

# **MISSIONAL CHURCH INITIATIVE**

## **INTERNAL**

### **Resources for Discipleship**

Eurasia Region

## **CONTENT**

### **5      DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS ON A NEW AND ABUNDANT LIFE IN CHRIST**

|    |                            |
|----|----------------------------|
| 14 | NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 1       |
| 18 | NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 2       |
| 22 | NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 3       |
| 26 | NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 4       |
| 31 | NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 5       |
| 36 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 1 |
| 44 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 2 |
| 52 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 3 |
| 60 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 4 |
| 68 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 5 |
| 76 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 6 |
| 83 | KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE 7 |

### **93     A JOURNEY INTO THE RIGHT DIRECTION**

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 94  | INTRODUCTION                             |
| 95  | CHRISTIANITY: THE BIG PICTURE            |
| 99  | CHRISTIANITY: THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH  |
| 106 | HOLINESS: THE QUALITIES OF A HOLY PERSON |
| 113 | HOLINESS: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES          |
| 120 | MINISTRY: WHY WE DO MINISTRY             |
| 125 | MINISTRY: TO WHOM WE MINISTER            |

### **131    THE ISLAND**

|     |                       |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 132 | ABOUT                 |
| 134 | THE ISLAND CURRICULUM |
| 139 | SAMPLE LESSON         |

### **155    CORE VALUES OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**

|     |                           |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 156 | WE ARE A CHRISTIAN PEOPLE |
| 158 | WE ARE A HOLINESS PEOPLE  |
| 160 | WE ARE A MISSIONAL PEOPLE |

**169 CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE ARTICLES OF FAITH STUDY MAPS**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 172 | ARTICLES 1-3: GOD                       |
| 173 | ARTICLE 4: HOLY SPIRIT                  |
| 174 | ARTICLES 5-10: FROM SIN TO HOLINESS     |
| 178 | ARTICLES 11-14: THE CHURCH AND ITS LIFE |
| 181 | ARTICLES 15-16: THE END TIMES           |
| 182 | ANNEX: WHY SUCH A GRAPHIC?              |



# **DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS**

---

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST  
ABUNDANT LIFE IN CHRIST

BY MÓNICA E. MASTRONARDI

## GUIDE FOR THE MENTOR

### **Congratulations on accepting the privilege and challenge of discipling a new believer in Christ!**

This is exactly what God called us to do as a church: make disciples. This basic discipleship guide will help a new follower of Christ in a crucial way, establishing solid foundations in the start of their Christian walk and for their future in God's work. Truly, the present and the future of the church depend on this task.

It is certain you have prayed a lot for this moment, and perhaps you had the joy of praying for the salvation of this person for months. If this is the case, give thanks to the Lord for answering your prayer! You will be investing in this person for a long time. Because of this, we will give you some brief details to help you in your work.

Jesus said, "...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

Matthew 28:19

1. Firstly, remember that discipleship is more than giving or finishing a series of lessons: it is a lifelong process. Specifically invite the person to choose to be a faithful disciple of Jesus. You will share your life, your experiences and your insight to guide them on the path that you have already chosen. It is vitally important that you develop a relationship of love, trust and mutual learning with the person you are discipling. You must also be willing to learn from them.

A personal relationship of unity and care establishes the basis for discipleship. In addition, it provides the new brother or sister with a healthy model for their Christian life and for a future ministry as a mentor. You should be aware of the fact that you will be the living example to this new convert, because they need a tangible example.

2. Another important task in your ministry as a mentor will be to help your new brother or sister to know and practice spiritual disciplines, together and individually. Because of your experience, you already know that we need to participate in means of grace, such as prayer,

fasting, reading and meditating on Scripture, and community worship in the church, among others.

It will be important that you help the new follower of Christ to establish the habit of having a personal devotional time to spend with Jesus and to be fed daily by Him. You will also need to introduce the Bible as their guide to continuous spiritual development. Show them how to look up passages in the Bible. The booklet ***How to read the Bible every day and learn from it*** could help you in this task. As you know, there are many versions of the Bible that can and should be used to enrich its study. However, during this study, we will use the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

3. Thirdly, the lessons at the core of your encounters are very important. We recommend that you get together with the new believer in the first 48 hours after their decision for Christ. The first thing you need to do is to discover if the person made a conscious decision to follow Jesus, and if they are sure that they have been forgiven. This is the starting point for basic discipleship. If that is the case, then you can begin with the lessons; if not, you should work with the person through a different method.

This study guide contains 12 lessons: the first five are entitled “New Life in Christ”, and explain some general principles for following Christ faithfully. The additional seven lessons, entitled “Keys to the Abundant Christian Life”, provide more details for the continuing walk with Christ. We also included certificates to give to the new believer after completing each of these stages. We suggest that you give them to the disciples publicly in a church service or special meeting where the whole congregation has the opportunity to celebrate the spiritual growth of the new members of the family of God.

We also include baptism and church membership requests for the new believer. You should orient them and help them when the appropriate moment comes.

Next, we offer you a list of support materials that could help with some of the topics in the basic discipleship lessons.

### **For the course “New Life in Christ”:**

- Lesson 1: How to read the Bible every day and learn from it  
Dictionary for new believers
- Lesson 2: Discovering Jesus every day
- Lesson 3: What Nazarenes believe  
Unity in the family of God

### **For the course “Keys to an Abundant Christian Life”:**

- Lesson 4: Four steps to being a happy tither
- Lesson 6: You will receive power
- Lesson 7: Sharing Christ with your family and friends  
History and ministry of the global  
Church of the Nazarene

As you begin this study, keep in mind that the topics in the lessons should be adapted to the specific needs of the new believer. Start where the believer is. To adequately guide them, you should discover their personal situation. How was their life without Christ? How are the relationships with their spouse and family? What are their struggles? What needs do the person and their family have that the church can respond to? When you begin a journey of constant learning and growth as disciple of Jesus, you will receive principles and guidance through the Holy Spirit to enjoy a new and abundant life.

There are some practical elements that you should consider as you lead the lessons of this Bible study:

1. Pray consistently for the life of the new disciple and their family. Ask them for specific prayer requests. Pray also for the time you will study the lessons individually and together. Pray that the Lord will enlighten your minds and help you understand the truths presented in each lesson.
2. Read and review the “Guide for the Disciple” with the person so they understand your relationship and how the lessons will develop. Choose a day of the week, a specific time and place where you will meet. Each session should be no longer than 60 minutes; 45 minutes is ideal. If you don’t complete a lesson, continue with it the next time.
3. Encourage the new disciple to study and complete the whole les-

son before you meet. This will help you take the most advantage of your valuable time together. Give them one lesson at a time. There is no hurry; let them fully digest every lesson. Study the lessons in advance, fill in the blanks and learn the content well before sharing it. If the person has trouble reading or writing, find another way for them to complete the lessons.

4. If the disciple ever forgets to complete the lesson, be patient, but motivate them to do it for the next time. It is very important that the new believer learns to be accountable to someone; in this case, it's you. If, as you review the lesson, you encounter mistakes, correct them kindly and listen to their point of view. However, under no circumstances should they be allowed to continue in their error.
5. Make sure that the person you are discipling has a Bible and, if necessary, spend one session explaining to them what the Bible is and how to look for verses. Clarify any misunderstandings that the person might have about the Bible, and allow them to share any concerns or questions about it.
6. You will need to teach the new disciple about prayer. It is always a good idea to start and conclude the lesson with prayer, allowing the new believer to practice prayer when you are present. This way you will be able to encourage them to cultivate the life of prayer and correct with love any inadequate things in their prayer. You will want them to learn how to pray correctly and to let prayer become a habit for their whole Christian life.
7. Make sure that the new believer completes all the activities in each lesson; that they memorize the verses when the lesson calls for it and that they understand and are able to explain the verses in their own words. Ask them, maybe towards the end of the lesson: How can you put into practice what you learned? Would you encounter any obstacles incorporating these principles into your life? If yes, how could you overcome them with the help of the Lord and me?
8. If other mentors are discipling other new believers, you could get together in small groups to share one or more lessons, to hear each other's testimonies, to get to know each other or simply to pray for one another.
9. It is very important that you are responsible and punctual with the person you are discipling. Do everything you promise. Put yourself at the person's disposal; give them your telephone number and address, as well as those of the pastor and the church. Be mindful of

the way you dress and your personal appearance, as well as your speech and vocabulary.

10. If you come across a situation, question or doubt that you can't deal with, talk to your pastor or the assigned leader. Regardless, it is important that you get together periodically with your pastor or the leader in charge of the discipleship program.

You are about to begin a beautiful adventure of faith with your new brother or sister in Christ. We encourage you to be consistent and allow God to use you powerfully. Ask the Lord to give you grace and wisdom to influence the life of your new brother or sister, and for both of you to grow in experience, knowledge and commitment to Christ and His church. Work toward the point where the person you're discipling becomes a mentor themselves.

**Be a faithful and committed disciple of Christ!  
This is our lifelong task!**

## GUIDE FOR THE DISCIPLE

### **Congratulations on making the most important decision of your life: allowing Christ to forgive you and take control of your life!**

From the beginning of your Christian journey, accept the privilege and challenge of being a disciple of Christ, a follower, an apprentice and an imitator of Him. From this moment on, this should be your highest priority: to allow Jesus to really be your Master. Learn from Him throughout your whole life, so you can become more like Him every day and fulfill the purpose of God for your life.

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* John 13:34-35

To learn about Jesus you will need the help and guidance of another follower of Christ who has been on the journey of learning from Him longer, and has done so through a group of disciples called the church. This is why you have a person to guide you. We call him or her “brother” or “sister” because of the close family relationship we should have with one another. You should rejoice that when you give your life to Jesus, you also became part of this family called the church (later on you will learn more about it).

You, as a spiritual baby, together with your mentor, will pursue growth in an intimate personal relationship with God and in the understanding of God’s will for your life. God is the inexhaustible source for your constant growth and spiritual development of your whole self. This study uses two important learning methods: praying and reading the Bible, the Word of God. You should know and incorporate both into your life.

The main purpose of learning this way is to become obedient and faithful to your Master, Jesus Christ, and to become a servant to others, motivated by His love. You will need to continue taking steps to get involved in the life of the church, and making decisions to grow in commitment to Jesus. In this way, you will allow God to continue changing you, and you will be able to develop fully until you can guide others in their walk with Christ.

Studying is a powerful method to achieve permanent growth and maturity as a disciple of Jesus. Start getting used to it and enjoy the time you dedicate to studying. This study has been created as a basic tool to motivate you to learn about what Christ has done for you and what He wants to do in you and through your life.

This study guide is made up of 12 lessons: the first five are entitled “New Life in Christ”, and explain some general foundations to faithfully follow Jesus. The following seven lessons, entitled “Keys to the Abundant Christian Life”, provide more details for the ongoing walk with Christ. You should commit to completing all the lessons in order to learn as much as you can about Christ and establish a solid foundation for everything that God has planned for you.

Your mentor will walk alongside you in this initial process. You can share your questions, doubts and needs with him or her. The lessons are based on different Bible passages that you need to read, then fill in the blank spaces according to what you have learned from them. Having a Bible and learning to use it is very important for this task. You can use different versions of the Bible, but we will use the New International Version (NIV). Your mentor will help you with this. Many of the lessons will have verses to memorize and activities to do. It is important that you do all of these exercises, because they will enrich your practical learning.

For your continued growth in Christ you should choose a weekly time to meet with your mentor and dedicate to this important task. Choose a day and time that will be optimal for your learning. Choose a place to meet that is free of distractions and where you will be comfortable sharing with your mentor. Let your family know so that you are not interrupted unless it's an emergency. You will need to study and complete the lesson before you meet. Write down your questions and doubts in a notebook. Your mentor will go through the completed lesson with you. Above all, this process should be centered in prayer. Ask God to give you the wisdom you need to learn the spiritual truths that are fundamental for your new life in Christ.

You are about to begin a beautiful adventure of faith with your brothers and sisters in Christ. We encourage you to be consistent. Allow God to continue shaping you. Share what you learn with your family, friends and school or work acquaintances. This way, you will influence others with the Word of God and your learning will increase.

**Be a faithful and committed disciple of Christ!  
This is our lifelong task!**

## **NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 1**

These Biblical lessons have been designed for you, who have received new life in Christ, to help you in the first steps of Christian life. But before continuing, read the following phrase out loud:

### **Welcome to the family of God!**

This first lesson will help you understand the new life that Christ has given you. In the lessons that follow, you will learn to grow in your new relationship with God through prayer and Bible reading. You will also be able to discover the wonderful plan that God has for you and how you can be a follower of Jesus who is involved in His church, and in that way, fulfill His purposes for humanity.

To complete these lessons, you will need a Bible and a pen.

As a new creation in Christ, you need to learn how to live as a child of God. There are six practices that identify someone as a Christian. Followers of Jesus:

- Pray
- Grow in daily Bible reading
- Worship God in community with His people
- Obey God
- Talk to others about Jesus
- Serve God with their lives

### ***Christ has given you a new life! Now...***

#### **1. You are a new creation**

According to 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, who is a new creation?

---

---

What happened to “the old”?

---

Who provides all this?

---

Think about your salvation experience and answer the following questions:

What are “the old” things in your life that are now gone?

---



---

What are the new things that God has done in your life?

---



---

John 1:12 affirms that all who have received Him become...

---

## **2. You have a new security**

Now someone lives in you, because you have invited Him to live in your heart. You are no longer alone. Who is with you, according to John 14:23?

---

According to 1 John 5:13, what can you be sure about now?

---

If you died in the next few hours, where does the Bible say you will go according to John 14:1-3?

---

## **3. Enjoy new relationships**

The Christian life is not a solitary life. Some people are afraid of losing their friends and loved ones because of their decision to follow Christ. Though this might happen in some cases, the Bible and the experience of millions of Christians affirm that when Jesus is in your life, He fills you with His Spirit of love. This is reflected in all of your relationships.

John 14:15-17 says that Christians have the presence of God in their lives at all times. After reading this passage, answer the following questions:

Who did the Father send to be with His children at all times?

---

In whom can the Holy Spirit live?

---

---

In whom does the Holy Spirit not live?

---

---

When you read John 15:11-16, you will discover that besides God, now you have more friends.

Christians have a new family in God that extends to (verse 12)

---

Christians have the best friend anyone could ever have (verse 14)

---

Christians who love Jesus will do as much as possible to (verse 16)

---

Jesus doesn't want you to be apart from your family and friends. His will is for them to see in you the new life that God has given you.

#### **4. You have experienced new growth**

Jesus died to give you new life, a new relationship with God and others, and for the Holy Spirit to guide you step by step in growth. Read Luke 14:25-33, where Jesus talks about how the disciples should grow. According to the passage:

Does being a follower of Christ have a cost?

---

---

According to verses 27 and 33, what three steps do the disciples of Jesus need to take?

---

---

---

---

---

---

According to verses 28-32, what does Jesus compare to growth in the Christian life?

---

If you build a tower or guide an army, what is the first thing that needs to be done so it does not fail?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

To grow as a follower of Christ you need to be willing to leave all you are, all you have and all your future in His hands. If you want to continue being His disciple, give everything to Him in prayer.

## NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 2

This lesson will teach you how Christians grow in their relationship with God through praying and reading the Bible. In this lesson, you will find answers to the following questions, which are common to all new followers of Christ:

- Why do Christians pray?
- How do I pray as a faithful follower of Jesus?
- Did Jesus pray when He was on the earth?
- Does God listen to me when I pray?
- Why should I read the Bible every day?
- How can I start to read the Bible?

Let's remember the six practices that identify the followers of Jesus:

- Pray
- Grow in daily Bible reading
- Worship God in community with His people
- Obey God
- Talk to others about Jesus
- Serve God with their lives

***Christ leads you to a new relationship with God!***

### 1. Prayer

*“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know” (Jeremiah 33:3).*

The Bible teaches us that God wants to listen to and help his children. Now that you are a child of God, He wants you to share with Him everything that is in you. You can come to God freely and tell Him about your dreams, goals and needs. Do you know how to express your needs to the creator of the universe? Jesus understood, better than anyone else did, God's patient and loving heart in listening to His children. He frequently went somewhere alone to have a private prayer time with God.

At what time did Jesus wake up to pray, according to Mark 1:35?

---

The disciples were witnesses of the wisdom, strength and power that Jesus received through prayer. On one occasion, they asked Jesus to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1). Jesus gave them the instructions about prayer that we find in Matthew 6:5-13. Read the passage and answer the following question:

What kinds of prayer does God listen to (verses 7,8)?

---



---

In this model that Jesus gave us, we can find some fundamental purposes of prayer:

**A. TO WORSHIP AND GIVE THANKS.** To worship God is to recognize His greatness and glory. We can see this in verses 9 and 13. What does Jesus affirm in the opening and closing of His prayer?

---



---

Gratitude is very closely related to worship. Jesus taught that the children of God should be thankful for everything they receive from their Heavenly Father. This not only includes material things, but also friends, family, job, rest and everything else they receive every day from God's hand.

**B. TO ASK WITHIN THE WILL OF GOD.** When Christians pray, they demonstrate that they want to live close to God and know His will for their lives. Through prayer, they can get to know their Heavenly Father more and more, and grow in their love for Him every day. A believer who doesn't pray every day will soon become discouraged and weak; they won't be able to overcome trials and temptations. Because of this, many fail in the Christian life. What did Jesus ask for in His prayer, in verses 11-13?

---



---

Are Jesus' requests selfish and focused only on His personal desires?

---

---

In the same way, the believer should seek to be guided by God every day in prayer, to do His will at all times (verse 10).

The believer also has the privilege of interceding for other people. Who does it say we should remember to pray for in Ephesians 6:18-20 and 1 Timothy 2:1-2?

---

---

**C. TO CONFESS SIN AND RECEIVE FORGIVENESS FROM GOD.** The word "sin" refers to actions, words, thoughts or desires that ignore the known law of God. When someone sins, he or she offends God and breaks his or her relationship with Him. That person needs to ask for forgiveness in prayer. Jesus taught that God's children should also be merciful and forgive those who wrong them.

According to Matthew 6:12, what is the relationship between the way a person treats someone who has offended him or her and the forgiveness that they want to receive from God?

---

---

According to Matthew 5:44-45: What does God expect from His children in their relationships with others?

---

---

## 2. The Bible

What does the Word of God say about itself in 2 Timothy 3:16?

---

---

---

---

For whom is the Word of God, according to Matthew 4:4?

Mark the correct answers:

- For experts.  
 For preachers.  
 For believers.  
 For everyone – men and women.

In the following passages you will discover how reading the Word of God will help you grow in your daily Christian life:

Psalm 119:11 \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 20:32 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 3:15 \_\_\_\_\_

A believer needs to spend time alone with God. Start by setting apart a time every day to nourish your life with the Word. This is commonly referred to as a devotional time.

- Read carefully for 5 to 10 minutes, starting with the Gospel of Luke.
- Meditate on how what you read relates with how you are living now. As you read, you will find promises from God for your life, commandments to obey, sins for which you should ask for forgiveness, and teachings about what God expects from you.
- Pray according to what God has said to you through the Word. Don't forget the purposes of prayer that you studied in this lesson: worship, give thanks, pray for your needs and those of other people, confess your sins and ask for forgiveness.

## NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 3

This lesson will teach you that God has a wonderful plan for your life and that He wants to guide you step by step in fulfilling it. You will find answers to the following questions, which are common to everyone who has decided to follow Jesus:

- What does God expect from me?
- How do Christians serve God?
- How can I help my family and friends to know Jesus?

Let's remember the six practices that identify the followers of Jesus:

- Pray
- Grow in daily Bible reading
- Worship God in community with His people
- Obey God
- Talk to others about Jesus
- Serve God with their lives

### ***Christ has a wonderful plan for your life!***

*“And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).*

### **1. God created you with a purpose**

What was God's purpose in creating humans beings, according to Genesis 1:26-31?

---

---

Adam and Eve disobeyed God and separated themselves from the plan He had for their lives, which affected their descendents, including us.

The Old Testament shows us a God that is seeking individuals and a people to live within His plan. He also sent Jesus Christ to guide people back to God's original plan. Jesus illustrated this process in the parable of the sower.

## 2. God wants to be the farmer of your life

Read Mark 4:1-20 and answer the following questions:

What does the seed represent? (verse 14)

---



---

What stops the plant from having roots? (verses 15-16)

---



---

What happens to the seed that doesn't fall on good soil? (verses 15-19)

---



---

When the seed falls on good soil, what happens? (verse 20)

---



---

What is your understanding of "bearing fruit"?

---



---

How much fruit do you think you can produce?

---



---

## 3. God has given you a new life for you to bear fruit

The seed of the Word of God has been planted in your heart. It will start producing changes that are necessary for your life to be more pleasing to God. After reading Luke 3:10-14, make a list of the fruits that God will produce in your life.

---



---



---



---

According to Matthew 7:17, what fruit does Jesus expect from Christians?

---

---

What can you do so that your friends and family know that now you are a follower of Jesus?

---

---

#### **4. The fruit that God wants to produce in His children is eternal**

Everything in this life has a limited existence, for example: building a house, planting a tree, writing a book, having a child, having a wonderful marital relationship, being good at art, sports or a profession, etc. The only one who offers you something that will not cease to exist after death is Jesus. The life that He gives you is eternal and now He wants to use you so that others have the same eternal life.

Read John 15:12-17 and answer the following questions:

What is the great commandment that Jesus left for His followers? (verse 12)

---

---

What is the best way of showing love to our friends? (verse 13)

---

---

What example did Jesus give in relation to “giving life for others to have eternal life”?

---

---

In verses 14 and 16 Jesus asks His followers to make an effort to bear fruit. One way of doing this is by sharing the eternal life they received with others.

Is this optional or is it a commandment?

---

---

What promise can be found in verse 16 for those who ask for the salvation of their friends?

---

---

Write the names of some of your friends that need to know Jesus:

---

---

---

You can help them have eternal life in Jesus by doing the following things:

- Pray for them to desire to hear the Word of God.
- Talk to them about what God has done in your life (what your life was like before, how you got to know Christ, and what Christ means to you now).
- Invite them to your small group meeting or to the local church, or set a date for them to come and listen to the gospel in your home.

## NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 4

This lesson will help you understand what the church is and why Christians gather to worship and fellowship with the people of God. You will find answers to the following questions, which are common to everyone who has decided to follow Jesus:

- What is the church?
- Why do Christians gather together?
- Why is unity necessary in the church?
- What is the mission of the church?

Let's remember the six practices that identify the followers of Jesus:

- Pray
- Grow in daily Bible reading
- Worship God in community with His people
- Obey God
- Talk to others about Jesus
- Serve God with their lives

### ***Christ wants to make you part of His church!***

The word church literally means “assembly” and it appears 109 times in the New Testament, mostly in Paul’s letters. Only in 17 of these passages does church refer to the whole people of God; in the rest of the references it describes a local congregation of disciples.

### **1. The nature of the church**

On whom is the church founded, according to Matthew 16:16-18?

---

Read 1 Peter 2:9. How does Peter describe Christians?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

These terms describe what the church is and they mean:

- Chosen people: family, race, descendents.
- Royal priesthood: priests that serve before the King of Kings (Jesus).
- Holy nation: a people that is clean of sin and lives according to the will of God.
- A people belonging to God: the people of God that have been bought by the blood of Jesus.

What did God create His church for, according 1 Peter 2:9b?

---



---

According to 1 Corinthians 12:27 and Ephesians 5:23, what is the relationship of Christ with the church?

