

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES FOR SENIOR SECONDARY THREE FROM

AKOGWU IGNATIUS

REGINA PACIS COLLEGE GARKI 2 ABUJA

WEEK ONE: THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST

- (a) Meaning and purpose of Baptism
- (b) Purpose of Jesus' Baptism
- (c) Synoptic account of the Baptism of Jesus. Mtt. 3:13-17, Mk. 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21-22.
- (d) Significance of the baptism of Jesus.

WEEK TWO: TEMPTATION OF JESUS

- (a) Synoptic account of the temptation of Jesus. Mtt. 4:11, Mk. 1:12-13, Lk. 4:1-13
- (b) Significance of each of the temptations
- (c) Temptation in the world today
- (d) Ways of overcoming temptation to sin today.

WEEK THREE: CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

- (a) Importance of call of Disciples to Jesus' ministry. Mtt. 28:19-20, Mk. 16:15-19, Lk. 5:10
- (b) Attitude of Christians today to God's call.
- (c) Call of the Disciples and their responses. Mtt. 4:18-25, Mk. 1:16-20, Lk. 5:1-11
- (d) Factors that militate against discipleship. Mtt. 8:18-22, Lk. 9:51-63.

WEEK FOUR: MISSION OF THE TWELVE AND THE SEVENTY.

- (a) Mission of the twelve. Mtt. 10:1-15, Mk. 6:7-13, Lk 9:1-6.
- (b) achievements of the twelve disciples.
- (c) Mission of the seventy. Lk. 10:1-20.
- (d) Achievements of the seventy disciples
- (e) Differences in the synoptic accounts of the twelve
- (f) Differences and the similarities in the mission of the twelve and seventy.
- (g) Significance of each of the mission.

WEEK FIVE: TRIAL AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

- (a) Jesus before the high priest. Mtt. 26:36-75, Mk. 14:53-75, Lk. 22:66-71
- (b) Jesus before Pilate. Mtt. 27:11-31, Mk. 23:1-25, Lk. 23:1-5.
- (c) Jesus before Herod. Lk. 23:6-12.
- (d) The crucifixion and burial of Jesus.
- (e) The significance of Jesus' death on the cross.

WEEK SIX: THE CRUCIFIXION, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

- (a) The Resurrection of Jesus.
- (b) The similarities and the differences in the synoptic account of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ.

WEEK SEVEN: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE MISSION TO THE GENTILES.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST

At the end of your study of this topic, you should be able to:

- (a) tell the meaning and purpose of Baptism
- (b) state Purposes of Jesus' Baptism
- (c) narrate the synoptic account of the Baptism of Jesus.
- (d) highlight some Significance of the baptism of Jesus.

What is Baptism?

The term Baptism is understood today as a sacrament which washes away the original sins, and which marks the transition into a new kingdom ushered in by Jesus. Baptism or ceremonial cleansing was part of the Jewish custom. This they referred to as the baptism of John in which Jesus too partook as a means of identification with the people He had come to save.

Exercise: Discuss how Baptism is done in your church. Please be detailed and do consider all the preparatory steps towards achieving it.

The Baptism Account of Jesus According to the Synoptic gospels.

References: Mtt. 3:13-17, Mk. 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21-22. (Please ensure to read all the passages referenced here to enable you have a robust understanding of the similarities and differences in the synoptic account of the Baptism of Jesus.)

Jesus went from Galilee to the River Jordan to be baptized by John the Baptist who was preaching repentance and baptizing people there. John protested at first when Jesus came to him for baptism and said, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” (Mtt. 3:14). Jesus answered back, “let it be now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Mtt. 3:15).

After the baptism, Jesus came out of the water, the heavens were opened and He saw the spirit of God descending upon Him, like a dove and a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.” The baptism of Jesus was for the fulfillment of the scripture as it was stated in the book of psalms 2.

Let us now identify some of the purposes of Jesus Baptism

1. To set an example for His followers.
2. To identify with sinners and willingly stand the gap.
3. To fulfill the scriptures.
4. To prepare Him for his public ministry.

COMPARISM OF THE SYNOPTISTS’ ACCOUNT OF JESUS’ BAPTISM

Based on the synoptic account, there are similarities and differences of the baptism of Jesus Christ.

Similarities.

1. Jesus’ baptism was in River Jordan.
2. The declaration of Jesus’ sonship and pleasing God.
3. 3. The descending of the Holy Spirit like dove.
4. 4. The opened heavens and a voice spoken.

