

Invest in your spiritual health: *The Divine Service*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- Why do we have Divine Services?
- What is the format/liturgy of a Divine Service?
- What is my role in the Divine Service?

I believe...

- In the Divine Service, people come together to worship God, praise Him, thank Him, hear the Word of God, and receive the sacraments. (Catechism Q&A question 613)
- The liturgy of the divine service is the order and combination of music, prayers, Bible readings, preaching, dispensation of the sacraments, and blessings.
- Through prayerful preparation, the listener is to accept the word in faith and put it into practice in daily life in thought, word, and deed. (Catechism question Q&A 628)

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- For Your Journey
 - [Episode 9 – Why Go To Divine Service?](#)
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)

References:

- Bible: Numbers 6:22-27, Matthew 18: 20, Acts 2:42, Romans 10:17, 2 Corinthians 13: 14, Colossians 1:28, Hebrews 10:25
- Catechism Q&A questions 370, 613-630, 643-653

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

What do a Major League Baseball game and the Divine Service have in common? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ to find out.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- This message can be customized with local information as necessary.
- "For Your Journey" episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#).

Dear Parents,
This week we started a new semester of the Youth THRIVE small group curriculum, "Invest in your spiritual health". The specific topic this week was the Divine Service Experience. The Divine Service is an encounter between God and Man and we have an active role in the experience. Considering sharing with your child ways that you prepare for a Divine Service, or perhaps even coming up with a family routine to help each other prepare for Divine Services. A possible conversation starter is [Episode 9 of "For Your Journey"](#)
Partnering with you,
Your Youth Leaders

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.

- 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?

Ask the students, "How would you define 'health'?"

- Consider listing their answers on a whiteboard or chart paper
- After the students have had a chance to contribute some answers, supplement with the dictionary definition (from merriam-webster.com) :
 - Health
 - The condition of being sound in body, mind, or spirit
 - The general condition of the body (freedom from physical disease or pain)
 - A condition in which someone or something is thriving or doing well
- Clarify with the students that someone or something could be in good health or bad health. Something described as "healthy" is generally good as opposed to something described as "unhealthy".

Introduce the new semester. Say something like, "With this discussion we are starting the next semester of the Youth THRIVE small group curriculum, 'Invest in your spiritual health'. Why would it be important to invest in your spiritual health?"

This week's discussion will explore the divine service, which is one of the ways we invest in our spiritual health.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- Why do we have Divine Services?
- What is the format/liturgy of a Divine Service?
- What is my role in the Divine Service?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Student Question #1 Why do we have divine services?

- A divine service is the activity of God upon human beings. At the same time, it is a work of human beings for God.
- In the divine service, people come together to worship God, praise Him, and thank Him. They also gather in order to hear the word of God and receive the sacraments.
- A divine service is an encounter between God and man. In the divine service, the congregation perceives the presence of the triune God and experiences that God serves them in love.
- The service is "divine" because of the presence of God in the divine service through the invocation "In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit", the Trinitarian opening formula (Catechism Q&A question 617)
- In the divine service, we hear a sermon message. Since the sermon is inspired by God, listeners experience that the spoken word is "alive", and therefore that:
 - Questions of life and faith are answered
 - Faith is strengthened
 - Comfort is given
 - Confidence is imparted
 - Admonitions and help in decision-making are provided

The word from the altar provides orientation in order to live in accordance with the will of God. (Catechism Q&A question 624)

Student Question #2 What did divine services look like in the Bible?

- The term 'divine service' doesn't appear in the Bible, yet based on the previous definition of what a divine service is and why we have them, the event of a divine service definitely appear in the Bible.
 - In Old Testament times, the divine service consisted primarily of the sacrificial service, in which the priests would bring gifts to God. They also had the commission to impart the blessing of God to the people, like in Numbers 6:22-27. (Catechism Q&A question 614)
 - In New Testament times, Jesus' teaching, death, resurrection, ascension, and promise to return impacted peoples' encounters with God. Particularly after Jesus' death, gatherings of the early Christian congregations consisted of the proclamation of the gospel, the professions of the congregation, collective prayers, hymns, and the celebration of Holy Communion. (Catechism Q&A question 615)

Student Question #3 What does 'liturgy' mean? Why do we need a liturgy?

- Liturgy is the customary public worship performed by a religious group, according to its beliefs, customs and traditions. As a religious occurrence, liturgy is a communal response to and participation in, the sacred through activity reflecting praise, thanksgiving, supplication or repentance. (Wikipedia)

- The word "liturgy" has its origin in Greek words meaning 'public workings' or 'the participation of the people'.
- A liturgy helps create order, structure, and security through repeated and established formulas so that people can participate in the overall experience.
 - From the pre-discussion text message: even sporting events have a form of liturgy.
 - If the students have ever been to a baseball game before or have seen one on TV (particularly a professional baseball game), they know that there is a set order to what happens at that experience:
 - The National Anthem is sung and people know to stand up, remove their hat if they are wearing one, and perhaps sing along.
 - The first pitch is ceremoniously thrown out by a celebrity or some public figure
 - The actual game starts
 - Perhaps there is a team chant or hand motion
 - At the 7th inning, everyone stands up and sings a song (Take me out to the ballgame) for the 7th inning stretch
 - Not only is there an order to what happens, there are other components that contribute to the liturgy of the experience:
 - Perhaps there are team colors or other garments that spectators wear at the ballgame
 - Perhaps there are certain foods that are only eaten at the ballgame
 - Overall, the order of events, the music, the food, the clothing all contribute to the experience. Having certain elements repeated help create order and provide security to spectators because they are able to know what to expect from the experience.
 - Just like if you were to bring a friend to their first ballgame and explain what was happening, you would most likely explain to a friend what was happening if you brought them to their first divine service as well. After someone has experienced it, they are able to know what to expect because the order is established.

Student Question #4 What is the format / liturgy of the divine service?

- The liturgy of the divine service is the order and combination of music, prayers, Bible readings, preaching, dispensation of the sacraments, and blessings.

- Consider writing the youth's answers to Student Question #5 on a whiteboard or chart paper as they contribute ideas.

Student Question #5 What is my role in the divine service?

- Through prayerful preparation, the listener is to accept the word in faith and put it into practice in daily life in thought, word, and deed. (Catechism Q&A question 628).
- Like so much in life, what we get out of a divine service will be determined by how much we have put into the divine service: pre-service preparation, in service participation (listening, note-taking, singing, praying, etc.), and post-service (application to our life; change in our thoughts, words, deeds)

Student Question #6 What are ways to prepare for the divine service?

Ask the students to contribute ideas. After the students have had an opportunity to list a few, affirm and/or supplement with tactics from the below list:

- Already during the week, pray for the upcoming divine service
- Through prayer and contemplation, identify parts of yourself that need God's intervention or truth (ask God to reveal what He wants you to learn through the divine service)
- Arrive early enough to quiet your mind and be ready to receive from God
- Arrive early enough to participate in the worship experience
- Reduce distractions like cell phones or other technology
- Pray for the minister holding the service
- Take all opportunities to attend divine services
- Come to the divine service with a sincere desire to know God's word
- Prepare your heart before you hear the message
- Reflect on how the message applies to you
- Pray that God will grant you a will and ability to put into practice what you hear in the divine service
- Reflect on the week and be repentant for moments that go against God's will
- Contemplate the sacrifice of Christ and ask to experience His strength, presence, and virtue through the celebration of Holy Communion
- Read the words of the hymns that will be sung that day
 - Sometimes the headings or margins of a song show if a song is based on Scripture.

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

Facilitator Notes:

Wrap up the lesson with how practicing the discipline of submission can deepen our relationship with God.

Close with the "I Wonder...." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to renounce Satan and surrendering themselves to God in obedience. We gain strength to renounce Satan and surrender to God in the divine services.

I wonder...

- Why do we have Divine Services?
- What is the format/liturgy of a Divine Service?
- What is my role in the Divine Service?

I believe...

- In the divine service, people come together to worship God, praise Him, thank Him, to hear the word of God and to receive the sacraments (Catechism Q&A question 613)
- The liturgy of the divine service is the order and combination of music, prayers, Bible readings, preaching, dispensation of the sacraments, and blessings.
- Through prayerful preparation, the listener is to accept the word in faith and put it into practice in daily life in thought, word, and deed (Catechism Q&A question 628)

Point to Ponder....

Another point to appreciate about the liturgy is how it is rooted in tradition and links us to our past. There is an element of heritage knowing that Christians, and perhaps some of our own family, have brought praise to God in worship, said prayers, received blessings, and celebrated Holy Communion together in the context of a divine service, like we do today.

A Call to Action....

This week, commit to at least one of the tips from question #6 as a way to prepare for upcoming divine services. Document afterwards how that tip impacted your divine service experience.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *The Divine Service*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do we have Divine Services? ➤ What is the format/liturgy of a Divine Service? ➤ What is my role in the Divine Service? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In the Divine Service, people come together to worship God, praise Him, thank Him, hear the Word of God, and receive the sacraments. (Catechism Q&A question 613) ➤ The liturgy of the divine service is the order and combination of music, prayers, Bible readings, preaching, dispensation of the sacraments, and blessings. ➤ Through prayerful preparation, the listener is to accept the word in faith and put it into practice in daily life in thought, word, and deed. (Catechism Q&A question 628)
References: Bible: Numbers 6:22-27, Matthew 18: 20, Acts 2:42, Romans 10:17, 2 Corinthians 13: 14 ,Colossians 1:28, Hebrews 10:25; Catechism Q&A questions 370, 613-630, 643-653	

1. Why do we have divine services?

2. What did divine services look like in the Bible?

3. What does 'liturgy' mean? Why do we need a liturgy?

4. What is the format / liturgy of the divine service?

5. What is my role in the divine service?

6. What are ways to prepare for the divine service?

Point to Ponder: Another point to appreciate about the liturgy is how it is rooted in tradition and links us to our past. There is an element of heritage knowing that Christians, and perhaps some of our own family, have brought praise to God in worship, said prayers, received blessings, and celebrated Holy Communion together in the context of a divine service, like we do today.

Call to Action: This week, commit to at least one of the tips from question #6 as a way to prepare for upcoming divine services. Document afterwards how that tip impacted your divine service experience.

Invest in your spiritual health: *Introduction to Spiritual Disciplines*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- The NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- What are spiritual disciplines?
- Why do spiritual disciplines need to be a priority in my life?

I believe...

- Spiritual disciplines are behaviors and activities that help us train ourselves to be practically equipped to be sustainably engaged in a deepening relationship with God.
- We want to deepen our relationship with God because we love Him and want to be with Him forever. Our love for Him and desire to connect are motivating factors for our desire to exercise spiritual disciplines.

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 1](#)
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)

References:

- Bible: Matthew 4:2, Luke 5:16, Luke 6:12, John 4:23-24, John 7:15, 1 Timothy 4:7-8

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

What is needed in order to exercise? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ to share your thoughts.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- This message can be customized with local information as necessary.
- The NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#).

Dear Parents,
This week we discussed spiritual disciplines and why they are important to our ongoing spiritual development. The discussion centered around 1 Timothy 4:7-8. Consider reading this passage together with your child and discuss what 'exercise yourself towards godliness' means to you. Another conversation starter about spiritual disciplines is the [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 1](#) video.

Partnering with you,
Your Youth Leaders

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.

- 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?

Remind the students that the previous session introduced the new semester "Invest in your spiritual health" and the students helped define "health". Now ask the students, "What is needed in order to exercise?" (from the pre-discussion message)

- Consider listing their answers on a whiteboard or chart paper
- After the students have had a chance to contribute some answers, supplement with the below points:
 - Exercise
 - Equipment (weights, treadmill, etc.)
 - Time
 - Desire/will/intention to exercise

This week's discussion will explore spiritual disciplines and exercise toward godliness.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- What are spiritual disciplines?
- Why do spiritual disciplines need to be a priority in my life?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- *Practically*: in a way that is reasonable or logical; in a practical way; not theoretical
- *Sustainably*: in a way that can be maintained at a certain rate or level

- Ask a student to read 1 Timothy 4:7-8 from their Bible:
 - *"But reject profane and old wives' fables, **and exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.**"* (emphasis added)

Student Question #1 How does someone exercise toward godliness ?

- Spiritual disciplines and habits help exercise toward godliness

Student Question #2 What are spiritual disciplines?

- Spiritual disciplines are behaviors and activities that help us train ourselves to be practically equipped to be sustainably engaged in a deepening relationship with God.
 - Consider asking some of the below follow-up questions:
 - What are some other behaviors and activities that have become habits in your life?
 - How did these behaviors become habits?
 - Can a behavior and activity be practical, but not sustainable?
 - What is an example?
 - Can a behavior and activity be practical and sustainable, but not help deepen a relationship with God?
 - What is an example?

Student Question #3 Why do spiritual disciplines need to be a priority in my life?