---



---

Read Ephesians 5:25-27 and explain in your own words: How important is the church to God and how has He shown this?

---



---

## 2. The unity of the church

In John 17 we can read the prayer Jesus prayed for all His disciples before giving His life on the cross for them. Read verses 20-23. For whom was Jesus praying to the Father?

---

Did Jesus also pray for you? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus ask the Father for His disciples?

---



---

Why is it important, then, that Christians get together and develop bonds of friendship?

---

---

Read Acts 2:43-47. Is it possible to be a disciple of Jesus without being part of His church?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Where did the first Christians gather?

---

Why did they gather?

---

What happened when the Christians were together?

---

---

Read the following passages and discover other reasons that Christians should gather together:

Ephesians 5:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1:14 and 12:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:44-45 \_\_\_\_\_

### **3. The mission of the church**

The mission of the Christian church is its “reason to be” in the world. The mission of the church is the same mission that Jesus had in His ministry on the earth. He now shares it with us; we are His church in our time, wherever we live.

There are two key passages in the New Testament that summarize the mission of Jesus for His church in the world. What is the mission of the church, according to...

Matthew 28:19-20? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1:8? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

According to Acts 1:8, what do we need to receive before fulfilling our mission as a church?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

During His ministry with the 12 disciples, Jesus was teaching and modeling the mission of the church for them in different ways. According to the following passages, what is the mission of the church, of each congregation in the world?

Matthew 5:13-16 \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, we learn about the mission of the church as we observe how the first Christians developed their ministry. According to Acts 2:42, what were the purposes that were part of their mission as a new church? In what did they persevere?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

According to 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, what is the mission of the church?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

To what does Paul compare us in verse 20?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The mission of the church is to become the type of church that God can use to reach others for Him. We need to be faithful disciples of Christ through the ministry of the church and be involved in its life and mission. What a great privilege we have to be an active part of what God wants to do in and through His church in the world!

It is important that you continue participating of the life of your local church.

## NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 5

This lesson will help you understand the importance of the sacraments of the church in your constant spiritual growth. Some of the questions it will help you answer are:

- What is a sacrament?
- Why do we celebrate two sacraments?
- What is baptism and what is its place in my commitment to Christ and the church?
- What is the Lord's Supper?

Let's remember the six practices that identify the followers of Jesus:

- Pray
- Grow in daily Bible reading
- Worship God in community with His people
- Obey God
- Talk to others about Jesus
- Serve God with their lives

### ***Christ invites you to be an active participant in His sacraments!***

Sacraments are symbols that were incorporated into the life of the church by Jesus Christ himself, who also participated in them during His earthly ministry. Because of this, we only observe two sacraments: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Read Matthew 3:13-17. Who is baptized in this passage?

---

What happened and what did the voice from heaven say immediately after this baptism?

---



---

In Luke 22:14-16, who led this supper?

---

Who else participated in the supper and what was the message given at the beginning of the supper?

---

---

---

Your participation in the sacraments is very important for your continued spiritual growth, because through the sacraments we unite as a church, receive grace from God and become witnesses of His love to the world.

We participate in the sacraments in church, led by a qualified pastor or minister. The Lord's Supper can be celebrated as frequently as desired.

## **1. Water baptism**

Water baptism is an initiation ceremony and a public witness of the forgiveness of our sins. We affirm our death and life together with Christ (Romans 6:3-5).

What does Matthew 28:19 say about baptism?

---

---

Note that this is a direct commandment from Jesus, not a suggestion. According to Acts 2:38, what was the condition for the people being baptized?

---

---

According to Acts 8:36-38, what did Philip require of the Ethiopian eunuch before baptizing him?

---

What did Peter do with the new believers in Caesarea, according to Acts 10:47-48?

---

After the baptism of Lydia and her family, what did she ask of Paul and his companions, according to Acts 16:14-15?

---

According to Acts 18:8, what happened to the people after they believed?

---

The word baptism literally means submerge, immerse, purify, regenerate, sprinkle, cleanse. We can identify at least three different forms of baptism in the New Testament: immersion (to be completely submerged in water), sprinkling (to trickle water onto the person) and effusion (to pour water on the head of the person). Which of the three forms could have been used in the following cases?

Mark 1:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 9:17-18 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16:29-33 \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, to which other baptism does the water baptism point, according to Matthew 3:11 and Acts 1:5?

---

## 2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper was instituted by the Lord Himself and is a ceremony of communion and constant renewal for His disciples. We can see some of the significant elements of the Lord's Supper in the following passages:

According to Matthew 26:26-28, what do the bread and the cup symbolize?

---



---

According to 1 Corinthians 11:26, when we take the elements of the Lord's Supper, what are we doing and until when?

---

---

---

Mark 14:24 points out that the cup, which symbolizes the blood of Christ shed on the cross, makes us participants in:

---

---

The new covenant refers to a new relationship that we can now have with God through the death and resurrection of Christ, an intimate love relationship as children of God.

What did Jesus do immediately after taking the bread and the cup, according to Luke 22:17-19?

---

What future hope does Luke 22:18 give us in the Lord's Supper?

---

---

---

In the same way as Luke 22:19, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 urges us that when we celebrate the Lord's Supper we do it in...

---

Participating of the Lord's Supper in memory of Him is to realize that the Lord relives this experience with His disciples, making Himself present not in the elements, but in His church.

Finally, what opportunity does the Lord's Supper give us for our spiritual growth as reflected in 1 Corinthians 11:28 and 31?

---

---

---

If you have received forgiveness of sins, it is important that you fill in the baptism request soon and give it to your pastor so that you can be baptized. In the same way, we encourage you to participate more intentionally in the Lord's Supper every time it is celebrated.

# KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 1

Follow Christ!

This lesson will

- help you understand that the call of discipleship of Jesus is for everybody.
- give you a bigger vision of what being a follower of Christ implies.
- challenge you to have a deeper commitment with Jesus, accepting Him as the Master and model for your life.

To memorize:

*“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps” (1 Peter 2:21).*

## 1. To follow Him is to know Him

These days there is a lot of confusion about who Jesus really is or was. Some who call themselves teachers or the “illuminated” affirm that Jesus was a good guide for the people of His time, but that now there are other teachers, who are similar to Him, sent by divinity to show men and women the way to become superior. They affirm that there are many ways to get to know God and reach eternal spiritual salvation.

However, the Bible affirms that there is only one person whom God has sent to be the mediator and the guide for humanity. Who is He according to 1 Timothy 2:5?

---

---

What is the only foundation designated by God for the Christian life in 1 Corinthians 3:11?

---

---

---

Why is Jesus the only firm rock on which the Christian life can be built, according to Matthew 16:13-18 and Hebrews 9:14-15?

---



---



---

What security can a Christian, who has put his or her faith in Christ as the Rock, have? Acts 4:11-12

---



---

The Bible affirms that Jesus was the only person sent by God to help people live their lives in accordance with the will of the Creator.

## **2. To follow Him is to obey Him**

What is the common calling that Jesus gives to people in...

Matthew 8:22; 9:9? \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 9:59; 18:22? \_\_\_\_\_

John 1:43? \_\_\_\_\_

How did Jesus demonstrate that He has authority over nature?

Matthew 8:26-27 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 1:27 \_\_\_\_\_

Why did Jesus have this power? John 1:1-18

---



---

What invitation does Jesus make to those who believe in Him in the following verses: Matthew 10:37-38, Luke 14:26, and John 7:37?

---



---



---

Jesus' invitation, "come to me," is a call for all who believe in Him to become His disciples. What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus according to John 8:31?

---

---

In other words, being a disciple is being willing to imitate and learn from Him, applying His teachings in every area of life. To be a Christian is to be a follower of Jesus. Is it possible to be a real Christian without being a disciple of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Luke 6:46, is it possible to be a real Christian without doing what Jesus asks us to?

---

### **3. To follow Him is to imitate Him**

Jesus did not try to make His followers practice a new religion based on rituals, ceremonies and rules. The disciples discovered step by step that Jesus had a lifestyle that was in continuous harmony with God's will. What was Jesus' priority in life according to John 6:38-40?

---

---

According to John 13:14-15, what does Jesus say that should be the priority in the life of His disciples?

---

---

### **4. To follow Him is to be willing to leave everything**

What examples can you give of people that gave up something to reach a goal in their lives?

---

In 2 Timothy 2:1-5, Paul compares a Christian to a good soldier and an athlete that trains hard to be among the victors. Which are the Christians that reach the goal or prize of eternal life?

---



---

Jesus used a clear example from His time to help those who wanted to be His disciples to understand that they needed to be willing to pay the cost. What comparison did He use according to Luke 9:23?

---



---

Being crucified on the cross was the way in which Jesus taught that the Christian life requires sacrifice. The cross represented suffering and physical death. The cross was the price that Jesus was willing to pay for our salvation.

As their Master has, the disciples of Jesus throughout history have faced trials and difficulties because of their faithfulness to the gospel. But it is in these situations where Christians are strengthened in their faith (Romans 5:3-5).

In Matthew 24:13 there is a promise for all who remain faithful to the Lord in the midst of trials. What is it?

---



---

Jesus did not accept anyone as a disciple who was not willing to pay the price.

According to what you have observed in your own life, what are the current difficulties that the disciples of Jesus have to face because of deciding to follow Jesus?

---



---

## 5. To follow Him is to be Faithful

The call to be Jesus' disciple is for one's entire life. The Christian life is to be lived day by day.

In what were the first Christians faithful, according to Philippians 3:13-14?

---

---

What did Paul recommend that the Christians in Thessalonica be faithful in doing (1 Thessalonians 5:12-23)?

---

---

---

---

Why is it not enough to be hearers of the Word of God, according to James 1:22?

---

---

---

---

The Master's teachings have to be lived out in His disciples' lives. Consistency is required. That is why Jesus tells those who want to follow Him that they need to persevere, and if they don't, they can't be His disciples (Luke 9:62). In this world, nothing lasts forever, but the real followers of Jesus are those who persevere, even in the midst of difficulties.

His follower must also adopt this lifestyle. What should the disciples of Jesus seek as their priority, according to Matthew 6:33?

---

---

The disciple of Jesus must "seek the Kingdom of God," that is, to fervently desire that the will of God be done in every area of their lives and around them. But this doesn't happen automatically after being born to the Christian life.

What areas of the life of the new disciple of Jesus need to be transformed?

Ezekiel 11:19 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Romans 12:2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 1 Peter 1:14 \_\_\_\_\_

The former desires, customs, and ways of thinking and acting need to be removed from the life of the new disciple of Jesus. This is why the Christian life is a continuous process of growth and transformation.

Being a follower of Jesus requires leaving behind anything that could separate us from Him. This renunciation includes giving everything to God, for Him to be the owner and for us to be the administrators of those resources. According to Ephesians 4:13, what goal do the disciples of Christ strive for?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Can we follow Jesus without making changes or adjusting our lives?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

These changes won't happen only by understanding that they are convenient. We must be willing to surrender our heart and to be transformed into the likeness of Christ. The disciples of Jesus need to make the decision to be transformed by Him.



2. Communicate your answer to God in prayer and ask Him to keep you firm in your decision to follow Christ.

3. After reading John 6:67-69, in whom, other than Jesus, can you find eternal life?

---

---

---

4. Pray for help and direction from God to be victorious in every situation.

5. If there are obstacles in your life that can stop you from following Christ, share them with your mentor or small group. It is possible that they can give you valuable suggestions based on their own personal experience or from that of other more mature Christians.

## KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 2

Love God with all you are!

This lesson will

- teach you more about what God is like and how much He loves you.
- guide you to discover what God has done and continues to do to bring humans closer to Him through His love.
- help you understand that God created you to have fellowship with Him.
- show you how you can experience the genuine love that comes from God and respond to this love without reservations.

To memorize:

*“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment’”* (Matthew 22:37-38).

### 1. What does it mean to love?

In Matthew 22:37-38, Jesus reminds us that the most important commandment that the children of God must keep is...

---

---

What does it mean to you to love?

---

---

It is not easy to describe love. This is because the verb “love” has lost its true significance. We cannot fully understand love if we don’t understand who God is. God is the source of love and where the human capacity to love comes from.

## 2. How does God show His love to us?

The first two chapters of the Book of Genesis tell how God, starting from nothing, created the whole universe and what is in it.

How did God rate human beings and the rest of creation after evaluating His work, according to Genesis 1:31?

---



---

Human beings were created by God in a “perfect” or “very good” way, like the rest of creation. This perfection not only refers to the physical aspect of humans, but also to their mental capacity, their desires, their emotions, their feelings and their spiritual purity.

According to Genesis 1:26-27, what made the first man and woman so special?

---



---

For what purpose did God give humans intelligence and the capacity to relate to their Creator?

---



---

God likes to have fellowship with human beings. In this way, He can share His love and wisdom with us, and be our tender and protecting Father. God is Spirit, but He is also a person. Like us, God feels happiness, gets angry, reasons with His children, forgives, loves, feels pain and has mercy.

Find some of the characteristics of God in the following passages:

Genesis 6:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 86:15 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 12:6 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 4:10, 16 \_\_\_\_\_

We shouldn't treat God as if He were an insensitive being, ready to punish us when we make mistakes. God is not a bunch of rules or norms that need to be obeyed. We don't seek God only when we need Him for something.

He is a loving Father who wants to hold you, who cares about you, who delights in talking to you, and who wants to guide you so you don't get hurt. Because He is your friend, He wants to help you become a better child, a better spouse, a better parent. God desires happiness for His creation. But something happened that affected God's plan. You can read about it in Genesis 3:1-24.

---

---

---

Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, sin, suffering and death broke the wonderful harmony of the world created by God, and brought disgrace for all creation.

But God didn't give up His purpose of having fellowship with human beings. Because of His love, He put His salvation plan in place to rescue human beings from sin and bring them back into an intimate relationship with their Creator.

The Bible was written by people who had fellowship with God and, in obedience to Him, wrote how this plan was developed in human history. It tells how God gave all of Himself so we can be reconciled with Him (Romans 5:8).

Why did God intervene in human history by sending His Son Jesus, according to John 3:16?

---

---

---

Personalize this verse, writing it in your own words and inserting your name:

For God so loved (write your name) \_\_\_\_\_  
 that He \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

List some examples of how God shows His love.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

While the plan of salvation was being developed, God revealed Himself to human beings. The Bible shows us that God is One, but at the same time He is three persons in One: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit (the Trinity).

You can find more information about the three persons of the Trinity in the book *What Nazarenes Believe* or in the *Dictionary for New Christians*.

### **3. God longs for His love to be returned by all His creatures**

Do you know someone who loved deeply, but his or her love was not returned?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Some people make the mistake of believing that God can be loved superficially. For them, loving God means fulfilling certain rites, prayers and sacrifices. But the Bible affirms that all that is useless; it doesn't please God.

In what way did the peoples, mentioned in Isaiah 1:10-20, try to please God?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think these people loved God in the way He wanted them to love Him, according to what Matthew 22:37-38 says?

---

---

Why did they not please God if they complied with all the rituals and religious festivals?

---

---

---

What contemporary examples can you give of wrong ways to please God?

---

---

---

#### **4. Love God with everything you are**

How does God want you to love Him, according to Deuteronomy 6:5?

---

---

Do you think it's easy to love in this way?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Human beings have the tendency of loving those who show love to us. We love people because of what they do or what they are able to do. Do you think God loves you for what you do, or for what you are?

---

---

Verify your answer with the following verses: Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4-5; Titus 3:4-7; 1 John 4:10.

Should we trust that God will give eternal life to those who do good works, according to Ephesians 2:8-10?

---



---

Good actions cannot compensate for our sins before God. Why then should the disciples of Jesus do good works, according to Matthew 5:16?

---



---

God loves us for who we are, not for what we do. In the same way, we should love Him for who He is. Some people fear loving God because they have been disappointed by someone they loved. It's hard to trust in someone again after being hurt. But these people can see their fears disappear as they know God more and more, and as they experience His faithfulness.

Again and again in the Bible, God is praised for His faithfulness (Psalm 40:10; 92:2; Lamentations 3:23). God is faithful independent of what we do. Even if we fail, He continues being faithful.

Find the following passages and identify examples of how God's faithfulness is revealed:

1 Corinthians 10:13 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Thessalonians 3:3 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 1:9 \_\_\_\_\_

God wants you to know Him and love Him more every day. God wants you to learn to express your love for Him. This will be the theme of the next lessons.



Thursday: Jeremiah 23:24; 32:17

---

---

Friday: John 1:18; 4:24

---

---

Saturday: John 1:5; 3:20; 4:16

---

---

Sunday: Psalm 130:3-41

---

---

2. Make a list of things you will do this week to show God your love:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mark the ones that you did with an X.

## KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 3

Love other people!

This lesson will

- help you understand that the will of God is that humans love each other.
- help you know the ultimate model for Christians of love in action: Jesus Christ.
- teach you to recognize who is your neighbor, whom God asks you to love.
- show you how you can experience genuine love that comes from God and put it into action.

To memorize:

*“Love your neighbor as yourself”* (Matthew 22:39b).

### 1. You were created with the need to love and to be loved

From the time they are born, humans need love to grow healthy mentally, physically, socially and spiritually. There are many illnesses that are caused by the lack of love. Can you give some examples?

---

---

---

---

In the previous lesson we saw that human beings were created with the capacity to love and receive God’s love. The first and greatest commandment Jesus gives to His disciples is to love God. It is in this relationship of love that a person can find satisfaction in his or her inherent need for eternal love.

But loving God and having fellowship with Him is not the only thing Jesus expects from His disciples. From the very beginning, the Creator’s original plan was that human beings would also relate to each other in love. We can see this in the following passages:

If Adam had a perfect relationship with God, why did he feel lonely?  
Genesis 2:18-2

God created man and woman to live as a family, where they take care of and love each other. Later on, God called Abraham. What plan did God have for Abraham's life, according to Genesis 12:1-2?

From the offspring of Abraham, God formed the people of Israel (Hebrew people), from which Jesus would come. With what purpose did God send Jesus into the world, according to Titus 2:14?

All the followers of Jesus are part of a new people (1 Peter 2:9-10). What other name did the people of God receive in the New Testament in Acts 2:47?

What should the relationships be like between the disciples of Christ who form the church, according to 1 John 4:7-8?

According to 1 John 4:16, what is the characteristic that identifies a disciple of Christ?

## 2. Jesus Christ is our perfect example of love in action

God knew that human beings, because of sin, could not love each other perfectly, according to the original purpose for which they were created. Jesus lived among human beings as a perfect and continuous example of God's love in action. What did Jesus do out of love for the people of His time, according to the gospels?

Luke 4:38 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 4:43 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 9:10-17 \_\_\_\_\_

Can we love as Jesus did?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe God would ask you to do something you can't do? Answer this question after reading Ephesians 5:1-2.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. You can put God's love into practice by imitating Jesus

1. Jesus had compassion.

According to Matthew 9:36, what did Jesus experience when He saw the crowds?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To have compassion is to feel pain or mercy for others' misfortune. To feel compassion is not merely to be sympathetic with the other person, but also to identify with them, to feel their pain, their need. Feeling pity for someone is not enough. Many people feel pity for those who suffer, but don't do anything to help them.

Jesus is the personified compassion of the Creator, who in view of His lost and hopeless creatures, decided to act to solve the problem (Matthew 15:32). Jesus demonstrated that love is not only words (1 Thessalonians 1:3; Hebrews 6:10 and 10:24). What then, should compassion compel Christians to do?

---



---

Through Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, the Church of the Nazarene promotes, trains and encourages Christians to practice compassion in concrete ways—the compassion that should characterize their lifestyle, helping to meet the needs of others.

2. Jesus loved everyone in the same way.

To show the people of His time that the children of God should love everyone, Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan, which you can read in Luke 10:25-37. With this parable Jesus had the purpose of teaching that the commandment of loving our neighbor has no limits; it includes people of all races, cultures, religions, political ideologies, gender, age, social, economical or cultural standing, and even includes enemies.

Who is the neighbor in the passage mentioned above?

---



---

To what extreme does Jesus take this teaching, according to Matthew 5:43-44

---



---

For whom does Jesus ask forgiveness in Luke 23:34?

---



---

Love and forgiveness are inseparable, but they are not easily accessible to human beings. We can only learn to forgive this way through the love that God gives us as we ask Him in prayer.

---

3. To learn to love others, start by loving yourself.

Some people have a mistaken self-image. What does Romans 12:3 say about this?

---

---

---

---

What are some wrong ways of loving yourself, according to 2 Corinthians 10:12-13 and 2 Timothy 3:2?

---

---

---

---

---

Some, on the other hand, see themselves as unworthy of being loved and valued. Some people have a difficult time forgiving themselves for past mistakes and sins. Christians need to learn to see themselves as God sees them.

You are a valuable person in God's hands. God loves you and if you have asked Him for forgiveness for your failures and sin, be sure that He has forgiven everything and forgotten it all (Micah 7:19). You are a new creature for Him, for yourself, and for others.

Your love for yourself is the measure of love that God asks you to have for others (Matthew 7:12). When you don't know what to do, you can ask yourself: if I were in this situation, how would I like people to treat me?

4. Jesus wants His disciples to love each other and to remain united.

The church is made up of human beings, and the Christians that are part of it, even though they are saved, are not without faults. They, in the same way as you, are learning to live as disciples of Jesus and they are learning to love like Jesus did.

What example does the apostle Paul give about this in his letter to the Philippians (3:12-14)?

---



---



---



---



---



---

In the Bible there are various suggestions for the members of the family of God (the church) to cultivate their relationships and learn to live like brothers and sisters in faith. Investigate this in the following passages: Matthew 5:22; 18:15, 21-22; Romans 12:9-10; Galatians 6:1 and Ephesians 4:2

5. Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit.

According to John 17:26, what kind of love did Jesus give His disciples?

---



---

Through whom is God's love poured into the hearts of His children, according to Romans 5:5?

---

According to 1 Thessalonians 3:12, God's love should

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in your heart.

The Holy Spirit of God is who teaches you to love your neighbors like Jesus did. You can pray, asking God to fill you with His Holy Spirit and His love.



4. Read 1 John 4:7-21 and answer: Why isn't it possible to love God without loving your brothers and sisters?

---

---

---

5. List some things that you can do this week to show love to your family, brothers and sisters in the church, and neighbors in your community, job, school and so on. Ask God to help you reach these goals.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mark the ones that you accomplished with an X.

## KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 4

Allow Jesus to be the Lord of all!

This lesson will

- help you understand that everything you own has been given to you by the generous hand of God.
- show you that Christ has given you a new life to be your Lord and for you to be a good administrator of everything He gives you.
- teach some characteristics of good administrators.
- inform you about some things that you can start doing as a faithful administrator of the Lord.

To memorize:

*“If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord”* (Romans 14:8).

### 1. Who is the owner of everything?

What is the difference of being able to use something and being the owner of it?

---

---

Compare your answer to Acts 4:32

---

---

According to Psalms 24:1, who is the owner of everything? Choose among the following options:

- The individual
- The community
- The church

- The family
- The government
- God

Why isn't it right to say that the human being is the owner of what he or she possesses, according to 1 Corinthians 4:7 and 1 Timothy 6:7?

---



---

On what do we base the belief that God is the owner of everything?

Job 38:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 100:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 45:12 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 17:28 \_\_\_\_\_

God created you, and He provides what you need to continue with your life. He has rescued you from the power of sin and death through the blood of His Son Jesus, and He has made you part of His holy people for you to serve Him with everything you are. Everything you are and everything you have has been given to you by God. Now He asks you to be the administrator of all those things.

