



NAC-USA
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE

Transfiguration

Jesus
establishes
His church -
Part 1

Jesus
establishes
His church -
Part 2

On the road
to Emmaus

MIDWEEK GUIDE

2016

March

Starting in 2016, there will be no distinction between the facilitator and participant guides - there will only be one monthly guide for the Midweek Experience Curriculum small group sessions. The guides will continue to provide discussion questions, Bible references, thoughts for further discussion, and notes for the facilitator if they are necessary. The scripts for each session of the month will be in a separate document.

Also keep in mind that your small group does not need to answer every question provided in the Midweek guides. There are a range of questions so that each group can answer questions that are applicable to them and that they are comfortable with. Also, take your time with discussing the questions and don't feel the need to rush through them in order to answer every one.

2016 March MIDWEEK GUIDE

Session 1: Transfiguration

Bible References

Matthew 16:28
Matthew 17
Luke 9
Mark 9
2 Peter 1: 16-18

John 1:14 – And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Matthew 5:17 - Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

John 14:12 - Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

1. Why was Jesus transfigured?

a)What was the “take away” for the 3 disciples from this event?

b)What was the “take away” for Moses and Elijah from this event?

2. What significance do you give to the voice from the cloud adding “Hear Him!” to the words that were spoken at Jesus’ baptism: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (See Matthew 3:17 and 17:5.)

3. What is the significance of the cloud?

Going Deeper

Transfigured

Greek: *metamorphōō*

1. To change into another form, to transform, to transfigure

Christ's appearance was changed and was resplendent with divine brightness on the mount of transfiguration.

Place: Mount Hermon (9,100 feet) to the north of Caesarea Philippi.

Moses and Elijah represented the law and the prophets respectively, which testify to but must give way to Jesus. (Holman Bible Dictionary)

Greek: "exodus", meaning exodus, departure. Translated as "decease" in Luke 9:31

Jesus is fulfilling the work begun by Moses and finished, in a sense, by Joshua in leading the chosen people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Like Elisha is said to have finished, in a sense, the work begun by his predecessor, Elijah, Jesus is taking the step of "going to prepare a place" where He and we may abide together eternally. He is not, however, completing God's plan of salvation by taking that step.

Mark and Matthew relate that Moses and Elijah were taking to Jesus, but only Luke relates what they were talking about. It seems that Moses and Elijah were doing the talking and Jesus was doing the listening.

a) Consider other times clouds appear in Scripture in connection with:

i. Moses receiving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 24:15 et seq.)

ii. The Israelites journey to the promised land (Exodus 13:21)

b) Matthew 17:6 relates that the disciples were very afraid when they heard the voice of God. Mark's account suggests they were afraid even earlier on the mountain. Why were they afraid?

4. Although He had raised the subject previously, the three disciples don't seem to comprehend Jesus' referral to His death and resurrection. When God shows you something in your life and you don't understand, what can you do to gain clarity?

5. What can you do to ensure that the activity of God doesn't just become another routine in your life?

6. Jesus gave the disciples a front-row seat to an amazing event in order to help them grow in their understanding of Him. What are some of the amazing things God has done in your life that have helped you come to know Him more?

7. In many of the stories in Jesus' life there is a strong connection to events from the Old Testament. Why do you think there are these Old Testament echoes in the New Testament? What do they teach us about Jesus?

8. Moses was the one God chose to take the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land, but he didn't complete this task, Joshua did. Elijah's work was completed by Elisha. Jesus fulfilled the work of Moses, as the Law, and Elijah, as the Prophet (Matthew 5:17), but He also didn't complete His work (John 14:12). He left it to others to be carried on. As a believer of Christ, what do you feel is your responsibility in carrying on this work?

9. When Peter comes fully awake on the mount and sees Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, he says it would be a good idea to build a tabernacle for each one, perhaps so they would prolong their stay. When we find ourselves in a good place do we wish to stay there instead of looking for what God will do next?

Session 2: Jesus establishes His church (Part 1)

Bible References

John 17, 20:21-23, 16:12-15
Matthew 16:18, 28:16-20
2 Corinthians 5:18-20, 11:2
Luke 22:14-20
Acts 8:14-18
1 Corinthians 4:1, 15:3-8
1 John 4:1-6
Acts 5:34-39

CA Thoughts

Children of God, those who have been reborn out of water and the Spirit, have been elected in order to become firstfruits in the kingdom of God. At the moment of His return, Jesus Christ will come to seek the elect – from among the living and the dead, who have made their election sure by allowing themselves to be prepared by the apostolate...The Lord elected His disciples, the future Apostles, and elected Peter in order to give him a special mission.

1. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, chapters 5-7), the listeners marvel at what they heard because Jesus spoke with authority, not as the scribes. Shortly before His ascension, Jesus told the 11 apostles that "all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." Outer authority is given and is reflected in a title/position. Inner authority is developed from what a person believes or learns. How did Jesus express His inner authority? Do you have inner authority?

2. Looking back on the 2000 year history of the church of Jesus Christ, it seems like a "given" that the church would be established and function, and that the gospel would continue to be spread after Jesus' ascension. What do you think were some of the obstacles and challenges faced by the church in its infancy? What are the challenges the church faces today?

