

BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN'S CLASS LESSONS

8. THE PURPOSE OF RELIGION

Welcome the children to the class. See that they are sitting comfortably and then ask one or two children to say a prayer.

Today we are going to think about the purpose of religion. Why do you come to this class? Why do your parents come to the Feast? (Try to get answers like “to pray to God”, “read the Holy Writings”, “socialise with our friends”, “it is a Bahá'í law”, etc.)

There are many different religions in the world. People follow different Prophets, but the purpose of the Prophets was the same. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, **“For a single purpose were the Prophets, each and all, sent down to earth; for this was Christ made manifest, for this did Bahá'u'lláh raise up the call of the Lord; that the world of man should become the world of God, this nether realm the Kingdom, this darkness light, this satanic wickedness all the virtues of heaven – and unity, fellowship and love be won for the whole human race, that the organic unity should reappear and the bases of discord be destroyed and life everlasting become the harvest of mankind.”** SWAB p. 31

In short, the passage says **“that the world of man become the world of God”**. Ask the children to suggest some ways in which this world would be the ‘world of God’. Treat the answers positively, but the tutor can suggest other ways of expressing the ideas.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá told us that it is better to be without religion than to have a religion that divides us – that makes people quarrel and hate each other. PT p.130 refers.

Now let us get our ideas together. The followers of all religions can do these things.

1. Pray – talking to God. Ask the children for their ideas and steer their ideas by asking questions.
2. Reading the Writings. Again ask questions like “Why do we need to read the Holy Writings?” etc.
3. Service. To do what Bahá'u'lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá want us to do. What do they want us to do? How do they want us to behave? Do other religions teach honesty, truthfulness, love?

ACTIVITIES

Decide before the class, which group's activities you wish to use so that you can prepare the correct number of photo-copies for the children.

GROUP A

Show the children the paper with three religious symbols on it. Identify for them the symbol for Christianity, Islam and Bahá'í. Have the children colour the symbols.

GROUP B

Give each child a paper with the doors drawn on it. These doors represent the religions which lead humanity to God. The quotation is “O Thou kind Lord let all the religions agree.”

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On each door is the symbol of a different religion. The names of the different religions appear above. Have the children write the correct name on each door. Then colour in the picture. When that is done the children can cut on the continuous line for each door, so that the doors can be opened. Do NOT cut along the dotted line. Make one or two folds in the paper so that it can stand up.

GROUP C

Draw two small streams joining into one big river. Label one stream 'Prayer' and the other stream 'Reading the Writings'. Label the big river 'Service'. This is the river of life to the world. Write down at least 5 things you can do to be of service to humanity.

It is a good idea to always have a few Bahá'í children's books, prayers, or Bahá'í children's magazines (or other material) at hand so that children who finish their activities early can have something useful to occupy them while they wait for the rest of the children to finish.

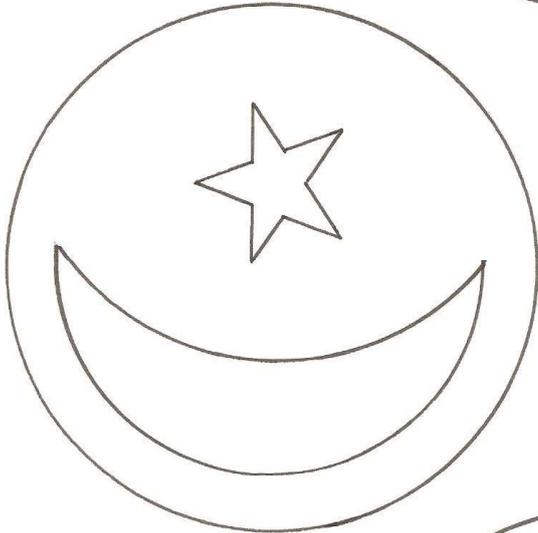
Also, if you have to entertain the children after class you can have children recite quotations or prayers they have learned by heart, or they can sing.