## 2. God has made you His administrator

Jesus used other words to refer to administrators, like steward and servant. What is a servant, according to Mark 10:43-45?

---



---

In the time of Jesus there was slavery, and to say servant was the same as saying slave. The only purpose a slave had was pleasing his or her owner, whom they called lord or master.

A steward was a servant who fulfilled administrative functions under the orders of his or her master. If Jesus is the Lord, then who are His administrators, servants or stewards?

---



---

Jesus was the perfect example of a person who gives His life in service to God. Therefore, who is a steward?

\_\_ One who uses the property of his or her master in the way he or she thinks best.

\_\_ One who obeys the desires of his or her owner.

\_\_ One who decides what to do with his or her master's properties.

### **3. Characteristic of a faithful administrator of God's resources**

In the parable in Matthew 25:14-30, how does a good administrator differ from a bad one?

---

---

---

If you had to put someone in charge of something that has a lot of value to you, what characteristics would you look for in that person?

---

---

---

The New Testament requires three things of a faithful steward of God. The first requirement is found in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2. What is it?

---

---

A faithful steward is one who fulfills all of his or her responsibilities, takes care of his or her master's interests, and uses his or her abilities for the master's service.

The second requirement can be found in Titus 1:7. What is it?

---

---

Another word for blameless is "upright." An upright person is one whom no one can accuse of failures. If the steward is not "upright" people can develop a wrong understanding of the owner, because the steward rep-

resents the owner to others.

The third requirement can be found in Hebrews 6:3, 10; 7:9-10. What is the characteristic that is found in all of these servants of God?

---



---

How can a Christian be wiser, according to James 1:5?

---



---

#### 4. Responsibilities of an administrator in the service of God

God's administrators have four responsibilities.

**A. Follow instructions:** We have learned that God decides what to do with His property and that we only need to follow His instructions. The Bible teaches us how to correctly use the resources we've received from God.

**B. Look for direction:** As an administrator you need to be in contact with God so you can know His will and receive new instructions. God does not always reveal His will all at once, but step-by-step. How does God reveal His will little-by-little to His servants in the following passages?

Genesis 12:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 9:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16:6-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 11:8 \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Wisely invest the resources received:** God wants His children to be faithful and to invest what He has given to them with the goal of multiplying these resources. These resources can be your life, your time, your abilities, and your money, among others.

According to 2 Corinthians 9:6-11, what is the promise God makes to all who invest their life according to His plan?

---

---

---

According to God's plan, a wise person invests what he or she has received in three persons:

- GOD
- OTHERS
- YOURSELF

What has God promised to those who give Him what belongs to Him? Malachi 3:10-12

---

---

God wants us to share what He gives to us with others. In what way are you to do that? 2 Corinthians 9:7

---

---

God will bless you every time that you give something that He asks you to. You will always receive more from God than what you can give Him. Is anyone so poor that they aren't able to give something to God or to others? What does Acts 3:6 say about it?

**D. Inform:** In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus taught that each person should give an account for what he or she administers. To whom should he or she give account?

Prayer is the means by which we, as Christians, can be accountable to God, evaluate together with Him our performance in the different areas of life, and make plans with Him. But we also need to be accountable to one another; with our leaders, and brothers and sisters in the church.

## 5. Surrender the control of your life to Christ

According to Colossians 1:13-18, Romans 14:9 and Acts 10:36 to whom has God the Father given the title of Lord of your life?

---



---



---

On the following page there is a graphic that can be helpful to show what a life bound to the lordship of Christ looks like. Place different aspects of your life that you need to surrender to the lordship of Christ into the graphic. Try areas like marriage, children, education, free time, job and finances, among others.

The decision is yours. Do you wish to give control of your life to Christ? If your answer is yes, tell it to the Lord in prayer: "Christ, I give You every aspect of my life that I have placed in the graphic, and I ask You to take control of everything I am. Help me live every day under Your Lordship."

If your answer is no, what is stopping you from making this decision?

---



---

### What I learned in this lesson

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

## Putting it into practice

1. Read: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.

Meditate: What will the practical implications be of giving the Lord control of your life?

2. Read: Mark 16:15, Ephesians 5:16 and Philippians 4:8.

Meditate: How can you invest the resources that you have received from God: your mind, personality, capabilities, time and knowledge of the gospel of Jesus?

3. Read Luke 14:28-32. Examine your goals, priorities and plans for this week analyzing whether they are in accordance with the will of God for you for by responding to the following questions.

Are my goals, priorities and plans a personal desire that God would approve of?

---

If Jesus were in my place, would He act the same way I act?

---

Am I being faithful to God with my goals, priorities and plans?

---

Have I thought about how my goals, priorities and plans can affect my neighbors (family, friends, siblings, co-workers, etc.)?

---

---

---

Will my goals, priorities and plans contribute to my growth as a disciple of Christ?

---

---

Am I investing enough time in my spiritual growth: Bible study, prayer, attending church, Christian fellowship and so on?

---

---

---

Am I separating a tithe of all my income of the week to offer to God and His work?

---

Make a list of things you will do this week in response to what God expects from you as a responsible administrator of what He has put in your hands.

## KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 5

Serve Christ!

This lesson will

- help you to understand that God has given you a new life for you to be a minister in the service of Christ.
- show you the different areas in which Christ wants you to serve Him.
- give you practical ideas for you to start serving Jesus this very week, in your home, job, school, church and community.

To memorize:

*“No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other”* (Luke 16:13a).

### 1. What is a servant?

In the previous lesson we saw that a servant is one who is not his or her own master, but he or she has someone else as a master.

What is the other word is used in the New Testament as a synonym of servant? Choose among the following options:

\_\_ brother    \_\_ boss    \_\_ slave    \_\_ lord

Is it correct to say that an individual is a slave to the thing or person in which he or she invests most of his or her time, attention and money, according to Matthew 6:24?

---

---

Who is the only person the Christian should serve, according to 1 Corinthians 4:1?

---

---

What example did Jesus give us in relation to service in Mark 10:45 and Luke 22:27?

---



---

According to Philippians 2:7, did Jesus volunteer to come and serve, or was He commanded by His Father?

---



---

Jesus was always willing to do humble tasks. He never made excuses nor refused to do tasks that required a lot of effort or personal sacrifice. If Jesus is to be your example in everything, what does His attitude teach you?

---



---

Jesus served the people around Him in different ways, providing answers for their needs. He taught, healed, preached, consoled, fed the hungry and even washed His disciples' feet, when none of them wanted to do that!

In the same way in which Jesus served the people, we, His disciples, have the privilege of serving them.

## **2. What does it mean to be a minister of Christ?**

In the Bible, the word ministry is used to refer to any service done for God. The words service and ministry communicate the same idea.

When Jesus addressed the needs of the people, was He concerned only with their spiritual life or did He also worry about their physical condition and emotional situation?

---



---

Jesus' servants should see to the well-being of their neighbors, spiritually as well as physically, emotionally, economically; in family, social and educational contexts, etc.

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Some Christians believe in Jesus Christ, but don't talk to others about Him, nor do they do anything to help people in their needs.

Do you think this type of Christianity is pleasing to God?

---

---

Why?

---

Compare your answer to James 1:22-25

---

---

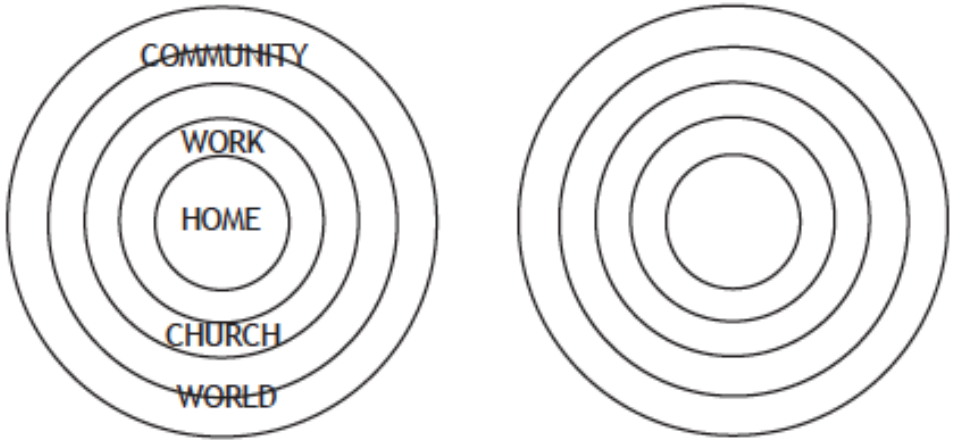
There are different types of ministries, or ways of serving the Lord, for each disciple.

Is it correct to say that since the moment that God gave you a new life in Christ, He has prepared a ministry for you? Ephesians 2:10

---

---

There are also different spheres or fields of ministry. Christians are people who live serving God wherever they are. The graphic that follows represents the life of an average Christian adult. He or she is responsible to be a minister of Christ when at home, at work or in their neighborhood. He or she even has the responsibility to serve people farther away than his or her community or the borders of his or her country.



Write down on the blank graphic the areas of your life the spheres in which you have a responsibility to serve others as a Christian.

### 3. Serving Christ in your home

Who is the creator of marriage and the family?

---



---

God desires that His children live within the comfort and security of a family. The family was created by God to give love, companionship, trust, encouragement and protection to human beings.

After reading Ephesians 5:25 to 6:4, mark some of the behaviors you have observed in families that you know that are not in accordance to the ideal family God intends His children to have:

- The children suffer from a lack of attention because their parents dedicate all their energy to their job, community or church.
- The parents don't give spiritual direction to their children.
- The children don't communicate with their parents.
- The parents don't know where their children are nor what they are doing.
- The parents have vices in which they waste all of their money and

their children are poorly cared for.

- There is physical violence, mistreatment and offensive vocabulary in their interactions.
- One of the spouses has extramarital relations.
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

God's desire for His servants is that they serve Him in their most immediate environment first: their family. In what ways do you think you can serve your family better? Write down some examples:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

#### 4. Serving Christ in your work

Human beings were created by God with the ability to work (Genesis 1:26-28). Work should not be seen as a curse, but as a blessing and opportunity to serve. What example did Jesus give us in relation to this in John 5:17?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

There are many ways in which the believer can serve God in his or her job. We offer you a list with some of them, and you can start putting them into practice this week:

- Working consciously, with creativity, diligence and responsibility.
- Being a faithful steward of the resources you administer (teams, people, buildings, land, etc.)
- Doing the job as if it was for God; it doesn't matter whether it's a manual or intellectual job, or if it's paid or not.
- Serving your co-workers in their needs when it's possible.

## 5. Serving Christ in your Church of the Nazarene

Because the word “minister” has been used for a long time in churches to refer to the pastoral ministry, some people have come to believe that this is the only ministry, or the most important one. Is this true in light of Ephesians 4:11-13?

---



---

What is the purpose of these ministries?

---



---

Make a list of some needs the people in your neighborhood have.

---



---



---



---

Is it possible for one person to satisfy all of these needs?

---

For this reason, Jesus has made you \_\_\_\_\_  
of His Body or church (Ephesians 5:29-30).

Read Ephesians 4:1-16. Why has Jesus made you a member of His church, according to verses 11-16?

---



---



---



---

In the same way that the parts of the human body (e.g. arms and legs) cannot be useful separated from the body, the disciples of Jesus need to remain united in a local church (group of believers from one location), with the goal of serving the world in accordance with the will of the Lord (John 17:20-21).

The members of the Church of the Nazarene around the world are people who, like you, have accepted the challenge of serving Christ and serving one another in love (you can find more information in the booklet History and Ministry of the Church of the Nazarene in the World).

Would you like to be part of this international family?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ I have doubts \_\_\_

If your answer is yes, communicate your desire to your mentor or pastor to receive instructions how to do this.

## **6. Serving Christ in your community and the world**

As followers of Jesus, we have been called to contribute to the development of our communities and the physical world in all its dimensions (health, education, living place, employment, etc.). What are some of the needs that you see in your community to which you could contribute as a follower of Jesus?

---

---

---

---

---

### **What I learned in this lesson**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Putting it into practice

1. Read Philippians 1:12-30. Write your personal reflection about the following: What was Paul's reason to live? What is your reason to live? Is your life valuable to you? Do you think your life could have more value?

How?

---

---

---

2. Read Philippians 2:1-11. List the recommendations Paul makes in relation to the way in which Christians should serve following Jesus' example.

---

---

---

3. Read Colossians 3:18-4:6. Consider how your relationships with your family, friends, co-workers, classmates, neighbors, and brothers and sisters in the church has been this week. Focus especially on how you have interacted with the people who have authority over you. Do you think you could improve the way you relate to them? Do you think you need to ask for forgiveness or apologize to someone you have offended or treated poorly? If this is the case, ask God for forgiveness and talk to the person at your first opportunity.

## KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 6

Be filled with the Holy Spirit!

This lesson will

- teach you more about the person of the Holy Spirit so you can have fellowship with Him.
- help you understand the ways in which the Holy Spirit has been present before, during and after your conversion.
- guide you to discover some dispositions and attitudes in your life that threaten your spiritual growth, which God wants to transform through the Holy Spirit.
- teach you that being filled with the Holy Spirit is being full of Christ's love so you can reach out to those around you.

To memorize:

*“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).*

### 1. The Holy Spirit is a person

The word spirit means life and breath; the word holy means pure and separated from evil. Holiness is the very essence of God (Leviticus 19:2). The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity; He is God. Because He is a spiritual person, He is invisible to human eyes; however, His presence is always with the Christian (Psalm 139:7). What are some of the names by which the Holy Spirit is known?

John 14:26 \_\_\_\_\_

John 16:13-15 \_\_\_\_\_

God sent the Holy Spirit for Christ to be known and His truth to be revealed to believers (John 14:26). Therefore, the Holy Spirit doesn't draw the attention of believers to Himself, but He directs them to look at and imitate Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:3).

## 2. The Holy Spirit is active in salvation

From antiquity, the Holy Spirit inspired holy men to write so that we would have the Bible today. He is the One who makes that Word speak to you, correct you, console you, teach you and apply it to your life and needs.

Before being born again, the Holy Spirit shows us, in many different ways, the sinful condition we are in. What does John 16:7-11 say about this?

---



---

In the moment we are forgiven and we receive Christ, who makes us new creatures according to John 3:6 and Titus 3:5?

---



---

According to 1 Corinthians 6:19, where does the Holy Spirit dwell?

---



---



---

According to Romans 8:16, what security does the Holy Spirit place in the hearts of those who have been forgiven of their sins by God?

---



---

What other works does the Holy Spirit perform in the salvation of His children?

John 16:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 8:29 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 15:9 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:26 and Jude 20 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 \_\_\_\_\_

For the Holy Spirit to be able to form you in the likeness of Jesus Christ, you must allow Him to act in every area of your life.

### 3. The Holy Spirit fills your life

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is being filled with the Spirit of Christ. This is why the person that is filled with the Spirit can walk in purity of life, just as Christ lived in this world. The blood of Christ cleanses you of sin and keeps you free of sin every day.

When we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit starts to live in our hearts too. God forgave your sins so you can live a life without sin; a holy life, depending on God, and experiencing His great spiritual riches (Ephesians 3:14-21). However, even though you have received new life, Christ still doesn't have "total control of your life." Christ cannot live and work in complete freedom in the life of a Christian who hasn't been completely filled with the Spirit.

After reading the verses below, mark which of the characteristics you notice in your own life:

- |                   |                          |   |
|-------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Matthew 16:23     | <input type="checkbox"/> | a struggle between your will and God's will |
| Luke 22:24        | <input type="checkbox"/> | selfishness and pride                       |
| John 18:25        | <input type="checkbox"/> | cowardice                                   |
| Romans 7:8        | <input type="checkbox"/> | covetousness                                |
| 1 Corinthians 3:3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | envy, division, lack of love                |
| Galatians 5:17    | <input type="checkbox"/> | internal struggles                          |

In 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 Paul refers to Christians who have these attitudes as "worldly" people. He is trying to show that their lives are not controlled by the Holy Spirit but by their own human will, also called the "I" or "ego."

The human will that is not controlled by the Holy Spirit frequently refuses to obey God in some areas of life. The "I" is the one who makes the final decision about in which aspects to obey God and in which ones to reserve the right to choose what to do.

No child of God should stay indefinitely in this conflict, for he or she

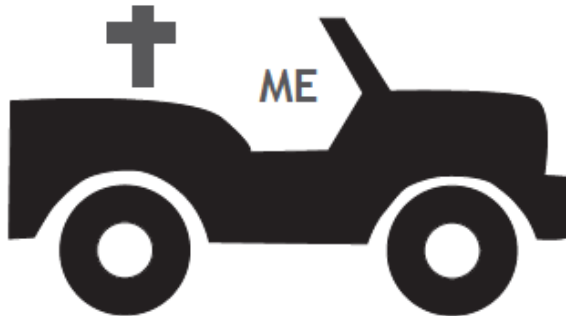
is sinning every time he or she chooses to follow his or her own will instead of God's will. He or she will feel more and more confused and like a failure, as he or she tries to perfectly obey God relying on his or her own effort. This Christian is like someone who lives on a petroleum reserve, but chooses to be poor instead of being a millionaire.

In the following graphic you will see a representation of the life of a worldly Christian. The life of the Christian is the vehicle. If this vehicle represented your life right now, who would be the driver?

---



---



After reading 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, answer: Is God pleased if you live like this?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

But when you allow the Holy Spirit to fill your life, the following occurs:



Who is the driver of this life now? What place does the “I” have in this life full of the Spirit of God?

#### **4. How can you be filled with the Holy Spirit?**

In the same way that forgiveness of sins is received freely by faith in Jesus, this second work of deep cleansing of your sinful nature has also been achieved for you in the cross (Ephesians 5:25-27). You will not receive it because you deserve it or desire it.

When you are filled with the Holy Spirit you will be empowered to live a holy life in all its fullness, and then you will be able to share this life as you disciple others, producing the abundant fruits that God expects from you. But you must prepare your heart first to receive Him. To prepare yourself, answer the following questions sincerely:

- Do you wish with your whole heart to please God in all your thoughts, desires, words and actions?
- Are you willing to give complete and absolute control of your life to the Lord?
- Are there sins in your life that you have not confessed to God and that need God’s forgiveness?
- Have you consecrated your life to the Lord? Have you given Him all you are so He can accomplish all of His purposes in your life?

According to Ephesians 5:18, the commandment of God for all His children is that they be filled with the Holy Spirit.

What do you need to do to receive the filling of the Holy Spirit in your life, according to Luke 11:13?

---

---

Do you want to be filled with the Spirit now?

Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_ I still don’t understand \_\_\_

If your answer is yes, you can pray a prayer similar to the following:

*Heavenly Father, thank You for making me Your son or daughter and giving me a new life in Christ. I open myself before You today for You to examine my heart and to remove everything that doesn't please You. Cleanse me with Your Spirit and fill me with Your love. I consecrate myself to You and I give You the control over my whole being, to live under Your lordship every moment, in every relationship, everywhere I go.*

*Give me Your power to be a witness to others of Your love.*

*I receive this by faith and I commit to continue growing in Your ways.*

*Amen.*

## **5. After being filled with the Holy Spirit...**

- Ask the Holy Spirit to affirm to you His sanctifying work in your life (Romans 8:16).
- Continue growing in Jesus through all the means available to you, cultivating the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life (Galatians 5:22-23).
- Share with others the good news of salvation and what the Holy Spirit has done in your life, purifying your heart.
- Let the Lord use you in His church with the spiritual gifts He has given you.
- Continue constantly searching for Him, to know Him and obey Him more and more.



## KEYS TO AN ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE 7

Be a faithful mentor of Jesus!

This lesson will

- help you to understand that the calling of Jesus to make disciples is what the church has started in you through these basic lessons.
- guide you to being a faithful disciple of Christ for the rest of your life.
- teach you to take advantage of opportunities to share Christ with other people.
- challenge you to become a mentor to others.

To memorize:

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).*

### 1. The responsibility of making disciples

The mission of the whole church is to make disciples. According to Matthew 28:18-20, which was the last commandment that Jesus gave His disciples before ascending to the heavens?

---



---



---



---



---

If you examine your life in light of the following list, which requirements to be a mentor do you fulfill?

- I have a new life in Christ.
- I am growing in knowledge of the Scriptures.
- I love God with all my heart.
- I love people that need Jesus and I feel compassion for them.
- I wish to guide others to know Jesus.
- I am learning to help others be disciples of Jesus.
- I wish to be a member of the Church of the Nazarene.
- I am willing to work under the authority of the leaders of my Church of the Nazarene.

What promise can you find for yourself in Matthew 4:19?

---

---

---

---

## 2. The cost of being a disciple of Jesus

Even though you have received forgiveness of sins, you need to consciously decide to be a disciple of Jesus for the rest of your life. This is precisely what God desires for you. But being a disciple of Jesus – a constant apprentice of Him in everything – has a cost, a greater commitment.

According to Matthew 16:24, which are the three steps that Jesus requires of those who want to “come after” him or be His disciples?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Other minor requirements that Jesus expects from His disciples are clear in the following verses:

Luke 14:26 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 14:33 \_\_\_\_\_

It is important to understand that the word “hate” in these verses doesn’t mean to hate or reject in sense we know it, but it is equivalent to “love less.” It implies loving our family and even our own lives less because Jesus is our supreme love, incomparable to our other loves.

### 3. The formation of a disciple

After assuming the cost of renunciation to be a disciple of Jesus, a process of continuous formation follows. The disciple is formed through experiences, knowledge, habits and sharing his or her faith with others; that is, through a life of obedience that bears abundant fruit.

Let’s take a look at the following:

a. Know Jesus Christ.

Can you correctly introduce someone you don’t know?

---



---

How do you get to know a person?

---



---



---

What causes people to grow in the knowledge of the Word of God every day, according to Psalm 119:11 and Luke 8:15?

---



---



---

A good mentor is a person who grows every day in the knowledge of Jesus.

b. Be an intercessor.

Does your prayer have an influence so that other people get to know Jesus, according to 1 Timothy 2:1-4?

---

---

A good mentor is a Christian who loves other people and is willing to spend time in prayer for each one of them.

c. Discipline your life.

According to John 15:14, what is the relationship between knowing Jesus and obeying Him?

---

---

One of the keys to bearing fruit in the Christian life is consistency in obeying the Lord. Below you will find a list of Christian disciplines that require perseverance. Mark those into which you need to put more effort:

- Spend time alone with God every day.
- Practice Christian fellowship.
- Memorize verses from Scripture.
- Read books and magazines that help me grow as a disciple of Jesus.
- Participate in the ministries of the church.
- Participate in the services and activities of my church.
- Regularly give my offerings and tithe.
- Practice compassion.
- Submit to church leaders.

The best mentors are those who offer those they are discipling a model of Christian life that is worthy of imitation.

#### 4. As you share with others, follow the Biblical model

From the beginning of the Christian church, the Good News of salvation has been passed on through people who told others about their experience with Christ, whether through their words or lifestyle.

Therefore, it is important that you share your personal testimony with others, then you will become a part of the chain of faithful disciples of all the ages. As you share with others, follow the Biblical model:

1. What does Jesus ask us in John 13:15?

---



---

According to Matthew 9:9-13, following the example of Jesus, why is it important that you continue building relationships with those that still don't know Him?

