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**HOLINESS
TODAY**

**ONE LORD
ONE FAITH
ONE BAPTISM**

ESSENTIAL TEACHINGS FOR FAITH FORMATION
IN THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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English Version

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Welcome to *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism!*

A Few Words on the Course

The Church of the Nazarene exists to preach, teach, and model holiness of heart and life. The basis of our mission is to make Christlike disciples in the nations. All Nazarenes are to embrace the distinct call that God has given us. Our future depends on our faithful participation in the mission of God. We seek to center our worship on God and God alone. He deserves all honor and glory. Our highest praise and adoration must flow from all we do. May Psalm 19:14 (NIV) be our prayer: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Sessions 1 and 2 focus upon Scripture for faith formation. Sessions 3 – 6 reveal four tools of classical faith formation: the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Sacraments, and the Lord’s Prayer. You may want to use more than one session to cover the content of “The Apostles’ Creed.” Session 7 is a wrap-up that may give time to resume discussions that began in a previous session, to ask follow-up questions, share insights, or cast a vision for your church’s life together. Session 7 can also be an excellent time to launch a membership class. (See Session 7 for more details).

Because this is a survey course, it will raise a number of topics and issues that are worthy of lengthy discussion. Therefore, it is wise to inform your group that your time together is limited and that there will be times when you need to limit a discussion topic. If it becomes necessary, look for a natural break in the conversation to say something like, “This is a good discussion. There is clearly a lot more to this issue than we can resolve in a few minutes. Let’s make a note to revisit this topic at a later time or in our wrap-up session.”

The session guides offer possible responses to the discussion questions. Many of these possible responses come directly from *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*. These are provided for you in the event that participants need your prompt to stimulate discussion.

The members of your group may be at different levels of familiarity with and commitment to the beliefs, practices, and goals of the Church of the Nazarene. Keep this in mind as you prepare for each session. What one person finds new or confusing, another may find common and obvious. Be sensitive to this dynamic, and make an effort to be affirming and encouraging to everyone. When disagreements or conflicting perspectives arise, maintain an environment of friendly inquiry. Everyone is present to explore the issues together, and differing perspectives need not disrupt this process.

To help you plan your time effectively, each section of the lesson has a suggested time limit with the expectation that each session will last one hour. You will be the best judge of how much structure your group needs and how much flexibility is necessary to allow the Holy Spirit to move as you discuss each topic. If you have more than an hour available, that is even better!

Resources

Each group member will need to have access to a paper or electronic copy of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*. Paper copies are available free and postpaid in the USA & Canada by requesting them at generaleditor@nazarene.org. Simply provide your name, the name of your church, and the number of copies you need. Electronic copies are located at www.nazarene.org/onelord in the “Documents” section. It is important for course leaders to read *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* and understand it as fully as they can prior to the first session. Group members should be asked to read the relevant portions of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* before each session.

In addition, recommend that group members keep a record of questions, thoughts, and insights as they read *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* and during the class sessions. Keeping a record of questions will help group members pursue answers to their questions on their own or in further discussions outside of class. It can also be helpful to look over notes at the end of the course to determine one’s growth during the learning process.

Refreshments are recommended for all sessions. They are a great way to increase participation. Decide this at the outset in order to budget accurately for the class.

Additional resources are listed at the beginning of each session.

Additional downloadable resources can be found at www.nazarene.org/onelord.

Promoting *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*

When putting *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* on your church calendar, determine whether you will offer the seven-session course or a longer version of the course. Determine whether your church would like to offer this course as a prelude to membership classes, a baptism service, church elections, or some other church or district event.

Begin announcing the class at least a month before the first session. Try to determine who will participate, so you can make sure each person has access to *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* at least one week before the first meeting. It is anticipated that all participants will read the designated sections before each session.

The graphics, logos, and other resources for bulletins, flyers, or PowerPoint slides will stimulate more interest in the course. These are located at www.nazarene.org/onelord in the “Artwork and Resources” section.

Session 1: The Basics—Background Conversations and Salvation History

In this session, we seek to:

- Observe background conversations regarding the formation of our denomination
- Examine our Nazarene place in salvation history
- Develop a deeper sense of Nazarene identity

Resources: Refreshments, Bibles, copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*

Optional: chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard, nametags, *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale (Foundry Publishing).

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

As people arrive, direct them to the refreshments, and introduce yourself. You might want to have someone assist everyone with nametags. When everyone has found a seat, welcome the group and begin the session with prayer, asking God to bless your time together and to speak to the group throughout this course of study.

Let Psalm 19:14 be our prayer focus: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Getting Started (10 minutes)

Have each person in the group introduce him or herself. Ask several questions to get an idea of where each person is in their relationship to and understanding of the Church of the Nazarene, such as:

1. How long have you attended a Church of the Nazarene?
2. Why did you choose this church?
3. On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you think you understand the
 - teachings,
 - practices, and
 - mission of the Church of the Nazarene?
4. What do you hope to gain from this series of lessons?

Keep some notes to help guide your presentation and discussion in all the sessions.

Explain that the vision for this course is more than presenting information about God and God’s plan of salvation. Nazarenes exist to preach, teach, and model holiness of heart and life. This is the basis of our mission to make Christlike disciples in the nations. We want all Nazarenes to embrace this distinct call that God has given us. In this session, we hope to develop a deeper sense of our Nazarene identity as we discuss some basics, looking at background conversations to the formation of our denomination and examining our Nazarene place in the story of salvation.

Session 2 will center on Scripture for faith formation. Thereafter, sessions 3 – 6 will show four patterns of faith formation. The Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Sacraments, and

the Lord's Prayer guide our exploration and understanding of the Christian faith as held by the Church of the Nazarene in our Wesleyan-Holiness theological tradition.

Remind the class to make notes to keep track of their thoughts and questions.

Digging In (30 minutes)

[Leader note: Some of James Milton Gregory's (JMG) insights on teaching from *The Seven Laws of Teaching* will be shared at the beginning of each of these "Digging in" segments.]

Leader note JMG 1: "A teacher must be one who knows the lesson truth or art to be taught."

Be sure you have read all of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* and have a good understanding of the material presented in the preliminary pages through Question 13. In this and other lessons, there are a number of words that may be new to you. Some words are followed by a word or phrase in parentheses, such as "espouses" (supports) and "recitation of dogma" (repetition of church beliefs). You may wish to explore the meaning of other words in a dictionary such as Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale's *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English*. Here are some definitions of terms from that book.

