

Embrace the promise of Christ's return: *Own It*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Your Journey episodes can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What does it mean to 'live your faith?' ➤ Why am I New Apostolic? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Living your faith means that your belief and trust in God influences your decisions and behavior. ➤ I have decided, or will decide, to be a Christian within the New Apostolic Church because I want to be prepared for the return of Christ in order to have eternal fellowship with God as soon as possible. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Catechism Q&A ➤ Something to play a video clip with (computer, TV, tablet, phone, etc.) ➤ Chartpaper or whiteboard/markers <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible: Matthew 16:24, 22:35-40, Luke 9:23, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:12-17, James 2:14-26 • Catechism Q&A questions: 296, 745-750 • Articles of Faith (found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A) • For Your Journey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Episode 23 – Aligning our Lives (to the gospel) ○ Episode 26 – Practice and Profession (credible witnesses of Jesus) ○ Episode 27 – Aligning (practice what you preach)
---	---

PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Do you know any basketball players? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ where we'll be discussing this question, and more.

POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please feel free to add local information and customize as necessary Consider including a link to one of the videos listed in the "References" section above. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I wonder..." questions were about living your faith. It was explained that being a disciple of Jesus Christ is a decision that requires daily focus and attention.</p> <p>A quote from American athlete and evangelist Billy Sunday was shared, "Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you an automobile."</p> <p>Consider asking your child what they think about this quote and share your thoughts as well. Ask your child what they think it means to live their faith in the context of the family (seeking forgiveness and reconciliation, helping others, making the gospel a priority in decision making, etc.).</p> <p>As always, if you have any question about the topic, feel free to contact us.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
---	---

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (up to 10 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.

- What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?
- What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?
- So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?
- Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

HOOK (up to 10 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.
- Consider writing the responses on chartpaper or a whiteboard.

- How are you and how are you feeling today?
- Who would like to share their point to ponder or call to action from last week?
- Following up from the pre discussion message: Ask the students if they know any basketball players (either from an NBA team or perhaps from their school)? If they know them by name, they can name them.
- Ask the students if they didn't actually see this person play basketball during an actual game, how would they know they are a basketball player?
 - Some responses could be:
 - Have seen them wearing their uniform
 - Was told they were a basketball player
 - Have seen them practicing outside of a game
 - Have seen the basketball player make decisions that contribute to their conditioning/ability to play the sport well, such as:
 - Not stay out late so that they can get a good night's rest
 - Not eat certain foods so that they can have optimal nutrition for playing
 - Not participate in inappropriate behavior (like a prank at school) that could damage their permission to play on the team
- The point is, the basketball player isn't just a player because they participate in the games on the court, but rather make many decisions off the court as well that contribute to them being a basketball player.
- After the students have had a chance to share their perspectives, explain that in this small group, we'll be discussing what it means to live your faith.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

- Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students.

I wonder...

- What does it mean to 'live your faith'?
- Why am I New Apostolic?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Consider asking a student to review the definition of a steward from V9 – Stewardship, Student Question #1.
- Consider writing the responses on chartpaper or a whiteboard.
- Additional **Flashpoints** on **Making Your Faith Your Own** can be found at these Bible chapters and pages of the IGNITE Bible. Consider reading through each one as a group, or divide the readings up among the students and have them share with the group.
 - o **Isaiah 6** pg. 698
 - o **Joshua 24** pg. 242
 - o **Acts 16** pg. 1153
 - o **2 Timothy 2** pg. 1272
 - o **Hebrews 11** pg. 1293

Say something like: *In this semester we've discussed some elements that are very future focused (quickly review if necessary or ask the students to contribute answers). While keeping the goal of the future is important, we can't only look to the future and disregard our responsibility on earth here and now. We strive to be good stewards* (responsible managers) of what God has given us. He has given us our life, time, preached (sermons) and written (Scripture) Word, sacraments, relationships, and more. We prepare for Christ's return and eternal fellowship with Him BY living our faith and growing in spiritual maturity.*

Ask the students if they've heard the phrase "live your faith" before. Ask what they think it means.

Summarize, correct any misunderstandings if needed, with the succinct statement from Student Question #1 below.

Student Question #1 What does it mean to live your faith?

- Living your faith means that your belief and trust in God influences your decisions and behavior.

Student Question #2 Constantly transforming our motivations and behavior is tough. Isn't faith in Jesus enough? Why isn't faith in Jesus enough?

- Jesus expects us to follow the example He set.
- Ask a student to read James 2:14-26 (not included in facilitator guide due to length)
- Ask a student to summarize these verses by reading the **Flashpoint: Making Your Faith Your Own** on page 1302.
- It isn't a matter of having faith OR works, but rather faith AND works.
- Think of a row boat that has an oar on each side. Both oars are needed to make progress and move through the water. If only one oar on one side is used, you just end up going in circles. Both faith and works are needed to 'move through the water/have a growing and mature relationship with God' as we journey through life.
 - It is important to highlight that when speaking about works, that we aren't just talking about works for the sake of works or for credit and accolades. But rather, works that are motivated by our faith and love for God.
- If the students have already gone through the **Transform your nature using Jesus as your example** semester of material, feel free to reference the semester (either as a whole or individual parts) and/or mention that the group will dive deeper into what it practically means to transform your nature using Jesus as your example in the upcoming semester.
- Ask the students if they think just attending church is enough to be considered 'living your faith.'
- After the students have responded, share the following quote from Billy Sunday (an American athlete and evangelist that lived 1862-1935) - "Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you an automobile."