- Spiritual disciplines help us develop intimacy with God
 - They create the space for us to connect with God and allow Him to speak in us and through us.
 - The goal isn't to accomplish the behavior or habit as if we're 'earning' anything. This treats the spiritual discipline in a legalistic way as something on a 'to do' list rather than in an authentic approach to connecting with God
- Spiritual disciplines help us become like Christ (Transform our nature using Jesus as our example)
 - Jesus practiced spiritual disciplines throughout His life:
 - Worship – John 4:23-24
 - Prayer – Luke 6:12
 - Study of Scripture – John 7:15
 - Fasting – Matthew 4:2
 - Solitude – Luke 5:16
 - In all things, Jesus perfectly modeled how we should think, act, and feel. Through spiritual disciplines, Jesus demonstrates how to best connect with God, the Father.

- Refer to some of the points from the 'Hook' activity regarding what is needed for exercise.
- Refer back to 1 Timothy 4:7-8 if needed

Student Question #4 How are physical exercises/disciplines SIMILAR to spiritual exercise/disciplines?

- Like physical exercises and disciplines, spiritual exercises and disciplines require intention and desire to grow, time, dedication, and perhaps equipment (Bible, journal, music, divine service experience, etc.).
- Both types of exercises contribute to health and growth.

Student Question #5 How are physical exercises/disciplines DIFFERENT from spiritual exercise/disciplines?

- Physical exercises and disciplines are for the growth and development of our bodies, whereas spiritual exercises and disciplines help us connect with God and grow and develop spiritually.
- Spiritual growth has present and eternal impact, whereas physical growth and development is restricted to this earth.

Corporate and personal

- The spiritual disciplines can be exercised in a group or in private. It is important to highlight the need for both. While God has given us a community of believers to help us on our journey of transforming our nature, we are ultimately responsible for our spiritual health. We can't blame others if we don't have the time to exercise spiritual disciplines (pray, worship, study Scripture, etc.).
- We come together on a Sunday to do, in a group, what we do individually all week (pray, worship, meditate, learn from Scripture, etc.).

Throughout this semester we will be exploring the spiritual disciplines of:

- Submission to God's will
- Prayer
- Studying Scripture
- Simplicity
- Worship
- Fasting
- Service
- Silence and Solitude

Ask the students which discipline(s) intrigue them the most and what about those disciplines they hope to learn.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- The NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube channel](#) and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#).

If there is time, consider the [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 1](#) video, which also introduces spiritual disciplines.

Close with the “I Wonder....” questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to renounce Satan and surrendering themselves to God in obedience. We gain strength to renounce Satan and surrender to God by deepening our relationship with God through spiritual disciplines and habits.

I wonder...

- What are spiritual disciplines?
- Why do spiritual disciplines need to be a priority in my life?

I believe...

- Spiritual disciplines are behaviors and activities that help us train ourselves to be practically equipped to be sustainably engaged in a deepening relationship with God.
- We want to deepen our relationship with God because we love Him and want to be with Him forever. Our love for Him and desire to connect are motivating factors for our desire to exercise spiritual disciplines.

Point to Ponder....

What are the biggest obstacles that stand in the way of making spiritual disciplines a part of our daily lives? How can we eliminate these obstacles?

A Call to Action....

Over the course of this semester, the discussions will revolve around specific spiritual disciplines. Already now, consider making a ‘spiritual health plan’ that you can develop and commit to, just like someone would make a health plan for their physical body.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *Introduction to Spiritual Disciplines*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are spiritual disciplines? ➤ Why do spiritual disciplines need to be a priority in my life? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Spiritual disciplines are behaviors and activities that help us train ourselves to be practically equipped to be sustainably engaged in a deepening relationship with God. ➤ We want to deepen our relationship with God because we love Him and want to be with Him forever. Our love for Him and desire to connect are motivating factors for our desire to exercise spiritual disciplines.
References: Matthew 4:2, Luke 5:16, Luke 6:12, John 4:23-24, John 7:15, 1 Timothy 4:7-8	

1. How does someone exercise toward godliness?

2. What are spiritual disciplines?

3. Why do spiritual disciplines need to be a priority in my life?

4. How are physical exercises/disciplines **SIMILAR** to spiritual exercise/disciplines?

5. How are physical exercises/disciplines **DIFFERENT** from spiritual exercise/disciplines?

Point to Ponder: What are the biggest obstacles that stand in the way of making spiritual disciplines a part of our daily lives? How can we eliminate these obstacles?

Call to Action: Over the course of this semester, the discussions will revolve around specific spiritual disciplines. Already now, consider making a 'spiritual health plan' that you can develop and commit to, just like someone would make a health plan for their physical body.

Invest in your spiritual health: *Perfect Submission*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is submission? ➤ What should I submit to? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Submission means having the willingness to voluntarily submit to Christ and other proper authorities. Thus, we make a commitment and resolve to make God's will higher than ours. ➤ As a believer, I am expected to submit to God's will and the teachings of the gospel. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Blindfolds (something like a bandana or a scarf) ➤ Maze printout ➤ Pencils/pens ➤ Ten Commandments printout (optional) ➤ Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.) ➤ Music video <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Take my life" by Christ Tomlin - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4ZxAAMLhcs <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: Exodus 20:1-17, Matthew 5-7, John 14:15, Acts 9:1-19
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PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

	<p>What do you think when you hear the word "submission"? This week we will be discussing the discipline of submission and what we submit to in life. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.</p>
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POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Facilitator Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder..." questions are about the discipline of submission, what it is and to what/whom we submit. One of the authorities that we are to submit to is our parents or guardians. Have an open discussion with your student about the rules that you enforce as a parent, especially the rules that maybe your student does not understand or disagrees with. Talk through these rules with them, explaining your reasoning for why they exist and how they are there to help them. You could also talk with your student about commands that God has for His people, and discuss if some are easier to follow than others, and why.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (up to 10 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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?
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HOOK (up to 10 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. To help get the conversation going, you could ask the student who was blindfolded what it was like to have to follow the leader's instructions in order to complete the maze. Was it hard or easy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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? <p>Put the students into pairs. One student will be the leader, and the other will wear the blindfold.</p> <p>After the student puts the blindfold on and has a pencil/pen, the leader has to guide the blindfolded student through the maze handout by giving instructions. (Make sure the blindfolded student doesn't see the maze beforehand.)</p> <p>After each blindfolded student completes the maze being guided by their leader, the pairs should come back into one group and discuss how they did on the mazes, and if the blindfolded student was able to follow the leader's instructions.</p>
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SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students. 	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is submission? ➤ What should I submit to?
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LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Submit</i> means to surrender to or yield to something. If you need more background on this Bible story, or it seems that the students don't understand, 	<p><u>Student Question #1</u> What is submission?</p> <p>Submission means having the willingness to voluntarily submit to Christ and other proper authorities.</p> <p>Read together Acts 9:1-19.</p>
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<p>you can also read or summarize the Flashpoint from the IGNITE Bible on page 1143.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be helpful to have a reference the Ten Commandments on page 253 of the Catechism Q&A book. • 10th Article of Faith: I believe that I am obliged to obey the worldly authorities provided no godly laws are thereby transgressed. 	<p>After reading the Bible passage, ask the students: How was submission displayed in this story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Saul/Paul displayed submission, after recognizing the Lord was speaking to him, by asking Jesus, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Paul then did what was asked of him, even though it meant he had to completely change the way he lived his life. ➤ Ananias displayed submission because even though he was scared of Saul, whom he knew was persecuting Christians, he did what the Lord asked him and went to heal Saul/Paul of his blindness. <p>Ask the students: What did Saul/Paul and Ananias have to do about their own wills in order to submit to Jesus?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They made God's will more important than their own will. ➤ If God's will hadn't been more important, then they never would have done what Jesus asked them to do. ➤ Therefore, when we submit to God, we make a commitment and resolve to make God's will higher than ours. ➤ Sometimes, submission to God means that we deny ourselves what we want (also known as self-denial). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What did Saul/Paul and Ananias deny themselves in this Bible story? <p><u>Student Question #2</u> What should I submit to?</p> <p>In the story from Acts 9, we see that Saul/Paul and Ananias submitted to Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Most importantly, as believers, we are expected to submit to God's will and the teachings of the gospel.</p> <p>Ask the students: Are there other authorities we are supposed to submit to? Who? Let's read the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20:1-17 to help answer this question.</p> <p>Ask the students: Who is mentioned in the Ten Commandments that we should submit to?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God ➤ Our parents/guardians ➤ Our neighbor ➤ The government and others who uphold the law (i.e. police) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The students could say this as an answer based on the commandment to not steal or murder, etc. ○ You should also reference the Tenth Article of Faith to support this answer. <p>It's important to note that, above all, we submit to God. His will should come before our own will or the will of others.</p>
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- There can be many more answers to this question, these are just a few possible answers.

Student Question #3 Why is it important to recognize that I should submit to these authorities?

When we recognize that there are authorities we should submit to, we learn a few things.

Ask the students: What can we learn?

- We learn to have humbleness.
- We learn to be selfless.
- We learn to let go of our pride or ego.
- We learn to respect the guidance and opinions of others.
- We learn to be more obedient. Practicing the discipline of submission is hard, but the more you do it, the easier it can become.
- We learn more about God – about His will and His plans for our lives.
- We learn that God's commands are for our own good.

Student Question #4 What does it look like when I submit to God?

Listen to the song "Take my life" by Chris Tomlin.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4ZxAAMLhcs>

Ask the students: Looking at the lyrics of the verses in this song, what are some ways that we can submit to God?

- We can praise God with our actions.
- We are willing to do what He asks us.
- We worship and profess Him.
- We talk about God with others.
- We offer and give our money, time, energy, and wisdom.
- We submit our will to His, meaning we deny ourselves.

Ask the students: Are there other ways that we can submit to God and other proper authorities? Think about outward actions (such as doing what your parents tell you to do) and inward feelings (such as learning to be more humble).

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

Facilitator Notes:

Wrap up the lesson with how practicing the discipline of submission can deepen our relationship with God.

Close with the "I Wonder...." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God in obedience.

I wonder...

- What is submission?
- What should I submit to?

I believe...

- Submission means having the willingness to voluntarily submit to Christ and other proper authorities. Thus, we make a commitment and resolve to make God's will higher than ours.
- As a believer, I am expected to submit to God's will and the teachings of the gospel.

Point to Ponder....

- Sometimes it can be difficult to not think of submission as always having to give up what you want. This can make submitting to God and others hard because you don't want to be restricted by them. However, submission is not a loss of identity or a type of "slavery." Instead, submission to God in all of your relationships helps you to be free of sin and helps you discover the good plans that God has for you. Submitting to God deepens our relationship with Him, and submitting to other proper authorities frees us from pride or arrogance and helps us to be more content with them.

A Call to Action....

In John 14:15, Jesus says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Read Matthew 5-7. In these chapters, Jesus teaches the gathered people about what His followers look like (i.e. what commands they should keep). Write down at least five of these commands and write about how each of these commands could help you submit to God and strengthen your relationship with Him.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *Perfect Submission*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is submission? ➤ What should I submit to? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Submission means having the willingness to voluntarily submit to Christ and other proper authorities. Thus, we make a commitment and resolve to make God's will higher than ours. ➤ As a believer, I am expected to submit to God's will and the teachings of the gospel.
References: Exodus 20:1-17, Matthew 5-7, John 14:15, Acts 9:1-19	