Important Key Terms Include:

Creed – "A creed is a short statement of Christian beliefs."

Confession – "A confession is a statement. A confession states something that has much meaning for one or more persons."

Catechism – "A catechism is a special way of teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith. It is usually done in the form of questions and answers."

Incarnation – "Incarnation is the event of God becoming human. The eternal Son of God entered into history in the person of Jesus. Still, He continued to be God. Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human."

Grace – "Grace means favor shown or received. Grace in the Bible refers to the favor that God shows to sinful people."

Leader note JMG 2: "A learner is one who attends with interest to the lesson." It is important to gain and maintain the attention of the group members.

First, share Phineas F. Bresee's statement that relates "worshippers" and "thinking." (2 minutes)

Second, ask group members to read John 17:3, Acts 4:12, and John 14:6-7. (2 minutes)

Third, help the group to understand the significance of "A Rightly Formed Faith." (2 minutes)

Tell the group: "Our spiritual ancestors developed creeds, confessions, and catechisms because they feared the Christian life would lose its distinctive shape unless believers could publicly affirm and embrace with conviction Christianity's core persuasions. The Christian faith is more than head knowledge or rote recitation of dogma (repetition of church beliefs). It is a specific way of life with a pattern that can be described."

Fourth, lead the group through the 10 questions in “Background Conversations.” Be sure to allow enough time for group members to respond. (14 minutes)

1. What is *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*?
Possible Responses: *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: Essential Teachings for Faith Formation in the Church of the Nazarene* is a comprehensive faith formation initiative for Nazarenes around the world (Ephesians 4:4-6).
2. What is the purpose of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*?
Possible Responses: It espouses (supports) the essential doctrines that Nazarenes confess and practice as part of a global community of Christians using a traditional, centuries-old template (model) for instruction in the faith of the Christian church.
3. Who provided the impulse for the development of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* in the Church of the Nazarene?
Possible Responses: The Board of General Superintendents authorized the development of this document as a means of encouraging theological coherence (consistent expression of our beliefs) among members of the global Nazarene family.
4. What is the format of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*?
Possible Responses: It follows the Christian tradition of faith formation (catechism) using a question-and-answer format with appropriate annotations (notes) and explanations from Holy Scripture, the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene, and key denominational documents.
5. How is this resource organized?
Possible Responses: It is broken out into four major sections called “patterns for Christian faith formation.”
6. What are the patterns for Christian formation used in this resource?
Possible Responses: These four patterns are (1) The Apostles’ Creed: orthodox theology, or what the church believes; (2) The Sacraments: sacramental theology, or what the church celebrates; (3) The Ten Commandments: moral theology, or what the church lives; (4) The Lord’s Prayer: devotional theology, or what the church prays.
7. How do we understand the purpose of the first pattern for Christian faith formation, the Apostles’ Creed?
Possible Responses: The Apostles’ Creed is the story of salvation history in miniature (brief).
8. How do we understand the purpose of the second pattern for Christian faith formation, the sacraments?
Possible Responses: The sacraments of Holy Communion and baptism celebrate the grace of God in the shared life of the church on its pilgrim journey.
9. How do we understand the purpose of the third pattern for Christian faith formation, the Ten Commandments?

Possible Responses: The Ten Commandments offer an introduction to understanding God's desire for our relationship with Him and with one another. They help guide and shape our personal story. The commandments show us how to live out our magnificent story as a Christlike disciple. Jesus clarified (explained) the place of the commandments for His followers in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Specifically, in Matthew 5:17-48, He admonished us to grasp God's highest intentions for our lives as reflected in the spirit of the commandments.

10. How do we understand the purpose of the fourth pattern for Christian faith formation, the Lord's Prayer?

Possible Responses: The Lord's Prayer is the sublime (uplifting) model for all the forms of prayer that illuminate the believers' reading of Scripture, give substance to public worship, enrich small groups in fellowship and intercession (prayer for one another), and shape our personal devotional experience.

Finally, lead the group through questions 11 – 13 under "Salvation History: Creation, Incarnation, Proclamation." (10 minutes)

11. What are the early events of salvation history?

Possible Responses: We acknowledge that the eternal God, motivated by holy love, freely created man and woman to share in God's own life (Genesis 1:27). Even when the first human beings broke their relationship with God, God pursued them, offering forgiveness and reconciliation (reunion). Throughout the story of salvation, God continued to call the peoples of the world, scattered and broken by their disobedience and spiritual dysfunctions (defects), to come to Him, to know Him, to love Him—with their whole being (Deuteronomy 6:5; Luke 10:27-28). Then, in the fullness of time, God sent His Son, the Word, into the world as Redeemer and Savior to accomplish God's holy will for the human family (Galatians 4:4).

12. What is Jesus' role in salvation history?

Possible Responses: In and through Jesus Christ, the Incarnation (Word made flesh), God continued calling all people everywhere to become God's adopted children by the indwelling (constant presence) of the Holy Spirit, to be "heirs of God and coheirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). To reach the entire world with God's Good News, Christ chose apostles, sent them into the world, and commissioned them to proclaim the gospel—the Good News that the kingdom of God has come in the person of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). Empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ's witnesses (John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8), the apostles "went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed His word by the signs that accompanied it" (Mark 16:20).

13. What is the Christian's role in God's mission?

Possible Responses: Those who have freely responded to Christ's call to follow Him are motivated by their love for Him to take the Good News everywhere. This gospel is a precious treasure (2 Corinthians 4:7), proclaimed first by the apostles, and then faithfully communicated by those to whom the apostles entrusted the message. All of Christ's followers are called to pass on the faith from generation to generation (Psalm 78:4), by

professing the faith, by living the faith, by sharing the faith, and by celebrating the faith in worship, spiritual conversation, instruction, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

Wrapping Up (10 minutes)

Identify one of your pastors or other church leaders in your personal salvation story. Then tell the group how he/she helped you.

Select one or more of the following questions as time allows:

1. What in today's session was new to you or sparked your interest?
2. How can what you have learned about our place in God's mission shape the way you think about your spiritual life and the kind of Christian God is calling you to be?
3. What can you do this week to more fully embrace your Nazarene heritage and identity?
4. What other questions or comments do you have pertaining to this session's material?

(Keep in mind that you will be addressing the four patterns for Christian faith formation in future sessions.)