Differences

S/NO	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1.	He said heavenly voice addressed the crowd.	States that the voice was addressed to Jesus.	The voice from heaven was addressed to Jesus.
2.	He gave reasons for Jesus’ baptism.	Mark and Matthew said Jesus came from Galilee.	He didn’t mention where Jesus came from to be baptized.
3.	Matthew and Mark mentioned who baptized Jesus.		He did not mention who baptized Jesus.

4.	He said John tried to resist baptizing Jesus.	Mark and Matthew said the descent of the Spirit in bodily form was as soon as he came out of the water.	Luke said Jesus saw the heavens opened when he was praying.
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What then are the significance of Jesus' Baptism?

1. It signifies the confirmation of Jesus as the true messiah. A confirmation is really true because the voice of God that came to Jesus during the baptism called Him Christ.
2. It proves that power can be gotten from God through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit Jesus received during His baptism was the power of God. This power was given to Jesus to enable Him to succeed in His ministry.
3. It signifies the need for every Christian to be baptized. This is so because Christ had no sin and yet allow Himself to be baptized by an ordinary man,
4. what more of you and me that are sinners and need to renew our relationship with God. Therefore, Jesus Christ did so for us to understand that we all need baptism which would prepare us to be accepted into the kingdom of God.
5. It signifies humility: Jesus indeed, to have allowed John to baptize Him shows that He is humble in nature and Christians ought to emulate Him.
6. The voice at the baptism declares the relationship which exist between Jesus and the father for it proves that Jesus is the son of God while God is the father.
7. The baptism officially prepares Him for his public ministry.

REVISION QUESTIONS.

1. What is baptism?
2. Give an account of the baptism of Jesus.
3. State the differences in the synoptic account of the baptism of Jesus Christ.

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

At the end of your study of this topic, you should be able to:

- (a) define temptation
- (b) give the synoptic account of the temptation of Jesus.

- (b) highlight the significance of each of the temptations.
- (c) discuss the challenges of temptation in the world today.
- (d) identify ways of overcoming temptation to sin today.

What does temptation mean? To tempt is to try to persuade, force, cajole or lure somebody to do something bad, evil or wrong. Temptation can also be seen as the desire to do or have something that you know is bad wrong.

The synoptic gospels tell us about the temptations of Jesus.

References: MTT. 4:1-11, MK.1:12-13, LK. 4:1-13.

All three synoptic gospels recorded that Jesus was tempted by the devil or the adversary for three times. These three temptations took place after His baptism. After His baptism, Jesus went into the wilderness and He fasted for forty days and forty nights there. Mark's account is very brief and sketchy while Matthew and Luke are more detailed. Thus, the temptation as recorded by Matthew.

"If you are the son of God, command this stone to become loaves of bread". Jesus replied, "man should not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the lord".

(Duet 8: 13). The devil took Jesus to the holy city in Jerusalem, set him on the pinnacle of the temple and told him to throw himself down and quoted clearly from **(Psalm 91: 1-11)** as follows: "he will give His angels charge over you and, on their hands, they will bear you up lest you strike your foot against a stone." Also, Jesus replied, from **Deut. 6:16** and said "You shall not tempt the lord your God." The devil again took Him to a very high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of this world and offered him control over earthly kingdom for exchange of Jesus' worship. With **Deut. 6:13** in mind, Jesus silenced him and said "be gone Satan" for it is written "you shall worship the lord your God and him only shall you serve. Then the devil left Him and angels came and ministered to Him.

THE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES IN THE SYNOPTIC ACCOUNT OF THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Matthew, Mark and Luke have something to say about Jesus' temptation. Matthew said much, followed by Luke while Mark said little about Jesus' temptation.

1. The third temptation in Matthew, is the second temptation in Luke.
2. Taking him to the pinnacle of the temple is the third temptation in Luke.

3. Matthew and Mark stated that angels ministered to Jesus but Luke concludes by saying that the devil left Jesus until an opportune time. This suggest that Jesus was tempted by the devil throughout the ministry.

4. Matthew and Luke used the word “led up”, Mark used much stronger expressions as “drove” and sees that the temptation likely took place at the mount of Quaratain, a wild district in the north west of Jericho.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS TEMPTATION

1. If Jesus had yielded to the first(1st) temptation, it would have represented him as an economic Messiah or material messiah.

2. The second temptation would have reduced Jesus to the level of a magician (if he had yielded) and wonder worker if he had accepted to fall from the pinnacle of the temple.

3. If Jesus had succumbed to the request to bow down and worship Satan, in order to own the kingdom of the world, he will have become a political messiah.

4. If Jesus was tempted by the devil, it signifies that nobody is above temptation. It can come to anybody but you must try to overcome it as Jesus did.

5. Jesus threw His dependence on God to over-come his temptations. In this way, every individual depending on Christ will overcome temptation.