1. What is submission?

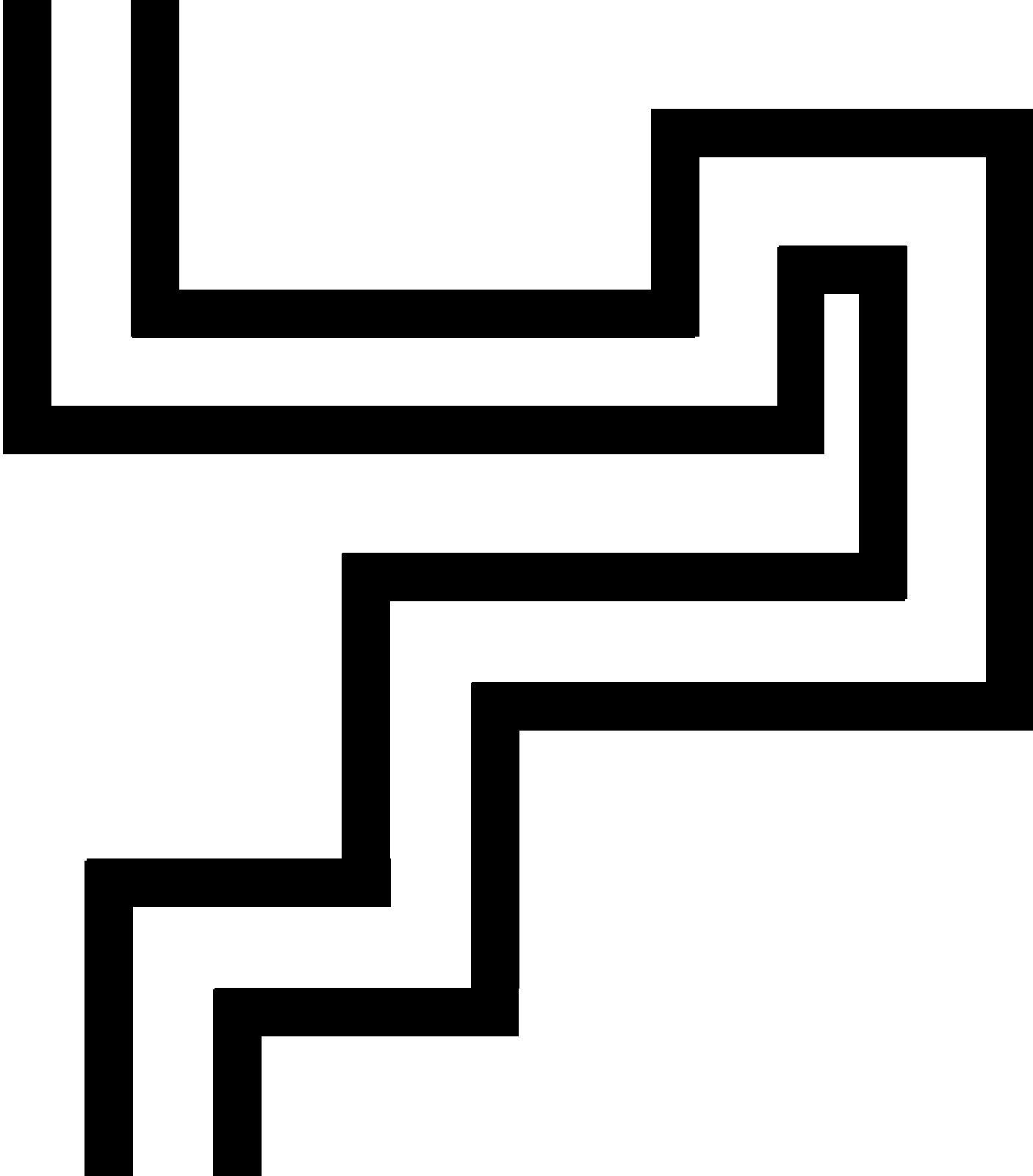
2. What should I submit to?

3. Why is it important to recognize that I should submit to these authorities?

4. What does it look like when I submit to God?

Point to Ponder: Sometimes it can be difficult to not think of submission as always having to give up what you want. This can make submitting to God and others hard because you don't want to be restricted by them. However, submission is not a loss of identity or a type of slavery. Instead, submission to God in all of your relationships helps you to be free of sin and helps you discover the good plans that God has for you. Submitting to God deepens our relationship with Him, and submitting to other proper authorities frees us from pride or arrogance and helps us to be more content with them.

Call to Action: In John 14:15, Jesus says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Read Matthew 5-7. In these chapters, Jesus teaches the gathered people about what His followers look like (i.e. what commands they should keep). Write down at least five of these commands and write about how each of these commands could help you submit to God and strengthen your relationship with Him.



Invest in your spiritual health by: *Disciplined in prayer*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

I wonder...

- What is prayer?
- How did Jesus pray?
- How can my relationship with God deepen through my prayers?

I believe...

- Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to enter into contact with Him. (Catechism Q&A question 715)
- Jesus prayed regularly and authentically in seeking a connection with His Father.
- Prayer strengthens faith and trust in God, and provides the assurance of security in God. (Catechism Q&A question 728)

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- Chart paper or whiteboard and markers
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)
- "What is Prayer?" video
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LG_3pX88fM

References:

- Bible:
 - Elements of a prayer: 1 Chronicles 29:10-14, Psalm 51, Colossians 4:2, 1 John 1:9
 - Jesus' prays: Matthew 26:39, Luke 5:16, Luke 9:28, Luke 11:5-13, Luke 18:1-8, Luke 18:10-14, John 17
 - Other: Matthew 6:8-13, John 16:23, Acts 2:24-26, Romans 8:14-17 and 26-27, 2 Corinthians 12:7-9, 1 John 5:14-15
- Catechism Q&A questions: 630-642, 715-720, 722-728

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

"Prayer is a genuine exchange with God." What does that mean? This week we will be talking about the discipline of prayer. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary.

Dear Parents,
This week the "I wonder..." questions are about prayer. Take some time this week to discuss with your student your thoughts on prayer: How often do you pray personally? As a family? What prompts you to pray? Why do you think it's important to pray?
As always, if you have any question about the topic, feel free to contact us.
Your Youth Leaders

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (up to 10 minutes)	
Facilitator Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. Have a large piece of paper and markers ready to write. For additional information on the Lord's Prayer, please see Catechism Q&A questions 630-642 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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? ➤ The Lord's Prayer Write out the phrases of the Lord's Prayer (as listed below and found in Matthew 6:8-13), then discuss as a group what each phrase means to the students and write down their answers. Review the following suggestions, and then answer the question at the bottom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Father – <i>God has adopted us into His family through Christ (Romans 8:14-17)</i> Hallowed be Your Name – <i>worship and adoration of the holiness of God, a reminder that we must have the proper attitude and respect for the name of God</i> Your Kingdom come – <i>we should live as citizens of God's kingdom already today – Jesus is King in our lives!</i> Your will be done – <i>we can talk to God about what we want, but we must trust that He will give the answer that is best for us.</i> Give us this day our daily bread – <i>we are dependent on God and ask Him to provide for our needs day to day</i> Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors – <i>we are sinful and need to confess our sins in repentance to God because we need His forgiveness and His strength to help us forgive others</i> Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one – <i>we ask God not to lead us to a place of testing (we can find examples in Scripture like Abraham and Jesus), and to protect us from the temptations of the evil one.</i> Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever – <i>these phrases return our focus to God. His kingdom has no end, He possesses all power in heaven and earth, His glory is forever.</i> Amen. – <i>So be it! Now I have to change so that I live in a way that is consistent with my prayer.</i> ➤ What does this prayer teach us? Why do you think we say it collectively every Sunday?

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- What is prayer?
- How did Jesus pray?
- How can my relationship with God deepen through my prayers?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- In each of the elements, you can read the Catechism Q&A answers with your students for more information.
- In *1 Chronicles 29:10-14*, David gives us a wonderful example of worship in the beginning of his prayer. Read it together and discuss all the attributes of God that David prays about.
- Read *Colossians 4:2* together – what does this one short verse teach us about prayer? What would it mean to pray for everything "with thanksgiving"?
- *Psalms 51* is a beautiful example of a prayer of confession. Read it together with your students. Discuss how they could use some of the same words in their own prayers.

Student Question #1 What is prayer?

- Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to enter into contact with Him. In prayer, the believer experiences: God is present, God hears, and God answers. (Catechism Q&A question 715)
- "Prayer is a genuine exchange with God." (CA Schneider) It is not just us speaking to God, but an exchange, a conversation. Why is this important?
- Prayer is necessary for our faith. (Catechism Q&A question 716) In prayer, we experience that God is a loving Father who provides strength and support. Prayer grants insight and knowledge into the nature of God.
- When we don't know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit helps us. (Romans 8:26-27)

Student Question #2 What are different elements of a prayer?

- Commonly used elements of a prayer are adoration and worship, thanksgiving, petitions, confession, and intercession (Catechism Q&A question 723)
- While every prayer doesn't need to have all of these elements, they do give us a certain foundation to build on – let's explore them a little more closely.
 - **Adoration and worship:** this is where we should start. Telling God what you love about Him and what He means to you puts you in the right perspective. It focuses our attention on who we are talking to. (Catechism Q&A question 724)
 - **Thanksgiving:** when we pray we should give thanks for everything that has been given to us by the goodness of God. (Catechism Q&A question 725)
 - **Petitions:** turning to God in petition makes it clear that He is the One we can go to in all situations. All difficulties are the same to God, no matter how big they seem to us. He is not distant or indifferent to His creation, but rather He accompanies us and protects us. (Catechism Q&A question 726)
 - **Confession:** 1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* We should confess our sins to God in prayer, possibly even every day, and ask for His forgiveness.
 - **Intercession:** we are not alone! God created us in relationship with those around us. Intercessions are expressions of our love for our neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 727) Jesus' intercessory prayer recorded in John 17 shows us how He approached His heavenly Father as an Advocate on behalf of the Apostles and the church. (Catechism Q&A question 720)

- Read *Luke 11:5-13*. The “friend” in this parable doesn’t seem to be much of a friend, seeing as at first he’s too lazy or sleepy to get up and help. At first this might seem like a strange comparison to our prayers to God – but read down to verse 13 where Jesus says, “...**how much more** will your heavenly Father give...” What does this tell us about God? What do we learn from Jesus’ comparisons to God and the friend, or the father in these verses?

Student Question #3 How did Jesus pray?

- Jesus prayed regularly and authentically in seeking a connection with His Father. (Catechism Q&A questions 718-719) We can find many examples of His prayers in Scripture:
 - Jesus prayed alone and often – *Luke 5:16*
 - Jesus prayed for others – *John 17*
 - Jesus prayed with others – *Luke 9:28*
 - Jesus taught persistence in prayer – *Luke 18:1-8, Luke 11:5-13*
 - Jesus taught humility in prayer – *Luke 18:10-14*
 - Jesus placed God’s will above His requests – *Matthew 26:39*

Student Question #4 How can my relationship with God deepen through my prayers?

- Prayer strengthens faith and trust in God, and provides the assurance of security in God. (Catechism Q&A question 728)
- Prayer helps us resist evil. Jesus prayed often when He was faced with difficulties and we can do the same.
- Ending our prayers with the words “in Jesus name” acknowledges our unworthiness to receive favor from God and our entire dependence on Jesus Christ. (John 16:23 / 1 John 5:14-15) When we pray in Jesus name, we have to think, is this something Jesus would advocate for on my behalf? Is this something that Jesus would pray for?
- God does not answer every prayer how or when we think He should. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 that he prayed often for “a thorn” to be removed from him and God did not remove it. **As we mature and grow in our relationship with God and learn more about Him, we will be able to trust His love and wisdom, even when we don’t understand His actions.**
- Our inner and outer posture when we pray: (Catechism Q&A question 722)
 - *Folding our hands*: this signifies that we have ceased other activity and are focused entirely on God
 - *Kneeling*: this signifies humbling ourselves before God
 - *Closing our eyes*: this signifies our intention to keep ourselves free from distractions

- Perhaps when we are children, our prayers focus a lot on ourselves, what we want or need. Praying through the Psalms is an exercise that can help us focus our prayers on God. Psalms has been a prayer book for the people of God since the time of David. (Catechism Q&A question 717) In Acts 2:24-26 we see an example of the first Christians praying the Psalms and Jesus Himself quoted Psalms when He cried out on the cross to His Father. There are a few ways that you can do this:
 - Pick a Psalm and start reading it, pause at every verse and turn it into a prayer. This is easier or more difficult depending on the Psalm you pick, but for example, if you read "*The Lord is my Shepherd...*" just those few words could you lead you to pray in thanksgiving for God's guidance and provision in your life. Or perhaps there is a specific issue that you need direction on this week. Or you could pray for the strength to submit your life to God as a sheep does to a shepherd. Or perhaps you have recently felt God's protection and could bring praise and thanksgiving for those moments.
 - The "Three R's" method – **Rejoice, Repent, Request**. Read a longer passage (perhaps an entire chapter of Psalms) and ask yourself these three questions: (1) What about this passage gives you a reason to **rejoice**, to give thanks and praise? (2) Is there something in the passage that reveals a sin in your life that should lead you to **repentance**? (3) Does the passage prompt you to make a **request** of God for yourself or others?

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

Facilitator Notes:

Spend some time discussing the following questions:

- Why should you start and end your day in prayer?
- Why pray before a meal?
- How can you turn your prayers into a more ongoing conversation with God?

If there is time, consider showing the "What is Prayer?" video. Whether there is time in the circle of the discussion or not, consider including the video in the follow up message to the parents and encourage them to use the video as a conversation starter.

- "What is Prayer?" video
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LG_3pX88fM

Close with the "I Wonder..." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God in belief and obedience.

I wonder...

- What is prayer?
- How did Jesus pray?
- How can my relationship with God deepen through my prayers?

I believe...

- Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to enter into contact with Him.
- Jesus prayed regularly and authentically in seeking a connection with His Father.
- Prayer strengthens faith and trust in God, and provides the assurance of security in God.

Point to Ponder...

- *"I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that He will guide me to do whatever I'm supposed to do, what I can do. I used to pray for answers, but now I'm praying for strength. I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things."*
 – Mother Teresa

A Call to Action...