---



---



---

2. What example did the apostle Paul give in 1 Corinthians 11:1? And the church in Thessalonica in Thessalonians 1:7?

---



---



---

Following Paul's advice in Corinthians 9:18-22, what should be your disposition to reach those who don't know Christ?

---



---

3. Give your personal testimony to others.

Your verbal testimony of what God has done in your life is important to reaching others. The following exercise suggests some general guidelines for sharing your personal testimony with others:

Write your personal testimony on a separate page, using the following questions as a guide:

- What was your life like before knowing Jesus?
- What need did Jesus satisfy in your life? It can be: lack of love, loneliness, feeling of guilt, need of forgiveness, among others.
- How did you receive new life in Christ?
- How has your life changed now that Jesus lives in your heart?

Your personal testimony is the key to awakens people’s interest in hearing more about Christ. (You can read about the example of Paul’s personal testimony in Acts 26:1-23).

4. Pray for others to become disciples of Jesus.

It is important to pray and to wait for the right moment to talk about Jesus. Remember that it is the Holy Spirit who prepares people’s hearts so they desire to hear the Word of God. Fill in the chart on the next page with information of the people you want to guide to Jesus.

Pray daily for these people, serve them in their needs, be an example to them so they can see your life transformed by God, prepare yourself for the appropriate occasion to share your testimony, and help them to receive new life in Christ.

| Name | Age | Relationship | Special Need |
|------|-----|--------------|--------------|
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |
|      |     |              |              |

5. Be willing to continue growing and to receive training through the church, in order to mentor others in the near future.

### **What I learned in this lesson**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

### **Putting it into practice**

1. According to Ezekiel 33:8-9 and Proverbs 24:11-12, are the excuses God's children make, not to speak to others of Christ, valid to Him?
2. According to Matthew 25:41-46 and John 3:17-18, is there hope for those who die without having been born to the new life in Christ?
3. Read and reflect on John 3:14-16 and Romans 10:14-15. Is it correct to say that God's will is that ALL His children proclaim to the world that there is hope in Jesus? Do you accept this commitment? If you do, express it to God in prayer and share it with your pastor and leaders in your church.

### **And now what?**

In completing this series of lessons of basic discipleship, we hope you have grown in your faith and commitment to Christ. Be especially care-

ful to continue setting aside a daily time to spend alone with God and study His Word. It's important that you have made the decision to be a faithful disciple of Jesus and a mentor, and that you continue to learn for the rest of your life.

Now you need to continue your spiritual growth, making the decision to become a member of the Church of the Nazarene, which has been nurturing you with so much love during all this time. In the church you will find help to grow in the life full of the Spirit, and you will be trained in the ministry that God has for you. There will be other lessons or studies that will help you understand the doctrines and organization of our beloved church better.

On one occasion, Jesus instructed His twelve disciples saying: "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8). The mission of the church, according to Matthew 28:19-20, is to make disciples; therefore, God's desire is that you also become a mentor. We hope that very soon you will make this decision, working in the evangelism and discipleship ministry in your local church.

Continue your walk in Him!





# **A JOURNEY INTO THE RIGHT DIRECTION**

---

THOUGHTS ON DISCIPLESHIP FOR YOUTH

COPYRIGHT © EURASIA DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES 2009

BY  
GUSTAVO CROCKER  
ED BELZER  
CLIVE BURROWS  
TIM EVANS  
JAYME HIMMELWRIGHT  
KYLE HIMMELWRIGHT  
TODD WAGGONER  
SABINE WIELK

## INTRODUCTION

Christianity. Holiness. Ministry. There are some common questions about these themes that many of us have asked, and have been asked by others. A few of us sat down to reflect on these questions, and as is usually the case, we ended up with even more questions of our own. We wrote those down too, so that together with you, we can embark on a journey.

What you're holding in your hand is only the beginning. These are a few questions and the beginning of answers. They are not meant to be complete nor comprehensive. They're really just to start you thinking. And together with others who are on this journey, and with God's help, we would like discover more answers.

There is no prescribed way to use this material, but it will probably work best if you explore the questions and answers with people around you. Whether you do that sitting on benches in a church or around a table in your favourite café is up to you. All we ask is that you honestly seek answers beyond the ones given, and that you don't stop asking these, and other, questions.

We also ask you to help us develop this material. If you'd like to turn it into a script and record a video, host a quiz-show, draw a comic or give us your thoughts in a written form, we would love to hear from you. With your permission, we'd also like to make your contributions available to others. Please email your thoughts, comments and ideas to be shared with the rest of us to [journey@eurasiaregion.org](mailto:journey@eurasiaregion.org) – for updates from others you might want to check [www.eurasianazarene.org](http://www.eurasianazarene.org) (“resources” link).

May God give us the courage and perseverance to ask the difficult questions throughout our journey, and the openness to go where that will take us.

*Your Fellow Travellers,  
Clive, Ed, Jayme, Kyle, Sabine, Tim & Todd*

## CHAPTER ONE

### CHRISTIANITY: THE BIG PICTURE

#### 1.1 WHAT GOD IS LIKE

*Q: I have heard God described in so many ways (loving, judging, everywhere, in heaven, watching, in action). So what is God really like?*

God is love. The very fibers of who God is are love. Let me explain. Okay, we are going to get a little deep here for a minute. In order to love, you have to have someone to love, right? Within God, we find three persons (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) who love one another (John 17). God is a circle of love. That means that the very person of God embodies love. However, God's love is not self-centered. That is why He could not be satisfied with just keeping His love for Himself. Instead, God's love is always moving out from Him to love others. That is why He created us. He created us in order to love us. In His love, God is always seeking a relationship with us.

God is so great that we could never truly define Him with our limited understanding and language. However, love encompasses all of His traits. This love is what sets God apart from all else and makes Him holy. We must remember that this is not an overly-emotional, sentimental type of love. This is a love that requires self-denial and discipline. It is a love that is truth (Romans 12:9).

#### Discussion Questions

1. How do you perceive God?
2. Do you understand Him in only one way (for example, only as a judge), or can you see His many dimensions?
3. Do you know God as love? How can you come to know God more fully?

#### 1.2 THE STORY THE BIBLE TELLS

*Q: I have read parts of my Bible and I do not see the connection between the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament gospels, or the Psalms of David and the letters of Paul.*

The Bible is God’s love story. God has been working to bring about perfect relationship in His creation since the beginning of time. God had a relationship with Adam and Eve, but they broke that relationship with Him, and the broken relationship continued for generations. Then, God chose Abraham’s family, the Israelites, to be His special people. God did not do this because He only loved them and because He had given up on the rest of the world. Instead, He gave the Israelites a special responsibility. They were to show the rest of the world who God was so that the other nations and peoples would also come to be in relationship with Him (Genesis 12:2-3, Exodus 19:5b-6). However, the Israelites did not do such a good job. They drifted away from God, so God let them have kings to guide them (I Kings 8:41-43, Psalms 67:1-4). They still turned their backs on God, so God sent prophets to warn them, but they did not listen (Isaiah 2:2-4, Isaiah 66:18-21, Jeremiah 1:5).

Then, God did the most loving thing possible (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-12). He came to Earth as a human to restore the relationship between God and humanity. Jesus gifted the world with two important things to take His place when He left. Firstly, He gave the Holy Spirit—God’s presence with us every day—to help us be in right relationship with God. Secondly, He established the church. The church is now the people of God. We have been given the special responsibility to show the world God, so that they can be in relationship with Him (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8).

The rest of the New Testament is the story of how more and more people came into right relationship with God as the church grew. Finally, in Revelation, we have a picture of what will one day be—all nations gathered together before God—the fulfillment of God’s love (Revelation 5:9-10, 7:9-10). So you see, the Bible is one continuous story of God’s loving pursuit of all people.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How can you relate the perspectives that we get of God in the Old Testament to the perspectives that we get of God in the New Testament?
2. Does our belief that Jesus came to reveal God more fully add another perspective?

### 1.3 THE ROLE THAT JESUS PLAYS

*Q: I understand that Jesus died for my sins, but is that the whole reason for Jesus coming to the earth?*

Jesus was both completely God and completely human. (Don't worry. You don't have to fully understand that. It is a mystery that we believe.) Therefore, Jesus revealed both God and humanity to us.

Firstly, Jesus showed us who God really is (Luke 10:22, John 14:9, John 17:6). For the first time in history, humanity was able to see God in a concrete, physical way. We were able to more fully know Him, love Him and be in relationship with Him.

Secondly, Jesus showed us what humanity was meant to be. Genesis 1:26 says that we were made in the image of God. That means we are able to be in relationship with God and in relationship with others. Jesus showed us and taught us what it is like to be in perfect relationship with God and to live in selfless, loving relationships with others (Mark 12:29-31). He showed us how to use power and resources selflessly. Jesus showed us what we will someday be like. He painted a picture of how we will be in eternity and taught us how to live in the present (John 17).

Finally, God did not abandon us when Jesus ascended into heaven. Instead, God, the Holy Spirit, remained with us to empower us to live in right relationship with God and with others (John 14:15-20).

“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:17-19).

#### Discussion Questions

1. What do we learn from Jesus about God?
2. What do we learn from Jesus about what humanity is meant to be?

## 1.4 WHAT HAPPENS IN THE END

*Q: I have friends that are good but not Christians. I don't understand how God punishes them but not the mean Christians from church I know. Is there hope for them?*

This is a difficult question. Honestly, I think that only God knows the answer. We can see both sides. God is loving and merciful, yet He is also just. “The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished” (Numbers 14:18).

God is just. There are many parables and teachings that tell of future judgment. Many Scriptures state that few will enter heaven (Matthew 7:13-14, I Peter 4:18). The Bible also tells us that Jesus is the only way to the Father (John. 14:5-6, Acts 4:12).

On the other hand, God is love. Will God show mercy? Will He look at the motives of the heart? Will His justice take into consideration the circumstances (Romans 2:12-16)? The Bible does tell us “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11). I do not think that we can put God “in a box” and limit what He can and will do. God is the ultimate judge, and He is a God of hope.

What we know for sure is that through Jesus we are saved (John 3:16). In this life, we must live for God and share Him with others. God, in His wisdom, will know what to do with those who have not accepted Him when the time comes.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Do we have to fully understand everything about God?
2. How can we live with mystery?

## CHAPTER TWO

### CHRISTIANITY: THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

#### 2.1 BEING A FAMILY

*Q: There are some people in my church that drive me crazy. Do I really have to go to church and be around them?*

Yes. Next question?

Just kidding! Actually, we were created to have a relationship with each other, and God wants to have relationship with us. Relationships, however, are very difficult. Just take a look at our world: there is conflict all over the globe. And sometimes this conflict happens in the church, to the extent that there are people in our church that drive us crazy. You are not alone. This is a really good question that we need to wrestle with.

Let's go back to the context of the great commandment that Jesus gave us in Matthew 22:34-40. For us, becoming and doing what God calls us to be and do, can only happen when we love God with all of our heart, soul and mind. Once we begin to love God in this way, then we begin to have the ability to truly love what God loves: people.

As I deal with people that drive me crazy, I think about the fact that God created every one of us in God's image (Genesis 1:26). So every person, regardless of their appearance, their perspective, their attitude, their behaviors, their temperament or whatever, was created by God. He or she is loved by God so much that He was willing to die for them. I have to remember this in order to begin dealing with the people who drive me crazy in my church.

We are commanded to love everyone; however, this doesn't mean that we have to be best friends with everyone. It does mean that we have to do our best to live "at peace" with those in the church.

Check out chapter 4 of Ephesians. In this chapter, Paul gives us some great ideas to help us deal with people in the church. There have been many times when I have had to go to this chapter and pray it into my life

again and again. Verse 2 really speaks to us regarding our relationships with others. I came to this realization: I knew it would be work to be around people who aren't Christians (you know, the whole idea that sinful people do sinful things). So I know that it will be work, that it will take a lot of patience and love to be around non-church kinds of people. But I had this idea that it would be easier to be around people in the church.

But then in verse 3, Paul's words confronted me on this issue: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." He says that it was going to take some effort, it was going to take work, and it wouldn't necessarily be easy to get along with others.

Sometimes it is hardest to be around people we love the most, because we know them so well. We know their weaknesses, we know who they are, and the reality is that every one of us has issues in our lives that tend to annoy others.

There are people in my family that drive me crazy, but they are still my family. The Church is the body of Christ, the "family of God." We must do everything we can to live at peace with everyone.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Who are the people who drive you crazy, and why do they drive you crazy?
2. What "image of God" do you see in their lives?
3. What is one thing about those people that you can appreciate?
4. In what ways can you pray for those people?
5. What are things about yourself that might drive other people crazy?

### **2.2 DISTRIBUTING GRACE**

*Q: Jesus seems to hang out with and forgive some of the worst and overlooked people. How can the church become more like Jesus?*

You are absolutely right in that Jesus came and hung out with the worst and overlooked people on Earth. We read about Jesus doing this in the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. Jesus knew that people were "muttering" about Him hanging out with "sinners." And Jesus told them, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

We have to remember that one of the purposes of the church is to reach out to those that don't know Jesus! It is easy for the church to become just a safe place where its members can hide and stay safe. However, we have to deal with some realities.

If you as a Christian hang out with “sinful” people, one will influence the other. Either you will draw them towards Christ or they will draw you away from Christ. Are you strong enough to influence others towards Christ or will they influence you away?

When I was a teenager, I could not have spent time in the bars around alcohol. I was not strong enough to deal with the temptations that it would bring. Today, alcohol has no temptation for me, and to be around it doesn't influence me at all, in fact, I feel compassion for the people whose lives are controlled by this substance.

In the church, we have a huge challenge: to reach people for Christ and then help them grow in the faith.

Many churches are good at reaching out to people, but then they struggle with discipling them. But we are not just about seeing someone “get saved”; we also know that there is a lifetime of learning and growing in our faith. It can seem more exciting to be reaching new people for Christ, but we want to see people grow and keep their faith until they go to Heaven.

In Acts, we read the account of the early church. Luke reports that 3,000 were added to the church in one day. He records later that they met together every day to break bread, pray and go over the apostles' teachings (Acts 2:42). We need to be grounded in faith in Jesus Christ; then we can hang out with people who desperately need Jesus.

The reality is that the church has people at every level of spirituality. Some are just checking out what it means to be a Christian; some have just accepted Christ, some are growing in their faith, and some are deeply committed, knowledgeable Christians who we would consider to be mature. We should be continually reaching new people, and then help them grow in their faith.

There are many ways in which we can exercise our faith and reach out to people as a church. One idea is to volunteer as a church or youth group in a soup kitchen to feed homeless people. I heard the story of one youth group that raised money every month to provide an apartment for women trying to get away from prostitution. It could even be as simple as joining that person who is always sitting alone at lunch.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What are some of the biggest temptations you face?
2. If you were to hang out with some of your “worst” friends, who would influence whom?
3. Who are students in your school that could sure use a friend like you?
4. What are ideas you could give your church in reaching out to people where you live?

### **2.3 CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH GOD**

*Q: My church seems to fight a lot about worship styles and what people should wear to church. Is there something bigger the church should be doing?*

I am sorry that it seems that much of our church focus is on wrestling with worship styles and what we wear to worship God. The Church was created to be the voice, hands and feet of Jesus Christ. As the church, our job is to represent Christ in the world; that is what we “should be doing.” It can be summed up in two easy statements: “Love God” and “Love Others.”

Your question, it seems to me, is really, how do we as a church genuinely worship God, and how do we really love others?

What we call the “Worship wars” have been going on for years, asking how we best worship God. Part of the reason this ‘fight’ exists is that we all have different ways in which we seem to connect better with God. For the generation that grew up with hymns, that music helps them to connect better in worship. The present generation tends to connect better with God through band-oriented music. The danger for both is that we may start to worship ‘style’ rather than God.

Some degree of learning and growing needs to happen in all of our lives. All generations have things to share and learn from each other.

What we wear can seem very trivial at first glance; however, there could be depth to it. For instance, when you are learning the game of football, you go over the basic rules of the game. When you truly understand the boundaries and guidelines of the game, they become natural for you (for instance, handling the ball, effective passing, rules of the pitch, etc.) Then you can work on plays and higher levels of learning.

Sometimes it seems that we make a big deal out of little things. The reality is, if we in the church were really solid in the basics of what the church should be doing, and how we should live our lives, then we can go on to other things. In some settings, people believe that we should give our best to God, so that is why we really dress up nicely. Other settings have a “come as you are” mentality because “it is all about the heart.” We need balance of the two trains of thought.

Take a look at Acts 6:1-7. Disagreements in the early church had to do with the distribution of food and the need to preach and to teach. Some Disciples were called to lead the worship, others to compassionate ministry. What was the big deal? Just this: that we need to maintain the purpose and importance of worship, how we minister, and how it represents Christ to our world.

Worship not only gives to God our attention and affection—which God enjoys—it is also done in a spirit of unity that strengthens our bond with fellow believers, which He also enjoys. It is a way in which we identify with both Christ and His church. It is through worship that God then provides each of us with the grace we need to sustain us in our Christian life. This grace empowers each of us to see the world as Christ sees it and to minister to it as Christ would minister to it.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. In what style of worship service do you feel closest to God?
2. Do you remember a time when all generations came together and you saw the overpowering presence of the Holy Spirit?
3. In what setting do you worship? “Give God your best”, or “come just as you are”?

## 2.4 RULES AND RELATIONSHIPS

*Q: My church seems to have a lot of rules. Is this really what Jesus intended when he created the church?*

The essence of church is definitely not rules. However, it is important to understand that our God is a God of order. Spend time reading Leviticus and see how ordered God is. Read the Book of Numbers and you will find that God is very specific; He wanted to know exactly how many people were in each tribe.

I personally don't like the word "rules" when it comes to church. I relate better with the concept of "guidelines" or "boundaries" or "the sides of the road." In the game of football, could you imagine playing the game with no boundaries? What an interesting experience it would be for the players to start the game, and then watch as someone kicks the ball up into the stands and it lands right in a spectator's lap! All the players would come running up the stairs at the spectator, kicking at the ball. The people all around would get kicked because the players are going after the ball.

This would never happen because players know that they are to play within the boundaries of the pitch, and when the ball goes outside the boundaries, they stop because of the whistle and start over again. It is really fun to watch a great match that is played within the boundaries.

God has given us some boundaries for our lives, and part of the ministry of the church is to help us figure out what those boundaries in life are. New issues arise with each generation and each culture, and our challenge is to figure out how to live like Christ in this present age.

Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:34-40)?" The expert in the law who asked Jesus this question didn't really want to know; it was just a test. The "law" was not given to us to become this list of rules to legalistically follow, but rather as a guide to help us know how to love God and how to love others.

Here is an example. When my wife was a child, her father gave the instruction to never leave sweets in her bedroom. The reason for this

instruction was because they lived in an area where there were stinging ants that loved sweets. Well, my wife didn't listen and left a package of open chocolate in her bed. That night when she went to lie down and sleep, she wasn't alone in her bed! And before long she was covered with stinging ants and for days she carried the bite marks all over her body. This "rule" was given to protect Lori; it wasn't just a list of rules to follow.

If you feel like the church is just giving you a bunch of rules to follow, I would challenge you to take a look at your spiritual heart! Are you truly seeking God and wanting to become all that He intends for you? Have you been living outside of the boundaries that God has set for you and is He drawing some lines to help you see where you are?

I would challenge you to find someone in your church and talk about the things that seem like "rules" to you and ask, "Why is this a rule?" Find out the reasons behind the guidelines and seek to understand them. I think you will find that you will appreciate the heart and spirit behind the rules.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What rules seem to irritate you the most?
2. Do you know why your church has this rule? (If not, find out!)
3. Have you given a rule or direction to someone else and they didn't respond well to you? Talk with a friend about how you felt.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HOLINESS: THE QUALITIES OF A HOLY PERSON

#### 3.1 SEEKING GOD WITH EVERYTHING

*Q: So Jesus says the greatest commandment is to love God with our whole heart, mind, soul and body. How do I do that?*

Jesus said this in answer to a Jewish religious teacher who asked Him which was the greatest commandment of all (Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27). Although there were 613 recognized commandments at that time, Jesus did not pick any of them as the most important. Instead, he quoted one of the most known and memorized Old Testament passages (Deuteronomy 6:4-5):

“Attention, Israel! God, our God! God the one and only! Love God, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that’s in you, love him with all you’ve got!” (The Message)

Jesus shifted the focus from rules, laws and observances to relationship. Instead of merely giving us a ‘key commandment’ to obey, Jesus invites us to respond to God with adoring love. Love is at the heart of relationship.

John describes how our amazing, unique, awesome God, who is absolutely holy, lavishes His love on us (I John 3:1a), passionately and unconditionally. God’s love is not a sentimental love but active and transforming and seeks our love in return. It is only when we accept or receive His ‘transforming love’ that we can love Him in return (I John 4:8b-10, I John 4:16b).

We can only love God with our whole heart, mind, soul and body when we allow His amazing, transforming love to flood our hearts and lives completely.

This is the work of God’s Spirit, but requires our willingness to receive it and surrender to His Lordship. Another word for this is ‘consecration’: ‘giving all that I know of myself to all that I know of God’. God does not hold anything back in His love for us and so He asks us to love Him

without reserve, to love Him with everything we are and have and desire. He wants more than some parts of our lives. He seeks wholesome and holistic love, not compartmentalised love. When we allow Christ to be Lord in our lives then our self-centered love becomes God Christ-centered love.

Love God, your God, with your whole heart. Love him with all that is in you. Love him with all you have!

When we do this, everything else, commandments, rules, etc., falls into place. In Luke's gospel Jesus goes further to add, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' This is the extension of this relationship and love. When we receive God's amazing love and fully return that love, then we want to love others as we have been loved.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Jesus' words came from one of the most known scriptures of the Old Testament. What is more important than knowing things about God?
2. Why is a right relationship with God more important than codes of practice and keeping rules?
3. Why is it important to love God with more than just the spiritual part of our life?

### **3.2 SEEKING GOD AS YOURSELF**

*Q: I have a lot of junk in my life that I know probably doesn't make God happy But how can I clean those parts of my life up so that I can become a better Christian?*

This is a great question because it recognizes that Christians often have 'junk' or things in their life that sadden and disappoint God.

The starting point of the question, 'how can I?', is the real issue. The truth is that we can't! The human tendency is to try to 'sort our lives out ourselves'. Sometimes we can be partially successful in changing a few things, but those changes tend to be at the surface. It is impossible for us to 'clean up our act' enough for us to make ourselves acceptable to God or make him happy. Instead, we are to give ourselves to God and

let Him completely change and transform our life. To deal with the real problem of junk in our lives we need God's help to deal with the deep issues that cause or allow the 'junk' (or sin) in.

John puts it this way: "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all [every] sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:7-9).

The first step is to acknowledge that we have junk (sin) in our life, even as a Christian, because when we acknowledge or confess it, we are also asking God to do something about it. We need to come to God just as we are—as ourselves. When we come to God in this honest attitude, acknowledging our sin, then God, who is merciful, loving and faithful, forgives our sin. This takes away the guilt and responsibility from us, while God's Spirit works at a deeper, transforming level to cleanse our lives of the deeper causes of the junk and sin, changing and purifying our deeper attitudes of self-centered, self-gratifying self interest or unrighteousness.

This changes not only our behavior (what happens at the surface level of life) but it changes our thinking, attitudes and disposition, what governs and determines who we are and what we do. We are no longer self-centered but Christ-centered and Christ is truly Lord of our life. But John also emphasizes that once this forgiveness and cleansing happen we need to live differently. "Walk in the light, as he is in the light... we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all [every] sin."