6. The temptation of Jesus teaches us readiness and endurance when the tempter comes.

Do we as young people still face temptations in our world today?

In our society today, there are a lot of temptations facing the youths. Some of them includes:

1. The temptation to cheat during examinations or tests.

2. The temptation to commit fornication.

3. The devil likes to use what we need most to tempt us. The devil came to Jesus when he was hungry and used food to tempt Jesus. Jesus was able to overcome the temptation.

4. Jesus was tempted immediately after fasting and after his baptism- when he was closest to God. Jesus was able to resist and overcome the devil through the power he got by prayer and fasting.

5. Jesus was highly disciplined and that was why He was able to overcome the temptations

Exercise: Mention five other temptations you face as a youth that is not mentioned above.

How do we as Christians overcome temptations to sin?

The following are some ways by which Christians can overcome temptations:

1. By reading the Bible and practicing what we read.
2. By being prayerful.
3. By not having inordinate ambition.
4. Christians should be physically and spiritually disciplined.
5. We can overcome temptation if we strictly rely on God and seek his help in time of temptation.
6. Christians can overcome temptations by avoiding negative influences. We should strive to live holy and God-fearing lives.
7. Christians can overcome temptation through the power of the Holy Spirit.

REVISION QUESTIONS

- 1.(a) Compare the different accounts of the temptations of Jesus.
(b) state why Jesus was tempted
- 2.(a) Narrate Mathew's account of the temptation
(b) What is the significance of each of the three (3) temptations of Jesus
- 3.(a) List and explain some temptations young people face in the world today.
(b) Highlight the significance of the temptations of Jesus.
- 4.(a) Discuss how Jesus overcame the three temptations
(b) How can Christians overcome temptations today?
(c) What are the moral lessons learnt from the temptations of Jesus?

CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

It is expected that you should be able to do the following at the end of your study of this topic:

- (a) tell who a disciple is.
- (b) discuss the importance of call of Disciples to Jesus' ministry.
- (c) identify attitude of Christians today to God's call.
- (c) give the account of the call of the Disciples and their responses.

(d) state factors that militate against discipleship.

References: Mtt 4: 18-24, LK 9:57-63, 14: 25-33, MK 1:16-20

Who is a disciple? A disciple is one who believes in and follows the teachings of a religious or political leader or it is one who learns and believes in Jesus Christ while on earth. An apostle on the other hand is one who has been given the power to tend the flock of God or one who strongly believes in Jesus and make others to believe in Him too.

What is the importance of disciples to Jesus' ministry?

Jesus had to choose and train his disciples to carry on His work of teaching, preaching and healing because he knew that his stay on earth was temporary. It was going to be for a short period.

When Jesus began his ministry, he gathered his disciples who would carry on the preaching of the gospel of salvation to others. Before His ascension, Jesus charged His disciples,

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of age.”

THE ACCOUNT OF THE CALL OF DISCIPLES AND THEIR RESPONSES ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPTIC GOSPEL

The gospels of Mark and Matthew narrated that as Jesus walked along the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother fishing. He told them to follow him so that he would make them fishers of men. The two brothers, Peter and Andrew, immediately left their nets and followed Jesus.

Going a little further, Jesus saw two other brothers, James and John, With their father Zebedee, in the boat. They were mending their nets. Jesus called them and they immediately left the boat and their father and followed Jesus.

In Matthew 9:9-13, Jesus saw a tax collector called Matthew who was sitting in his tax office. He said to him ‘follow me’. Matthew stood up followed Him. The same man was referred to as Levi, Son of Alphaeus in Mark’s account.

LUKE’S ACCOUNT

Luke’s account of the four disciple’s call appears more detailed than Matthew and Mark’s. Again, it is a bit different.

According to Luke, as Jesus stood by the lake of Gennesaret, he saw two boats by the lake but the fishermen had gone out of them and they were washing their nets. Jesus entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and he taught the crowd from the boat.

After the teaching, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep and let down your net for a catch.' Peter answered, 'Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word, I will let down the nets. When Peter obeyed Jesus' instructions, he caught a large shoal of fish, to the point that his net almost broke. Peter and Andrew called their partners in the other boat to come and help them to bring out the tremendous catch of fish. Astonished, Peter fell on the ground saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man. O Lord"

Among those who assisted Peter in bringing out the fish were James and John, sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Peter, "Do not be afraid, henceforth, you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to the land, they left everything and they followed Jesus.

Luke tells us that the sons of Zebedee witnessed this miracle and they also followed Jesus. Again, Luke mentioned the call of the Levi. Levi or Matthew was sitting in his tax office when Jesus saw him. He called him and Levi followed Jesus without hesitation. Levi, also called Matthew, became the fifth disciple of Jesus.