- In the next week, take the time to pray through a Psalm. Write down the verses that you read and write your prayer to God next to them. Take time to reflect after your prayer: how was this prayer different from your prayer last week? Did praying through a Scripture passage help you to focus more on God?

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...

Invest in your spiritual health by: *Disciplined in prayer*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is prayer? ➤ How did Jesus pray? ➤ How can my relationship with God deepen through my prayers? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to enter into contact with Him. ➤ Jesus prayed regularly and authentically in seeking a connection with His Father. ➤ Prayer strengthens faith and trust in God, and provides the assurance of security in God.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible References: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Elements of a prayer:</u> 1 Chronicles 29:10-14, Psalm 51, Colossians 4:2, 1 John 1:9 ○ <u>Jesus' prays:</u> Matthew 26:39, Luke 5:16, Luke 9:28, Luke 11:5-13, Luke 18:1-8, Luke 18:10-14, John 17 ○ <u>Other:</u> Matthew 6:8-13, John 16:23, Acts 2:24-26, Romans 8:14-17 and 26-27, 2 Corinthians 12:7-9, 1 John 5:14-15 ➤ Catechism Q&A questions: 630-642, 715-720, 722-728 	

1. What is prayer?

2. What are different elements of a prayer?

3. How did Jesus pray?

4. How can my relationship with God deepen through my prayers?

Point to Ponder: *"I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that he will guide me to do whatever I'm supposed to do, what I can do. I used to pray for answers, but now I'm praying for strength. I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things."* – Mother Teresa

Call to Action: In the next week, take the time to pray through a Psalm. Write down the verses and write your prayer to God next to them. Take time to reflect after your prayer: how was this prayer different from your prayer last week? Did praying through a Scripture passage help you to focus more on God?

Invest in your spiritual health: *The B-I-B-L-E*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

I wonder...

- What is the Bible?
- Where did the Bible come from?
- Why is the Bible important to believers?

I believe...

- The Bible is a collection of writings about God's activity, promises, and commandments. The author of Holy Scripture is God. Human beings, whom the Holy Spirit inspired to this purpose, wrote down what God revealed. (Catechism Q&A questions 12- 13)
- The biblical writings were collected over the course of centuries through the will of God and human contemplations. (Catechism Q&A question 15)
- Jesus is the center of Scripture. For a believer of Jesus Christ, Scripture comforts and edifies, provides orientation and admonition, promotes knowledge and faith. (Catechism Q&A questions 25-26)

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)
- "What is the Bible?" video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ako6MSETeo4>

References:

- Bible: John 21: 25, 2 Timothy 3:10-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:11-13

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

Have you ever wondered about God? About Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? Where did you go to learn more about the Triune God? This week we will be talking about the Bible. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary.

Dear Parents,
 This week the "I wonder..." questions are about the Bible and its importance. The Bible is a gift from God to us so that we can learn about Him. This week consider having a discussion with your student about what the Bible teaches and how important it is to us as believers. As always, if you have any question about the topic, feel free to contact us.
 Your Youth Leaders

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (up to 10 minutes)	
Facilitator Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ako6MSETeo4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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? ➤ Play the video, "What is the Bible" by The Bible Project. ➤ Do you know what the Bible is and why it's so important for disciples of Jesus?
SET THE STAGE (1 minute)	
Facilitator Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students. 	I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the Bible? ➤ Where did the Bible come from? ➤ Why is the Bible important to believers?
LESSON (up to 25 minutes)	
Facilitator Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider writing the student's answers on a whiteboard, and supplement or summarize with the bullet points. 	Student Question #1 How would you explain what the Bible is to a friend? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Holy Scripture – The Bible – is a collection of writings about God's activity. ➤ Holy Scripture attest to the revelations of God. ➤ It consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. ➤ Through its pages, God teaches us about Himself – His nature and His plan of salvation. ➤ It is a testimony of the revelation of God without claiming to be a complete account of all of God's deeds. ➤ The Bible is the foundation for the doctrine of the New Apostolic Church.

- Read the **White Hot Topic – 2 Timothy 3:16-17** on page 1274 of your IGNITE Bible together.

Student Question #2 Who is the author of the Bible?

- The author of Holy Scripture is God.
- Human beings, whom the Holy Spirit inspired to this purpose, wrote down that which God revealed.
- The Biblical books bear the mark of their respective authors as well as the worldview and experiences of their time.
- God is the author of the Bible. He has seen to it that the texts of the biblical books have remained untainted over the centuries.

Student Question #3 How was the Bible put together?

- The biblical writings were collected over the course of centuries.
- The Christian canon of the Old Testament is based on Hebrew canon of Judaism, the writings of which are presumed to have come into being over a timespan of about 1,000 years.
- The writings of the New Testament came into being over the time of approximately 70 years.
- In order to preserve and hand down these original accounts of Christian faith, they were compiled into a collection that ultimately came to be certified as “canonical” in the course of various synods.
- Later writings of the Old Testament contained in many editions of the Bible as also known as “Apocrypha”. These are an important binding agent between the Old and New Testaments. In the New Apostolic Church these later writings of the Old Testament are just as binding for faith and doctrine as all other writings of the Old Testament.

Student Question #4 What does God teach us in the Old and New Testaments?

- The Old Testament contains vivid accounts of the creation and the first human beings, as well as texts concerning the origins and history of the people of Israel. It also contains songs of praise to God, as well as admonitions and promises to people.
- The Old Testament is comprised of seventeen historical books, five doctrinal books, and seventeen prophetic books.
- In the New Testament, the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles give an account of Jesus Christ, His Apostles, and the early Christian congregations. It also contains letters from the Apostles, which were written to congregations as well as individual persons. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, the only prophetic book of the New Testament deals with the return of Jesus Christ and other events of the future.
- The New Testament consists of five historical books, 21 doctrinal books, and one prophetic book.

Student Question #5 How does spending time in the Bible help you INVEST in your spiritual health?

- Holy Scripture is of great significance in the life of the believer: it comforts and edifies, provides orientation and admonition, and promotes knowledge and faith.
- The Bible focuses your life on Jesus Christ. The central element of Holy Scripture is Jesus Christ. The Old Testament prepare the way for the arrival of the Messiah and the New Testament teaches of Jesus' activity in the present and the future.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- **Hebrews 4:12:** For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Wrap up the lesson with this question: Did you see how valuable the Bible is to your life as a follower of Jesus Christ? What should we be doing with our Bibles? Are you willing to spend time reading God's Word?

Close with the "I Wonder..." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God in belief and obedience.

I wonder...

- What is the Bible?
- Where did the Bible come from?
- Why is the Bible important to believers?

I believe...

- The Bible is a collection of writings about God's activity, promises, and commandments. The author of Holy Scripture is God. Human beings, whom the Holy Spirit inspired to this purpose, wrote down what God revealed. (Catechism Q&A questions 12- 13)
- The biblical writings were collected over the course of centuries through the will of God and human contemplations. (Catechism Q&A question 15)
- Jesus is the center of Scripture. For a believer of Jesus Christ, Scripture comforts and edifies, provides orientation and admonition, promotes knowledge and faith. (Catechism Q&A questions 25-26)

Point to Ponder...

- How does the Bible affect my relationship with God?

A Call to Action...

- Take some time for prayerful reflection and introspection, and ask God what He is teaching you in the Bible.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *The B-I-B-L-E*

<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the Bible? ➤ Where did the Bible come from? ➤ Why is the Bible important to believers? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Bible is a collection of writings about God's activity, promises, and commandments. The author of Holy Scripture is God. Human beings, whom the Holy Spirit inspired to this purpose, wrote down what God revealed. (Catechism Q&A questions 12- 13) ➤ The biblical writings were collected over the course of centuries through the will of God and human contemplations. (Catechism Q&A question 15) ➤ Jesus is the center of Scripture. For a believer of Jesus Christ, Scripture comforts and edifies, provides orientation and admonition, promotes knowledge and faith. (Catechism Q&A questions 25-26)
<p>References: John 21:25, 2 Timothy 3:10-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:11-13</p>	

1. How would you explain what the Bible is to a friend?

2. Who is the author of the Bible?

3. How was the Bible put together?

4. What does God teach us in the Old and New Testaments?

5. How does spending time in the Bible help you INVEST in your spiritual health?

Point to Ponder: How does the Bible affect my relationship with God?

Call to Action: Take some time for prayerful reflection and introspection, and ask God what He is teaching you in the Bible.

Invest in your spiritual health: *Studying the Bible*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- The NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- Why should I study the Bible?
- How should I study the Bible?

I believe...

- I want to study the Bible to be confident in the truths of God.
- One method to study the Bible is SOIA:
SURVEY: What is the context?
OBSERVE: What is happening? Who? Where? When?
INTERPRET: Why is this happening? What truth is being revealed through the experience in the Bible?
APPLICATION: What does this mean for me in my life? How will I apply this truth?

Materials:

- IGNITE bible pages 18A-34A (to show the various topics the Bible addresses and can provide insight)
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 2](#)
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)

References:

Bible: Deuteronomy 11:18-23; Joshua 1:8; Proverbs 2:1-6; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:10-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:11-13; Revelation 1:3

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

The Bible is a large collection of books that teaches us about God. It's so big that it can be intimidating and it can cause you to be hesitant to study its contents. But its Words are vital for our journey as disciples of Jesus. This week we will be talking about how to study the Bible. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary
- Consider including the video link from above for the parents to use as a conversation starter with their child.

Dear Parents,
This week the "I wonder..." questions are about studying the Bible. Taking time to study God's Word in the Bible is vital to our lives as disciples of Jesus. This week consider having a discussion with your student about taking time to study the Bible. As always, if you have any question about the topic, feel free to contact us.

Your Youth Leaders

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.

- 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?
- Ask a student to read the "**White Hot Topic** – The Bible is the Truth" on page 1119 of the IGNITE Bible
- After the "Get it" and "Live it" sections are read, summarize with something like, "The Bible contains God's truth and we want to study what is true about God's character and His plan of salvation."

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- Why should I study the Bible?
- How should I study the Bible?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Consider writing the student's answers on a whiteboard, and supplement or summarize with the bullet points.
- Consider the **Soul Fuel** on page 1315 of the IGNITE Bible – 2 Peter 1:20-21

Student Question #1 With everything else I have going on, why would I take time out to give my attention to the Bible?

- The Bible is God's word to us and for us. It's the most important book that has ever been written from humankind.
- Within its pages you'll find answers for all of life's situations. (see 2 Peter 1:2-11)
- The Holy Scripture is divinely inspired, infallible, authoritative, truthful, and foundational for right belief. The Gospels teach us that Jesus saw the Bible to have all of these characteristics.

Student Question #2 How is the Bible divinely inspired?

- The Bible is divinely inspired because the author of its words is God.
- God initiated, superintended, and inspired the Scripture.
- According to the church father Origen (185-254), "the sacred volumes are fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and there is no passage either in the Law or the Gospel, or the writings of an Apostle, which does not proceed from the inspired source of Divine Truth."

Student Question #3 Is the Bible authoritative for my life today?

- As the Word of God, the Bible has authority over your life today when you humble yourself beneath its teaching.
- When you claim the Word as an authority over your life, you can live obediently to the will of God and find blessing.

Student Question #4 How do I know that the Bible is truthful?

- The Scripture is completely and totally truthful.
- If God is who He said He is and this is His word to us, then this will be something that is truthful for us.

Student Question #5 What are you building your belief system up on?

- Without the Bible, we cannot form a picture of God nor can we fully understand the nature of who God is without His self-revelation.
- We cannot just make stuff up about God.
- We need God to reveal himself to us and if this Scripture is God's word to us, then it is going to be foundational for a right belief and a right understanding of God.

Student Question #6 The Bible is such a large book, how do I go about studying it?

- There are many ways to study the Bible. There are several plans available online that will provide you with a guide on how to read in various different ways such as reading the entire Bible in a specific amount of time.
- The key to studying the Bible is setting time aside each day that works for you. Start with an amount of reading that is reasonable and focus on what God is teaching you in that chapter or verse.

Student Question #7 Is there an easy way to understand what God is saying in the Bible?

- Prior to studying the Scripture, take a moment to pray and ask God to open up the Words of the Bible to you through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- One way to go about studying the Bible is to use the SOIA method. SOIA is acronym that stands for Survey, Observe, Interpret, Application.
- S – Survey = What is the context? Who is the human author and to whom was the book or passage written too originally?
- O – Observe = What is happening? Who? Where? When?
- I – Interpret = Why is this happening? What truth is being revealed through the experience? What does this passage teach me about God?

- A – Application = What does this mean for me in my life? How can I apply this truth today?

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

Facilitator Notes:

- **Hebrews 4:12:** For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Wrap up the lesson with this question: Did you see how valuable the Bible is to your life as a follower of Jesus Christ? What should we be doing with our Bibles? Are you willing to spend time reading God's Word?