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Divide the class into smaller groups. Ask them to thank God for those who have gone before us in the story of God's mission, and then pray specifically for your church leaders, your local congregation, and the ministry of the Church of the Nazarene. After a few minutes, lead the group in a closing prayer, thanking God for the work He has done through our predecessors and asking for the grace and vision to continue His work among the people of every nation.

Inform the group that the next session will cover "The Holy Scriptures and Faith Formation." Remind them to read these passages in preparation and to keep a record of their questions and thoughts.

Session 2: The Holy Scriptures and Faith Formation

In this session, we seek to:

- Recognize ways God's Good News is transmitted
- Examine the distinctive Wesleyan perspective on Holy Scripture
- Show the importance of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* to the Church of the Nazarene

Resources: Bibles, Church of the Nazarene *Manual*, copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*, The Articles of Faith in Global English Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/articles-faith-global-english-church-nazarene>)

Optional: Refreshments, chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard, nametags, StudyMaps: Articles of Faith, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/studymaps-articles-faith-church-nazarene>), *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale.

Remember: In the first session, you were asked to keep notes to help guide the presentation and discussions. Keep in mind how long the group members have attended a Church of the Nazarene; why they chose this church; how well they think they understand the teachings, practices, and mission of the Church of the Nazarene; and what they hope to gain from this series of lessons.

Note: This session has a number of new terms that may need explanation. These can be listed on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or PowerPoint slides.

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

As people arrive, introduce yourself to anyone you do not know. If you are providing refreshments, direct them to the refreshments. You might want to have someone assist everyone with nametags. When everyone has found a seat, welcome the group and begin the session with prayer, asking God to bless your time together and to speak to the group throughout this course. Also, ask God to teach us how to connect Scripture to Him and to allow these practices to shape our lives.

Ask the group to recite Psalm 19:14 as our prayer focus: "May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

Getting Started (10 minutes)

If there are new group members, have each person introduce him or herself. Lead the group in the following discussion questions:

1. What was the first session's topic?
Possible Responses: "The Basics – Background Conversations and Salvation History"
2. Who was Phineas F. Bresee?
Possible Responses: First general superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene

3. What are some Scriptures that help us focus on this series of lessons?
Possible Responses: John 17:3, Acts 4:12, and John 14:6-7
4. What do we mean when we say, “A rightly formed faith”?
Possible Responses: Our spiritual ancestors developed creeds, confessions, and catechisms because they feared the Christian life would lose its distinctive shape unless believers could publicly affirm and embrace with conviction Christianity’s core persuasions. The Christian faith is more than head knowledge or rote recitation of dogma (repeating of church beliefs). It is a specific way of life with a pattern that can be described.
5. What are some of our background conversations?
Possible Responses: Reminders of the purpose and structure of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*.
6. What are the early events of salvation history?
Possible Responses: These are the first things that prepare us for the formation of faith in the Christian life. We acknowledge the eternal God, motivated by holy love, freely created man and woman to share in God’s own life (Genesis 1:27). Even when the first human beings broke their relationship with God, God pursued them, offering forgiveness and reconciliation. Throughout history, God continued to call the peoples of the world, scattered and broken by their disobedience and spiritual dysfunctions, to come to Him, to know Him, to love Him—heart, soul, and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5; Luke 10:27-28). Then, in the fullness of time, God sent His Son into the world as Redeemer and Savior to accomplish God’s holy will for the human family (Galatians 4:4).
7. What is Jesus’ role in salvation history?
Possible Responses: In and through Jesus Christ, God continued calling all people everywhere to become God’s adopted children by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, “heirs of God and coheirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17). To reach the entire world with God’s Good News, Christ chose apostles, sent them into the world, and commissioned them to proclaim the gospel—the Good News that the kingdom of God has come in the person of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). Empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ’s witnesses (John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8), the apostles “went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed His word by the signs that accompanied it” (Mark 16:20).
8. What is the Christian’s role in salvation history?
Possible Responses: Those who have freely responded to Christ’s call to follow Him are motivated by their love for Him to take the Good News everywhere. This gospel is a precious treasure (2 Corinthians 4:7), proclaimed first by the apostles and then faithfully communicated by those to whom the apostles entrusted the message. All of Christ’s followers are called to pass on the faith from generation to generation (Psalm 78:4) by professing the faith, by living the faith, by sharing the faith, and by celebrating the faith in worship, spiritual conversation, instruction, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

Digging In (30 minutes)

Leader note JMG 3: “The language used as medium between the teacher and learner must be common to both.”

List any new terms and explain them as you use them in this session. Use of a theological dictionary is recommended. Here are some terms as defined by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale in *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English*:

Good News – “(see Gospel) The gospel is the Good News about Jesus Christ. Gospel is from the Greek word *evangel*, which means ‘the Good News of victory.’ The first four books of the New Testament are called Gospels. They are called Gospels because they tell the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ.”

Articles of Faith – “Most denominations have listed their Articles of Faith. These articles tell what Christians in those denominations believe.”

Inspired – “Inspiration in the Bible means that God’s Spirit helped certain people to write the Bible. He guided them to know what to say. No other book is inspired in the way the Bible is inspired.”

Plenary (inspiration) – “Plenary describes something that is complete or full. Plenary inspiration means that the whole Bible was inspired by God. The 66 books contain all that people need to know for their salvation.”

Wesleyan – “Wesleyan describes a person or doctrine that holds to the teachings of John Wesley. Wesleyanism is a part of Protestant Christianity.”

Canon – “Canon was the guide used for deciding which books belonged in the Bible. It also means the list of all the books of the Bible. The word *canon* comes from Hebrew and Greek words that mean ‘a measure’ or ‘list.’ The canon includes those books that the Church believes God inspired.”

Sanctification – “God’s act by which He makes people holy. Wesleyans believe that sanctification includes the two decisive moments of initial and entire sanctification. Initial sanctification takes place when a person is born again. They also believe in entire sanctification as a second work of grace. Sanctification includes a lifelong process of spiritual growth.”

Be sure you have read all of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* and have a good understanding of the material presented in questions 14 – 22. Tell the group that understanding the Holy Scriptures and applying them to our lives is essential for our faith formation. Share a time when you applied a daily Scripture reading to your life that made a difference.

Lead the group in discussion questions 14 – 22. Be sure to allow enough time for group members to respond to each one.