THE DEMANDS OF DISCIPLESHIP (Mtt 8:18-22, Lk 9:15-62)

Jesus' encounter with the three would-be disciples brought out clearly, the demands of discipleship of Jesus as follows:

1. Self-denial
2. Prompt response
3. Total commitment
4. Willingness or readiness to follow
5. Concentration and dedication

The demand of discipleship is also referred to as the costs of true discipleship. According to Matthew, the first of these would-be disciples was a teacher of law, a Jewish scholar or a scribe. He came to Jesus and volunteered to follow Him. Jesus told him:

"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head"

The man could not sacrifice his pleasure and comfort. He declined to follow Jesus. He thought that discipleship involved a life of pleasure. When he realized that it required total commitment and was full of dangers and uncertainties, he refused to follow Jesus.

The second would-be disciple was told by Jesus to follow Him. However, he requested that Jesus should allow him to first go and bury his father, Jesus said to him, "follow me and leave dead to bury the dead". Here, Jesus said that people should give preference to God's service more than any other need. In fact, the call to serve God should take prominence. This second man procrastinated.

The third man wanted to follow Jesus but also asked for permission to go home and say goodbye to his family. The third would-be disciple was only recorded by Luke. Jesus said to him, 'no one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God'. (Luke 9:62).

The above would-be disciple lacked total commitment. Discipleship demands absolute loyalty and not a divided loyalty. Jesus stressed the fact that discipleship is not a jamboree or a pleasure trip or something without hardship. Discipleship requires constant attention.

Furthermore, in Luke 14:25-33, another dimension to the cost of discipleship is mentioned, Jesus said,

"If anyone comes to me and doesn't hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple."

Here Jesus tells us that discipleship requires self-denial, total loyalty, commitment and the readiness to carry out God's work. Discipleship demands personal sacrifice. One's interest and that of the family should be secondary.

Jesus also used some Analogies about the cost of discipleship. The first analogies were that of a man who wanted to build a tower and the second was about a king who wanted to go to war. In these two analogies, He stressed the need for preparedness and understanding of what one is to undertake.

Exercise: State five factors militating against your being a good disciple of Christ

MORAL LESSONS

1. Obedience is more important than material and physical needs i.e. to say that there is need for one to forsake the material\physical things.
2. God is the supreme object of worship and not man or physical things.
3. We are called to share in Jesus' work of seeking and saving the cost.
4. We should be firm in our faith.
5. Live a Christian-like life till death.

REVISION QUESTIONS

- 1a. state clearly how the first four disciples of Jesus were called
- b. From the reaction of the first four disciples to the call, what lessons does it teach the present-day Christians?
2. "Those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick."
 - a. Trace the events that led to the above statement.
 - b. What is the significance of this statement?
3. Those whom Luke referred to as the would-be disciples lacked the requisite demand of discipleship. Explain the above statement, using their dialogue with Jesus
- 4a. Who is a disciple?
- b. Give Matthew's account of the call of the first four disciple
- c. State three reasons why Jesus needed disciples
5. What differences (if any) exist among Matthew, Mark, Luke's accounts of the call of the first four disciples?

MISSION OF THE DISCIPLES

At the end of your study of this topic, you should be able to:

- (a) narrate the synoptic account of the mission of the twelve.
- (b) state the achievements of the mission of the twelve disciples.
- (c) give the account of the mission of the seventy.
- (d) Identify the achievements of the seventy disciples
- (e) tell the differences in the synoptic accounts of the mission of the twelve.
- (f) discuss the differences and the similarities in the mission of the twelve and seventy.
- (g) highlight the significance of each of the mission.

Let us learn about the mission of the disciples:

There were two separate missions- the first being the mission of the twelve and the second being the mission of the seventy. The three synoptic gospels gave accounts of the mission of the twelve, Only Luke gave an account of the mission of the seventy. Out of his followers, Jesus chose twelve whom he called apostles. The two missions were aimed at acquainting Jesus with

the level of their preparedness and ability to handle the mission after his departure. He also tested the zeal and enthusiasm of his disciples. Jesus sent them out to go and preach the gospel and win souls for God's kingdom.

Knowing fully well that he would soon join his Father in heaven, Jesus wanted the gospel to be preached to everyone, Jesus then tested his disciples to see how capable they were.

MISSION OF THE TWELVE

References: Mtt. 10:1-15, Mk. 6:7-13, Lk 9:1-6.