Close with the "I Wonder..." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God in belief and obedience.

I wonder...

- Why should I study the Bible?
- How should I study the Bible?

I believe...

- I want to study the Bible to be confident in the truths of God.
- A method to study the Bible is: SOIA (Survey, Observe, Interpret, Application)

Point to Ponder...

- How will regularly studying the Bible shape my understanding of who God is and the purposes He has for my life?

A Call to Action...

- Take some time to read the Bible, and ask God to help you understand what He has revealed about Himself in the passages you are reading.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *Studying the Bible*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why should I study the Bible? ➤ How should I study the Bible? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I want to study the Bible to be confident in the truths of God. ➤ A method to study the Bible is: SOIA (Survey, Observe, Interpret, Application)
References: Deuteronomy 11:18-23; Joshua 1:8; Proverbs 2:1-6; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:10-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:11-13; Revelation 1:3	

1. With everything else I have going on, why would I take time out to give my attention to the Bible?

2. How is the Bible divinely inspired?

3. Is the Bible authoritative for my life today?

4. How do I know that the Bible is truthful?

5. What are you building your belief system up on?

6. The Bible is such a large book, how do I go about studying it?

7. Is there an easy way to understand what God is saying in the Bible?

Point to Ponder: How will regularly studying the Bible shape my understanding of who God is and the purposes He has for my life?

Call to Action: Take some time to read the Bible, and ask God to help you understand what He has revealed about Himself in the passages you are reading.

Invest in Your Spiritual Health: *Keep it simple*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

I wonder...

- How can I make time for Christ?
- How can I learn to be happy with what I have?
- What should I get rid of?

I believe...

- When my life is Christ-centric, everything else will be added.
- Everything I have is a gift from God.
- Refusing to be a slave to anything but God, is freedom.

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Paper and pencil

References:

- Matthew 6:33, Matthew 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22, Luke 12:15-21, Luke 12:33, 1 Timothy 6:10

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

Read Luke 12:15. What would you consider to be an abundance of things? How much is too much? Join us _____ for small group as we discuss the discipline of simplicity.

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

Dear Parents,

This week the "I Wonder..." questions were - How can I make time for Christ? How can I learn to be happy with what I have? What should I get rid of? The spiritual discipline these questions surround is Simplicity. The goal of Simplicity can be summed up in a single phrase, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God". Discuss with your son or daughter what things in your life consume a lot of your time, energy and money. Ask your child the same question and discuss if any of these things bring you closer to our heavenly Father. Then talk about what you can give up and what you could do with the extra time, energy or money that will bring you closer to God. As always, if you have questions about the topic, feel free to contact us.

Your Youth Leaders

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.

- 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?

"The Simple Life" quiz:

Have students number their paper from 1-10, and ask the following questions. Student should write A or B. They should answer each question with complete honesty and choose the response that applies in most situations. Read the questions quickly and only once:

1. Do you dress each morning for A. fashion B. comfort
2. Do you use social media for A. comparing with friends B. communicating with friends
3. When you make a purchase do you A. buy the most expensive/popular version B. buy the most functional/affordable version
4. When your friends invite you out do you A. always say yes B. only say yes if your homework and chores are done
5. On a Saturday do you A. text friends and find out what everyone is doing as soon as you awake B. sleep in and spend the day as you want
6. How would you define a successful career A. you earn a large salary B. you enjoy going to work everyday
7. Would you rather receive a A. a pair of North Face mittens in a color you hate B. Target mittens in a color you love
8. What fills your calendar A. social events B. academic events
9. When you hear about a box office hit do you A. see it as soon as it hits the theater B. wait to rent it from Redbox or borrow it from the library
10. Do you A. buy your lunch B. bring a lunch

Ask students to count how many times they answered A and B and then share the following:

- Remind the students that the purpose of this exercise is to just get them thinking about decisions and behaviors. It isn't a comprehensive list of actions nor a scientific way to determine their entire worldview or motivations

If 5 -10 answers were A, you may be focused/driven by what others think or you
 If 5-10 answers were B, you may be very self-focused and not considerate of others

What's the point??

- The point of this activity is for students to begin searching their heart for why they do what they do.
- The Christian discipline of simplicity is an inward reality that results in an outward life-style. (ex. we cannot say we don't care what others think if we are checking social media every 5 minutes)
- Student should understand that The goal of simplicity is to increase our focus on Christ and our future in His Kingdom.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- How can I make time for Christ?
- How can I learn to be happy with what I have?
- What should I get rid of?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Read the story of the rich young man: Mark 10:17-22

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

¹⁷ Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God.¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "

²⁰ And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."

²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."

²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the following questions which can be found on the Student Copy of the lesson:

- Be sure the discussion around question 4 is about things that students love to do, have an intense interest in, or insist they must have.

Student Question #1 In verses 17-20, what do you think the rich young man understood as the necessary steps to attaining eternal life?

- He thought he could earn it just by "doing" something. We cannot earn our way into heaven no matter how many good deeds, or acts of service we perform.
- Following the commandments, attending all divine services, putting in an offering, serving in the congregation are necessary but do not guarantee eternal life.

Student Question #2 What do you think is necessary for eternal life?

- A pure heart
- A heart that seeks the kingdom of heaven first and foremost
 - Matthew 6:33, *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*
- A heart that puts no other desire before being near to God and the Lord Jesus for all eternity

Student Question #3 Read the same story in Matthew 19:16-22 and notice the difference between verse 21 in Matthew and verse 21 in Mark. How do they differ? What do you think the version in Mark is trying to convey?

- The difference lies in the words in Mark "Jesus looking at him, loved him,...".
- These words tell us that **Christ looks** deep into our hearts and knows what barriers or desires exist that keep us from seeking the kingdom of God. **Christ loves** us so much that he tells us what it is and asks us to cleanse our heart of it.

Student Question #4 Think about what most of your time, money, and thoughts are spent on, and write down the top 3. Could these be barriers?

Student Question #5 What would your response be if Christ asked you to give up these 3 items, or if He took them away?

Student Question #6 Do you think the message in this story is that wealth is a bad thing? Explain your answer.

- The message in this story is that Christ knows what barriers or desire reside in our heart, and He will make it known to us, if we ask.
- He does expect us to give it up.
- It does not mean that wealth is bad, but rather identifying what is holding us back from following Christ: an obsession about social media posts, FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out), video games, being popular, having the highest grade point average, being the most active in the congregation.....etc..
- When any of these become more important than our love for Christ and seeking His kingdom, they become a barrier, and we need to get rid of them.

- As you go through each principle, ask the students to refer back to their quiz answers. The principles will help students gain an understanding of how and why they make the decisions they make, and if their decisions have a positive or negative impact on their ability to seek God first.
- It is possible to do many of these 10 items without necessarily growing closer to God. Consider how to make sure that the students understand that simplifying your life does automatically make you closer to God, but merely gives you the chance (e.g. gives you more time) to do so. It is one thing to have a simpler life, and another to have a close relationship with God.

The Discipline of Simplicity has 10 guiding principles. These are not laws, but ways to help begin practicing simplicity in your life, and to make sure nothing becomes more important than seeking the kingdom of God....

1. Buy things for their usefulness, rather than their status.
2. Reject anything that is producing an obsession/addiction in you.
3. Develop a habit of giving things to which you are obsessively attached, away to someone who truly is in need (voluntary poverty).
4. Learn to be ok with the device you have even though it may not have the newest feature.
5. Learn to enjoy things without owning them (enjoy public parks, libraries, share things etc.).
6. Develop a deep appreciation for creation, walk when you can, listen to the birds, smell the flowers, etc..
7. Lend without expecting anything in return.
8. Speak with integrity and use plain honest speech, don't try to flatter, tell half-truths, don't use jargon to impress.
9. Reject anything that breeds the oppression of others (when buying something consider where it's made, by whom, and in what conditions do the laborers work).
10. Reject anything that distracts you from seeking first the kingdom of God (job, relationship, college choice, friends, etc.)

Ask student to go back to their quiz results and see if any of these guiding principles can help them to discern their heart. Let them share any insights/reactions they might have.

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

Facilitator Notes:

End the lesson with this quote and ask students to share what they think it means:

"It's not bad things that make people do bad things, but rather good things that make people do bad things."

- An unhealthy obsession with money, makes someone steal
- An unhealthy need for power/control leads someone to harm or kill
- An unhealthy need for status leads someone to lie or gossip
- Money, power and status are not bad things, but when they control the heart they can make/lead people do bad things

Close with the "I Wonder..." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students on their Confirmation day that they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves in belief in God.

I wonder...

- How can I make time for Christ?
- How can I learn to be happy with what I have?
- What should I get rid of?

I believe...

- When my life is Christ-centric, everything else will be added.
- Everything I have is a gift from god.
- Refusing to be a slave to anything but God, is freedom.

Point to Ponder...

- Think about how and why you make the decisions you make.

A Call to Action...

This week, choose one of the Discipline of Simplicity guiding principles and use it to make decisions this week. Be prepared to share with the group if it made life simple or more complicated, if it saved you money or caused you to spend more money, and did it free up time or take up time.

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...

Invest in Your Spiritual Health: *Keep it simple*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How can I make time for Christ? ➤ How can I learn to be happy with what I have? ➤ What should I get rid of? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When my life is Christ-centric, everything else will be added. ➤ Everything I have is a gift from God. ➤ Refusing to be a slave to anything but God, is freedom.
➤ References: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22, Luke 12:15-21, Luke 12:33, 1 Timothy 6:10	

- In verse 17-20, what do you think the rich young man understood as the necessary steps to attaining eternal life?

- What do you think is necessary for eternal life?

- Read the same story in Matthew 19:16-22 and notice the difference between verse 21 in Matthew and verse 21 in Mark. How do they differ? What do think the version in Mark is trying to convey?

- Think about what most of your time, money, and thoughts are spent on, and write down the top 3. Could these be barriers?

- What would your response be if Christ asked you to give up these 3 items, or if He took them away?

- Do you think the message in this story is that wealth is bad thing? Explain your answer.

Point to Ponder: Think about how and why you make the decisions you make.

A Call to Action: This week, choose one of the Discipline of Simplicity guiding principles and use it to make decisions this week. Be prepared to share with the group if it made life simple or more complicated, if it saved you money or caused you to spend more money, did it free up time or take up time? How did you choose to spend the extra money, time or freedom.

Invest in your spiritual health by: *Worthy of worship*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- What is worship?
- Why do we worship?
- How can we worship?

I believe...

- Worship is our expression to God of who He is and what He is worth to us.
- If the Lord is to be the Lord, worship must have priority in our lives.
- God calls for worship that involves our whole being. The body, mind, spirit, and emotions should all a part of worship.

Materials:

- Hymnals
- IGNITE Bible
- Chart paper or whiteboard and markers
- Catechism Q&A
- Catechism
- For Your Journey
 - [Episode 18 - Worship](#)
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)

References:

- Bible: Psalm 117, 139, John 4:23-24, Acts 17:24-29, Romans 12:1, Colossians 3:17
- Catechism Q&A questions: 301, 307, 370
- Catechism 5.3.2.3

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

What are ways that you can tell someone how much they mean to you? This week we will be talking about worship. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.

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

Facilitator Notes:

Dear Parents,
 This week the "I wonder..." questions are about worshipping God. Take some time this week to discuss with your student different ways that we can worship God. Make a list with them. Here are a few questions to ask:

1. How do I worship God alone?
2. How do I worship God with other believers?
3. How often, outside of church, do I sing songs and hymns of praise?
4. In what ways do I incorporate my emotions in my worship of God?

As always, if you have any question about the topic, feel free to contact us.
 Your Youth Leaders

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.
- Have a large piece of paper and markers ready to make the list. Come with a few ideas of your own.

- 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?
- **Who is God?** Make a list of all the names and attributes that you can think of. Feel free to use your Bible (especially the Psalms) to help you.
- We worship God for who He is, and the more we study God and learn about Him, the richer our worship will be.
- Look at the list you have created. Pick one of the names or characteristics and take a few moments to write a short prayer to God, or find a song from the hymnal that expresses that idea.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- What is worship?
- Why do we worship?
- How can we worship?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- In the New Testament, Jesus speaks of a new kind of worship – we'll get to that later...

Student Question #1 What is worship?

- The definition of worship is to ascribe value or worth to something or someone, usually an idol or a deity. For Christians, this means recognizing and expressing who God is and what He is worth to us.
- The first commandment says: **I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me.** Only God the Lord is worthy of worship. Only He is to be served. There are many forms of worship recorded in the Bible: prayer, singing, sacrifices in the temple. (Catechism Q&A 301, 307)
- Our Catechism says that one of the two purposes of the church of Christ is to bring "praise and worship to God." (Catechism Q&A 370)

- Walk through Psalm 139 with your students.
- After reading a verse, give the students an opportunity to share what they think it means.
- If you have time, read the **FLASHPOINT: Knowing and Finding God** on page 630 of your IGNITE Bible together. Discuss how this makes them feel, what does it teach them about God?