So we need God's help not only to deal with the problem of sin and its cause. We need God's ongoing help to live Christ-centered, Christ-like lives! The Spirit of God then enables us to continue living a Christ-honoring life.

Paul also assures of this when he writes, "May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together - spirit, soul, and body - and keep you fit for the coming

of our Master, Jesus Christ. The One who called you is completely dependable. If he said it, he'll do it!" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, The Message).

### Discussion Questions

1. What kind of junk holds young people back from fully following Christ?
2. If Jesus accepts us just as we are, is it OK to remain the same and just keep asking Him to forgive us?
3. What is wrong with trying to sort out or straighten up our own lives before we follow Christ?
4. Why is it as important to continue to live a Christ-centered life as it is to receive forgiveness and cleansing from Him in the first place?

### 3.3 SEEKING GOD IN DIFFERENT WAYS

*Q: I don't get a lot from reading the Bible and church makes me bored. Is there more to being a Christian than reading the Bible and going to church?*

There is certainly a lot more to being a Christian than Bible reading and going to church: at the heart of being a Christian is a relationship with Christ.

When we get the relationship part right, then Bible reading and worship take on new meaning, new depths, new excitement. This relationship with Christ must be the priority. Paul explained His relationship with Christ in this way: "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things, that I may be found in Him..." (Philippians 3: 8).

Paul frequently speaks of the life of the Christian as the 'in Christ' experience. He means that Christ should live fully in the life of the Christian and that Christians should live their lives in a completely Christ-centered way, becoming more and more Christlike in who they are, how they think and what they do.

The heart of the Good News is about our relationship to Jesus Christ, God's son. It is not, first of all, about church services and formal wor-

ship and the discipline of daily devotions but about a living, dynamic and growing relationship with God through His son by the power of the Holy Spirit.

When we settle the relationship issue, and this is the priority, then reading the Bible and being part of a worshipping church begin to take on new meaning, interest and excitement.

Bible reading is no longer a boring discipline; it becomes part of the desire to ‘know Christ’ which Paul describes as ‘the surpassing greatness of knowing Him’.

To have a real relationship with Christ we need to know Him. It is impossible to have a deep relationship with someone we only know at the surface level. Paul gave the first priority of His life to knowing Christ more and more—so should we.

But the Bible is not the only place where we meet Christ and get to know Him. We do this by living for Him, by following Him and obeying Him. We also learn to know Christ by worshipping together with others who have this same relationship with Him and are on the same journey because they are part of His family. Christ calls us into His family to be part of a worshipping community. Church is about meaningfully worshipping Christ together and listening to the voice of God’s Spirit as we do. We not only learn on our own but we learn together as a community.

This doesn’t mean that worship does not need to be relevant, meaningful and inspiring to all ages and all groups—it should! But we must help this by participating rather than merely being spectators. We must allow God’s Spirit to minister to us through worship.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What do you think it means to ‘know Christ’ and how can we make this a life-long pursuit?
2. What could you do to help worship to be more relevant and inspiring to you and your peers?
3. What are the biggest difficulties for you in reading the Bible and how could this be changed?

### 3.4 SEEKING GOD DURING HARD TIMES

*Q: My friend just died and God seems so far away. Is there something I can do to feel God's presence again?*

Life's crushing experiences hit us at a deep emotional level and can anaesthetise our feelings or send them into angry turmoil and cause us to feel distanced from God. Our feelings can deceive us and convince us that God is absent, unconcerned, unable or unwilling to help. It is important to remember that it is quite normal to feel like this—it is often part of the process of grief.

In fact, everyone has times like this, of spiritual dryness or a lack of connection with the Lord Jesus. It can be caused by gradual sin that we've allowed into our life that creates a barrier between us and the Lord; or sometimes it's just a matter of fatigue. When emotions are confused, they can make us feel far away from God even though we may not be. It can also be caused by crisis like bereavement.

Emotions alone are never a valid measure of spirituality. It is wonderful to experience great emotional highs, but our relationship with Christ cannot be based on emotional signals or responses.

What do you do when God seems far, far away? When you try to read the Bible but it just seems like meaningless print? When you attempt to pray but just can't concentrate or connect and you feel like you're simply wasting your time? What do you do? How do you renew that intimacy with God?

Let's focus on one key issue: the route to intimacy with God is not based on knowledge, nor ritual nor trying harder, but on obedience. Jesus said in John 14:21, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

Obedience is the key to re-establishing intimacy with God. Notice what it says above: "he that loves me will keep my commandments." And then we receive the promise—Jesus and the Father will come and make themselves known and be real to us in response to our obedience.

When you are really low and feel distant from God, open the Bible and say to the Lord, “I don’t feel much right now, but whatever I read I’ll take seriously and search for a way to respond (obey) and put it into practice”. Determine to obey anything you see in the passage. This will help to re-set your spirituality and refocus in the right direction. There is no easy or instant formula, but when we start to focus on obedience, the intimacy and the accompanying emotions are often not far away. Open your Bible, read a paragraph or two, and then in some specific way, respond to it. Love Him and love others. And I think you’ll see that God will reveal Himself in a new way.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What does the story of the Storm on the Lake (Mark 4: 35–41) teach us about Jesus’ love and concern for us in the difficult experiences of life?
2. Why is it dangerous to rely on feelings and emotions in understanding and experiencing God’s presence?
3. Paul says that ‘faith’ is the gift of God. It comes from God’s generous love or grace. When our faith is limited, lacking and weak what can we do about it?
4. In any relationship there are quiet times. How should we cope when God seems silent?

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HOLINESS: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

#### 4.1 SCRIPTURE: READING AND REMEMBERING

*Q: I don't get a lot out of reading my Bible. Is there something wrong with the Bible, with me or with how I'm reading my Bible?*

I'm going to guess the problem is with how you're reading your Bible. We believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, good and beneficial for all Christians (2 Timothy 3:16). So the problem is not the Bible. That being said, you may want to see if another version or translation that is easier to read is available to you. The Bible also says that much of the Christian faith will appear as foolishness to non-believers (1 Corinthians 1:18). But the fact that you're asking such a question lets me know you are not the problem either. God says seek and you will find (Deuteronomy 4:29, Proverbs 8:17, Matthew 7:7) and you are clearly seeking. So let me help you figure out how you can improve your Bible reading skills.

The first thing to remember when reading your Bible is that, the more you read, the better it will be for you. When studying your Bible it's okay to focus on a chapter, verse or word, but when you want to read your Bible the goal should be to see how many chapters you can read in one sitting.

Another thing to remember when trying to read your Bible is to actually read your Bible. It's amazing how much time Christians spend reading books about their Bible, about how to read the Bible better, about how to be a better Christian or books of Christian fiction. Stop reading books about the Bible and just read your Bible. And don't give up if it is hard or feels unproductive. For many of us, reading is becoming a lost art. Often, reading seems awkward and difficult. Do not give up. The more you read, the more you will condition your mind to realize the impact of reading.

Here's another way to improve your reading habits: Most Christians read their Bibles when something is wrong in their life and they are looking to their Bibles for answers. A much more productive way to

read your Bible is to read your Bible when times are good, then when a problem happens, return to passages you remember about characters that went through the same thing. For instance, if you are facing a time of temptation you could return to the stories of Joseph (Genesis 39) or David (2 Samuel 11). Facing a time of fear, turn to the stories of Daniel (Daniel 6) or the Disciples (Matthew 8). Facing a time of leadership, turn to the stories of Moses (Exodus 18) or Paul (Acts 15).

Finally, don't be afraid of the Old Testament. A lot of us find the Old Testament intimidating. The names, places and traditions seem old and we may feel we won't understand. However, the majority of the Old Testament is stories, and stories are universal. While we may not fully understand the customs or cultural differences of the characters, we can relate to their emotions. And the Old Testament characters feel a lot. They are scared, worried, ashamed, empowered, happy and confused. They laugh out loud with joy, cry out in pain and comfort their friends. These are things we can all relate to and these are the stories that enrich our lives and make reading the Bible so much fun.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What could I do to improve where and how I read my Bible?
2. Because of what I'm going through, what Bible character could I relate to right now?
3. How has God used the Bible to speak to me in the past?
4. How could I set aside more time in my day to read my Bible?

### **4.2 PRAYER: TALKING AND LISTENING**

*Q: Christians talk a lot about prayer, but when I pray I don't hear anything. In fact, I feel like I'm talking to myself like a crazy person. Can I get some help?*

Firstly, you need to know that you're not alone. Secondly, that doesn't mean that everything is okay. Being a Christian means having a relationship with God. And prayer is nothing more than talking and listening to God. Prayer is how we communicate, and communication is the most important thing to keeping a relationship alive and healthy. It is one of those things we cannot give up on. Below are a few obstacles that must be overcome.

The most common prayer that God answers in the Bible is a cry for help. Exodus begins with God saying, “I have heard my people cry out” (Exodus 3). A lot of the Psalms are nothing more than David crying out for help from his enemies (Psalm 17, 28, 55, 102, 143 and more). Jesus tells a story about a sinner who cries out “have mercy on me God” and receives the mercy he was seeking (Luke 18). Too often we come before God with arrogance and command Him to do something for us or give us something we want. Prayer is about humbly coming with nothing before a God who is generous in His giving. If you want to see God answer your prayers stop telling Him what to do and simply cry out for help.

The second half of praying that many of us simply ignore is listening for God’s answer. While God often comes in his might and power, like the whirlwind in Job 38, God just as often speaks with gentleness and compassion. Just like with Elijah, God comes to us as a silent breeze that whispers truth to our soul (1 Kings 19). We must learn how to be comfortable with silence and silent places if we ever hope to hear what God is saying. This is one of the reasons that morning devotional time makes so much sense for those of us that live in cities. We need to come to God before the hustle of crowds, the honking of car horns and the yelling of vendors begins if we ever hope to hear God’s whispers.

Another lesson to learn with prayer is that we need to be persistent. Jesus tells a story about a widow who comes before a judge every day asking for justice (Luke 18). Eventually, the judge realizes how important justice is for this widow who he had dismissed every day and grants her what she has been begging for. We too need to come before God this way, Jesus goes on to say. This seems to help us realize what is actually important to us. We think we want something, but if we’re not willing to continue to pray for it, to really fight for it, to come before God and beg for it day after day, do we really want it? Does the parent whose child is sick and dying in the hospital just pray once to God for healing for their child? No, he or she prays non-stop, over and over again, asking for the same thing every minute of every day, waiting for God to move.

Another way to hear from God is to ask God for things He wants to give, not for things we want. If you want to hear God say yes, don’t pray for the latest toy or gadget. Instead, ask God to use you. Come before God as an available servant looking for direction and you will hear God

speak a lot sooner than you would have heard Him answer you about when you'll get the latest must have item you want.

Finally, it's possible that prayer feels uncomfortable to you because you're going through a period of spiritual dryness. It's normal for most Christians to go through a time in their lives when God doesn't seem as close as He used to. Prayers just don't get answered like they used to. The Bible just doesn't speak like it used to. This is normal, but doesn't mean you should give up until God seems close again. No, God will use these times to help us realize just how important He is to us. Keep up with your prayers, Bible reading and other spiritual disciplines. God will reward your faithfulness soon enough with his presence.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How much time a day do I spend talking to God?
2. How much time a day do I spend listening to God?
3. When I pray, do I spend more time telling God what I want or asking God to show me what He wants?
4. How can I create more quiet times in my day to listen to God better?

### **4.3 GROUPS: CONFESSION AND CONNECTION**

*Q: I'm tired of Christianity that's all about 'me and Jesus'. What can we do as a church or youth group to grow in our faith?*

Your desire to move from an individual faith to a group faith is a noble goal. The Bible is a 'we story'. In the Old Testament, God is interested in creating a nation of Israelites, not just a relationship with one Jew. And in the New Testament Jesus begins his ministry by choosing 12 followers (Mark 1). So it is good that you sense God pulling you into group faith. But I must warn you that it will not be easy. The more people there are, the more opinions there are. How you will resolve these differences will make all the difference. Here are some helpful tools.

The first thing that the group must be known for is love. Jesus says, "The world will know that you are my disciples by the way you love each other" (John 13:35). If the group cannot get along, if you cannot get along with the person you disagree with, then don't expect God to be glorified by the group. And if your church or youth group goals are

not to bring glory to God, then you need to rethink the goals. Love for others is our way to prove our love for God.

Read the New Testament letters for guidance. Paul, Peter, John and others wrote their letters to the early churches who were going through much that your group will go through. Issues of conflict, leadership, membership, group goals and much, much more are addressed in the New Testament letters. Keep an eye out for the phrase 'one another'. This is Paul's way of saying, "Make sure you do this." The list includes: greet one another (1 Corinthians 16:20), encourage one another (1 Thesalonians 5:11), educate one another (Romans 15:14), bear one another's burdens (Ephesians 4:2), love one another (1 Peter 1:22).

For your group to really succeed, you need to create a group where grace and peace rule. Paul opens all 13 of his letters with these two words. Grace and peace will create a group where people of different opinions can co-exist. Grace and peace will create a group where new people feel accepted instead of judged. Grace and peace will create a group where big God-sized dreams have room to take root. Grace and peace will create groups where hearts are transformed. Grace and peace will create groups where forgiveness reigns over guilt. Grace and peace will create a group where members want to come back every week and new people will want to join.

Finally, and probably the hardest part to start doing, your group needs to create a time for confessions of faith and a time for confessions of wrongs. Confessions of faith, or testimonies, do two things. Firstly, they remind others that God is on the move, that God is moving in people's lives, that God is answering prayers, that God is still using His scriptures to speak new words. Secondly, confessions of faith provide truths that cannot be debated. Someone may disagree with what the pastor says in his or her sermon, but they cannot tell you that what you experienced never happened. Confessions of wrongs, or apologies, are also needed. Any time a group meets, people can get offended or hurt. When this happens, someone needs to say "I'm sorry" before the hurt turns into bitterness or anger. A place and time where people can say, "I've been hurt" and where others can say, "I'm sorry" will be a sign of grace and peace and where the anger will turn into love. And love is what brings glory to God.

## Discussion Questions

1. What are some creative ways I can show grace, peace, love and support to others in my church or youth group?
2. Whom in my church or youth group do I need to forgive?
3. To whom in my church or youth group do I need to say I'm sorry?
4. What God-size dreams does God have for our church or youth group that I couldn't do myself but require everyone?

### 4.4 STILLNESS: SILENCE AND FASTING

*Q: I'm so busy in my life. Is there anything I can stop doing to strengthen my Christian walk?*

The simple answer is: yes. From the very beginning (Genesis 2), God has called us to times of rest, times of quiet, times of Sabbath. So your desire to stop being so busy is a good and holy impulse. But even if you take a day of Sabbath every week, there are still times during the rest of the week that you may want to incorporate some spaces of quiet rest. Two of the ways Christians throughout history have stopped doing things in order to strengthen their faith have been using the spiritual disciplines of silence and fasting. Here are some insights to starting these two spiritual disciplines in your own life.

Know your motivation. If you are angry with your parents and choose not to talk to them, that is not the spiritual discipline of silence. Skipping a meal in order to lose a few pounds is a diet, not spiritual fasting. The purpose of all spiritual disciplines is to apply James 4:8 (Come near to God and God will come near to you) to our lives. If you take this seriously, several things will happen.

The first thing that will happen is that you will know God better. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." When we seek out silent places and become silent, God's whispering voice and the subtle nudging of the Spirit become easier to recognize.

Part of seeking out silence is becoming still. And when we are still we notice so much more. This is because meaning accrues with time. For example, if you go to an art museum and look at a painting for just a few seconds, you may notice the colors, shapes or characters in the paint-

ing. But if you stare at that same painting for a few minutes or hours you will begin to notice deeper truths. Truths such as the way the colors interact with one another, that the artist actually uses several shades of a color and not just one color, that the paint has a texture, that the artist put great details into the background that you had overlooked, the way the characters in the painting are interacting with each other. In the same way, when we become still we notice so much more about our surroundings. Part of being a mature Christian is simply being aware of where we are (Colossians 4:2) and asking the question “how could God use me here?”

A third lesson we learn by pursuing silence and fasting is just how self-centered we really are. When we fast a meal and feel hungry, it helps us remember all of those that will only eat one meal a day and the millions of less fortunate ones who go to bed hungry every day. By choosing to stop speaking, we find a connection to those who are handicapped and also cannot use one of their senses. All of a sudden, we become one with the blind, deaf, mute and lame.

If you are still having trouble creating a place of stillness, try getting out of the city (if you live in a city) or away from all the people in the village. When we surround ourselves with man-made buildings, man-made cars or other man-made things, or even lots of other people, it is easy to think about the greatness of mankind. But our goal is to think about the greatness of God (Deuteronomy 32:2, Luke 9:43). So go someplace where you are surrounded with what God created. Maybe God-made trees or other things that grow in nature where you live, God-made mountains, or maybe the ocean is nearer than even the next hill, and God-made animals. Get away from the televisions or radios, family drama or friends. Seek God all alone with stillness through silence and fasting and I’m sure you will find what you were looking for.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. When was the last time I took a real Sabbath and was just still?
2. Where could I go to be surrounded by God’s creation?
3. What might God show me if I took the time to really look at my neighborhood, school and church or youth group?
4. What things could I cut from my life and schedule to create moments of silence and fasting?

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MINISTRY: WHY WE DO MINISTRY

#### 5.1 GOD WANTS IT

*Q: Does God care or want me to do anything about debt of poorer countries, the AIDS crisis, world hunger or extreme poverty?*

Absolutely! He does! How can we love our neighbour – something Jesus said was essential (Matthew 22:37-40) without caring about these issues that shape the reality of our lives? We are all connected. And although “connected” looks different in every place, none of us lives in isolation. It may be the beggar on the street that you walk past every day who is asking you for a cup of water or some food. It could be the child on the street who could really use a clean shirt and trousers. Or it could be when you go shopping and check the labels of where things are produced. Sometimes it says it has been made in your own country, sometimes halfway around our big world. With that connection—which ever form that may take—simply seeing people on your way, through the Internet or through the news— it comes with a responsibility. You can pretend that the beggar is not there. But you will continue to see him.

You can pretend that the child does not need help, but when it looks at you asking for help, what do you answer? You can not pretend that everybody is happy. You cannot pretend that you could live your life without others around you, those who drive the buses you take, who cook the food you eat, who produce the things you buy. Do you care about them? Do we love these neighbours, whether they live within a few meters of our homes, or somewhere far away?

And what does it mean “to love”? The issues mentioned in the question seem overwhelming. Nobody on their own can solve the challenges that are described. So where do we start? Throughout the scriptures God has called his people to be a people who love mercy, act justly and walk humbly with him (Micah 6:8). Could that be a starting point? Look at Isaiah 1:16-17, Psalm 10, Matthew 5, Luke 4, 1 John 3:16: when you explore the gospels, what kind of God do you see? How does Jesus treat the people he meets? For whom does he care?

## 5.2 WE'RE ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

*Q: I hear a lot of “saved versus unsaved” talk at my church, and people saying that we just need to get the unsaved to become more like us. Is making more of us the reason for doing ministry?*

We need to remember that when we speak of saving people, we are speaking of healing, restoring and redeeming things that are broken. God is doing that. And very often, he chooses to do it through things that we do or say. “Making more of us” can never be the reason for ministry. Ministry comes out of loving God and people (see 5.1) and that leads to people asking why we do what we do, or why we are the way we are. If our lives reflect the love of God then often others will be compelled to follow Him.

Imagine that following Christ is the best thing that has ever happened to you. Would you not want others to know about it? Would you not want the people around you to know about Christ as well? It may be helpful to look at salvation and redemption as an ongoing process. Yes, we are restored in and through Christ Jesus. But living on this earth, every day we experience the hurt of broken relationships, the challenges of school or work, our need to love and be loved more and more. So every day we look to God for restoration and healing. And every day our desire to love more will inspire and encourage us to show this love to the people around us. And that will bring healing and restoration to those people around us.

If you read the stories in the gospels and in the book of Acts, can you find what motivated Jesus to minister to the people around him? Did he do it to have a lot of people follow him? Have a look at Luke 5:15-16.

And what motivated people to tell others about Jesus? Was it simply to be able to say there were more people in the “following Jesus” group? Or was it because they had found something that had transformed their lives, that had saved them, and that they wanted everybody to know about (like the woman in John 4)?

### **5.3 GOD IS LEADING THE WAY**

*Q: I sometimes get the impression that I'm doing a lot of things for God as if God was taking some time off. Where is God when I, the youth group or the church is doing ministry?*

There's a statue of Jesus in a church in Soweto, South Africa. Some gunmen came in during the apartheid years and grabbed the priest, dragged him to the statue of Jesus and then made him watch as they shot off the hands of the statue. So now, there is this statue with the arms still reaching out, but there are no hands. You can find photos of it on the Internet (look for Regina Mundi, the name of the church).

The statue without hands is a good image of Jesus, of God and the way he chooses to work through us. We are his hands and his feet. So yes, when we as a youth group, as a church or as individuals "do ministry" it could look like we are doing it for God and he's taking time off.

Is that true though? Imagine God is right there with you all the time. Imagine He's that friend of yours, who is with you as you dig your hands into the dirt and clean up the garden of your elderly neighbour. Or that He works next to you as you paint that wall in a school, or is coming with you as you visit someone in the hospital? When Jesus went back to heaven, He told the disciples that He would send them the Holy Spirit to have the strength to be his witnesses (check Acts chapter 1 for more of the story). And that's what he did. We are called to live our lives in communion with Christ. His Holy Spirit is at work in us and gives us the strength to serve him. So how about starting to look for him being at work in that old lady at church who brings the flowers so the place looks nice? Or how about in the child who dances when she sings?

### **5.4 WE ARE ALL GOD'S PRIESTS**

*Q: I think I have some good ideas for helping others, but I'm not the pastor, youth pastor or even a youth leader. Should I just let them do their jobs?*

Can anyone find a passage of the Bible that talks about the leader doing everything in the church? The role of a leader is never to do everything.

The church is only alive when it operates as a collective. It is a body of believers called to be ONE who minister together (Ephesians 4:1-6).

Never be afraid to help others or to share ideas with leaders. What does Paul say about the body of believers in 1 Corinthians 12? Each believer has a part to play.

The root of what it means to minister is to “tend to the needs” of people: to be active in the healing of and caring for people who are in need. We believe in the God who came not to be served, but to live a life of service for others (Matthew 20:25 until the end of the chapter). The Christian life is shaped by love for one another and love for God. Therefore, all ministry finds its root in the calling to love God and love one another.

We “do ministry” because we are to be a people shaped in the likeness of Christ who emptied Himself for the interests and needs of others (Philippians 2:4-11). As such people, we treat those around us as he would have, with loving respect and care. When the church lives in this way, it points to the reality of God and his love for the world.

The apostle Paul uses the image of a body in 1 Corinthians 12 to describe how everybody who is a follower of Jesus is important and gifted. He insists that every part of the body, therefore every one of us, is important and that there is no “unnecessary” part who could just sit back and watch. And when he writes to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4, he encourages his friend to have confidence and to be an example to the other believers.

So it is twofold—we have no excuse to “just let them do their jobs” because it is just as much our responsibility to serve God, to serve other people, to share the ideas we have and to find ways to put the ideas into practice. We do not need a job or a title to do that. But at the same time, we should do it well, in a way that is an example—and also an inspiration—to others. That way, they will begin to share your ideas and help you to find ways to minister using your gifts.