Jesus sent out the twelve and charged them to preach that the kingdom of God was at hand. They were given authority to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out demons. Mathew alone mentioned the names of the disciples who were directed to the lost sheep of Israel and not to the Gentiles and Samaritans. They include; Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Mathew, the tax collector, James's son of Alphaeus and Thaddaeus; Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus. Whereas, Mark said they were grouped two by two.

They were further instructed not to take money, belts, bags, staff, no two tunics, sandals and no bread or food for laborers deserve their wages. They received freely, power and healing and so they should give without pay.

In any village or town, they entered, they should stay with that family whom they found worthy until they depart. They are to salute every house with peace and if the house is worthy, they shall receive peace if not, their peace will be returned to them or their word(message) they were to shake off the dust of that place from their sandals and He further said to them that those who reject them and their teaching, their punishment on the last day will be worse than that of Sodom and Gomora.

Mark and Luke reported the successful result of the apostles for the healing of the sick and casting out demons. While Luke further mentioned how Herod the Tetrarch who beheaded John the Baptist became worried of the report.

MISSION OF THE SEVENTY

Reference: LUKE 10:1-20

Christ observed that the harvest was plentiful while the laborers are few and therefore prayed that laborers are sent out into the harvest. He sent the seventy out two by two to every town where he himself was to go. The mission needed carefulness because they were going like

sheep in the midst of wolves, that means innocent people going to the midst of those people who might frustrate their efforts.

They were instructed not to carry purses or bags, no sandals and not to salute no one on the road. Whatever house they enter say, "Peace to this house" and if a son of peace is there, your peace shall rest upon him but if not, it shall return to you. They were charged to return to the same house eating and drinking what is provided and served them, for a laborer deserves his wages. He further says any town that receives them, they should heal the sick and preach to them that the 'Kingdom of God has come near.' but if you are not being received, you should go into the street and say "even the dust of your own town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you." Jesus' condition that any city or house that rejected the word of God preached to them that their punishment would be more or worse than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Jesus lamented over the city of Pakistan such as Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, whom have heard the message but rejected it and that their punishment would be more serious than those of the adulterous city of Tyre and Sidon who would have repented if they had heard the word.

DIFFERENCES IN THE SYNOPTIC ACCOUNTS OF THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE.

1. Matthew had the Jewish audience in mind in his account of the mission of the twelve; Luke had a more universal outlook. Matthew's account had been referred to as the mission to the Jews while Luke's account had been tagged the mission of the Gentiles.
2. Matthew stated that the disciples would be persecuted for the sake of the gospel.
3. There is no mention of Gomorrah in mark and Luke; whereas we have it in Matthew.
4. Only Matthew gave the disciples names in connection with their mission, Mark and Luke were silent on this. However, they gave the names elsewhere but not in relation to this mission.
5. Only Matthew's account had a well detailed of things the disciples were not allowed to take with them. Mark mentioned that they were allowed to take a staff and sandals.
6. Matthew and Luke mentioned that the disciples were to greet people, Mark was silent on this.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TWELVE DISCIPLES

Mark recorded that the disciples made tremendous achievements which include:

They were able to cast out many demons in the name of Jesus Christ.

The twelve disciples anointed with oil many sick people and they were healed of their diseases and different diseases were cured.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SEVENTY DISCIPLES

As the seventy returned with joy, saying "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name"
"Jesus answered them:

"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this that the spirit is subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:19-20)

The disciples made such remarkable influence in the lives of those they encountered that the sick and the demonically oppressed were all delivered.

Exercise: what are some barriers to a successful missionary work? Please explain.

SIGNIFICANCE AND MORAL LESSONS

1. For any learning to be effective, it should be backed up with practical. Jesus sent his disciples out to the test their capability.
2. Jesus' instructions not to take money, two tunics, bag and to greet no one on the way discloses the urgency of the mission.
3. Every true Christian has his reward from God.
4. The twelve people sent to the house of Israel symbolically represented the twelve tribes of Israel. We can say here that the mission of the twelve represented Jesus' mission to the Jews. While the mission of the seventy symbolically represents the mission to the gentiles or foreigners.
5. Evangelism involves a lot of tasks, dangers, and persecution. Jesus' charge to his disciples about sending them out as lambs in the midst of wolves justifies this. They were warned to be strong and courageous. They should be ready to surmount any opposition.
6. Jesus as Jesus sent out his disciples, he can also send us on assignments to go and win souls for his kingdom.

REVISION QUESTIONS

- 1(a) Give reasons why Jesus sent his disciples on a mission.
(b) discuss the qualities of a disciple especially that of present-day evangelists.
- 2(a) What instructions were given to the twelve disciples before they set out on their mission?
(b) Mention any four differences that are notable in the accounts of Matthew and Mark.