TO FINISH

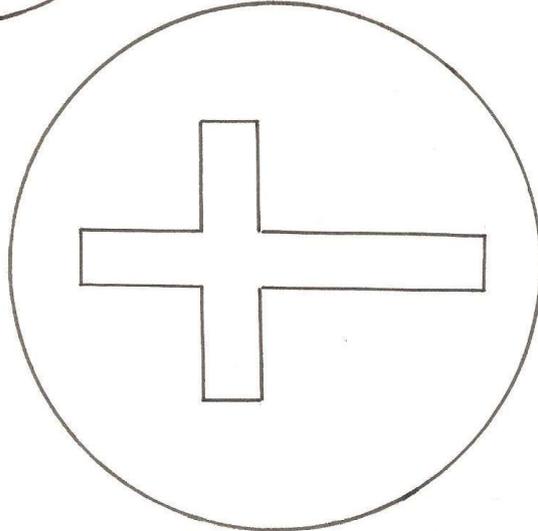
Make sure that the room is tidy before the final prayer and dismissing the class.

PURPOSE OF RELIGION. Group A.

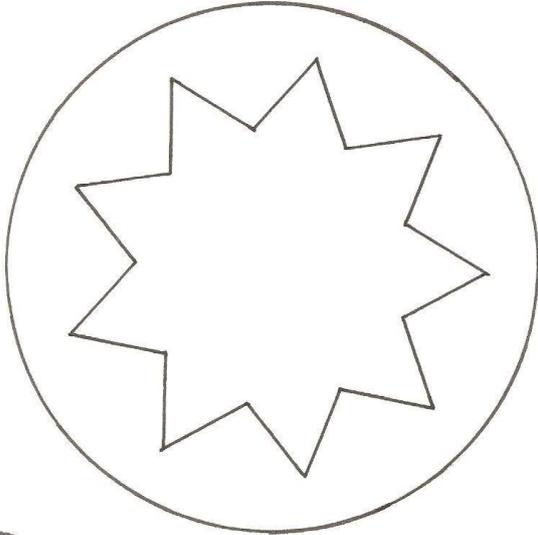
Colour the symbols.



Islam



Christianity



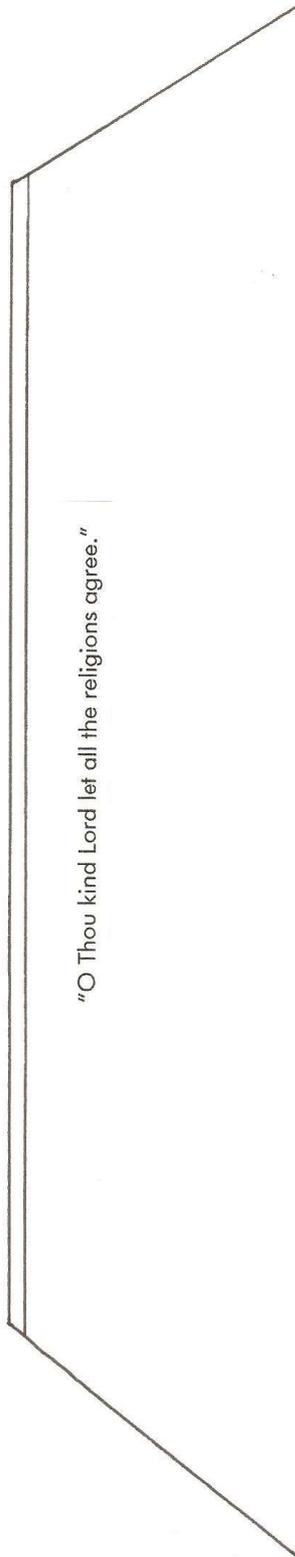
Bahá'í

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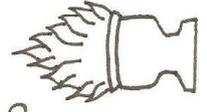
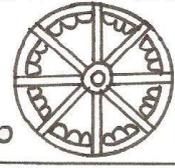
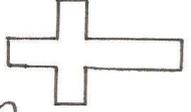
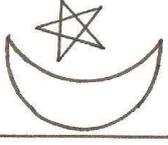
PURPOSE OF RELIGION. Group B.

Write the correct name on the door with the matching symbol.

Hinduism Judaism Zoroastrianism Buddhism Christianity Islam Baha'i



"O Thou kind Lord let all the religions agree."

+ - 3000BC		1400BC		660BC		536 BC		Year 1		622 AD		1844 AD	
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