14. In what ways has the good news been transmitted?

Possible Responses: It is God’s intention for “all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). God wants everyone to know the Good News about Jesus Christ, what the New Testament identifies as the gospel. Implicit in Christ’s command to “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) is the necessity of

communicating the faith in a variety of ways. The Holy Bible contains the proclamation of the gospel in written form.

See Article of Faith 4: The Holy Scriptures

We believe in the plenary (complete) inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by which we understand the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined (taught) as an article of faith. (Luke 24:44-47; John 10:35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

15. Why do we believe Holy Scripture teaches the truth?

Possible Responses: Since God inspired Holy Scripture, we are assured that it is inspired and teaches “all things necessary for our salvation, and that nothing in addition to what the Bible asserts about salvation can be required of believers” (Gregory S. Clapper, *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, 487). The Holy Spirit inspired the human authors of sacred Scripture, who in turn wrote down what God wanted to convey (2 Timothy 3:15-17).

16. Is there a distinctive Wesleyan perspective on Holy Scripture?

Possible Responses: John Wesley emphasized tangible (real), observable (visible), lived obedience: “When Jesus’ disciples live as though their sins have been forgiven, when they exhibit a radical witness of humble love . . . then the divinely inspired nature of Scripture is evidenced. . . . Wesleyans believe an incarnational (living) witness to the Bible’s authority is far more convincing than arguments about the inerrancy or infallibility of the text itself” (Gregory S. Clapper, *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, 487-488).

17. What is in the Christian Scriptures, the Holy Bible?

Possible Responses: The sacred (holy) writings of the church, known as the “Canon of Scripture,” is comprised of 66 books; 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.

18. Is the Old Testament important for Christians?

Possible Responses: Christians affirm the Old Testament books as divinely inspired and bearing witness to God’s saving love. They reveal God’s unfolding story of salvation for humanity. Above all, they prepare God’s people for the coming of Christ, the Savior of the world.

19. What importance does the New Testament have for Christians?

Possible Responses: The New Testament books bear direct witness to the person, work, and mission of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. The four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are the principal witness to the life and teaching of Jesus. The remaining books of the New Testament bear witness to the coming of the Holy Spirit, the creation and spread of the Church, and other essential elements of the Christian faith.

20. How do we understand the unity between the Old and New Testaments?

Possible Responses: The Holy Scripture offers us a unified understanding of God's self-revelation to humanity. God's plan of salvation and the inspiration of both the Old and the New Testaments unfold God's progressive revelation to us. The Old Testament prepares for the New Testament, and the New Testament fulfills the Old. Scripture is a confirmation of the faith, nourishment for the soul, and the source of instruction for faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

21. What is a catechism?

Possible Responses: The term catechesis (cah-te-key-sis) describes the church's efforts to instruct disciples, forming them in Christlike character and virtue, thus building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12-13). In that tradition, *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: Essential Teachings for Faith Formation in the Church of the Nazarene* continues the mandate of Christ to make disciples of all nations; to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and to teach obedience to everything Jesus has commanded (Matthew 28:19-20).

22. What is the importance of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* to the Church of Nazarene?

Possible Responses: This resource is the first phase of a collaborative effort to synthesize and teach the fundamental expressions of Nazarene doctrines (beliefs). We examine Holy Scripture, our Wesleyan-Arminian theological tradition with its emphasis on entire sanctification and practical holiness, and the Church of the Nazarene's core statements of belief, namely the Articles of Faith, the Agreed Statement of Belief, and the Covenant of Christian Character (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, ¶1-21.3).

Finally, point out that *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* can thus be considered a baseline (starting point) of doctrinal and theological understanding for local faith formation (discipleship) resources created by and for Nazarenes in and for various cultural and language groups around the world. It is a work in progress that will develop with time and continued reflection.

Wrapping Up (10 minutes)

Ask the group to describe the significance of the Bible in forming our faith.

Possible Answer: The Bible offers us a unified understanding of God's revelation of Himself to people.

If time allows, select one or more of the following review questions:

- In what ways is the Gospel great news?
- On what authority do we believe Christianity presents God's truth?
- What are some distinguishing Wesleyan features in understanding the Bible?
- How is the Old Testament important for Christians today?
- Why is the New Testament important for Christians today?
- How does a catechism benefit Christian believers?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Divide the class into smaller groups. Ask them to thank God for giving us His Holy Scripture. Also, ask God to show us how to apply the Bible to our lives. After a few minutes, lead the group in a closing prayer, thanking God for what we have already learned in sessions 1 and 2.

Inform the group that the next session will cover “Pattern One—The Apostles’ Creed.” Remind them to read these passages in preparation and to keep a record of their questions and thoughts.

Session 3: Pattern One—The Apostles' Creed

In this session, we seek to:

- Examine what it means to believe in God, the Father Almighty
- Examine what it means to believe in Jesus Christ
- Examine what it means to believe in the Holy Spirit, church, communion, forgiveness, resurrection, and life everlasting

Resources: pens and sheets of paper for each group member, Bibles, copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*, The Articles of Faith in Global English, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/articles-faith-global-english-church-nazarene>)

Optional: Refreshments, chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard, nametags, StudyMaps: Articles of Faith, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/studymaps-articles-faith-church-nazarene>), *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale.

Note: This session has a number of new terms that may need explanation. Be prepared to do this. Perhaps you can list them on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or PowerPoint slides and then define them as you use them during this session.

Some new terms may be (as defined by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale):

(Holy) Trinity – “Trinity is a central Christian doctrine. It states that the one true God reveals himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is not three gods who act as one. The Trinity is one God who reveals Himself as three Persons.”

Apostles' Creed – “The Apostles' Creed is a short statement of the Christian faith. It has been used by Christians for many centuries.”

Divine – “Divine describes someone or something as having the nature of God.”

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

If you are providing refreshments, enjoy the refreshments with your group members. At the arranged time, ask for everyone to be seated. When everyone has found a seat, welcome the group and begin the session with prayer, asking God to bless your time together and to speak to the group throughout this course of study. Also, ask God to teach us how to utilize the Apostles' Creed and the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene to shape our lives.

Remind the group of Psalm 19:14 as our prayer focus: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Getting Started (10 minutes)

Ask the group: What were our last sessions' topics?

Possible Responses: (1) “The Basics – Background Conversations and Salvation History” and (2) “The Holy Scriptures and Faith Formation”

Remind the group that this session focuses on “Pattern One—The Apostles' Creed, or what the church believes.”

