Several more years passed and the children of Abraham, we know them as Israelites, occupied this homeland and God's promise had been realized.

It was a long journey between the time Terah and his son Abram left Ur and the time that Israel settled down in Canaan. There were many obstacles. There were many delays. There were days that made the goal seem hopeless. However, through faith in God, they finally came home.

When Jesus was on earth, He promised His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them. It was to be the place where they would finally be safe, free and able to rest. It was His reward to those who chose Him and lived for Him.

It is a wonderful, exciting, beautiful place that will be more home than any place you have occupied on earth. There are no words to adequately describe it and no ability available to humans to imagine it. John, the apostle, tried to tell us a little of what it looks like in the Revelation, chapters twenty-one and twenty-two.



The Road to Success in Christian Living

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He talks about gold streets, pearly gates, mansions, trees that bear fruit all year long. He was stretching his vocabulary just to describe a little of what God allowed him to see. We can assume that his description is about as good as it can be. We can also assume that his description is as accurate as ours would be in describing anything about God. The place is called Heaven.

What we know for sure is that at the end of this life, God will take His children to be with Him in Heaven. Matthew 24:31 tells us that at the end of time, God will gather His chosen ones to be with Him. Matthew 10:32 promises that if we acknowledge Jesus before humans, He will acknowledge us before His Father in Heaven. The first chapter of First Peter assures us that our inheritance, from God, will not perish, spoil or fail. We are joint heirs with Jesus in God's riches. Our inheritance is kept for us in Heaven.

Jesus promised that when He left the earth, He was going to prepare a place for us. Our memory verse today records those words. Just think, Jesus is the architect and builder. He is the one who was the architect and builder of the universe. Think about it, what a great design and what a great production the universe is! Now, just think what He has dreamed up for His special children...of which you are one, if you have asked Him to be your Savior.

Like the children of Abraham, we have a way to go before we enter the promised land...Heaven. We will have some difficulties, just like they did. There will be times when we get off course. There will be times when we will not get it right and have to ask for forgiveness. There will be times when Heaven seems like a long way off. However, our Canaan, our home in Heaven, is more real than the original Canaan. Our Heaven is where God is and He is waiting for us there.

One of the problems that Christians have is being too much at home on earth. The Israelites got comfortable in Egypt, even though they were slaves. Once, in the desert between Egypt and Canaan, they got mad at Moses and God and wanted to go back to Egypt. Someone has said that one of the problems that the Israelites had in following God was that they had never moved out of Egypt in their hearts.

Christians need to see Heaven as home and think every day about what they will have when they arrive. The most important thing for Christians in Heaven is that God will be there and Jesus will be there.

Sometimes our homes on earth are not happy and maybe not even a very nice place to be. However, there is no home on earth...no mansion...no estate...no palace that compares to our home in Heaven. And for sure, there is no place on earth...no home anywhere outside of Heaven that is as happy, comfortable, warm and welcoming as Heaven.

Going home to Heaven is the best thing you could ever imagine!

*Underlined sentences in the Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

The Road to Success in Christian Living

COMMITMENT

I believe:

- that God the eternal Father, creator of all things, loved me so much that Jesus came to earth to be my Savior.
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- that when I made declaration of this, my belief, to God, I became His adopted child and His Holy Spirit came to be with my spirit forever.
- that my relationship with God is in His hands, and He will never let me go.

The Road to Canaan... You are Going Home

Memory Verse:

"...if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." John 14:3

You are Going Home:

>God told Abram that all he could see, the land of Canaan, would be given to

Abram and his _____ to be their _____, forever.

>It was a long journey between the time Haran and his son _____ left Ur and the time that _____ settled down in Canaan.

>Jesus promised that He was going to _____ a place for His disciples. It was to be the place where they would finally be _____, free and able to _____.

It was His _____ to those who chose Him and _____ for Him.

>We know for sure that at the _____ of this life, God will take His _____ to be with Him in _____.

>First Peter assures us that our _____, from God, will not _____, spoil or _____.

>Just think what Jesus has dreamed up for His _____ in Heaven...of which you are one, if you have asked Him to be your _____.

>Our Heaven is where _____ is and He is _____ for us there.

>The most important thing for Christians in _____ is God will be there and _____ will be there.

>There is no place on earth...no home anywhere outside of _____ that is as happy, comfortable, warm and _____ as Heaven.

You are Going Home

What is Home?

Some people have a relatively happy home, some don't. We might learn about home from what God has promised us will be our eternal home. What is Heaven like?

It is a place of love. The Bible tells us that God is love. I John 4:8. That means that the place where He is at home is a place of love. That love is not a conditional love. He doesn't require anything of us in order for us to be loved. He loves us no matter what. Heaven is a place where everyone will experience that kind of love. Our homes on earth should also be that kind of place.

It is a secure place. Our heavenly home is created by God, prepared by Jesus. It is as secure as it can possibly be. No one will be harmed there...not in any way. No one can enter there without God's permission. We are told in Luke 12:33 that we can place all our treasures in Heaven where no thief comes near. Our earthly homes should be a place where everyone is secure, where no one is threatened or harmed in any way.

It is a place of recognition. God promises us that there will be rewards in Heaven. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said that there would be difficult times on earth, but that there would be great reward in Heaven: Matthew 5:11, 12. Just being allowed in...welcomed by God the Father...will be the most wonderful recognition we could ever have. Heaven offers appreciation to all who enter. Home on earth ought to be a place where everyone is appreciated and where accomplishments are celebrated.

It is a place for happy people. God promises that there will be rejoicing in Heaven. We are told that even now there is joy in God's presence...among His angels...when one person accepts Christ as Savior: Luke 15:10. In another place, the Bible tells us that God will wipe away every tear: Revelation 21:4. Home on earth should be a place where we can find happiness.

It is a place where we will never be thirsty or hungry. In Revelation 7:17, we are told that Jesus would occupy a throne and that He will lead us to springs of living water. If you have never tasted water from a spring that just bubbles up from underground, you have missed a blessing on earth. The water is clear, cool, and very satisfying. Also, Revelation 22:2 tells us that there will be trees that bear fruit all year around and that means that there will always be something to eat. Our earthly homes should be the place where we can find something to eat and drink. Sometimes that may not be much, but parents/guardians should make it their first priority that the family has basic things to prevent hunger.

It will be, most important of all, a place where God is. The Bible promises us, in so many places, that God will be there with us. Revelation, chapter twenty-two, verse one says that there is a beautiful river that flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. The Father and the Son sit side by side making sure that all things that were promised are fulfilled, and available to all who go there at all times. The very best thing about Heaven is that it is home to God. The best thing that can be said about a home on earth is that someone is there who can make sure that all is well. It may be parents, or grandparents, or someone else who loves you. It should be someone whom you can respect and love.

You are going home...to Heaven. That is wonderful news!