So who are the people around you who could help you turn your ideas into reality? Hopefully those listed in the question who have the “job” will partner with you and support you. And you might be surprised who

else has similar ideas that you could develop together with them. And how could your ideas, put into practice, serve others and through that serve God? What motivates you? Are your ideas, turned into action, building God's kingdom? Are you actively involved in sharing his love with the people you are in contact with?

## CHAPTER SIX

### MINISTRY: TO WHOM WE MINISTER

#### 6.1 To THE LOST

*Q: Jesus says He came to seek and to save. I want to follow in Jesus' steps, so how can I do this too?*

Jesus did indeed come to “seek and save” the lost. By the power of His Holy Spirit, God graciously seeks out people to have a relationship with them, even before they realize He is seeking them. When they decide to give their lives to God, it is also God who saves them. We do not have to “seek and save” in this manner. What we have to do is to walk daily in a Christlike manner, so that when people see us, they get an accurate representation of who Jesus really is. If you are saying, “I want to follow in Jesus' steps,” you have already begun to do so.

The journey of following in the steps of Jesus begins with the recognition that Christ, as the Son of God, is worth following! However, simply wanting to follow Christ is not enough. We must first understand who Jesus was on Earth and why He left His footsteps where He did. Read one of the first three books of the New Testament. Where did Jesus leave His footsteps? With whom did Jesus decide to walk? When we answer these questions, we will better understand where and with whom we need to be walking.

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why has God placed you where you are? With whom do you associate?
2. How can you creatively show Christlike love to the people in your life?
3. Have you ever looked at someone and thought they were made to do what they are doing? Why did you think that? What makes them a perfect fit for that ministry or job?

## 6.2 TO THE LEAST OF THESE

*Q: I want to see my friends get saved but is evangelizing my friends the only kind of ministry I need to do?*

Every person has a sphere of influence, a small corner of this very big world where what we say and do has an effect on people. To recognize that your friends need a relationship with Christ and that you can make a difference is a very profound realization. Also profound is the realization that our ministry is more than just evangelism. This is where the church comes into play. Paul, the very first missionary, compared the church of God to the human body. Every part must do its part in order for the body to function correctly. To find out what part of the body you are and what ministry He is calling you to, there are few helpful things you can do.

Firstly, you can pray about it. God has uniquely gifted you for a particular purpose. This purpose is not something He wants to keep hidden from you, but He wants you to seek it. When we pray, we seek and find the best that God has for us.

Secondly, think about how God has particularly gifted you. Do you make friends easily? Are you blessed with musical ability? Are you particularly successful in one area of life? If God has gifted you in a particular area, maybe He did so, so that you could offer that ability back to Him for His glory and service.

Next, ask people who know you what gifts for ministry they see in you. Often, we fail to see our own gifts because we assume that is just the way we are. Other times, we tend to be hyper-critical, unwilling to give ourselves a bit of credit for those things God has enabled us to do well.

Finally, volunteer with several different ministries to find out what passions God has placed within your heart. Often times, we do not realize how amazing an opportunity for service can be until we actually get involved and experience it firsthand.

When we seek God's will through prayer, reflecting on our particular gifts, conversations with others and firsthand experience, He gives us clarity.

### Discussion Questions

1. Who are the “least of these?”
2. How many of the “least of these” do you have regular contact with?
3. What are some gifts you have already realized that you possess?
4. How can you use your gifts to perform a part of the body’s (church’s) responsibilities?

### 6.3 TO EACH OTHER

*Q: I often think that Christians are not very nice to each other and should treat each other better. Does the Bible have anything to say about this?*

You can tell an Italian by his or her language. You can tell a police officer by his or her uniform. You can tell a child by his or her size, and John 13:34-35 says that you can tell a Jesus-follower by his or her love. As Christians, we are called to a love beyond our immediate families and friends. During His mountaintop sermon in Matthew 5, Christ challenged His listeners to love even those who hate them.

The Bible is a large book, but Christ said it can really be summarized in two key ideas: love God with all that we are and love the people we come into contact with as much as we love ourselves. God is love (1 John 4:8) and He demonstrated that by giving His Son to die for us even while we were right in the middle of sinning against Him (Romans 5:8)! If the very essence of God is love, can we truly bear the name “Christian” if we are unable to love those for whom Christ died?

### Discussion Questions

1. What is absolutely essential to reaching our world for Christ?
2. In reaching people, what part does a building play? What about a Bible? An ordained pastor? Music? A denomination? Money?
3. How much of the fighting in the church is centered on non-essential issues?
4. What does Matthew 18:21-35 teach us about forgiveness?

## 6.4 TO THE EARTH

Q: I feel closer to God when I'm outside in nature, but does God care about things like the environment and the extinction of animals?

The first chapter in the Bible tells us that upon the completion of His creative work, God took a step back, analyzed the results, and called it "good." From the sky, land and waters that God separated into their rightful places to the animals that walked, swam and flew, God was happy with what He had done. And with Adam and Eve, God was very happy. In His infinite wisdom, God created a balance of existence where the animals who could not swim had land to walk on which was filled with food sufficient for maintaining life. The fish had the water, and for the birds He created the air. There were billions of organisms and they were intricately pieced together in a masterpiece only God the Creator could have made. Chapter one of Genesis records God giving Adam and Eve one, and only one, bit of instruction: care for His creation.

Every time humans eliminate a natural habitat in order to build the next highway or shopping mall, we upset the delicate balance and the natural order of the Creator's masterpiece. When we choose to use and discard rather than recycle, when we prefer convenience over sustainability and when we consume faster than the creation can reproduce, we distort God's creation as surely as if we painted an X in the middle of Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece, "Mona Lisa."

Just as a great painter signs his masterpiece, "the heavens tell of the glory of God, the skies display His marvelous craftsmanship" (Psalm 19). In other words, we know something about God because we have seen His work.

Paul understood that creation is actually an unspoken testimony about God. He wrote, "From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and the sky and all that God made. They can clearly see His invisible qualities - His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God" (Romans 1:20). When we fail to care for His creation, we're not only showing disrespect for His creative nature, we're actually distorting His own personal revelation.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. If God were to take a step back and re-analyze His creation, would He call it good?
2. When we look at God's creation, where can we see God?
3. Read Matthew 10:29. What does this verse tell us about how much God cares for His creation?
4. Read Colossians 1:19-20. Is Christ only planning to reconcile human kind to Himself or is His reconciliation more inclusive?



## **THE ISLAND**

---

BY EMMA WRIGHT  
COPYRIGHT © 2009  
CARRICKFERGUS CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

THIS EDITION TRANSLATED AND PUBLISHED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE  
CARRICKFERGUS CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

---

## ABOUT THE ISLAND



The Island is an exciting collection of Bible-based resources for weekly children's ministry. It provides a range of lessons and activities adaptable for your work with primary school-aged children, whether that be children's church, Sunday school or a midweek kids' club.

The Island is designed to help you offer structured teaching and positive reinforcement through materials which can be tailored to your group of children. You will be able to:

- plan your time with your children easily and efficiently;
- present a range of activities to suit different learner types;
- enrich your presentation with visual images.

The Island can help you to be better equipped with effective Bible-based lesson plans to lead your children into a relationship with Jesus and to disciple young believers.

Session leaders are encouraged to focus on the Bible text, using effective story-telling techniques, songs, fun memory verse activities and a range of creative crafts and games to facilitate children's engagement. These methods work together to introduce and consolidate the Bible concepts, and to encourage children's response, personalisation and life application of what they have learned. It can also assist in building community among the children.

***A sample of these lessons is included in this booklet.*** If you are interested in receiving the full year of lessons in electronic format, please go to the Eurasia Region children's discipleship page and request a copy:

<http://www.eurasiaregion.org/index.php/childrens-discipleship>

It is our hope that The Island will significantly nurture the lives of our children as they discover new life in Jesus Christ. We pray that The Island will help and support you as you work with and minister to a new generation of young disciples.

*Carrickfergus Church of the Nazarene Children's Team*

## THE ISLAND CURRICULUM

The Island curriculum is designed for children's work that is child-targeted and creative, and which allows volunteer leaders to develop skills and talents by contributing to a team-based ministry.

### Child-targeted

Drama and music are incorporated into the lessons, along with engaging age-appropriate games and activities. Ideally, the classroom(s) should be **decorated** to make children feel comfortable and special. For example, in Carrickfergus, our room is decorated with foldaway palm trees, flowery window skirts, hanging flower decorations and a tropical island scene setter which covers one entire wall. We have monkey **puppets**, called Rocky and Ringo, who live in a Hessian-covered box in one corner of our room. Memory verses are displayed, and we have a notice board to display the children's work for adults to see during the week. The decoration, as well as the curriculum design, ensures that the ministry is child-targeted.

### Creative

The Island structure is based on a group of between 10 and 40 children, although it may be adapted for smaller or larger groups. Each week's material is written in two sections – we use the first section at morning Children's Church, and the second section at evening Children's Church. Each section is timed to last around 40 minutes. This set-up may also be adapted. You could, for example, choose elements from both sections to use in one meeting each week. You may want to use the first section in a large group setting, and the second section for small groups. Adapt the material to suit your children's needs.

When our children arrive in church, they pick up their **name tags** from a leader who is waiting at the children's **welcome desk** in the main church foyer. This serves as a short period of personal interaction between children and the leader, as well as an opportunity for the leader to make contact with parents and other family members. (Name tag templates are included in this package. We purchased lanyards and clear ID card wallets to carry the name tags.)

During the church service, the children participate in corporate worship

and prayer until they see *The Island* **logo** appear on the screen – then they leave the sanctuary and move to their designated room where they are welcomed by a leader and/or the puppets, and join in singing contemporary child-targeted songs. We use **Hillsong Kids DVDs**, projected onto a large screen in our room, which present Bible-based songs in a relevant way to children with excellent visuals and accompanying dance and actions.

Children then each pick up a mat from the back of the room and sit on it for the next stage of the lesson. We provide large multi-coloured **foam play mats**, rather than chairs, for the children to sit on – which they love!

A leader begins this stage by opening our **treasure chest** (we use a wicker ‘chest’) and lifting out a prop which was placed there the previous week. The leader asks questions, including the puppet(s) in the conversation, to elicit from the children what we learnt last week, using the prop as a reminder. This is an effective recap activity which may surprise you to hear how much even the youngest child remembers through association with the prop.

The Bible passage is then taught creatively from a **scripted lesson**, with ideas for using props, drama and visual aids to bring the Bible story to life. The lesson is not intended to be read word-for-word, but to act as a guide for the storyteller. **Images and backgrounds** are contained in this package to maintain continuity of The Island theme and to help with your presentation each week. At the end of the story, a **prop** is placed into the treasure chest to be taken out next week during the recap stage as detailed above.

Following the story, a leader begins a prayer time with the children. We have a child’s **fishing net** which hangs on our puppet box. Each week, a different child is chosen to hold out the net. The leader spends a few minutes explaining and eliciting the nature of prayer, relating how God can help us apply the Bible concept just learnt. The leader pulls out prayer cards which the children placed in the net the previous week and asks for updates on those situations. The leader then allows the children to share prayer requests with the group. The leader writes each prayer topic on a small card. The child is encouraged to say a prayer and may then put their **prayer card** into the prayer net. When the chil-

dren have finished sharing their specific requests, the leader closes in prayer and the child holding the net hangs it back in its place. Those prayer requests will be taken out of the prayer net next week during the prayer time. This is an important time of sharing, discussion and relationship building, where children are open to encouragement and discipling. It is also an opportunity for the leader(s) to share his or her own life experiences, thereby providing examples of faith in Jesus and, at the same time, promoting community between leaders and children.

Children are challenged to remember the Bible truth and to come back for the evening session (you may want to adapt the session structure as outlined above). The session is concluded with a prayer and a song. The children's name tags are collected in a box before they leave. The collected names are then marked on The Island register before the name tags are placed back on the welcome desk for the children to collect before the next session.

The routine is repeated in the evening when children arrive to pick up their name tags from a leader at the children's welcome desk in the church foyer. When The Island logo is displayed during the church service, the children leave the sanctuary to move to their room. There, they are welcomed by a leader and the puppets before they sing together.

A leader begins by asking a few questions to recap the morning's story, and spending some time in simple explanation of the truths and concepts learnt.

This acts as an introduction to the **memory verse activity**. A variety of **games** are used to engage children's attention. Both group and individual **drill exercises** encourage memorisation of the verse. The memory verse acts as reinforcement and internalisation of the Bible story and concept learnt earlier.

Children are then guided to the next stage of the lesson which consolidates the story and concept in a practical and creative way. Sometimes, children complete an easy **craft project** which they can take home. Sometimes, they participate in **team games**. Activities are clearly outlined with directions, explanatory pictures and checklists of materials required.

The session is closed with a prayer and a song, and a reminder to come back next week.

From time to time, we have a Family Service in Carrickfergus, when The Island comes to church. This helps to encourage community and acceptance of children into the larger fellowship, as well as attracting parents and families who do not usually attend church. On these Sunday mornings, the church sanctuary is decorated with props from the classroom. The children participate in communal worship and then remain in the sanctuary. The Island programme on these days is designed to let the children's parents and the wider congregation see and hear what the children have been learning in terms of songs, Scripture and Bible truths. The lesson plans for these services are written as church service outlines but, of course, may be adapted. You may want to use them on 'normal' days on The Island. Use the material to benefit your kids and your situation.

### **Team Ministry**

While it would be possible for one person to prepare and deliver the lessons each week, The Island suggests that a team of leaders can make a joint impact on the children's church experience. Each leader can contribute to an element of the programme using their skills and abilities to create the best overall experience for the children. Working in a team also fosters the concept of community among the children's workers as they serve God, the children and each other.

## The Island at a glance

- Relevant, child-targeted curriculum, tested and evaluated
- Complete curriculum with graphics, worksheets and preparation checklists to save time
- Bible-based lessons with life application reinforcement (NIV version used unless otherwise stated)
- Key concepts help children learn and apply Bible truths
- God's plan of salvation presented throughout with invitations to children to enter into a relationship with Jesus
- Creative and fun methods used to present and teach the Bible and its principles
- Variety of learning activities considering multiple intelligences and therefore accessible to different learner types
- Children are valued individually and community is encouraged through interactive discussion and shared prayer
- A team approach to children's ministry, where leaders contribute in their chosen area of skill or ability

|                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>LEADER</b>     | <b>DATE (am)</b> Week One     |
| <b>HELPERS</b>    | <b>TIME (mins)</b> 40 minutes |
| <b>PUPPETEERS</b> | <b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>      |

**SERIES / LESSON:** Children of the Bible / Miriam

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Exodus 2:1-10

**CONCEPT:** God is with me

### **GOALS:**

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To help kids believe that God is always with them.
- To help kids understand that God has a plan for each of them and is preparing them to do something for Him.
- To lead kids into a prayer time and help them understand that God listens.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- DVD player / laptop / projector / screen, etc.
- Song DVD
- Miriam graphic
- Map or globe
- Bible
- Story dramatisation:  
Blue sheet Reeds (paper or representative plants in pots)  
Baby Basket  
Container and sponge  
Baby doll in a blanket
- Treasure Chest
- Prayer Net
- Prayer cards and pen

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>A. Worship through Music (with puppets)</b>      <b>10 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing.</li> <li>2. Sing 2 songs together. <b>(This is the Day / I Am Not Forgotten)</b></li> <li>3. Open in prayer.</li> <li>4. Ask kids to lift a mat each and sit down.</li> </ol> | <p><b>You'll need ...</b><br/> DVD player / projector<br/> Song DVD<br/> (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</p> |
|---|---|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>B. Message</b>      <b>15 minutes</b></p> <p><b>1. Set the scene</b> God's people, the Israelites, were living in Egypt. Can you find Egypt on our globe? <i>(Allow kids to find Egypt in relation to their own country.)</i></p> <p>The king of Egypt was called the Pharaoh. He was a new king, a new pharaoh, and he didn't like the fact that there were so many Israelites living in his country. He thought that the Israelites were becoming too powerful, so he made a new law. Do you know what a law is? <i>(a rule that tells you what you must or must not do, e.g. traffic laws)</i></p> <p>Pharaoh's law was for the Israelite – or Hebrew – women. This is what he said. <i>Read (or have a confident child read) Exodus 1:22.</i></p> <p><i>“Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.”</i></p> <p><i>(Lay out the blue sheet on the floor to represent the River Nile, and place the pots of reeds at one side.)</i></p> | <p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Globe / map</i></p> <p><i>Bible</i></p> <p><i>Blue sheet</i><br/> <i>Reeds (you could make these from paper, or have real plants in pots to represent the reeds)</i></p> |
|---|--|

## 2. Tell the story

We're going to hear about one little Hebrew girl who was living in Egypt at that time. Her name was Miriam (*show Miriam's picture on screen*). Her daddy was called Amram, and her mummy was called Jochebed. Miriam had a brother too. His name was Aaron. Mummy Jochebed was having another baby. Do you remember about Pharaoh's law? What did it say? *Allow kids to answer*. How do you think mummy Jochebed was feeling while she was pregnant?

Mummy Jochebed had a beautiful baby boy. What did that mean for this new Hebrew baby? Would he survive? ... Mummy Jochebed was very scared of those Egyptians. She loved her baby very much. She didn't want the Egyptians to throw him into the Nile River and kill him! So, she hid him in her house for three months. How easy do you think it was for mummy Jochebed to hide her baby? *Allow kids to answer*. Babies need a lot of love and care, and they are not quiet! Her baby boy was getting bigger and noisier, so she couldn't hide him any longer. Mummy Jochebed needed a new plan.

Here's Jochebed and her daughter, Miriam (*choose two girls*). Here's what Jochebed did. *Read (or have a confident child read) Exodus 2:3-4. (During the reading, at the appropriate points, help Jochebed to lift up the basket and pretend to coat it with tar, daubing the sponge from the container to the basket. Help her to place the baby in the basket, and then to put it among the reeds along the river. Guide Miriam to her watch point. Jochebed can sit down with the other children.)*

*Miriam portrait*

*Basket Container  
and sponge  
Baby doll in a  
blanket*

*“But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.”*

Now, remember Pharaoh? He had a daughter, a princess  
*(choose another girl to be the Egyptian princess and position her in the river).* One day, she went down to the River Nile to swim. Her servants were walking beside the river *(choose two or three servants to walk along the river).* The princess was enjoying being in the water, when she saw something move among the reeds. I wonder what she thought it could be! *(Allow children to give suggestions.)* She told one of her servants to get it. *(Help servant girl to pick up the basket. Guide the princess to the riverbank.)* Here’s what happened next. *Read (or have a confident child read) Exodus 2:6.*

*“She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. ‘This is one of the Hebrew babies,’ she said.”*

*(Help the princess and her servant to open the basket.)*

The princess realised that this must have been one of the Hebrew babies, one of the boys who should be thrown into the river and killed! But the baby boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. Just at that moment, a little girl came to talk to the princess *(usher Miriam to the princess).* Who was that girl? Yes, it was Miriam, the baby’s big sister! Miriam asked the

princess a question: *have Miriam read the question in Exodus 2:7.*

*“Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?”*

The princess said: have the princess read her response in Exodus 2:8.

*“Yes, go.”*

So, Miriam, the baby’s sister, went away to find someone to take care of this little baby that the princess had found in the river. Who do you think Miriam brought back to the princess? She went back to her house and got her mummy, mummy Jochebed! (*Help Miriam to find Jochebed among the children and lead her back to the princess.*) Pharaoh’s daughter, the princess, said to mummy Jochebed: *have the princess read from Exodus 2:9.*

*“Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.”*

(*Jochebed can sit down with the baby. All the others can sit down too.*) The princess didn’t know that Jochebed was the baby’s real mummy. She even paid Jochebed to look after him!

Mummy Jochebed was able to look after her baby. He was safe. When the baby grew older, mummy Jochebed took him to the palace, to the princess. Then the little boy became the princess’ son. The princess called the boy, ‘Moses’, because she drew him out of the water.

### 3. Explain

Mummy Jochebed believed that God would save her baby boy. God saved baby Moses because he had a great plan for his life. When Moses grew up to be a man, God had lots of important jobs for him to do. And what about Miriam, baby Moses' sister? Miriam watched her baby brother while he was in the basket in the river. *Ask Miriam (your actress): How did you feel there? Were you scared?*

Miriam was worried and frightened, but she knew that God would help her baby brother too. Can you imagine how hard she must have prayed to God while she was watching the basket? Praying that God would keep her baby brother safe from harm, and that no Egyptian soldiers would find him. God had a special job for Miriam too – she was ready to run to the princess and offer to find a lady to care for the baby. What a great idea Miriam had, to go and get her own mummy!

Remember that God is with you and me, just like He was with Miriam when she was frightened and worried. He doesn't forget about us. And remember that God has a special job for each one of us, just like He had for Miriam. Let's put the basket into the treasure chest. We'll open it again next week.

*Treasure Chest  
Basket with baby  
inside*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>C. Prayer Net</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask a child to explain what it means when we pray – We talk to God and He listens.</li> <li>2. Explain that prayer / talking to God is very important because that's how we get to know Him. When we pray, God can talk to us too in a still, small voice in our mind. We can be ready, like Miriam, to do the job God has for us.</li> <li>3. Ask a child to say how and why we pray and what things we can pray about – We talk to God like we talk to our best friends, or to our Mums and Dads. We can close our eyes, pray silently or aloud. We can pray at church, at school, at home, anywhere! We should thank God for His love and for caring for us, we should praise Him for the good things in our lives and we should ask Him for help to deal with the bad things – ask kids to provide examples.</li> <li>4. Tell kids that we have a special prayer net. We are going to make a note of some special prayers today and put them in the prayer net. Next week the kids will tell us what happened in those situations.</li> <li>5. Choose a child to hold the prayer net.</li> <li>6. Ask a few kids if they have a prayer to put into the net. As they tell you, write their name and the topic of their prayer on a small card. Ask the child to say a prayer aloud (help them to do so) before they place their card into the prayer net.</li> <li>7. Finish by leading a prayer for the whole group.</li> </ol> | <p><b>10 minutes</b></p> <p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Net</i><br/> <i>Small cards / postcards</i><br/> <i>A pen</i></p> |
|---|--|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>D. Conclusion (with puppets)      5 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Challenge kids to remember to be like Miriam – take care of your family and be ready for God!</li> <li>2. Remind kids to come back this evening.</li> <li>3. Sing a closing song. (<b>I Am Not Forgotten</b>)</li> <li>4. Ask kids to put their mats away and put their name tags in the box before they leave.</li> </ol> | <p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p>DVD player / projector<br/> Song DVD<br/> (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)<br/> Name tag box</p> |
|--|---|

**THE ISLAND cont'd**

|                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>LEADER</b>     | <b>DATE (pm)</b> Week One     |
| <b>HELPERS</b>    | <b>TIME (mins)</b> 40 minutes |
| <b>PUPPETEERS</b> | <b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>      |

**GOALS:**

To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.

To reinforce today's Bible concept by learning a related Scripture verse.

To consolidate today's Bible story by making a Baby Moses craft.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Song DVD / DVD player / projector / screen, etc.
- Memory Verse Activity: 12 pre-made circles of yellow card, resembling coins. Write each word of the verse on a separate coin.  
Write Hebrews on one coin, 13:6 on another.  
Bible Blu-tack
- Activity: Tables  
Pre-made 'Baby Moses' craft to show kids (Follow instructions in Activity Section to make your model. Make at least a week in advance to give the seeds time to sprout – see photo below.)  
Plastic plates(one per child)  
Cotton wool  
Water sprayer  
Cress seeds  
Jelly Babies (one per child)  
Squares of cloth (approx. 5cm square, one per

child)

Foil bun cases (one per child)

Small prizes (selection of bookmarks, stickers, pencils, etc.)