Quote: “Because the church’s mission requires it to engage the whole of life, from the beginning it has thought and spoken very carefully. From time to time the church has carefully stated its beliefs in creeds. The word “creed” is from the Latin *credo*, “I believe.” Very early, creeds were incorporated into the disciplines by which converts entered the church’s life ... The Apostles’ Creed . . . seems to have grown from a second-century Roman baptismal creed and to have achieved its current form around AD 700. It acknowledges the Father and the Spirit, the church, the resurrection of the flesh, forgiveness, and unending life. But most of it focuses on Jesus Christ . . . The creed stresses His crucifixion, descent into hell, resurrection, ascent to the Father, and future return to judge the world” (Russell Lovett, *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, 137-138).

Have the group sit in groups of two or three. Distribute pens and papers to the groups. Assign one of the following questions to each of the smaller groups (Note: If you have more than eight groups, some questions can be repeated. Be sure to note which group is responding to each question. If you do not have eight groups, feel free to assign more than one question per group).

1. What do you think it means to believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?
2. What do you think it means to believe in Jesus Christ?
3. What do you think it means to believe Jesus Christ died and rose again?
4. What do you think it means to believe Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God?
5. What do you think it means to believe Jesus Christ will come to judge?
6. What do you think it means to believe in the Holy Spirit?
7. What do you think it means to believe in the holy church?
8. What do you think it means to believe in life everlasting?

Allow the groups about five minutes to record their responses. Then, ask them to evaluate their responses and make comments during the “Digging In” section.

Digging In (30 minutes)

Leader note JMG 4: “The lesson to be mastered must be explicable (explained) in terms of truth already known by the learner – the unknown must be explained by means of the known.”

Encourage group members to find the meaning of difficult words in a dictionary. Be sure to invite the responses from the small groups at the appropriate times in this section. Due to the length of the content provided for this session in *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*, it might work best to know the content well enough to allow the small groups’ questions to primarily guide this “Digging In.” Be sure you have read all of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* and have a good understanding of the material presented in questions 23 – 82. As you go through the questions, be sure to allow enough time for group members to respond.

If you use the StudyMaps: Articles of Faith, Church of the Nazarene, point out each Article of Faith as it is presented.

Read together the Apostles’ Creed in the *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* document.

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic [universal] church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”

The following questions are linked to the Apostles’ Creed in general:

24: What is the Apostles’ Creed?

25: Why does our profession of faith begin with “I believe in God?”

26: Why do we profess our belief in only one God?

Discuss the small group questions together:

1. What do you think it means to believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 1.

Link responses to questions 27 – 36:

27. What is the name by which God reveals Himself?

28. Why is God’s disclosure of His name important?

29. What is the central mystery of the Divine Being?

30. Why do we affirm, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1)?

31. Who created the world?

32. What did God create?

33. What place does the human person occupy in creation?

34. How did sin begin?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 5.

35. How do we understand original sin?

36. What did God do after sin entered the human race?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 8.

2. What do you think it means to believe in Jesus Christ?

Link responses to questions 37 – 44 as time allows:

37. What is the significance of the name “Jesus”?

38. What is the meaning of the title “Christ”?

39. How do we learn from Scripture that Jesus is the “only begotten Son of God”?

40. What do we mean when we say “Jesus is Lord?”

41. What is the meaning of “incarnation”?
42. How do we understand the mystery of the incarnation?
43. What is the meaning of the phrase “conceived by the Holy Spirit”?
44. What is the meaning of the phrase “born of the Virgin Mary”?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 2.

3. What do you think it means to believe Jesus Christ died and rose again?

Link responses to questions 45 – 60:

45. How may we understand the life of Christ?
46. Why did Jesus allow Himself to be baptized by John?
47. What do the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness teach us?
48. Why did Jesus announce the Kingdom with signs and miracles?
49. What was the transfiguration?
50. What did Christ’s entrance into Jerusalem mean?
51. How do we understand the mystery of Christ’s suffering, crucifixion, and death?
52. Why was Jesus condemned to death?
53. How did Jesus offer Himself to His Father?
54. What happened in the Garden of Gethsemane?
55. Did Jesus truly die?
56. How do we identify the hell (Hades) into which Jesus descended?
57. What place does the resurrection of Jesus hold in the Christian faith?
58. What are the signs of the resurrection of Jesus?
59. How is the Trinity involved in the resurrection?
60. What is the redemptive purpose of the resurrection?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 6.

4. What do you think it means to believe Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God?

Link responses to questions 61–64

61. What does the ascension mean?
62. How does the ascension affirm Christ’s victory?
63. How do we understand the coming of Jesus in glory will happen?
64. What do we mean when we say Christ will judge the living and the dead?

5. What do you think it means to believe Jesus Christ will come to judge?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 15.

Link responses to questions 65–69 as time allows:

65. What do we mean when we make the confession “I believe in the Holy Spirit”?
66. What do we mean when we say the Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life?
67. How are the missions of the Son and the Spirit indivisible?
68. By what other titles or designations is the Spirit known?

69. How did the Spirit “speak through the prophets”?

6. What do you think it means to believe in the Holy Spirit?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 3.

7. What do you think it means to believe in the holy church?

Link responses to questions 70 – 79:

70. Why is Pentecost considered “the third great day of the church”?

71. What is the Spirit’s ministry to the church?

72. What is the meaning of the word “church”?

73. What is the mission of the church?

74. Why do we call the church “the people of God”?

75. How is the church the “body of Christ”?

76. How do we understand the statement, “The church is holy”?

77. Why does the church proclaim the gospel to the whole world?

78. How do we understand the expression “communion of saints”?

79. Who has the authority to forgive sins?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 8.

Wrapping Up (10 minutes)

Remind the group about the Scripture references at the end of Article 8. As time allows, read some of them, especially 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” Ask your group the following question:

8. What do you think it means to believe in life everlasting?

Link responses to questions 80 – 82:

80. How do we understand the word “body”?

81. Is there a relationship between Christ’s resurrection and our own?

82. What is life everlasting?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Utilize the small groups as prayer groups. Ask them to thank God for giving us the wisdom of our church leaders in the form of creeds and articles of faith. Also, ask God to show us how to apply this wisdom in our lives. And, thank God for what we have already learned in these three sessions.