Student Question #2 Why do we worship?

- To answer this question, let's take a look at Psalm 139. We're going to see what David is learning about God and what effect it has on him.
 - *O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off* (v. 1-2). Here, David speaks of God's omniscience; God knows all about us.
 - *For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether...Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it* (v. 4,6). David recognizes that God is much wiser than he could ever be.
 - *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there* (v. 7-8). God is ever-present. Even in places where we think He may not go, He is always with us.
 - *For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...* (v. 13). David identifies God as his Creator.
- David takes the time to articulate who God is. We can only worship when we are aware of who God is, when we seek His presence, and when we discover more about Him in Scripture.

Student Question #3 How could taking time to discover and reflect on the characteristics or names of God (like we did at the beginning of our session) focus your worship?

- Let's jump to the end of Psalm 139:
 - David concludes this Psalm with a plea: *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting* (v. 23-24).
 - Recognizing who God is and worshipping Him put David in the right perspective to look at himself.
 - First, when we understand the glory of God, we see ourselves rightly. We are small and weak and so, dependent on God. When we see the bigness of God, it also helps us to trust Him with our problems and worries that seem small by comparison (this is echoed regularly in various Psalms).
 - Second, as we spend time worshipping and understanding God and His will, we see what we need to change in our lives. We can ask God to show us these things and then guide us in the way that He wants us to go as David did.
 - When we worship God, it helps us align our life to His will, to let Him be the Lord and ruler over it, to change us into who He wants us to be. God delights in our worship, but He doesn't need it (Acts 17:24-25). We need worship.

- Quote for discussion:
Worship isn't something other, external, compartmentalized, or confined. It is life with God, lived unto God for His glory and our pleasure.
 - Mike Cosper

- Worship also expresses to the people around us what we believe. Because of all the things God has done, is doing, and will do on our behalf – we lift up a song of praise to Him for all to hear and we welcome everyone to join with us. Psalm 117 is a perfect example of this:

*Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles!
 Laud Him, all you peoples!
 For His merciful kindness is great toward us,
 And the truth of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!*

Student Question #4 What are you proclaiming with your worship to those around you? If someone heard you singing or praying – would they believe what you were saying?

Student Question #5 How can we worship?

- When Jesus is speaking to the woman at the well, He says, *"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth"* (John 4:23-24). Worship of God is not just an act, but is a person's complete devotion to God. (Catechism 5.3.2.3)
- Worship consists of **outward actions** and **internal devotion** that we offer to God. It's both a **specific set of activities** and a **continuous service**.
- Usually when we think of worship we think of singing, praying, and reading the Bible. But it is so much more than that. Paul writes in Romans 12 that we present our *bodies [as] a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service* (Romans 12:1). And in Colossians 3 he writes, *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him* (Colossians 3:17).
 - How can you present your body as a living and holy sacrifice to God?
- Worship isn't only limited to the kinds of things we do when we gather together in church. It includes everything we do. Whether we are studying Scripture, working, praying, at school, resting, cleaning, or marveling at His creation – we can feel God's presence with us throughout the day, we can use each opportunity to learn more about Him and everything that He is and take moments to worship Him.
- Let's learn to worship God through every word and every deed, and offer our lives to glorify and bring praise to Him.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (up to 10 minutes)**Facilitator Notes:**

- If time allows, watch [Episode 18 of For Your Journey](#) and discuss any points, words, or phrases that stick out to the students.
- For Your Journey episodes can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel and in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

Spend some time reading through the list of names and characteristics that you created at the beginning. After you read each one, have a student come up with a sentence that expresses what that particular word or phrase means to them. For example, Shepherd – “God is my Shepherd because I feel that He watches over and protects me.”

Close with the “I Wonder...” questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God in belief and obedience.

I wonder...

- What is worship?
- Why do we worship?
- How can we worship?

I believe...

- Worship is our expression to God of who He is and what He is worth to us.
- If the Lord is to be the Lord, worship must have priority in our lives.
- God calls for worship that involves our whole being. The body, mind, spirit, and emotions should all be a part of worship.

Point to Ponder...

- What has changed in your understanding of worship today? How will you apply it? Will you study the Bible differently? Will you sing songs of praise differently? Will you approach a daily activity in a different way?

A Call to Action...

- In the next week, take the time to think about how you worship. What do you think it would mean for you to make worship a greater priority in your life? Read Psalm 111 and/or 145, in which are listed several attributes of God. Choose the one attribute you feel you need the most in your life right now and spend a few minutes in reflection, worship, and prayer with that as your theme.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *Worthy of Worship*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is worship? ➤ Why do we worship? ➤ How can we worship? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Worship is our expression to God of who He is and what He is worth to us. ➤ If the Lord is to be the Lord, worship must have priority in our lives. ➤ God calls for worship that involves our whole being. The body, mind, spirit, and emotions should all be a part of worship.
➤ References: Psalm 117, 139, John 4:23-24, Acts 17:24-29, Romans 12:1, Colossians 3:17, Catechism Q&A questions 301, 307, 370; Catechism section 5.3.2.3	

1. What is worship?

2. Why do we worship?

3. How could taking time to discover and reflect on the characteristics or names of God focus your worship?

4. What are you proclaiming with your worship to those around you? If someone heard you singing or praying – would they believe what you were saying?

5. How can we worship?

Point to Ponder: What has changed in your understanding of worship today? How will you apply it? Will you study the Bible differently? Will you sing songs of praise differently? Will you approach a daily activity in a different way?

Call to Action: In the next week, take the time to think about how you worship. What do you think it would mean for you to make worship a greater priority in your life? Read Psalm 111 and/or 145, in which are listed several attributes of God. Choose the one attribute you feel you need the most in your life right now and spend a few minutes in reflection, worship, and prayer with that as your theme.

Invest in your spiritual health: *Fasting*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- The NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum can be found on the [NAC USA YouTube](#) channel *and* in the [NAC USA mobile app](#)

I wonder...

- What is fasting?
- Why do we fast?
- How can we fast?

I believe...

- Fasting is removing something from our life and replacing it with God.
- Fasting helps us obtain a spiritual goal.
- Fasting requires intentional focus.

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Mason jar (not too large)
- A couple handfuls of Legos (or something similar)
- 3 cups of sand
- [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 3](#)
- Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.)

References:

- Bible: 1 Kings 21:27-29, Ezra 8:23, Isaiah 58:3-7, Jonah 3:5-10, Matthew 3:16-4:4, Matthew 6:16-18, Luke 2:36-38, Acts 14:21-23

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

What do you know about fasting? This week we will be discussing what fasting is and why it's important. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.

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

Facilitator Notes:

- Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary.

Dear Parents,
 This week the "I Wonder..." questions are about what fasting is, why we fast, and how we can fast. This week, your student has been asked to choose one thing to fast from each day for the whole week. To encourage a fast that focuses on God, brainstorm together with your student ways they can spend their time fasting with actions dedicated to God, and help them with these actions. This could be as simple as taking time to read the Bible with them.

Your Youth Leaders

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.
- If they begin to list spiritual things (i.e. praying, reading the Bible), then you should put a spoonful of sand into the mason jar.

- 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?

Take the mason jar and tell the students that it represents their day. Ask the students what they fill their days with (i.e. eating, going to school, homework, watching tv, hanging out with friends, etc.). For every item they list, fill the mason jar with one Lego to represent that item.

When they are done listing things, take the sand and dump it into the mason jar. Make sure that you don't use all of the sand. Explain to the students that the sand represents the time they give to God. The sand "fills up the rest of their day," but it has to compete with the Legos.

Now dump everything out of the mason jar and fill it only with sand. Tell the students that fasting allows us to focus on God. In fasting, we eliminate certain actions from our day so that He is the One who fills us up and sustains us.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- What is fasting?
- Why do we fast?
- How can we fast?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Student Question #1 What is fasting?

To fast means to voluntarily go without food, or some other regular activity, for the sake of a spiritual purpose.

- Ask the students what else they think a person can fast from (i.e. video games, social media, free time, etc.)

It's important to note that this "regular activity" is something that is central to our daily life. Maybe it's not always 100% necessary to our life (like food or water is), but it is something that we give our attention and time and energy to.

- Choosing a "regular" activity like this to fast from is what gives our fast meaning.
- In fasting, we are telling God that we choose to give up something important to us for His sake and to become more focused on Him.
- Ask the students: If we choose to fast from video games, but we only play video games for an hour per month, what does this tell God about our fast?
 - It tells God that we aren't serious about our fasting and focusing on Him.

Student Question #2 Why do we fast?

Nowhere in the Bible does it explicitly say that Christians are required to fast. However, if we look examples from the Bible and Jesus' teachings, we can understand that fasting is something that we can use in our lives to refocus on God.

Read the definition of fasting again to the students:

To fast means to voluntarily go without food, or some other regular activity, for the sake of a spiritual purpose.

When we look to the Bible, we can find many instances of fasting in both the Old and New Testaments. Fasting in the Bible often took the form of abstaining from food, and it was a practice used for a variety of spiritual purposes.

Read the following Bible verses and discuss with the students what spiritual purposes these people fasted for:

- Jonah 3:5-10 – The king of Nineveh and his people fasted and prayed to repent
- Acts 14:21-23 – Paul and Barnabas fasted to seek God's wisdom for newly appointed leaders in the church
- Matthew 3:16-4:4 – Jesus fasted in the wilderness to prepare Himself to do His Father's work

Ask the students: Besides the examples you came up with from reading the Bible verses, what other purposes might you fast for?

- Remind the students that we fast for *spiritual* purposes. A good way to know if we are fasting for a spiritual purpose is to see if it is mentioned or modeled in the Bible.
- Some answers to this question could be: to strengthen prayer (Ezra 8:23), to humble oneself before God (1 Kings 21:27-29), to minister to the needs of others (Isaiah 58:3-7), to express love and worship to God (Luke 2:36-38).

- Make sure you highlight these two aspects of fasting: replace with actions dedicated to God and keep your fast secret.
- **Matthew 6:16-18:** Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting... But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Student Question #3 How can we fast?

When we fast, we need to have an intentional focus. Fasting doesn't just happen when accidentally skip a meal.

Brainstorm with the students some things you can do before and during a fast to help make your fast be intentional and focused:

- Determine your spiritual purpose for fasting. You could use the Bible to help with this.
- Read Scripture and meditate on God's Word.
- Pray to God.
- Humble yourself before God. One way to do this is to confess your sins to Him.
- Replace the time you would spend doing this thing you are fasting from, and replace it with actions dedicated to God.
 - This is a key part of fasting.
 - Actions dedicated to God could be many things: worship, serving others, forgiving someone who has wronged you, etc.
- Keep your fast secret.
 - Read Matthew 6:16-18 together.
 - The Pharisees often made it a point to make their fasting known to others so they would be seen as pious.
 - Ask the students: What is Jesus telling His disciples about fasting?
 - Jesus tells His disciples that when they fast, they should not call attention to themselves. Their fasting should be kept secret.

Student Question #4 Why should our fasting be kept secret?

Jesus wants to make sure that we aren't fasting because we want to impress other people, like the Pharisees did.

If we tell other people about our fasting, it is no longer just about God. We make it about ourselves and how we look to others. We don't want to try to prove we're very spiritual people because we are fasting.

If we decide to fast, it should always be centered on God. He is our primary reason for fasting.

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

Facilitator Notes:

Wrap up the lesson with how fasting is an opportunity for us to invest in our spiritual health.

If there is time, consider showing the Midweek Experience video from October 2018 Session 3 on Fasting. Whether there is time in the circle of the discussion or not, consider including the video in the follow up message to the parents and encourage them to use the video as a conversation starter.

- [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 3](#)

Close with the "I Wonder...." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves to God in belief and obedience.

I wonder...

- What is fasting?
- Why do we fast?
- How can we fast?

I believe...

- Fasting is removing something from our life and replacing it with God.
- Fasting helps us obtain a spiritual goal.
- Fasting requires intentional focus.

Point to Ponder....

- When we fast, things might become a little more challenging or we might find it hard to focus because we desire or crave something that we are purposely trying to resist. In this way, fasting forces us to rely on God in a renewed way. We are reminded that we depend on Him as our ultimate Sustainer.

A Call to Action....

Choose one thing to fast from each day for one week (if you choose to do a food fast, only fast for a certain time period each day, not the whole week). Make sure that the time you spend fasting is replaced with an activity dedicated to God. Journal about your experience.

