

Borah Laawe Bit: Facilitator Lesson 3

Phases of the Male Spiritual Journey as Seen in Jesus Life

Preparation:

- Facilitator laminates prepares color hand-outs of Jesus' Spiritual Journey'
- Laminated colored cut-outs of the cycle of death and life metaphors. A4 paper and markers.
- 12 slips of paper with: "There is no change without transformation and no transformation without death" in Khmer.

Purpose: Men will have a basic design for a male's spiritual journey and use that to make sense of the pain and suffering along the way to be encouraged.

Objectives:

- Recognize that Jesus life left us with a general design and truth for a man's spiritual journey.
- Name, identify, and describe parts of the two first two phases of Jesus' journey.
- Compare their experience and journey with that of Jesus.
- Predict what might be next or what should happen next during their present place on the journey.
- Deduce that death and suffering are necessary parts of our transformation

I. **Introduction:** Facilitator welcomes those attending (2-3 mins) and reminds them of our rules about protecting each other's stories.

II. **Bridge:** Cycles of Life and Death.

LEARNING TASK 1: Facilitator prepares beforehand colored copies of images that represent a cycle of life and death and hands them out. Each participant selects an image that reflects where they are today on the spiritual journey and where they have been. Participants share their thoughts with the group (10 mins).

Facilitator Note: In the Bible Jesus asked us to be aware of the cycles of nature-seasonal, daily, and yearly. He said look at nature! It has a lot of spiritual lessons to teach you. All the seasons include death. Each day includes the darkness of night. And in the cycle of nature, there has to be death before there is life and renewal. This is true in the spiritual life as well. Something needs to die before new can spring up. When people 'receive' Christ, what really changes? They have a new team to belong to, the right team, the only team with the truth. They believe some correct concepts about God, change their behavior by going to church, stop smoking, drinking and beating the wife. But what really changed? Nothing really died, some new concepts were accepted, nothing died, and not much was changed and transformed. Many Christians love to say we are "born again." But to be born again, our other life has to die. Does learning some truth from the bible mean that we have been 'born to a new life'? What has

really died? Nature and Jesus that before something, like a grain of wheat, can be raised up to new life, it has to fall to the ground first and die.

III. **BODY:** Review the story of Jacob

- A. **LEARNING TASK 2:** Facilitator asks hands out slip of paper with the saying: “There is no change without transformation, no transformation with out death.”

Question: What things were put to death in Jacob’s life? What things changed?

B. **The Phases of Jesus’ Life and Ministry**

Facilitator hands out laminated color copies participants. Facilitator briefly traces the phases of Jesus ministry from God’s approval at the Baptism, Jesus’ voluntary time in the desert, his popularity, suffering/death and resurrection.

Facilitator has them look at Phase 1-

1. **Phase 1: Jesus approved by God** (Matt 3:16-4:11).

Facilitator to Group:

Over the next 2 weeks, we will take a look at the **5** most significant phases of Jesus’ official ministry life. His ministry at the age of 30 or so, which is mid-life, began with John’s Baptism. Here we see that God has affirmed the call of Jesus to ministry with presence of the Holy Spirit in the form of a DOVE, and the voice of God the Father. **Matt 3:13-16**

The scriptures say (have a participant read):

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

The first step of starting a faith or spiritual journey is when you have the experience of **feeling** deep in your heart that God loves really loves you. It is more an experience than knowing facts, or Bible verses like John 3:16. It is almost like hearing God’s voice, feeling his presence and just knowing and feeling he loves you and is pleased with you. We may have been learning the Bible for years and knowing all sorts of things, but until you experience God being pleased with you, you have climbed up on the right road, but you have not really even begun the journey.

LEARNING TASK 2: Take a few moments of silence and have participants reflect on Jesus' experience at the baptism, and if they have had a similar experience yet in their lives. Ask only volunteers to share.

Facilitator introduces the next phase:

IV. BUILD Phase 2: The Desert Experience

Have participants read **Matthew 4:1-11**

Facilitator: Then, immediately after Jesus voluntarily/willingly/intentionally goes into the desert alone. What Jesus did was similar to male initiation rites in many traditional countries.

LEARNING TASK 3: In pairs, think together of everything a person might experience alone in the desert. Put yourself in that desert alone day and night. Imagine the physical experience, the emotional experience, your thoughts, your needs, your prayers, etc.

1. Write down and discuss everything that could be experienced by the body, mind, and soul alone in the desert.
2. This was a voluntarily action, it was not forced on Jesus, he submitted to it as a part becoming a man. Share if there someone prepared for you a similar experience.
3. Has Cambodia ever had any similar initiation ritual for becoming men?

Pairs Share their findings-

V. My Story: Selected Participant Shares their story.

VI. Group prayer for that person and closing prayer.

VII. Select Person for following week.