Tell the group that you desire to close this session with a prayer that all will be certain they enter into life everlasting. You may also want to share Jesus’ words in John 6:47, “I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.”

Inform the group that the next session will cover “Pattern Two—The Sacraments.” Remind them to read these passages in preparation and to keep a record of their questions and thoughts.

Session 4: Pattern Two—The Sacraments

In this session, we seek to:

- Describe baptism as the sacrament of prevenient grace and a sign of the covenant of grace
- Identify the Lord's Supper as the sacrament that nourishes Christians' spiritual growth
- Encourage prayer with faith for divine healing

Resources: Bibles, copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*, The Articles of Faith in Global English, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/articles-faith-global-english-church-nazarene>)

Optional: Refreshments, chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard, nametags, StudyMaps: Articles of Faith, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/studymaps-articles-faith-church-nazarene>), *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

If you are providing refreshments, enjoy the refreshments with your group members. At the arranged time, ask for everyone to be seated. When everyone has found a seat, welcome the group and begin the session with prayer, asking God to bless your time together and to speak to the group throughout this course of study, also asking God to teach us how to utilize the sacraments as means of grace and growth.

Remind the group of Psalm 19:14 as our prayer focus: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Getting Started (10 minutes)

Prepare in advance for one group member to share a testimony about baptism, the Lord's Supper, or about a divine healing. (8 minutes)

Explain that this session seeks to show how these relate to our salvation. (2 minutes)

Digging In (30 minutes)

Leader note JMG 5: “Teaching is arousing and using the learner's mind to grasp the desired thought or to master the desired art.” As you go through the questions, be sure to allow enough time for group members to respond. Again, there may be terms or phrases that need to be explained. You may refer to Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale for words or phrases like:

Prevenient grace – “...It is the love of God reaching out to everyone. God makes the first move toward people. He makes it possible for them to respond to Him. God places within people the desire for what is good and true. No one can turn to God in his or her own strength. God awakens people to a knowledge of their need for redemption.”

Efficacious – “Efficacious describes something that has the power to produce a desired result. It refers to the grace of God that produces salvation in those who believe. The atonement of Christ makes possible the salvation of everyone. It is efficacious for those who believe. It is

also efficacious for those who are unable to believe. Some are unable to believe because they are too young. Others cannot believe because their minds are not normally developed.”

Ask the group to name the four patterns of *Essential Teachings for Faith Formation in the Church of the Nazarene*. (Pattern One—The Apostles Creed; Pattern Two—The Sacraments; Pattern Three—The Ten Commandments; and Pattern Four—The Lord’s Prayer.)

Remind the group that today we are looking at Pattern Two—The Sacraments.

Say: This second pattern of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism* explains how God’s salvation, accomplished once for all through the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ Jesus, is made present in the sacraments of the church. The sacraments include baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Holy Communion). Baptism is the sacrament of prevenient grace and a sign of the covenant of grace. God’s faithfulness and the work of the Holy Spirit call from us a response of faith and growth in the Christian life. John Wesley said this growth is necessary for sanctification that will transform every aspect of our existence. The sacrament that nourishes us in this growth is the Lord’s Supper (Theodore Runyon, *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, 477-478).

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 7.

Ask questions 84 – 87:

84. How do we understand the purpose of the second pattern for Christian faith formation, the sacraments?
85. What is a sacrament?
86. What do we mean when we say the sacraments are efficacious means of grace?
87. What sacraments do the Church of the Nazarene observe?

Tell the group that we will first look at baptism, briefly covering eight questions. However, these questions could generate much more discussion. You may need to focus on questions 88 and 94.

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 12.

Ask questions 88 – 94:

88. What is Christian baptism?
89. What is a further significance of Christian baptism?
90. How is baptism anticipated in the Old Testament?
91. Who can receive the sacrament of baptism?
92. Why does the church baptize infants?
93. Are there special requirements for believers’ baptism?
94. What does the sacrament of baptism acknowledge?

Tell the group you will now look at the Lord’s Supper (Holy Communion), our second sacrament. You may need to focus on questions 95 and 103.

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 13.

Ask questions 95 – 103:

95. What is the Lord's Supper?
96. Why is Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper important?
97. When did Jesus institute the Lord's Supper?
98. By what other names is this sacrament known?
99. What are the required elements for the Lord's Supper in the Church of the Nazarene? (See Church of the Nazarene *Manual* ¶802 and the note appended to it.)
100. Why do we use these elements in observing the Lord's Supper?
101. Can anyone participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?
102. How does a follower of Christ prepare for the Lord's Supper?
103. How is the Lord's Supper a pledge of future glory?

Tell the group there is another ministry commonly practiced in the Church of the Nazarene, even though it is not a sacrament. We call it divine healing.

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 14.

Ask questions 104 – 106:

104. What is divine healing?
105. Are there any actions one should take for divine healing?
106. If believers pray for divine healing, should they avoid seeking medical advice or assistance from doctors or nurses?

If your time has almost expired, be sure to at least discuss responses to question 104.

Finally, remind the group that the sacraments are visible signs of inward and spiritual grace. We pray for divine healing because it is a means of experiencing God's grace in believers' lives. The church affirms divine healing because it acknowledges the compassion of Jesus toward those who are ill and hurting.

Wrapping Up (10 minutes)

Ask the group members to indicate if they have been baptized. If there are some who have not yet been baptized, ask if today's session has encouraged them to participate in this sacrament. If some desire to be baptized, indicate that you will follow up with the pastor about information on a baptismal service.

Ask the group if they have gained a greater appreciation for the Lord's Supper as a result of today's session.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Remind the group that we have the privilege to pray for divine healing and that we will end today's session praying for God's healing touch for them and for others.

End the session with prayer requests and intercession for divine healing.

Remind the group that the next session will cover “Pattern Three—The Ten Commandments.” Also, remind them to read this section in preparation and to keep a record of their thoughts on the questions from this section of material.

Session 5: Pattern Three—The Ten Commandments

In this session, we seek to:

- Examine God’s will for His people as explicitly expressed in the Ten Commandments
- Interpret the Ten Commandments through the lens of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount
- Relate the Ten Commandments to the Church of the Nazarene Articles of Faith and other portions of the *Manual*

Resources: Bibles, copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*, The Articles of Faith in Global English, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/articles-faith-global-english-church-nazarene>)

Optional: Refreshments, chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard, nametags, StudyMaps: Articles of Faith, Church of the Nazarene (see <https://whdl.org/studymaps-articles-faith-church-nazarene>), *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

If you are providing refreshments, enjoy the refreshments with your group members. At the arranged time ask for everyone to be seated. When everyone has found a seat, welcome the group and begin the session with prayer. Ask God to guide this session with our hearts and minds open to hear His voice and allow the Holy Spirit to have full control of every area as we apply the Ten Commandments to our lives.