NAC Catechism

2.4.3 The Third Article of Faith

The church of Jesus Christ has a concealed side and a revealed side. In this respect it corresponds to the dual nature of Jesus Christ, who is both true Man and true God. The concealed side of the church cannot be fathomed by human reason, but can be accessed through faith and experienced, for example in the sacraments and in the spoken word of God, that is in all the signs of divine salvation and divine nearness. The revealed side of the church is a reference to the true humanity of Jesus Christ. Like the Man Jesus, the church is part of the history of mankind, although the Man Jesus was without sin—which is not the case with the revealed side of the church. It shares in the sinfulness of humanity on account of the human beings at work within it. Thus the mistakes and deficiencies of human history are also present in the church.

4.5 Election

Election is rooted in God's will to forth individual human beings or groups for a purpose determined by Him, thereby making them accountable to Him."

6 The church of Jesus Christ

The church of Jesus Christ has been established on earth by the Lord Himself. In it salvation is made accessible to human beings. In it human beings bring worship and praise to God... Those human beings who belong to the church of Christ have been called forth by God for eternal fellowship with Him, namely with God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit...In the midst of the church, Jesus Christ prepares His bridal congregation through Apostles for His imminent return and the "marriage in heaven".

3. Consider this statement: *The wonder isn't that there are living apostles today, but that Jesus Christ is alive in the apostle ministry.* What does that statement mean to you?

4. What does the duality of Jesus, True God and True Man, mean to you? How do you understand it? How would you explain it someone?

5. How do you understand the dual nature of the church of Jesus Christ?

6. What are ways to continually grow in our understanding of God's plan of salvation? How are you part of it?

7. Jesus knew who He was and His purpose. How do we come to know who we are and what our purpose is?

8. Discuss how the Holy Spirit equips individuals for their unique calling.

Session 3: Jesus establishes His church (Part 2)

Bible References

1 Corinthians 9:2
2 Corinthians 3:1-3, 5:20

CA Thoughts

Election to salvation is effectively related to the moment at which God offers salvation. At the end of the kingdom of peace, all human beings will know Jesus Christ. Those who are excluded from fellowship with God then will not be excluded because they were not elected, but because they will have refused the offer of salvation made to them.

NAC Catechism

2.4.3 The Third Article of Faith

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the one, holy, universal, and apostolic church, the community of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting.

The church is "apostolic": the apostolicity of the church has a content-related aspect and a person-related aspect. First of all, the church is apostolic because the gospel of the death, resurrection, and return of Christ—as preached by the early Apostles—is proclaimed within it. On the other hand, the church is apostolic because the apostolic ministry is historically manifest in the Apostles who work within the church in the present.

2.4.4 The Fourth Article of Faith

I believe that the Lord Jesus rules His church and thereto sent His Apostles, and until His return still sends them, with the commission to teach, to forgive sins in His name, and to baptise with water and Holy Spirit.

1. How can we, individually and as a congregation, give evidence of the apostle ministry to the world?

2. As members in the Body of Christ we are called upon to support the apostles in their commission described in Matthew 28:18-20. How do we go about that?

3. The word doctrine is defined as something that is taught or teachings collectively. What is the "apostles' doctrine" referenced in Acts 2:42? *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

4. People often make assumptions about parents based on the words and actions of their children. When a child is well behaved and respectful, adults say that their parents are raising them well. As children of God, our actions reflect our Heavenly Father. How do our actions provide the world around us a testimony about our God?

5. When talking with others about your beliefs, how can you avoid "testifighting"?

Session 4: On the road to Emmaus

Bible References

Luke 24

1. We've come to learn that even by the time of Jesus' sacrifice the disciples did not yet understand what was to happen to Him or why. Why would these disciples leave Jerusalem and the other disciples so quickly?

2. What significance do you give to Jesus asking the questions He asked in Luke 24 verses 17 and 19?

3. In talking to Jesus (but as yet not knowing that it was Him) the disciples said, "We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel." What kind of redemption were they looking for? What kind of redemption did Jesus give?

4. Throughout Jesus' explanations to the disciples they have no clue that they are talking to Him – until He breaks bread. At that point their eyes were opened, and recognized Jesus. What about His breaking bread opened the disciples' eyes?

5. What message was Jesus sending by not revealing Himself, yet still speaking to them with authority (cf. Matthew 7:28-29)?

6. What does the “burning” of the disciples’ hearts mean to you? Is it a good “burning” that comes from comprehension or a bad burning that comes from a failure to see or act appropriately? How can diving into the Scripture change your life and cause a burning in your heart for God?

7. Think about a time in your life when you were walking around with your head down, disappointed because of something that had transpired. Were you able to see the Lord in your life during this time? What are some ways to focus on God during disappointing days?

8. Today it is possible for us to encounter our God in many ways. Have you ever shared your encounters with others? How can sharing our experiences help others come to believe in God?

9. Jesus explained to the disciples about His death and resurrection and why it was necessary, so that they could understand. Look back in your life. Have you ever had a Road to Emmaus experience where something happened, not the way you thought, and it left you confused and disappointed? Looking back now, can you see perhaps why it happened? What did you learn from it? Share the experience with the group if you are comfortable.