Name tag box

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>E. Worship through Music</b>                      <b>10</b><br/><b>minutes</b></p> <p><b>(with puppets)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing.</li><li>• Sing 2 songs together. <b>(This is the Day / I Am Not Forgotten)</b></li><li>• Open in prayer.</li><li>• Ask kids to lift a mat each and sit down.</li></ul> | <p><b><i>You'll need ...</i></b></p> <p><i>DVD player / projector</i></p> <p><i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i></p> |
|---|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>F. Memory Verse (with puppets) 10 minutes</b></p> <p><i>“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.”</i><br/> <i>Hebrews 13:6</i></p> <p><b>Steps 1 and 2 should be prepared before the session.</b></p> <p>Cut 12 large circles of yellow-gold card to resemble coins. Write each word of the memory verse on a separate coin. Write Hebrews on one coin, and 13:6 on another.</p> <p>Stick the coins, in word order, onto the puppet box or onto a wall using Blu-tack.</p> <p><i>Explain:</i> This morning we heard how God was with Miriam while she was watching out for her baby brother. Miriam was worried and scared, but God was with her, just like He is with us. Here is a great verse from the Bible that helps us to remember we are not alone. Read Hebrews 13:6 from your Bible (<i>or hold your Bible for the puppet to read if he/she is leading</i>).</p> <p>Have kids repeat the verse a few times as a group, and individually.</p> <p>Start a brief discussion with kids, asking what makes them feel worried or afraid. Encourage them to say this verse when they are afraid, and to ask God for help. While you are speaking with the kids, the puppet or another leader should ‘steal’ a couple of memory verse coins – <i>you remain unaware of this</i>. Make sure you have asked them to do this before the session.</p> <p>Act surprised that the coins are missing. Challenge kids to repeat the verse with the missing words, as a group</p> | <p><b>You’ll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Pre-made coins</i></p> <p><i>Blu-tack</i></p> <p><i>Bible</i></p> |
|---|---|

Repeat steps 5 and 6 a few times – for as long as you have time, until there are no coins left.

Finish with a group repetition of the verse.

**Idea:** After the session, you could stick the memory verse coins somewhere in your room, or place them in/on the treasure chest, to add to your decoration as well as reminding kids of the Bible concept. Then you can also refer to it in later sessions of this series.

### **G. Activity**

**15 minutes**

### ***You'll need ...***

- Ask kids to put their mats away.
- Arrange tables in your room as a workspace and have the children stand around them.
- Use the pre-made demo model (see photo below) to explain that we are going to make a Baby Moses craft. Tell kids that they can take this home to remind them of how Miriam was ready to help her baby brother when the Egyptian princess found him in the river.
- Give each child a plastic plate.
- Help kids to fill their plates with a layer of cotton wool.
- Help kids sprinkle a layer of seeds over the cotton.
- Spray each plate with water and tell kids that they will have to water the seeds every day at home.
- Let each child choose a Jelly Baby and a square of cloth. Help them wrap the baby in the cloth.
- Give each child a foil bun case. This represents the basket. Tell them to put the baby into the basket.

*Tables*  
*Pre-made demo model*

*Plastic plates*  
*Cotton wool*  
*Seeds (e.g. Cress)*  
*Water sprayer*  
*Jelly Babies*  
*Squares of cloth (5cm<sup>2</sup>)*  
*Foil bun cases*

| <b>G. Activity</b>   | <b>15 minutes</b> | <b><i>You'll need ...</i></b>  |
|--|-------------------|--|
| <p>Ask kids to put their mats away.</p> <p>Arrange tables in your room as a workspace and have the children stand around them.</p> <p>Use the pre-made demo model (see photo below) to explain that we are going to make a Baby Moses craft. Tell kids that they can take this home to remind them of how Miriam was ready to help her baby brother when the Egyptian princess found him in the river.</p> <p>Give each child a plastic plate.</p> <p>Help kids to fill their plates with a layer of cotton wool.</p> <p>Help kids sprinkle a layer of seeds over the cotton.</p> <p>Spray each plate with water and tell kids that they will have to water the seeds every day at home.</p> <p>Let each child choose a Jelly Baby and a square of cloth. Help them wrap the baby in the cloth.</p> <p>Give each child a foil bun case. This represents the basket. Tell them to put the baby into the basket.</p> <p>Help kids to put the basket into the damp cotton wool plate.</p> <p>Show kids the pre-made model again to let them see how the seeds will grow to hide the baby in the basket.</p> |                   | <p><i>Tables</i></p> <p><i>Pre-made demo model</i></p><br><p><i>Plastic plates</i></p> <p><i>Cotton wool</i></p> <p><i>Seeds (e.g. Cress)</i></p> <p><i>Water sprayer</i></p> <p><i>Jelly Babies</i></p> <p><i>Squares of cloth (5cm<sup>2</sup>)</i></p> <p><i>Foil bun cases</i></p> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>H. Conclusion (with puppets)     5 minutes</b></p> <p>Ask one boy and one girl if they can recite the memory verse. The puppets / another leader will judge if they deserve a prize. Award the prizes.</p> <p>Ask kids to hold hands and sing Jesus Loves Me (first verse and chorus) a cappella, or with an instrument if preferred.</p> <p>Close in prayer. Remind kids to come back next week!</p> <p>Ask kids to put their name tags in the box before they leave.</p> | <p><b><i>You'll need ...</i></b></p> <p><i>Small prizes – bookmarks, stickers, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Name tag box</i></p> |
|--|--|





**CORE VALUES  
OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**

---

## 1. WE ARE A CHRISTIAN PEOPLE

As members of the Church Universal, we join with all true believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in affirming the historic Trinitarian creeds and beliefs of the Christian faith. We value our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage and believe it to be a way of understanding the faith that is true to Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

We are united with all believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We believe that in divine love God offers to all people forgiveness of sins and restored relationship. In being reconciled to God, we believe that we are also to be reconciled to one another, loving each other as we have been loved by God and forgiving each other as we have been forgiven by God. We believe that our life together is to exemplify the character of Christ. We look to Scripture as the primary source of spiritual truth confirmed by reason, tradition, and experience.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church, which, as the Nicene Creed tells us, is one, holy, universal, and apostolic. In Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit, God the Father offers forgiveness of sin and reconciliation to all the world. Those who respond to God's offer in faith become the people of God. Having been forgiven and reconciled in Christ, we forgive and are reconciled to one another. In this way, we are Christ's Church and Body and reveal the unity of that Body. As the one Body of Christ, we have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." We affirm the unity of Christ's Church and strive in all things to preserve it (Ephesians 4:5, 3).

Jesus Christ is the holy Lord. For this reason, Christ's Church is not only one but also holy. It is to be holy in its parts and in its totality and holy in its members as it is in its Head. The Church is both holy and called to be holy. It is holy because it is the Body of Christ, who has become for us righteousness and holiness. It is called to become holy by God, who chose us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless. As Christ's one Body, our life together as a Church should embody the holy character of Christ, who emptied himself and took on the form of a slave. We affirm the holiness of Christ's Church, both as a gift and as a calling.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church. For this reason, the Church is not only one and holy but also universal, including all who affirm the essential beliefs of the Christian faith. We affirm the apostolic faith that has been held by all Christians everywhere and at all times. We embrace John Wesley's concept of the universal spirit, by which we have fellowship with all those who affirm the vital center of Scripture, and we extend toleration to those who disagree with us on matters not essential to salvation.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Scriptures. For this reason, the Church is not only one, holy, and universal but also apostolic. It is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets and continually devotes itself to the apostles' teaching. The Church especially looks to the Scriptures, which are the Church's only norm of faith and life. The Lordship of Jesus over the Scriptures means that we are to understand the Scriptures through the witness of the Holy Spirit as they testify to Jesus. To confirm and correct our understanding of the Scriptures, we honor and heed the ancient creeds and other voices of the Christian tradition that faithfully explain the Scriptures. We also allow our understanding of the Scriptures to be guided by the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to us in repentance, faith, and assurance. Finally we test our understanding of the Scriptures by seeking the reasonableness and coherence of their witness to Jesus Christ.

We are especially called to witness to the holiness of Christ's Church as embraced in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. We affirm the principles of salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ our Savior. In doing so, we continue to affirm that Christ's Church is one, universal, and apostolic. But our special calling is to hold before the eyes of the world and the Church the centrality of holiness and to encourage the people of God to live in the fullness of the Father's holy love. For this reason we affirm the Wesleyan-

Holiness understanding of the Christian faith and seek to remain faithful to its principal teachings: God's prevenient grace and the means of grace, repentance, faith, the new birth, justification, entire sanctification, assurance, the Christian community and its disciplines, and the perfection of love.

## 2. WE ARE A HOLINESS PEOPLE

God, who is holy, calls us to a life of holiness. We believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to do in us a second work of grace, called by various terms including “entire sanctification” and “baptism with the Holy Spirit”-cleansing us from all sin, renewing us in the image of God, empowering us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, and producing in us the character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christlikeness.

Because we are called by Scripture and drawn by grace to worship God and to love Him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, we commit ourselves fully and completely to God, believing that we can be “sanctified wholly,” as a second crisis experience. We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts, cleanses, fills, and empowers us as the grace of God transforms us day by day into a people of love, spiritual discipline, ethical and moral purity, compassion, and justice. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that restores us in the image of God and produces in us the character of Christ.

We believe in God the Father, the Creator, who calls into being what does not exist. We once were not, but God called us into being, made us for himself, and fashioned us in His own image. We have been commissioned to bear the image of God: “I am the LORD . . . your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44).

Jesus Christ revealed the one holy God to us and modeled worshipful, holy living for us. Our hunger to be a Holiness people is rooted in the holiness of God himself. The holiness of God refers to His deity, His utter singularity of being. There is none like Him in majesty and glory. The appropriate human response in the presence of such a glorious being is worship of God as God. God’s holiness is expressed in His gracious redemptive acts. Encountering the God who reveals and gives himself makes worship possible, and worship becomes the primary way of knowing Him. We worship the holy redeeming God by loving what He loves.

Our worship of the great and gracious God takes many forms. Often it

is praise and prayer with the faith community. It also expresses itself in acts of private devotion, thanksgiving, praise, and obedience. Evangelistic sharing of the faith, compassion toward our neighbor, working for justice, and moral uprightness are all acts of worship before our God of blazing holiness. Even the ordinary tasks of life become acts of worship and take on a sacramental significance as worship of a holy God becomes our way of life.

Jesus informs our understanding of holiness through His life, sacrifice, and teachings as found in the Gospels, particularly the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). As a Holiness people we seek to be like Jesus in every attitude and action. By His grace God enables believers who worship Him with their whole hearts to live Christlike lives. This we understand to be the essence of holiness.

God has also given us the gift and responsibility of choice. Because we were born with a tendency to sin, we are inclined to choose our own way rather than God's (Isaiah 53:6). Having corrupted God's creation with our sin, we are dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). If we are to live again spiritually, God, who calls into being what does not exist, must graciously create us anew through the redemptive acts of His own Son.

We believe that God uniquely entered our world through the incarnation of His only Son, Jesus of Nazareth, the historical God-man. Jesus came to renew the image of God in us, enabling us to become holy people. We believe that holiness in the life of the believer is the result of both a crisis experience and a lifelong process. Following regeneration, the Spirit of our Lord draws us by grace to the full consecration of our lives to Him. Then, in the divine act of entire sanctification, also called the baptism with the Holy Spirit, He cleanses us from original sin and indwells us with His holy presence. He perfects us in love, enables us to live in moral uprightness, and empowers us to serve.

The Spirit of Jesus works within us to reproduce in us His own character of holy love. He enables us to "put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). To be like God is to be like Jesus. Having had the divine image restored in us in God's act of entire sanctification, we acknowledge that we have not

yet arrived spiritually; our lifelong goal is Christlikeness in every word, thought, and deed. By continued yieldedness, obedience, and faith, we believe that we are “being transformed into his [Christ’s] likeness with ever-increasing glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

We participate further in this process as we live a life of worship expressed in many ways, including embracing the spiritual disciplines and the fellowship and accountability of the local church. As a body of believers in a specific congregation, we endeavor to be a Christlike community, worshiping God with our whole hearts and receiving His gifts of love, purity, power, and compassion.

As a Holiness people we do not exist in a historical and ecclesiastical vacuum. We identify with the New Testament and the Early Church. Our Articles of Faith clearly place us in the tradition of classical Christianity. We identify with the Arminian tradition of free grace—Jesus died for all—and human freedom—the God-given capacity of all to choose God and salvation. We also trace our ecclesiastical heritage to the Wesleyan Revival of the 18th century and to the Holiness Movement of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Through the centuries the Holiness people have had a “magnificent obsession” with Jesus. We worship Jesus! We love Jesus! We think Jesus! We talk Jesus! We live Jesus! This is the essence and overflow of holiness for us. This is what characterizes Holiness people.

### **3. WE ARE A MISSIONAL PEOPLE**

We are a sent people, responding to the call of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into all the world, witnessing to the Lordship of Christ and participating with God in the building of the Church and the extension of His kingdom (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:1). Our mission (a) begins in worship, (b) ministers to the world in evangelism and compassion, (c) encourages believers toward Christian maturity through discipleship, and (d) prepares women and men for Christian service through Christian higher education.

## A. Our Mission of Worship

The mission of the Church in the world begins in worship. As we are gathered together before God in worship-singing, hearing the public reading of the Bible, giving our tithes and offerings, praying, hearing the preached Word, baptizing, and sharing the Lord's Supper—we know most clearly what it means to be the people of God. Our belief that the work of God in the world is accomplished primarily through worshiping congregations leads us to understand that our mission includes the receiving of new members into the fellowship of the church and the organizing of new worshiping congregations.

Worship is the highest expression of our love for God. It is God-centered adoration honoring the One who in grace and mercy redeems us. The primary context for worship is the local church where God's people gather, not in self-centered experience or for self-glorification but rather in self-surrender and self-offering. Worship is the church in loving, obedient service to God.

Worship is the first privilege and responsibility of God's people. It is the gathering of the covenant community before God in proclamation and celebrative response of who He is, what He has done, and what He promises to do. The local church in worship is at the core of our identity. The Church of the Nazarene is essentially local worshiping congregations, and it is in and through the local congregation that our mission is fulfilled. The mission of the church finds its meaning and orientation in worship. It is in the preaching of the Word, the celebration of the sacraments, the public reading of the Scripture, the singing of hymns and choruses, corporate prayer, and the presenting of our tithes and offerings that we know most clearly what it means to be the people of God. It is in worship that we understand most clearly what it means to participate with God in the work of redemption.

## B. Our Mission of Compassion and Evangelism

As people who are consecrated to God, we share His love for the lost and His compassion for the poor and broken. The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) move us to engage the world in evangelism, compassion, and jus-

tice. To this end we are committed to inviting people to faith, to caring for those in need, to standing against injustice and with the oppressed, to working to protect and preserve the resources of God's creation, and to including in our fellowship all who will call upon the name of the Lord.

Through its mission in the world, the Church demonstrates the love of God. The story of the Bible is the story of God reconciling the world to himself, ultimately through Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:16-21). The Church is sent into the world to participate with God in this ministry of love and reconciliation through evangelism, compassion, and justice.

Both the Great Commission and the Great Commandment are central to the understanding of our mission. They are two expressions of a single mission, two dimensions of the one gospel message. Jesus, who directs us to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" and to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37, 39), also tells us to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20).

The mission of the Church in the world extends to all humanity, as all people, being created in the image of God, have ultimate value. It is our mission to love and value people as they are loved and valued by God, who seeks to bring them peace, justice, and salvation from sin through Christ. It is our mission to have compassion upon and to care for those in need. It is our mission to oppose social systems and policies that devalue or disempower people.

The mission of the Church extends to the whole person. God has created us as whole persons, and it is our mission to be ministers of God's love to people as whole persons—body, soul, and spirit. Our mission of evangelism, compassion, and justice is a single integrated mission, engaging people in their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

The mission of the Church in the world extends to all humanity because Jesus Christ has come into the world to save all who call upon His name. As the people of God, it is our privilege and responsibility to share the good news of the gospel with all who will hear. Whether in

public services or in personal one-on-one witnessing, our passion is to take every opportunity to invite people to faith in Jesus Christ.

The mission of the Church in the world extends to all people because the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was poured out upon all humanity (Acts 2). It is our mission to present the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ to every person on earth. We are empowered by the Spirit to go into the world proclaiming the Kingdom and participating with God in the building of the Church.

It is with a spirit of hope and optimism that we engage our God-given mission in the world. It is more than an expression of human concern or human effort. Our mission is a response to God's call. It is our participation with God in the Kingdom mission of reconciliation. It is the Church's faithful witness to and expression of the love of God in the world in evangelism, compassion, and justice. It is our faith in the ability of God's grace to transform the lives of people broken by sin and to restore them in His own image.

### C. Our Mission of Discipleship

We are committed to being disciples of Jesus and to inviting others to become His disciples. With this in mind, we are committed to providing the means (Sunday School, Bible studies, small accountability groups, etc.) through which believers are encouraged to grow in their understanding of the Christian faith and in their relationship with each other and with God. We understand discipleship to include submitting ourselves to obeying God and to the disciplines of the faith. We believe we are to help each other live the holy life through mutual support, Christian fellowship, and loving accountability. John Wesley said, "God has given us to each other to strengthen each other's hands."

Christian discipleship is a way of life. It is the process of learning how God would have us live in the world. As we learn to live in obedience to the Word of God, in submission to the disciplines of the faith, and in accountability to one another, we begin to understand the true joy of the disciplined life and the Christian meaning of freedom. Discipleship is not merely human effort, submitting to rules and regulations. It is the means through which the Holy Spirit gradually brings us to maturity in

Christ. It is through discipleship that we become people of Christian character. The ultimate goal of discipleship is to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

By studying and meditating on the Scriptures, Christians discover fountains of refreshment in every thirsty valley on their discipleship journey. Invigorated by the washing of the Word, refined by immersion in the Word, drinking deeply the truths of the Word, disciples discover to their happy surprise that they are being “transformed by the renewing of [their] mind” (Romans 12:2). The Christian way opens before them like a high and open road. Nerved by God, they proceed on a way of life that eclipses mere human and cultural values. Refreshed by the fountain of the Word, disciples give their lives away in self-transcending service.

We affirm the life-giving value of the classic spiritual disciplines in the training of women and men as disciples of Christ. The disciplines of prayer and fasting, worship, study solitude, service, and simplicity are at the same time natural expressions and intentional commitments in the life of the believer. Discipleship requires mutual support and loving accountability. On our own, few of us will develop the spiritual disciplines that lead to Christian maturity.

We believe that we are to encourage the mutual support provided through such means as Sunday School classes, discipleship groups, Bible study groups, prayer meetings, accountability groups, and Christian mentoring as necessary to our spiritual formation and maturity. Recognizing the role of accountability in the Wesleyan class meetings encourages us to support its place within the contemporary Christian congregation.

#### D. Our Mission of Christian Higher Education

We are committed to Christian education, through which women and men are equipped for lives of Christian service. In our seminaries, Bible colleges, colleges, and universities, we are committed to the pursuit of knowledge, the development of Christian character, and the equipping of leaders to accomplish our God-given calling of serving in the Church and in the world.

Christian higher education is a central part of the mission of the Church of the Nazarene. In the early years of the Church of the Nazarene, institutions of Christian higher education were organized for the purpose of preparing women and men of God for leadership and Christian service in the global spread of the Wesleyan-Holiness revival. Our continued commitment to Christian higher education through the years has produced a worldwide network of seminaries, Bible schools, colleges, and universities.

Our mission of Christian higher education comes directly out of what it means to be God's people. We are to love God with our whole heart, soul, and mind. We are therefore to be good stewards in the development of our minds, of our academic resources, and in the application of our knowledge. In this light, we are committed to the open and honest pursuit of knowledge and truth coupled with the integrity of our Christian faith. Christian higher education is an essential arena for the development of the stewardship of our minds. It is intended to be an arena characterized by the discussion and discovery of truth and knowledge about God and all of God's creation.

In Christian higher education, faith is not compartmentalized but rather is wonderfully integrated with knowledge as faith and learning are developed together. The whole person is cultivated with every area of thought and life understood in relationship to the desire and design of God. Christian character and the equipping of Christian leaders for service in the church and the world are forged in the context of learning about God, humanity, and the world. This commitment of Christian higher education to the formation of the whole person is critical for the development of Christian men and women for missional leadership in the church and the world.

As a redeemed people called to Christlikeness and sent as agents of God's love in the world, we participate with God in the work of redeeming humanity. Christian higher education contributes significantly to our ability to fulfill our mission and is necessary for effective service to God in our various vocations. Our faithful participation in God's redemptive work requires that we raise up men and women of God who can take their place as Christian servant leaders in the church and in the world.

The world in which we are called to serve is becoming more closely connected and more profoundly complicated each day. As God's work of redemption advances in present and future generations, our faithful witness to the Lordship of Christ and effective participation with God in the building of the church will continue to require a vital commitment to Christian higher education.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV). Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.





# **CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE ARTICLES OF FAITH STUDY MAPS**

---

By STÉPHANE TIBI  
COPYRIGHT 2008 STÉPHANE TIBI AND HIS LICENSORS

## ***Need for Study Maps***

This section on the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene is presented to assist pastors and laypeople in sharing the Articles of Faith with those unfamiliar with these foundational 16 principles. While it is specifically directed toward immigrants in your neighborhood, pre-literate communities, and children, the ideas and principles contained within may also give new insight on these important tenets.

## ***Guide for the StudyMap on the 16 Articles of Faith***

Rationale:

The purpose of this guide on the graphic of the Articles of Faith is...

1. To lead to a better understanding of how the articles of faith of the Church of the Nazarene can help us to articulate our Christian faith.
2. To become able to witness with confidence and conviction the foundations of this life-transforming faith.
3. To help teach the meaning of the articles of faith of the Church of the Nazarene and invite others to welcome Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

# Church of the Nazarene Articles of Faith

**1** Triune God

**2** Jesus Christ

**3** Holy Spirit

**4** Holy Scriptures

**5** Sin, Original and Personal

**6** Atonement

**7** Preventive Grace

Justification, Regeneration, Adoption

**8** Repentance

Entire Sanctification

**9**

**10**

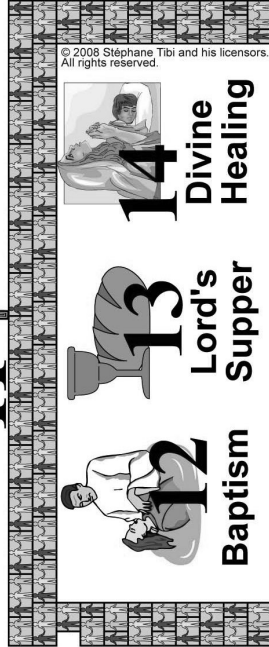
Jesus Christ Holy Spirit

**11** The Church

**12** Baptism

**13** Lord's Supper

**14** Divine Healing



**15** Second Coming of Christ

**16** Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny

## ***A Presentation of the Articles of Faith through the Graphic***

In this guide, I suggest one possible way of presenting the articles of faith and how to relate them together. Most of what you will find in each article below is taken from the text of the articles of faith in the *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene 2005-2009*. I encourage you strongly to have this text with you as you study and teach the articles; it is the text of reference and cannot be replaced by the short explanations given below. These explanations will attempt to simply show some key aspects of each of these articles.