Remind the group of Psalm 19:14 as our prayer focus: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Getting Started (10 minutes)

In the last session, we discussed baptism as the sacrament of prevenient grace and a sign of the covenant of grace, as well as the Lord’s Supper as the sacrament that nourishes Christians’ spiritual growth. We also encouraged prayer with faith for divine healing.

Inform the group that today we will look at the third pattern in *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*. We will seek God’s will for His people as explicitly expressed in the Ten Commandments. We will utilize the lens of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7), as well as the Church of the Nazarene Articles of Faith and other portions of the *Manual*.

Ask the group if anyone has memorized the Ten Commandments. If some have, ask for someone to volunteer to say them. Be sure to show appreciation for the attempt, whether or not each commandment is stated in the correct order.

Digging In (30 minutes)

Leader note JMG 6: “Learning is thinking into one’s own understanding a new idea or truth, or working into habit a new art or skill.”

Say: The two tablets of the law include love for God and neighbor. In giving the Ten Commandments, God initiated a covenant with His people. God said in Leviticus, “I will be your God and you shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:12). Thus, “privilege and responsibility are included in the Sinai covenant. The theme of ‘covenant’ speaks of mutuality of relationships” (James W. Lewis, *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, 501).

New Testament believers read the Ten Commandments through the lens of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). The spirit of Christ’s teachings in this sermon helps us understand how the law instructs our faith journey with Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Refer to the answers to questions 108 – 109. Ask group members to respond briefly to question 110.

108. What is meant by a covenant with God?
109. Where in the Old Testament is God’s will for us shown most clearly?
110. What are the Ten Commandments or Decalogue?

Have the group say the Ten Commandments together (Exodus 20:3-17):

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an image.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet.

Refer to the answers to questions 111 – 113. Ask the group members to respond briefly to each one.

111. What do we learn from the Decalogue (another term for the Ten Commandments)?
112. What is the purpose of the Ten Commandments?
113. What is sin?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 5b.

Refer to the answers to questions 114 – 118. Ask the group members to respond briefly to questions 119 and 120.

114. What is freedom?
115. What is the relationship between grace and human freedom?
116. What is the moral conscience?
117. What are the positive fruits of the Ten Commandments?
118. What is the fruit of the Holy Spirit?
119. How does the old covenant relate to the plan of salvation?
120. How does the new covenant relate to the plan of salvation?

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 9 and the answer to question 121.

As a group, review the Church of the Nazarene Article of Faith 10 and the answers to questions 122 – 123. Pay close attention to question 124.

- 122. How do we understand the sanctifying work of God’s grace?
- 123. Does God call persons to Christian holiness?
- 124. Why is a consistent moral life of holiness essential for proclaiming the gospel?

Refer to the answers to questions 125 – 128, but if discussion time has nearly ended, be sure to discuss responses to question 125:

- 125. What must we do to gain eternal life?
- 126. To what does the term “Decalogue” refer?
- 127. What do we mean when we say the Decalogue is an organic (living) unity?
- 128. How is it possible to keep the Ten Commandments?

Wrapping Up (10 minutes)

Share your personal testimony of a way God has enabled you to overcome sin in obedience to one of the Ten Commandments.

Depending on the size of your group, divide it into smaller groups to discuss questions 129 – 140:

- 129. What is the first commandment and what is its meaning?
- 130. What is the second commandment and what is its meaning?
- 131. What is the third commandment, and how do we understand its significance?
- 132. What is the fourth commandment?
- 132. What is the fifth commandment and what does it require of us?
- 134. Does the fifth commandment imply any obligation of parents to their children?
- 135. What is the sixth commandment and what is its significance for today?
- 136. In reviewing the seventh commandment, how do we explain its significance?
- 137. What is the eighth commandment and what does it prohibit?
- 138. How does work relate to the eighth commandment?
- 139. What is the ninth commandment and how do we observe it?
- 140. What is encompassed in the tenth commandment?

Closing and Prayer (5 minutes)

Tell the group that the next session will cover “Pattern Four—The Lord’s Prayer.” Also, remind them to read these passages in preparation and to keep a record of their questions and thoughts.

Today’s session will conclude by briefly looking at question 141 and prayer for our response to it.

- 141. What should be the highest desire of the human heart?
Possible responses: Our most eager desire should be a longing for God alone. As we Christians grow in our faith, we realize that true happiness is found only in the One

who created us out of love and who continually invites us into the joy of the endless love of the Holy Trinity.

Guide the group in praying that our “most ardent desire” will “be a longing for God alone;” our “true happiness” will be “found only in the One who created us out of love;” and that we will welcome “the joy of the infinite love of the Holy Trinity.”

Session 6: Pattern Four—The Lord’s Prayer

In this session we seek to:

- Examine the importance of prayer for a Christian’s personal relationship with God
- Consider models of exemplary prayer
- Apply the Lord’s Prayer to our Christian lives

Resources: Bibles; copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*; *How to Start a Small Group*, see: https://whdl.org/sites/default/files/publications/English_How_To_Start_a_Small_Group.pdf

Optional: Refreshments, chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard, nametags, *A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English* by Eby, Lyons, and Truesdale

Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

If you are providing refreshments, enjoy the refreshments with your group members. At the arranged time, ask for everyone to be seated. When everyone has found a seat, welcome the group and begin the session with prayer. Encourage the group to have their hearts and minds open to hear God’s voice and to allow God to teach us to pray more effectively.

Also, remind the group of Psalm 19:14 as our prayer focus: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

Getting Started (10 minutes)

Remind the group of the importance of prayer for a Christian’s ongoing relationship with God. Tell them that today we will consider some models of exemplary prayer and apply the Lord’s Prayer to our Christian lives. This is the fourth pattern of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*.

Note John Wesley’s statement: “Whether we think of, or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for Him, all is prayer when we have no other object than His love and the desire of pleasing Him. All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God” (Wesley, *Works*, 11:438).

