

The First Sunday after Christmas

Late Elementary · Parent Edition

For the parent: Read each part aloud and work through the questions together. Your answers are printed in blue italics, so no preparation is needed. Your child uses the Student Edition.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

A collect is a short prayer the pastor prays for the whole church. Here is today's collect:

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Words to know. *Maker:* the One who made us. *Redeemer:* the One who buys us back and sets us free. *Incarnation:* God's Son becoming a man with a real body. *Restored:* fixed and made new again. *Human nature:* what we are as people, body and soul. *Purification* (in the Gospel): a cleansing the Law required after a baby was born. *Consolation:* comfort. *Prophetess:* a woman who spoke God's Word.

1. God is our Maker and our _____.
Answer: Redeemer.
2. God's Son became a man. The collect calls this the _____.
Answer: Incarnation.
3. We ask that we may ever be _____ in Jesus.
Answer: Alive.

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Luke 2:22-40

22 And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") **24** and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. **26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. **27** And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, **28** he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, **29** "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; **30** for my eyes have seen your salvation **31** that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, **32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

33 And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. **34** And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed **35** (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, **37** and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. **38** And coming up at that very

hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. **39** And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. **40** And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

1. Where did Mary and Joseph bring baby Jesus?

Answer: To the temple in Jerusalem (verses 22 and 27).

2. What had the Holy Spirit promised Simeon?

Answer: That he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ (verse 26).

3. What did Simeon do when he saw Jesus?

Answer: He took Him in his arms and blessed God (verse 28).

4. Who else came and gave thanks to God?

Answer: Anna, a prophetess who was eighty-four years old (verses 36-38).

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

Say to your child: Our prayer calls God our Maker and our Redeemer, and it says God's Son made Himself to be like us. In the Gospel, old Simeon holds that Son in his arms. Let's find our prayer in the story.

1. The collect says God's Son *made Himself to be like us*. Read verses 22 and 40. How do we see that Jesus was a real baby and a real child?

Answer: His parents carried Him to the temple, and He grew and became strong (verses 22, 40).

2. The collect calls God our *Redeemer*. What did Simeon say his eyes had seen?

Answer: "Your salvation" (verse 30).

3. The collect asks that we may *ever be alive* in Jesus. Simeon was ready to die. Why was he at peace?

Answer: He had seen the Savior God promised him (verses 26, 29-30). With Jesus, even death is peace.

Parent note. God's Son became like us so that He could redeem us. Jesus kept the Law from His first weeks (verses 22-24, 39), since we could not keep it. We are made alive in Him in Baptism, and He comes to us in His Supper, as He came into Simeon's arms.

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The First Article. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean? I believe that **God has made me and all creatures**; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true. **The Second Article.** And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. **What does this mean?** I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, **who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins,**

from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

1. The collect calls God our Maker. What does Luther say God has made?

***Answer:** Me and all creatures, my body and soul and all my members.*

2. The collect calls God our Redeemer. What does Luther say Jesus has done for me?

***Answer:** He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.*

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

Pray today's collect together one more time. Then ask:

1. What does Jesus do for you by becoming a child like you?

***Answer:** He took on a body like mine so that He could keep God's Law for me and die for me. In Him I have life that never ends.*