- For the sake of preparing for the discussion, the full Bible passage is included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy.
- For Your Journey – Episode 27 is 7:19 long. If you don't have time to watch it in class, consider sending it to the students in the day or two after the discussion to serve as a follow up and/or include the link in the follow up parent email.
- Similar For Your Journey episodes are below. If the facilitator feels a different episode is more suitable for the group, they can be swapped out.
 - [Episode 23 – Aligning our Lives \(to the gospel\)](#)
 - [Episode 26 – Practice and Profession \(credible witnesses of Jesus\)](#)
- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

Student Question #3 What areas of life should I be aligning with God's purposes and teaching? What areas of life shouldn't I be influenced by God?

- Yes, this is slightly a trick question. We should strive to align every area of our lives to God's purposes and teaching.
- Ask a student, or group of students, to read 1 Corinthians 10:31
 - *"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."*
- Consider playing the For Your Journey – [Episode 27 – Aligning](#)
 - Ask the students what from the episode stood out to them.

Student Question #4 The Bible is a lot of reading, Jesus taught many things, and we've heard many preached sermons in our lifetime. How are we to remember all of it for our journey of developing our faith?

- Yes, the Bible teaches many things. The Bible gives us the Ten Commandments.
- Ask a student to read Catechism Q&A question 296
 - In the Ten Commandments, God is addressing all human beings. The individual bears responsibility to God for his conduct and the way he leads his life.
- The Ten Commandments are important and we should follow them. In Matthew, a lawyer tried to trick Jesus and get Him to make one of the ten more important than another.
 - Ask a student to read Matthew 22:35-40 (not included in facilitator guide due to length).
 - Jesus highlights loving God and others. If we keep those commandments, the Ten Commandments naturally are kept.
- Ask a student to read Colossians 3:12-17 (not included in facilitator guide due to length)
 - Ask the students to identify the actionable items from the verse. Consider writing them on a whiteboard or chartpaper.
 - Highlight the phrase "but above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."
- How can we apply the Ten Commandments and Christ's teaching of love in these spheres of influence? (consider writing ideas the group comes up with on a whiteboard or chart paper)
 - Family
 - Congregation
 - Community

Student Question #5 How often do I have to follow Jesus' example?

- Again, a slightly trick/rhetorical question to get the students to think and come to the conclusion, we should always follow Jesus' example.
- Ask a student to read Matthew 16:24
 - *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*
- Following Jesus is a decision that requires daily attention and focus.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the student(s) reveal that they don't feel loved, accepted, and supported in their congregation, a larger discussion may need to be had with the rector/district leader/apostle to address any specific concerns that arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In the Confirmation Vow, the believer declares to renounce satan and surrender to the Triune God. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep consistently focus on this declaration, suggest to the students that they consider reciting the Confirmation Vow every day. <p>Knowing about Jesus' teaching isn't enough. Jesus established His church and wants us to live out our faith in the context of community.</p> <p><u>Student Question #6 Why am I New Apostolic?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I have decided, or will decide, to be a Christian within the New Apostolic Church because I want to be prepared for the return of Christ in order to have eternal fellowship with God as soon as possible. ➤ In the congregation, I feel loved, accepted, and supported as I continue my journey of a deepening relationship with God. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the students don't feel that the congregation is a loving, accepting, and supporting environment, ask them to share their perspective (as much as they feel comfortable doing). We all contribute to a church in which people feel at home.
---	---

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 10 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>Close with the "I Wonder..." questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask a student to read an "I Wonder..." question, and invite another student to answer with an "I Believe..." statement or an "I Believe..." statement in their own words. ➤ As you review each question and answer, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions. <p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What does it mean to 'live your faith?' ➤ Why am I New Apostolic? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Living your faith means that your belief and trust in God influences your decisions and behavior. ➤ I have decided, or will decide, to be a Christian within the New Apostolic Church because I want to be prepared for the return of Christ in order to have eternal fellowship with God as soon as possible. <p>Point to Ponder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When we really believe what we say we believe, and really love our neighbor, then we will want to share our belief in Jesus and His gospel with others. <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read the White Hot Topic – Love Looks Good on You! from the IGNITE Bible, page 1253. Write a note as described in the "Live It" section.
----------------------------------	--

Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Point to Ponder...

Call to Action...

Embrace the promise of Christ's return: *Back to the Future*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What does it mean to 'live your faith?' ➤ Why am I New Apostolic? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Living your faith means that your belief and trust in God influences your decisions and behavior. ➤ I have decided, or will decide, to be a Christian within the New Apostolic Church because I want to be prepared for the return of Christ in order to have eternal fellowship with God as soon as possible.
Bible: Matthew 16:24, 22:35-40, Luke 9:23, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:12-17, James 2:14-26 Catechism Q&A questions: 296, 745-750	

1. What does it mean to live your faith?

2. Constantly transforming our motivations and behavior is tough. Isn't faith in Jesus enough?

3. What areas of life should I be aligning with God's purposes and teaching? What areas of life shouldn't I be influenced by God?

4. The Bible is a lot of reading, Jesus taught many things, and we've heard many preached sermons in our lifetime. How are we to remember all of it for our journey of developing our faith?

5. How often do I have to follow Jesus' example?

6. Why am I New Apostolic?

Point to Ponder: When we really believe what we say we believe, and really love our neighbor, then we will want to share our belief in Jesus and His gospel with others.

Call to Action: Read the **White Hot Topic – Love Looks Good on You!** from the IGNITE Bible, page 1253. Write a note as described in the "Live It" section.