Ask question 143: How do we define prayer?

After some group responses, say: Prayer is lifting our thinking and believing into the presence of God, as well as asking Him for those good things that align with His will. Prayer is a divine gift; God always longs to encounter the human family. It flows from a personal and living relationship of believers with the Lord. God’s Spirit dwells in believers’ hearts and “intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God” (Romans 8:27).

Digging In (30 minutes)

Leader note JMG 7: “The test and proof of teaching done – the finishing and fastening process – must be a reviewing, rethinking, reknowing, reproducing, and applying the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideals and arts that have been communicated.”

Ask your group the following questions:

144. Who are some models of exemplary prayer?
Allow several responses, but be sure Abraham and Moses are included.
Say: Abraham walked in the presence of God; he demonstrates ideal prayer both in listening to God and obeying God. For Abraham, prayer was a struggle of faith that led him to believe in the faithfulness of God even during times of testing (Genesis 15). Moses experienced prayer as intimacy with God “face to face, as one speaks to a friend” (Exodus 33:11). Moses interceded persistently for the Hebrew people as they journeyed to the Promised Land. The prayers of Moses anticipate the role of intercession by the one Mediator, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5).
145. How is Jesus an example of the life of prayer?
146. What was the significance of prayer during Christ’s passion?
151. Who gave us the Lord’s Prayer?
152. Why do we call this prayer the “Lord’s Prayer”?

Ask your group to say the Lord’s Prayer together:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen. (from Matthew 6:9-13)

Ask questions 153 – 163 and allow time for responses:

153. What are the reasons for saying “our” Father?
154. How do we understand the words, “in heaven”?
155. What is the structure of the “Lord’s Prayer”?
156. What does the phrase “Hallowed be your Name” signify?
157. Why do we pray, “Your kingdom come”?
158. Why should we pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”?
159. How do we understand the petition, “Give us today our daily bread”?
160. Why do we pray, “Forgive us our trespasses (debts) as we also have forgiven those who trespass against us (our debtors)”?
161. What do we mean by the phrase, “Lead us not into temptation”?
162. What is the concluding petition of the Lord’s Prayer?
163. What is the meaning of the doxology (an expressive praise to God) that concludes the Lord’s Prayer?

Wrapping Up (10 minutes)

Discuss answers to question 147:

147. What are the essential forms of Christian prayer?
Note that a good outline of Christian prayer appears in 1 Timothy 2:1-2, and ask for examples of each:
 - Worship, or doxology
 - Supplication, or petition
 - Intercession, or invocation
 - Thanksgiving, or benediction

Say: “Christians, in fact, can follow the example of Jesus and embrace all of life as prayer. John Wesley considered prayer the most important means of grace and the principal activity in works of piety (personal holiness). Works of mercy (doing good) are also expressions of prayer. Christian prayer asks God for personal needs, prays for the consummation of God’s kingdom, and intercedes for the salvation of all persons” (Achim Hartner, *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, 425-426).

Finally, share question 149 and its response: Why can prayer often be a struggle?
 “The Spirit’s invitation to prayer, as an expression of God’s grace, must always have an intentional response from us, because we battle against many distractions, and our adversary does all he can to turn us away from prayer. This struggle in prayer is a spiritual battle and benefits our growth in grace. We must learn to pray as we live because we live as we pray.”

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

If you have decided to offer a seventh session, inform the group of what Session 7 will involve (e.g., fellowship, further questions and discussion, finish covering material from another session, and so on). Remind them to bring their notebooks with their questions and insights.

End this session by sharing question 150 and its response: Is it possible to pray continually?

“Prayer is an abiding disposition of Jesus’ disciples because He always remains with us (Matthew 28:20). Prayer and the Christian life cannot be separated (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).”

Offer prayer on behalf of the whole group. Pray for any specific needs, and conclude by asking God to apply in their lives all they have learned in these six sessions.

Session 7: Wrap-up

In this session, we seek to:

- Discuss questions or observations that remain from previous sessions
- Create a plan of action for more fully embracing *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: Essential Teachings for Faith Formation in the Church of the Nazarene*
- Guide prospective new members in the membership process

Resources: Refreshments; list of small groups and possible ministry opportunities in your church; Bibles; copies of *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: How to Start a Small Group*, see: https://whdl.org/sites/default/files/publications/English_How_To_Start_a_Small_Group.pdf

Optional: chalk, chalkboard, projection screen, computer, projector, graphics, whiteboard markers, whiteboard.

You might also want to have a pastor meet with the group during the “Wrapping up” portion of this session.

Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 minutes)

Offer refreshments. Allow for a few extra minutes of fellowship and community building. When you are ready to begin, open with prayer, thanking God for the ways He has spoken to us and challenged us in the past several weeks.

Getting Started (10 minutes)

In this session, we want to take time to address some of the remaining questions we have recorded in our notebooks. The discussion will be guided by the concerns and interests of the group. Receive and record the group’s questions. Then, allow these to guide the “Digging In” portion of the session.

Digging In (30 minutes)

Leader note JMG 7: “The test and proof of teaching done – the finishing and fastening process – must be a reviewing, rethinking, reknowing, reproducing, and applying the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideals and arts that have been communicated.”

Allow the discussion to be guided by the concerns and interests of the group. Revisit questions considered through the last six weeks that deserve further discussion. It may be more orderly to organize the questions according to the previous six sessions:

Session 1: The Basics—Background Conversations and Salvation History;

Session 2: The Holy Scriptures and Faith Formation;

Session 3: Pattern One—The Apostles’ Creed;

Session 4: Pattern Two—The Sacraments;

Session 5: Pattern Three—The Ten Commandments; and

Session 6: Pattern Four—The Lord’s Prayer.

Wrapping Up (5 minutes)

Encourage the class members to keep asking questions, investigating, studying the Bible, and

embracing what they have learned in these sessions to continue growing spiritually.

If you have people in your group who are interested in joining the church, inform them of the steps they need to take to become a member.

Come prepared with a list of possible small groups and ministry opportunities within your church. Ask the group to prayerfully consider how they might participate or contribute in some way. Share with those who are interested information that Daphne Mathebula provided in *How to Start a Small Group*, at https://whdl.org/sites/default/files/publications/English_How_To_Start_a_Small_Group.pdf

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Conclude with prayer for any specific needs in the group, also thanking God for the time you have been able to spend together as a group and asking for grace to live fully for Him.