### **A. ARTICLES 1-3: GOD**

These three first articles describe the God in whom we believe. The pictures of the triangle (Triune God), of Jesus Christ and of the dove (Holy Spirit) are grouped together in order to manifest their intimate relationships and unity.

#### ***1. The Triune God***

This article is both the beginning and the end of our faith. We believe in one eternal and infinite God. He created the Universe out of nothing. He was before the world existed, is and will always be. He has three facets<sup>1</sup>, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which are illustrated through the use of a triangle<sup>2</sup>.

#### ***2. Jesus Christ***

God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, from heaven to earth. He was eternally with the Father, and became man by the power of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. He was fully God and fully man. On the

---

<sup>1</sup> To speak of the three persons of the Trinity as 'facets' could lead to the heresy of 'modalism,' but at the same time the belief in the Trinity is a result of a deeper understanding of God's revelation in our world that came only after centuries of theological debate. In some contexts, it could be wise to first of all stress the unity of God, and then speak about the Trinity as three different persons only after the '16 articles' have been presented (you will find some of this already in the explanation of article 11).

<sup>2</sup> The triangle, as any analogy of the Trinity, is limited -it serves us well in our desire to first stress the unity of God but lacks when we want to express that the Trinity is also three distinct persons. In teaching further on this subject, it could be good to present other analogies so that the persons don't confuse analogy and reality and get a deeper understand of this important mystery of our faith.

picture he is presented as kneeling because he came as a servant, to teach us how much God loves humanity.

### **3. The Holy Spirit**

The picture representing the Holy Spirit is a dove, the image that the authors of the first three Gospels have used to describe His/Her coming on Jesus at His baptism. A dove is white, expressing the purity of the Holy Spirit, a purity and holiness that He/She<sup>3</sup> can communicate to those who welcome Her/Him. The Holy Spirit works with and through the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus. As you finish the group of the three first articles of faith, it could be good -if needed -to review them by memory. For instance, you can close your eyes and then tell the name of the first article as you try to remember the picture, and so forth for the second and third. Then you can go backward 3-2-1, or ask someone to read the title of one article and you could then give the right number<sup>4</sup>. You will soon realize that an added advantage of such a graphic tool is that you will rapidly know the list of the articles forward and backward.<sup>5</sup>

## **B. ARTICLE 4: HOLY SCRIPTURES**

The picture of a book represents the Holy Scriptures as the written Word of God, while Jesus Christ is the living Word of God. In it, we learn how God created the world and has invited all humans to a deep communion

<sup>3</sup> In Hebrew, the word for Spirit is 'ruah', which is sometimes masculine and sometimes feminine. This can help us to remember that God is beyond our concepts of male/female. It is true that in Jesus He became man, but from all eternity God is the creator of the genders, and is not trapped in one of them.

<sup>4</sup> I encourage you not to neglect this kind of exercise, which will reinforce the memory. For the moment, this exercise touches only what is called the 'short-term memory'. Also, don't hesitate to be playful in all this -a good study time should never be boring, this will significantly increase the joy in this process of learning. Here, I am giving you simply possible guidelines, hoping that it will help you to study and find ways to teach these articles of faith.

<sup>5</sup> This could be described, in mathematical terms, as a 'one-dimensional and bidirectional' memory. Most auditive memories are only unidirectional (you cannot move backward). This simple thing is of key importance when you want to learn to articulate your faith with ease -to be able to link the articles of faith with a freedom which should help to rapidly build a good theological foundation. At a theoretical level, we could discuss the fact that pictures have the potential to lead us to reach a 'two-dimensional' memory, and one of the purposes of such a graphic is to move toward that as much as possible.

with him. With the help of the Holy Spirit, these books of the Old and New Testament teach us the will of God concerning us in all that is necessary to our salvation.

The Holy Scriptures give testimony about who God is (articles 1-3), and the path that leads from sin to salvation (articles 5-10).

Take a little moment to playfully review the 4 first articles with the students, it is still rather easy but will place the foundations for going further. One thing you can also do is to ask someone to describe in simple words what the meaning of one of these articles is (or of all, one after the other).

Don't forget to communicate to your audience, through questions like this one, that what you are looking for as a teacher is more than just having people able to repeat forward and backward the titles of the articles of faith. You want also, if not even more, to train persons who can express their faith simply and confidently with the support of these articles of faith -therefore I encourage you to stress this important point by attentively listening to the answers given and by using approving remarks (and smooth corrections when you perceive the need).

## **C. ARTICLES 5-10: FROM SIN TO HOLINESS**

Articles 5-10 describe how each human is invited to move from sin to holiness, from separation from God and death to a full communion with Him that promises eternal life. The links between these 6 pictures witness to the fact that it is the path of humanity. Articles 5 and 6 deal with our forefathers, that the apostle Paul called the first Adam and the "new Adam" (Jesus), and the curse that comes from the original sin and the blessing that comes from the atonement through Jesus' blood. Articles 7-10 show us how we can receive, by obedient faith, all the blessings of this atonement in our lives, thanks to prevenient grace and through repentance, justification and entire sanctification.

### ***5. Sin, Original and Personal***

The first humans God created, Adam and Eve, sinned by disobeying God. In the same way sin, which is the failure to follow the good and

perfect will of God for us, touches not only one human but has been touching all humans at a personal level. It was first the ‘original sin’ of Adam and Eve, but also became personal as each of us committed sin. The apple eaten on both sides reminds us of this fact, that there is Adam’s original sin and our personal sin. By disobeying God, humans rejected the life-giving relationship with God, and death entered the world in consequence of sin.

## **6. Atonement**

The name ‘Jesus’<sup>6</sup> means ‘God saves’. When Jesus came on earth, about 2000 years ago, he came to deliver not only his people but all humanity from the most important source of enslavement: sin. If Jesus Christ was fully God, he was also fully human -except that he never disobeyed his heavenly Father. Jesus loved us so much that he gave his life for us, dying on the cross. The fully obedient life of Jesus, and his death on the cross are the ground of our salvation, so that we can be united with God again<sup>7</sup>. The picture of the cross is on the top of the eaten apple representing sin, because it crushed sin and opened the possibility of being delivered from it for a holy life<sup>8</sup>. The cross is empty, without the body of a dying Jesus, because three days after his death on the cross Jesus was resurrected -thus proving his victory over sin and death.

## **7. Prevenient Grace**

Grace means ‘gift’, and here it is a gift from God. ‘Prevenient grace’ means “the gift that comes before,” that precedes our good intentions. If humans have been enslaved to sin from the days of Adam until now, it means that since Adam’s sin we were not able of pure and righteous motives and actions. The prevenient grace of God is the gift that comes before us to convince us of sin and enables us to turn from sin to righteousness, from evil to God. The picture represents a gift in a box, ready to be opened. As it is for prevenient grace, we need to open this gift by

<sup>6</sup> ‘Yeshua’ in Hebrew.

<sup>7</sup> The word “atonement” or “at-**one**-ment” was created by William Tyndale, in the 16th century, to speak about this wonderful work of God’s grace, making it possible for us to be **one** with Him.

<sup>8</sup> Eastern Orthodox icons often show the cross of Jesus as placed just above the skulls of Adam and Eve (perhaps as an extrapolation of the fact the hill was called “Golgotha” -the place of the skull), thus expressing the fact that through his death on the cross and his resurrection, Jesus released humanity of the old curse of the original sin. The picture of the apple could then be associated with the death of Adam and Eve and the need for the atonement through Jesus’ cross.

opening our hearts to the direction God wants for us in order to be delivered from sin and death. The opening of our hearts to such a direction is described in the three next articles 8, 9 and 10.

### **8. Repentance**

Repentance is a sincere change of mind in regard to sin, involving a sense of personal guilt and a voluntary turning away from sin. The picture of a returning arrow shows that repentance involves a real change of attitude, with the humble hope of God's mercy. Repentance is a necessary step toward God's forgiveness. The picture of the arrow goes from 7 to 9, showing that repentance is possible only because of God's prevenient grace that makes us aware of our sins, and leads us to hope in God's forgiveness and justification.

### **9. Justification, Regeneration and Adoption**

Justification is the gracious act of God by which He fully forgives all committed sins, and accepts as righteous all who believe in Jesus Christ and receive Him as their Lord and Savior. This act of God can be understood as three-fold: -Justification: the person is accepted as righteous through his/her faith in Jesus. The picture of the judge's gavel<sup>9</sup> represents the judgment of God that graciously recognizes us as righteous and acquits us (Rom 3:21-26). -Regeneration or new birth: through this gracious act of God, a new spiritual life is granted to the believer. The picture of the little baby shows that by the grace of God we become a new creation (John 3, 2Cor 5:17). -Adoption as child of God: the picture of a father welcoming his little child reminds us of this wonderful aspect of God's grace at work here (Rom 8:15-17). Justification, regeneration and adoption are simultaneous in the experience of the one who seeks God and are obtained upon the condition of faith, preceded by repentance; and the Holy Spirit witnesses to the believer of this work and state of grace.

### **10. Entire Sanctification**

Entire sanctification is the act of God, after regeneration, by which believers are released from original sin. It is preceded by an entire consecration of the believer to follow God wherever He wills, and the Holy Spirit bears witness to this work and state of grace. A sanctified person

---

<sup>9</sup> The gavel is a kind of small hammer that a judge uses in a trial. In this case, our heavenly judge -God -declares us as 'not guilty'.

will be released from the self-centeredness that is still often felt after justification, and will walk faithfully and obediently as a servant of God. If it is possible to enter into this state of grace for all believers, it is also possible to fall from it. The life of holiness is possible only through following Christ with all our heart and strength, a walk of faith that brings to Christlikeness of character and personality. The picture of the dove within a heart expresses the fact that entire sanctification can be described as the fullness of the Spirit (dove) or as loving God with all our heart, mind and soul and loving our neighbor as ourselves (heart).

As you finish this group 5-10, take a time of playful review, both at the level of the titles and at the level of the meaning of each of the articles 5-10. Try to show how each relates to the next one: the original sin (5) was like a trap that needed the help of someone outside us to be broken. This is what Jesus did through the atonement (6). In order to benefit from this and be united with God, we humans needed the help of God who, through prevenient grace (7), makes us aware of our wickedness and of our need of God's help. Thanks to this prevenient grace, we realized of our need to repent (8) and to welcome with obedient faith Jesus as our Lord and Savior in order to be reconciled with God as His forgiven children (9). From this blessed adoption, we are led by the Holy Spirit toward the joy of a life of purity fully surrendered to God, filled with the Holy Spirit and thus entirely sanctified (10). Once you feel that the listeners are able to remember well the titles (forward and backward) of the articles 5-10 and their meaning, you can go back to 1-4 and reinforce the learning on these also. After this, begin to alternate between questions on the group 1-4 and 5-10, so that you help your listeners to strengthen their memory<sup>10</sup>. When someone struggle a little about a specific article, you could go back to it and spend some more time on it. If you struggle in

---

<sup>10</sup> I call this process of revision 'memory weaving,' since the goal here is to slowly help the memory to move from short-term to long-term. I encourage you to work first within a specific group of articles, once this group is mastered review a previous one, and then finally work on two groups of articles together so that this helps to build a strong memory. Once the numbers and names of articles are clear, then move toward the meaning of the articles, to be sure that at least a good basic understanding of each article is in place. I hope you will perceive how much the exercises are important in the study and teaching of the articles of faith. With kindness, encouragement and playfulness, I believe the Lord can use you to build long-lasting theological foundations in the hearts of new believers or even to bring someone to faith in Christ Jesus -this is my hope and my prayer.

explaining one of the articles, it is a good thing -it could be that the Lord is encouraging you to deepen your understanding and/or experience with God in relationship with this article<sup>11</sup>. Once the articles 7-10 are understood, this foundation can prove very useful in a personal discussion when you want to know where someone is in his/her faith and to invite this person to go one step further with the Lord. Don't hesitate to share personal examples about how you progressed in your journey of faith. The Lord could use it to encourage the other person(s) to realize where they stand and how to move on with God and welcome Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.

## **D. ARTICLES 11-14: THE CHURCH AND ITS LIFE**

The Church is the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. The Lord calls the believers in the Church to worship together and to be a shining witness of His love to the entire world, inviting unbelievers to the joy of being a redeemed child of God and thus part of His family. The picture shows the exterior walls of a physical church. Although the Church is not at all a building but a living community of believers united to God through Jesus. If you look at each brick, you will notice that it is 'made of persons', to express that we as members of the Church are to be living stones that are connected together and welcome God to reign in our midst and shine through us<sup>12</sup>. In the top-left corner of the building, you can notice that there is a brick missing -this is to remind us that the Church is not 'the others', be it is of fundamental importance that we become part of

---

<sup>11</sup> In case you would feel bad about not 'mastering' the articles of faith, you could remember that theology is not so much a matter of mastery but rather of servanthood. We will always be students in front of God. An important thing to ask ourselves is: are we still students willing to learn from Him and those he places on our path, or do we try to cheat ourselves and others by pretending a supposed mastery concerning what are ultimately deep mysteries of our faith? Good theology brings you to the desire to be more with God, to know more about Him, and to share His love with others.

<sup>12</sup> See 1 Peter 2:4-6. Jesus, in a certain way, came to replace the temple (read for instance Mat 12:6), so that the Church would become the living temple of the living God. Thus, we are called to become the temple of God -not only as a single person but also as a united and holy community of believers. This is God's call for His Church, and we cannot help but respond humbly with all our heart and all of our strength to this challenging call.

it -thus filling this gap and bringing all our gift to the service of God in the Christian community.

### **12. Baptism**

Our Lord gave us the command to baptize new believers in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. To be baptized, we have to confess our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We must have the purpose of obediently following God for a life of love, righteousness and holiness. Baptism is the first sacrament<sup>13</sup> that a believer is invited to experience, thus becoming a member of the Church of our gracious and righteous God. The picture shows someone being immersed into water by a servant of God, showing a way someone can be baptized.

### **13. Lord's Supper**

Following the commandment of our Lord Jesus, we commemorate Jesus' sacrifice for each of us through the Lord's Supper. Like baptism, the Lord's Supper is a sacrament. It requires faith in Christ and love for the saints. The picture shows bread and a cup, the two parts of the Lord's Supper. His body was broken for us on the cross (the bread) and His blood was poured out for the forgiveness of our sins (the cup).

### **14. Divine Healing**

We believe that God can heal our bodies in many ways. One of them is through direct divine intervention, another is through doctors and medicine. The picture shows someone praying God near a sick person, thus stressing the fact that prayer is a key element in asking for divine healing.

As you finish the articles 11-14, review them and make sure you know what is the name of each. Go again backward and forward, and probe to see if you are able to express the key elements of each of these articles. It is always better to use your own words to express yourself instead of a rote memorization of one or two sentences, since it is the best way to check that you really understand what is meant and thus will be able to meditate on it or explain it to others. The picture of article 11 (the Church) covers the 3 next articles (12-14), thus expressing the

---

<sup>13</sup> A sacrament is a 'means of grace' -a way God uses to bring us closer to Him. Each sacrament requires both the faith of the person and the grace of God.

fact that these three occur in the context of the Church<sup>14</sup>. Try to visualize by memory that the one in the middle is the Lord's Supper, the one on the left is Baptism and on the right Divine Healing. Such simple details can significantly help the memory. With your eyes closed, try to remember the different articles 11-14, use the spatial positioning as a help in order to reinforce your memory of the relative places (for instance ask yourself: what is the article that is over the three others, what is the one on the left, what is at the right of the Lord's Supper, etc.).

You can also notice that, on the graphic the pictures of Jesus and the Church are very close, it manifests the intimate relationship between Jesus and the Church -that the apostle Paul calls the Body of Christ. In this direction, you can also notice that the spatial closeness between the Church and the articles 1-3 can express that through the first centuries of its existence the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, came to understand more deeply the mystery of God as revealed through Jesus Christ: God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Three in One. The three persons of the Trinity are united by a perfect bond of love; this implies that God did not need to create the world in order to learn what it means to love, but rather that he created the world in order to share with others this love that is at the very heart of God, a love which is expressed through the perfect unity of the Trinity and is to become manifest in this world through the Church.

Once this review and memorization of 11-14 is done, then you can go back to check that the articles 5-10 are well memorized (backward and forward, one at a time...). Review again 11 to 14, and then go back to 1-4 before finishing by saying forward and backward the articles 1 to 14. It is at this point that most persons realize how efficient the combined pictures are for the memory, allowing many to see how one can remember 14 articles almost painlessly<sup>15</sup>.

---

<sup>14</sup> You can say that 12-14 occur 'inside' the Church, as long as it is clear for the students that the Church is not a building but the redeemed people of God.

<sup>15</sup> Some studies on human memory mention that most persons cannot, with their short-term memory, remember more than 7 items. What we do here by using pictures and this back-and-forth 'weaving' or associations is to move purposefully toward a structured (and long-term) memory that will allow a much more efficient retention of the information on the long run. There will always be a need of review, but with such tools it should be much less painful and hopefully much more fruitful -all this by the grace of God.

## E. ARTICLES 15-16: THE END TIMES

We reach now the last group of articles, a group showing two key foundations for our faith, which can be a great incentive to welcome Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Second coming of Christ and the Resurrection, judgment and destiny, are intimately linked.

### ***15. Second Coming of Christ***

As he has promised to His disciples, Jesus will come again. His coming will bring the final judgment of humans (you can read Mat 25:31-46). The picture is showing Jesus as coming from heaven (clouds under his feet).

### ***16. Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny***

At the second coming of Jesus, the dead will resurrect and be judged, those who have done good for a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil for a resurrection of damnation. Therefore, resurrection, judgment and destiny will be intimately linked together. The first picture shows someone resurrecting, the second one above -the gavel -expresses the judgment and the two last pictures illustrate the two possible destinies: hell (fire) for those condemned for having done evil in their lives, and the angel welcoming at the gates of heaven suggests the blessed destiny of those who have done good.

As you finish this study of the articles of faith, make sure you remember the title of these two articles, particularly the three parts of the title of article 16. You can notice that 15-16 are located just below 8-10, because when Jesus will come back it will be too late for going through 8-10 (repentance, justification and entire sanctification). Therefore the time for repenting and believing in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior is now since we don't know the day when Jesus will come back; it could be even today. Then, you can review the articles 11-14, and then weave them with 15 and 16 (that is, for instance, to tell the title and meaning of one article of 11-14 and then one of 15-16). After that, you can review by memory the titles of the articles 5-10 (first in the chronological order and then backward). Then, you can integrate the articles 1-4 in this review.

By first keeping the articles by groups, you help to reactivate and strengthen the memory. Once this initial memory is reactivated you can efficiently and playfully go back and forth up to the point when you will feel confident enough to tell the title associated with any of the 16 first numbers, as well as the meaning associated with each. Once you know well these articles of faith, and teach them to someone else, you could ask what the person thinks will happen at the resurrection, what his/her eternal destiny will be and why. In this way, the Lord could use what they have learned to realize their need to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

This tool could be more than just an initial step in studying the foundations of our faith, it could perhaps -God willing -be a tool that will help many to come to know Christ and to meditate about God's love for us, and then help the person to teach to others these tenets of the Christian faith.

My prayer is that this simple tool will be a holy tool that will encourage you to share your faith with others and help you to go deeper in your walk as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **ANNEX: WHY SUCH A GRAPHIC?**

### ***a. Basic Observations about the use of Pictures***

Many persons recognize that pictures can be an efficient help for teaching. Pictures are considered to be a good tool for teaching illiterate people, whether illiterate adult people or young children. But images can be used for other purposes as well. For instance, images are able to communicate a lot of information in a small amount of time, something that TV programs, movies, internet websites and advertisers have quickly grasped and put to heavy use. Yet, the use of pictures in western education is at best marginal, if not simply dismissed from 'serious education.' Could pictures be used to teach efficiently both illiterate and literate people? The rest of this annex will discuss how to use images for structuring and reinforcing the learning process, whatever the level of education of the person taught.

### ***b. Learning with Pictures***

First, pictures can be seen as a symbol that represents an object, person or idea. For instance, a dove can represent the Holy Spirit -thus following the description of Jesus' baptism in the Synoptic Gospels. This first basic use of pictures, as symbols carrying a meaning, is less efficient than human languages in some aspects. Through oral or written languages, we are able to express various types of relationships between objects or even abstract concepts, while a single picture is like a lonely word which is not integrated in a sentence. Languages have the ability of relating words through grammatical associations. The goal is then to find a way to combine pictures like we combine words together in a meaningful whole.

### ***c. Toward a "Grammar for Pictures"***

When we put a few pictures together on a single page, we have already created a bigger picture that has different parts. For instance, in the case of the graphic on the articles of faith, the 16 pictures put together make a larger picture. In combining the images, I tried to use a basic 'spatial grammar', a grammar of spatial associations and distinctions. For instance, the first three articles of faith are tied together in order to manifest that they express the same reality: God, One in three persons. The separation between the pictures of 3 and 4 reflects the fact that the articles 1 to 3 are linked to one another in a very different way than 3 and 4. In the same way the image of article 4 is not connected to 5-10 (Original Sin -Entire Sanctification), since articles 5 to 10 will deal with humanity and its relationship to God while article 4 (the Holy Scriptures) shows where we can read about all these points. In order to be meaningful, these spatial associations (spatial grammar) need to be combined with explanations, something previously illustrated in this guide. The spatial positioning of pictures enables us, through the connection between spatial position and theological relationships, to teach theology with such a graphic. This "spatial grammar" shall strengthen the memory and lead to a deeper understanding because someone will have a graphical tool helping to develop associations between theological concepts. Pictures are not supposed to replace explanations, but to offer a memory framework that will allow a better memorization of the meaning of what is taught.

#### **d. A “Graphic Sentence”**

It is easier to remember a single sentence than five or ten unrelated words. In the same way, it is easier to remember the 16 articles of faith as a single ‘combined picture’ than 16 unrelated articles. As a sentence shows specific and meaningful associations between words, the spatial relationships between pictures will attempt to communicate meaningful associations between the different articles of faith.

One of the biggest mistakes that we can make when we learn or teach with ‘rote memory’ is when we separate memorization from understanding. While understanding should be the cement that strengthens and gives its use to memory, when it is removed from the memorization process it significantly weakens the memory. The purpose of the graphic on the articles of faith is to strengthen the memory through a better understanding of how all these elements fit together in our Christian faith. In order to reach such a goal, I have tried to explain the choice of pictures<sup>16</sup> and then the theological relationships in association with the spatial relationships. We could say that this process is a process of “loading with meaning,” both at the picture level and at the relationships level. In these steps, a very important way of making these connections was to tell the story that relates all the articles of faith, what could perhaps be called a narrative approach.

NOTE: What is presented in this annex -in a rather theoretical way -does not need to be explained to people if you teach them the 16 articles of faith. I believe that most of the time it will be better not to speak about it. Once a person you teach realize that ‘it works,’ you could speak about some of these underlying elements if you sense the need; but sharing this at first could provoke unnecessary doubts or an outright rejection of this new way of teaching.

---

<sup>16</sup> Depending on the cultural context you are in, some pictures will need more explanations than others. I hope most will be very simple, but I also realize that some will take more time to explain (like, for instance, the gavel that stands for ‘justification’ in the article 9).