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *Fasting*

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is fasting? ➤ Why do we fast? ➤ How can we fast? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fasting is removing something and replacing it with God. ➤ Fasting helps us obtain a spiritual goal. ➤ Fasting requires intentional focus.
References: 1 Kings 21:27-29, Ezra 8:23, Isaiah 58:3-7, Jonah 3:5-10, Matthew 3:16-4:4, Matthew 6:16-18, Luke 2:36-38, Acts 14:21-23	

1. What is fasting?

2. Why do we fast?

3. How can we fast?

4. Why should our fasting be kept secret?

Point to Ponder: When we fast, things might become a little more challenging or we might find it hard to focus because we desire or crave something that we are purposely trying to resist. In this way, fasting forces us to rely on God in a renewed way. We are reminded that we depend on Him as our ultimate Sustainer.

Call to Action: Choose one thing to fast from each day for one week (if you choose to do a food fast, only fast for a certain time period each day, not the whole week). Make sure that the time you spend fasting is replaced with an activity dedicated to God. Journal about your experience.

Invest in Your Spiritual Health: "Service" or "Serve us"?

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do I serve? ➤ Can I choose whom to serve? ➤ How is service a discipline? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is a difference between true service and self-righteous service ➤ When we choose to be a servant, we surrender the right to decide who and when we will serve. ➤ We must be intentional in our serving. It is not about doing service acts, but rather being a servant. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ Index cards (optional) ➤ White board or chart paper (optional) <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Matthew 20:28, Luke 9:46, John 13: 14-17, Galatians 6:2, Titus 3:2, 1 Peter 4:9
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PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

	<p>We're in the "Invest in your spiritual health" semester of the THRIVE acronym. How can serving others be a way of investing in your own spiritual health? Find out at small group at _____.</p>
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POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Facilitator Notes:	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the "I Wonder..." questions were - How do I serve? Can I choose whom to serve? How is service a discipline? This week students learned about the Discipline of Service and how critical it is to our Christian life. Students learned there is a gospel way to serve and a self-righteous way to serve, and that true service is not accomplished in big acts, but constant small acts. Talk with your child about how you can both engage in constant small acts of service to those around you. As always, if you have questions about the topic, feel free to contact us.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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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.
- If students cannot think of a time, prompt them by asking – "Have you a helped a friend, relative or stranger recently, who was in need?" (it could be an act that is as simple as holding a door open).

- 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?

Have students think of the last time they helped someone in need, and to reflect on the experience by asking themselves the following questions:

- 1.) Initially, did you want to help?
- 2.) Why did you decide to help?
- 3.) What impact did it have on the person(s) you helped?
- 4.) What impact did it have on you?

Ask for volunteers to share their experience, and their reflection.

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- How do I serve?
- Can I choose whom to serve?
- How is service a discipline?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Read the following story:

Josh arrived early for his interview and walked into the waiting area where the other candidates for the position sat. Josh silently prayed again, and then began to prepare mentally for his interview. As he sat there, he couldn't help over hear the other candidates talk about their accomplishments, awards, and degrees. Josh began to feel very under qualified for the position for which he was about to interview. The other candidates had way more experience and had accomplished far more than he in the field. When it was time to interview, candidates were

called by name and sent down a long hallway to the CEO's office. The interviews lasted about 10 minutes and then candidates returned to the waiting area, gathered their coats, and with big smiles said things like "Nailed it!". Josh was the last candidate to interview, and when his name was called, he couldn't help feel that this was all a complete waste of his and the CEO's time considering the caliber of candidates he was up against. As Josh walked down the hallway, he noticed a crumpled piece of paper on the floor and bent down, picked it up and placed it in the trash can just outside the CEO's office. The CEO, who was standing in the doorway, said "Josh, there's no need for you to interview. You're hired." Josh was shocked and could barely speak, but managed to say "How...why??" The CEO explained that the interviews were scheduled to find qualified candidates, of which all of the candidates were, including Josh, but that the real test was to see who would be willing to pick up the piece of crumpled paper in the hallway and throw it in the trash. "Josh, that paper has been on the floor all day. All of the candidates saw it, but you were the only one willing to pick it up." The CEO continued, "The core values of our company are Service, Humility and Dedication. I believe you are going to fit right in here."

Have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss the following questions which can be found on the Student Copy of the lesson:

Student Question #1 How do you define: service, humility, and dedication? How do you define service, humility and dedication?

Student Question #2 How did the CEO in the story define: service, humility, and dedication?

- a. Service – any act of assistance (no matter how small) that betters the organization/group/individual
- b. Humility – no matter what role, position of authority, or credentials one might have, you are willing to do whatever needs to be done to serve the organization/group/individual
- c. Dedication – feeling obligated to always do what is right/best for the organization/group/individual

Student Question #3 Read the story about Jesus washing the feet of the disciples in John 13:14-18. What message was Jesus trying to teach His disciples? How is this similar to Josh's story?

- a. Jesus wanted His disciples to learn that the greatest must become the least in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven – regardless of one's pedigree/credentials, Josh did not put himself above picking up trash.
- b. Washing feet was a necessary part of life / tradition during Biblical times. Christ wanted to teach His disciples that it's the willingness to serve each other with small, humble acts, regardless of one's position in life, is what matters most – the CEO wanted employees that would do whatever task was necessary for the success of the company, regardless of one's position in the company.
- c. Christ demonstrated many acts of service throughout His life. He came to serve all mankind, not to be served – Josh believes he is responsible for caring for the creation, keeping the planet clean, regardless of where you are or what you are doing.

➤ Be sure the discussion around question 3 is about serving with humbleness and doing what is expected and right in God's eyes always.

- As you go through the list, encourage the students to think about the “results” of each act of service. For example, the service of guarding the reputation of others, would result in an environment where gossip would no longer exist. People would only talk about the good God has placed in each of us. People would recognize how valued and important they are to God, and each other.
- Consider writing the list of practices on a board for all to see or have the students write them on notecards along with some of the supporting points for each act of service.
- Consider whether the service of “bearing the burden of others” might also include accepting traits or characteristics or personality quirks in the person that others might find “unbearable”

The Discipline of Service is not about an outward act, but a willingness to live a life dedicated to putting the needs of others before our own. Below is a list of ways to begin practicing the Discipline of Service:

- **Service of guarding the reputation of others**
 - Apostle Paul in Titus 3:2 admonishes us to speak evil of no one
- **Service of being served**
 - When Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, Peter refused. Peter didn’t want his master to stoop to such a low task. Even though this sounds like Peter is making a statement of humility, there is a hint of pride mixed in. In other words, if Peter was the master, he would not have washed feet!
 - We should submit to acts of service by others. We should graciously receive service offered by others, and never feel we must repay it, or we are above it.
- **Service of common courtesy**
 - “Thank you”, “yes, please”, “my pleasure”, RSVP responses are all services of courtesy with the same goal: to acknowledge others and affirm their worth.
 - This is much needed in the computerized and depersonalized society in which we live.
 - Looking into someone’s eyes during a face-to-face conversation, adds an emotional connection to a conversation, that a text lacks.
- **Service of hospitality**
 - In 1 Peter 4:9, Peter urges us to “Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another”. Open your home to others (with parent permission).
 - Don’t make it complicated...invite someone in to study, to watch a movie, to share a meal/snack, or to sit and talk. It’s about making people feel welcome and a willingness to share what we have with others.
- **Service of listening**
 - The beginning of love to others is learning to listen to them.
 - We do not have to solve each other’s problems, but just become available to others, with patience and compassion.
 - If you think you don’t have time to listen to others, eventually you will have no time to listen to God and others, and only time for yourself and your own desires and needs.
- **Bear the burden of others**
 - In Galatians 6:2, we read “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ”. The “law of Christ” is the law of love.
 - Learn to bear one another’s sorrows. It doesn’t mean you need to wallow in the sorrows of others, but help others to see the value in lifting up their sorrows to Christ.
- **Service of sharing the word**
 - We need to share God’s word with others, and allow them to share the word with us.
 - We can learn so much more about God and the Lord Jesus when we discuss his word with a community of believers (even non-believers can teach us what we still need to learn, and we can teach them what they may have never considered).
 - This is the purpose of the Wednesday evening small group discussions.

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

Facilitator Notes:

Ask the group if this lesson has changed their understanding of service, and if so how?

- Things for the group to consider:
 - Does this mean we do not have to participate in “outward acts of service”, such as assisting in a food drive, donating to a good cause, etc.?

It's our attitude and expectations that determine a true act of service. Are we serving only when it's convenient, comfortable and/ or a preferred activity? Are we expecting praise, thanks, recognition for what we do?

Close with the “I Wonder...” questions

- 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.
- Remind the students on their Confirmation day that they will or have already promised and committed to surrendering themselves in belief in God.

I wonder...

- How do I serve?
- Can I choose whom to serve?
- How is service a discipline?

I believe...

- There is a difference between true service and self-righteous service
- When we choose to be a servant, we surrender the right to decide who and when we will serve.
- We must be intentional in our serving. It is not about doing service acts, but rather being a servant.

Point to Ponder...

Think about your past approach to serving and determine if your approach to serving was in the spirit of true service or not. What needs to change?

A Call to Action...

This week, choose one of the ways to practice the Discipline of Service and commit to trying it for a week. Be prepared to share with the group how it affected you, those around you and the mood/climate of the situation.

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...

Invest in Your Spiritual Health: "Service" or "Serve us"?

I wonder... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do I serve? ➤ Can I choose whom to serve? ➤ How is service a discipline? 	I believe... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is a difference between true service and self-righteous service ➤ When we choose to be a servant, we surrender the right to decide who and when we will serve. ➤ We must be intentional in our serving. It is not about doing service acts, but rather being a servant.
References: Matthew 20:28, Luke 9:46, John 13: 14-17, Galatians 6:2, Titus 3:2, 1 Peter 4:9	

1. How do you define:
 service _____

humility _____

dedication _____

2. How did the CEO in the story define:
 service _____

humility _____

dedication _____

3. Read the story about Jesus washing the feet of the disciples in John 13: 14-18. What message was Jesus trying to teach his disciples?

4. How is this similar to Josh's story?

Point to Ponder...

Think about your past approach to serving and determine if your approach to serving was in the spirit of true service or not. What needs to change?

A Call to Action...

This week, choose one of the ways to practice the Discipline of Service and commit to trying it for a week. Be prepared to share with the group how it affected you, those around you and the mood/climate of the situation.

Invest in your spiritual health: *Silence and Solitude*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <p>The NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum can be found on the NAC USA YouTube channel <i>and</i> in the NAC USA mobile app</p>	<p>I wonder...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the purpose of silence and solitude? <p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The purpose of silence and solitude is to be able to see and hear. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IGNITE Bible ➤ NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 4 ➤ Something to play a video (TV, computer, tablet, projector, etc.) <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bible: Psalm 46:10, Matthew 14
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PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

	<p>How often do you spend time apart from others in silence? This week we will be discussing the purpose of spending time in silence and solitude. Join us tomorrow for small group at _____.</p>
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POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please keep the main message intact, but feel free to add local information as necessary. • Consider sharing the video link above in the follow up message to parents. Encourage them to watch the video with their child and discuss what stuck out to them. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week the “I Wonder...” question was about the purpose of spending time in silence and solitude. The opening activity to this lesson was for the students to spend 5 minutes sitting in silence in a space that was separate from others. We would ask that you also do this activity. Sit in a room with no people in it, with complete silence, for 5 minutes. Do not do anything except sit there. After you do this, discuss with your student what it felt like to do this, for both you and them. Was it uncomfortable to do nothing for 5 minutes? Was it restful? What did you think about while sitting there? Consider incorporating intentional silence and solitude into your family’s weekly rhythm.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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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.
- If space does not allow for each student to be in a separate room, have them go into different corners of the room you're in. It might be helpful to have them sit facing the wall so that they're not distracted by the others in the room.

- 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?

Have each student go into a different room to spend time in silence and solitude for 5 full minutes. Have them leave their phones with you, so that they are not a distraction. It is important that the students do nothing during these 5 minutes, except sit there.

After the 5 minutes of silence and solitude, discuss the following questions with the students:

- How did this activity make you feel? Was it uncomfortable/awkward to sit in silence and solitude for that long? Was it restful?
- What did you think about during the 5 minutes? (Students do not have to share if the answer is too personal.)

SET THE STAGE (1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

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

I wonder...

- What is the purpose of silence and solitude?

LESSON (up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

Have the students skim chapter 14 of the Gospel of Matthew. How many times did Jesus go off by Himself to be alone and/or pray in this chapter? (2 times – Matthew 14:13, Matthew 14:23)

The point of this exercise is to show that Jesus often went off by Himself to pray – and these are only examples from one chapter of Matthew! (You can do a quick Google search to find many other examples throughout the Gospels.) If Jesus spent a lot of time in silence and solitude, these disciplines are worth taking a closer look at.

Start the session by reading these definitions if the students seem to not understand the terms “silence” and “solitude”:

- Solitude – to choose to be alone for a time and do nothing
- Silence – withdrawal from noise, words, and activities for a time, completes the action of spending time in solitude
- Silence and solitude are two separate spiritual disciplines, but they complement each other very nicely, and so the lesson focuses on them together.
- **Matthew 14:13:** When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself.

Student Question #1 What is the purpose of silence and solitude?

The purpose of silence and solitude is to be able to see and hear.

Ask the students: What do you think God wants us to see and hear when we practice silence and solitude? In other words, what does He want to happen during our silence and solitude?

- God wants us to notice what is true about ourselves as we come to Him in this time and space. Are we tired? Are we feeling joy? Are we angry about something?
- He wants us to allow these emotions that we’re feeling to be recognized. When we share these emotions with God, our relationship with Him deepens, and we gain strength from Him.
 - Reference Matthew 14:13 (and the previous verses for context) to see that Jesus goes into silence and solitude because of His grief over John the Baptist’s death and its implications.
- God wants us to recognize His presence and guidance in our silence and solitude. When we take time to do nothing, but sit and listen, we want to listen for Him. Maybe He has been trying to tell us something that we have been too busy or distracted to hear.
- God wants us to gain perspective. When we focus on Him, we begin to see Him and ourselves in the right way, and we notice His hand in our lives.

When we enter into silence and solitude, we are giving ourselves time to clear our minds. With this clarity, we give ourselves the ability to focus on God.

Student Question #2 When might it be helpful for us to spend time in silence and solitude?

Ask the students: Are there moments when silence and solitude might help us prepare for something?

- Before hearing God’s Word in the divine service, so that we can clear our minds to be filled with what the Spirit wants us to learn.
- Before experiencing Holy Communion, so that we can be focused on being in fellowship with God.
- Before repenting for our sins throughout the week, so that we have time and space to acknowledge our sins and confess them to God.
- Before going into or during times of practicing other spiritual disciplines (i.e. fasting, reading Scripture, worship, etc.), so that we can be focused on God and be open to His direction.

- **Psalm 46:10:** Be still, and know that I am God...
- Consider asking whether or under what circumstances you would feel comfortable riding in a car or sitting in a room with someone without engaging in conversation or having any other noise or distraction (listening to music, etc.). Often people are ok with that when they are with people they are comfortable with or know well; often it is when we are with people that we don't know or aren't comfortable with that silence is awkward. What does that say about our relationship with God, if we want to avoid times of silence and solitude?

Student Question #3 Why is spending time in silence and solitude so hard?

Spending time in silence and solitude means we have to let go of our grip on everything that is happening in our lives in that moment.

Read the first line of Psalm 46:10. The Hebrew word for "be still" literally means to "let go of your grip."

Ask the students: What are you gripping in your life that you may need to let go of during your time in silence and solitude?

- Personal preferences – Fulfilling our own desires (to play 20 more minutes of a video game, or to watch one more Netflix episode, or to hang out with a friend for another hour, etc.) is something that we want to do. But to create moments of silence and solitude, we have to be willing to put aside our own wants and desires for a certain amount of time.
- Control – In this society, there is always something that we are doing (homework, chores, piano lessons, part-time job, etc.). Perhaps we think that if we don't get all of these things done, then we've failed or something won't go the way it should. We need to trust God with our lives so that we can disconnect to spend time Him in silence and solitude.
- Fear – Maybe the idea of spending time alone and in complete silence is intimidating. When there's nothing going on around us, we are forced to focus on ourselves and on God. This could make us feel vulnerable, especially if we feel that our relationship with God isn't as good as it should be.

Student Question #4 What can we do to help create moments of silence and solitude?

Brainstorm with the students some things they can do to help promote spending time in silence and solitude:

- Find a physical space to spend time in silence and solitude.
 - It might be helpful to pick a somewhat special place – a place set apart for God. If it's just the student's bedroom or another place they spend a lot of time in, they might be easily distracted during their moments of silence and solitude.
- Determine a time during the day when you will sit in silence and solitude, and for how long you will practice these disciplines.
- Sit in a comfortable position, so that you don't have to move around a lot.
- Pray before you sit in silence and solitude, so your mind can already begin to calm down and disconnect from whatever activity you were just doing.
- Leave your phone in another room to prevent distraction or noise.
- If you plan to sit in silence and solitude in your home, tell your family ahead of time so they know not to disturb you.
- Accept what God offers during your silence and solitude. Maybe you will hear Him speaking to you, and maybe you won't. Maybe you will learn something, and maybe the time you spent was just a way to slow down and rest for a while. Either way, trust that God is with you in those moments.

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

Facilitator Notes:

Wrap up the lesson with why silence and solitude is necessary for our spiritual health.

If there is time, consider showing the Midweek Experience video from October 2018 Session 3 on Fasting. Whether there is time in the circle of the discussion or not, consider including the video in the follow up message to the parents and encourage them to use the video as a conversation starter.

➤ [NAC USA Midweek Experience Curriculum – October 2018 – Session 4](#)

Close with the "I Wonder...." questions

- 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.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrender themselves to God.

I wonder...

- What is the purpose of silence and solitude?

I believe...

- The purpose of silence and solitude is to be able to see and hear.

Point to Ponder....

- To practice solitude is to choose to be alone for a time and do nothing, to give up accomplishment. Silence completes solitude. Until we enter quietness, the world around us still commands our attention and distracts us.

A Call to Action....

Keep track of how much time you spend on your phone over the next week (you can keep track by writing down the times you go on your phone, or you can download an app that tracks your screen time each time you use your phone). After the week is over, consider how much time you spent using your phone. Was it more or less time than you expected? What other things could you do with the time that you typically spend on your phone? Now, over the next week, use 25% of the time you spend on your phone to sit in silence and solitude with God.

- Consider suggesting apps like "Moment" and/or "Break free" to help the students keep track of the time they spend on their devices

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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *Silence and Solitude*

I wonder... ➤ What is the purpose of silence and solitude?	I believe... ➤ The purpose of silence and solitude is to be able to see and hear.
References: Psalm 46:10, Matthew 14	

1. What is the purpose of silence and solitude? What does God want to happen during our silence and solitude?

2. When might it be helpful for us to spend time in silence and solitude? Are there moments when silence and solitude might help us prepare for something?

3. Why is spending time in silence and solitude so hard?

4. What can we do to help create moments of silence and solitude?

Point to Ponder: To practice solitude is to choose to be alone for a time and do nothing, to give up accomplishment. Silence completes solitude. Until we enter quietness, the world around us still commands our attention and distracts us.

Call to Action: Keep track of how much time you spend on your phone over the next week (you can keep track by writing down the times you go on your phone, or you can download an app that tracks your screen time each time you use your phone). After the week is over, consider how much time you spent using your phone. Was it more or less time than you expected? What other things could you do with the time that you typically spend on your phone? Now, over the next week, use 25% of the time you spend on your phone to sit in silence and solitude with God.

Invest in your spiritual health: *IGNITE*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- Sunday Sermon Reflections, Point to Ponder and Call to Action should still be shared at the beginning of the lesson.
- Since the format of this lesson is less structured, facilitators can incorporate a light meal or snack into the evening such as pizza or popcorn. Be sure to include this in your Message to Parents so they are aware and can contribute.
- During these activities, the facilitator will need to assist when students struggle with answers or clarify when students misunderstand or have misconceptions.

This lesson is designed for review, reflection, re-teaching or application of the topics taught the past semester. Facilitators can decide what type of lesson is needed based on the learning outcomes the students experienced during the semester. Listed below are suggestions for the type of lesson that should be conducted based on the needs of the students. A descriptor for the type of lesson is provided to assist the facilitator in choosing the appropriate lesson. Suggested activities are listed below each type of lesson. The scheduled time for this discussion can also be used to discuss how the students can implement and engage in spiritual disciplines in their families, congregations, and communities in an ongoing basis.

When to use each type of lesson:

Review Lesson: when a general understanding about a topic exists, rather than a solid, deep understanding.

- Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group:
 - **Pick a Card...** Have the "I wonder..." questions on separate index cards and the corresponding "I believe..." statements on separate index cards. Shuffle all of the cards and have each student pick 1 or 2 cards (depending on the size of your group). Students should not show their cards to each other. Always start with someone reading an "I wonder..." question, and the person with the corresponding "I believe..." statement should respond.
 - **Break it Down...** Choose the "I wonder..." question that needs review and write it on chart paper. On a separate piece of chart paper write only the words "I believe...". Have each student come up and add something, change something, or delete something until the statement is complete and accurate.

Reflection Lesson: when students show real interest and excitement about a topic.

- Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group:
 - **Relive...** Have students share their Call to Action experiences from the topic, and invite them to share more experiences related to that topic.
 - **Dig Deep...** Further investigate the topic by examining Bible verses or stories that further define or explain the topic. Let the students search for additional events in the Bible that demonstrate or provide examples of the topic.

- It would be helpful to give any guest speakers the facilitator guides from previous topics so that they know what has been discussed.

- Because of safety for minors, any For Your Journey episodes that are made should not be posted online nor shared privately without the student's and parent's consent.

Re-teaching Lesson: when students do not understand or have misconceptions about the topic.

- Choose 1 or both of the following activities depending on the needs of the group:
 - **True or False...** Have the students pick a topic from the semester. Make 5-7 true or false statements about the topic. Distribute notecards and have the students write "True" on one card and "False" on a different card. Then ask students to hold up either the True or False cards for each statement you make (have students face the cards to the outside of the circle). The facilitator should walk around the circle, review the answers, and choose students with the correct answer to explain their answer to the group.
 - **Be Our Guest...** Invite a minister to share his explanation about the topic and have him revisit the questions from the student lesson copy (from the corresponding lesson) with the students to ensure students have mastered the topic.

Application Lesson: when students have a good understanding of the topic and/or great interest and excitement about the topic.

- Choose 1 or a combination of the following activities depending on the needs of the group:
 - **FYJ....** Have the students pair up. Give each pair an "I wonder..." question to discuss. Then have them video tape a 1-2 minute "For Your Journey" episode to later share with the class.
 - While the students can be fun and creative, they should still take the exercise seriously. This isn't to be a parody or skit, but rather a genuine exploration of the question(s).
 - **Take Your Show on the Road....** Take the students to visit a widow, to a nursing home, to a local restaurant and encourage them to share with others one of the "I believe..." statements and what it means.
 - **Make a spiritual health plan...** Have the students commit to making a plan (time, frequency, location, trigger) for the spiritual disciplines and exercises.

Have students work together to complete the questions on the student lesson copy. If time allows, come back together and let students share their responses.

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

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This message can be customized to include local information. 	<p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>This week is the last discussion of the "I" semester of the THRIVE curriculum. This semester's lessons focused on "Invest in your spiritual health." It's our hope that this semester your student saw the value of investing in their spiritual health. In addition to investing in our spiritual health by coming to the divine services and receiving God's word and sacrament, we also develop our spiritual health through exercising spiritual disciplines. The students were encouraged to think about a spiritual health plan, similar to how someone would make a physical health plan. If you don't have one already, consider making a spiritual health plan using the disciplines and exercises that the students learned about this semester.</p> <p>As always, if you have questions about the topic, please feel free to contact us.</p> <p>Your Youth Leaders</p>
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SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS (10 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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?
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WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? (15 minutes)

<p>Facilitator Notes:</p>	<p>Wrap up the lesson with the "I" message from THRIVE: Invest in your spiritual health by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> praying. Prayer cultivates a relationship with God and helps deepen your knowledge of Him and yourself. (Colossians 4:2) reading and studying the Bible. The Holy Scripture is inspired by God's word and equips us for righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) actively partaking in the divine service experience and celebrating the presence of the Triune God, allowing the encounter to transform your daily life. (Romans 10:17, 1 Corinthians 11:23-29) continually pursuing knowledge of the Triune God through the Gospel so that your thinking is not static, but is constantly renewed. (Romans 12:2, John 17:3) worshipping together. (Psalm 29:2, 1 Chronicles 29:10-15) <p>A Point to Ponder....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is more important than my spiritual health? <p>A Call to Action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This week, write a letter/prayer to God about the thing that stuck with you the most from this "I" semester. You can thank Him for Jesus' example in demonstrating how we can connect with Him, you can ask Him for help in staying committed to investing in your spiritual health - just talk with Him about it.
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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...

Invest in your spiritual health: *IGNITE*

How do the spiritual disciplines help you connect with God?

How does connecting with God invest in your spiritual health?

Why is it important to exercise the disciplines in a group and when you're alone?

What are things in life that could prevent you from exercising spiritual disciplines?

After spending a semester learning and discussing how to invest in your spiritual health, how will you approach the divine service experience differently?

A Point to Ponder....

- What is more important than my spiritual health?

A Call to Action...

- This week, write a letter/prayer to God about the thing that stuck with you the most from this "I" semester. You can thank Him for Jesus' example in demonstrating how we can connect with Him, you can ask Him for help in staying committed to investing in your spiritual health - just talk with Him about it.