



Ministry of Education
and Sports

HOME-STUDY LEARNING

SENIOR
4

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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This material has been developed as a home-study intervention for schools during the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to support continuity of learning.

Therefore, this material is restricted from being reproduced for any commercial gains.

National Curriculum Development Centre
P.O. Box 7002,
Kampala- Uganda
www.ncdc.go.ug

FOREWORD

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, government of Uganda closed all schools and other educational institutions to minimize the spread of the coronavirus. This has affected more than 36,314 primary schools, 3129 secondary schools, 430,778 teachers and 12,777,390 learners.

The COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent closure of all has had drastically impacted on learning especially curriculum coverage, loss of interest in education and learner readiness in case schools open. This could result in massive rates of learner dropouts due to unwanted pregnancies and lack of school fees among others.

To mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the education system in Uganda, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) constituted a Sector Response Taskforce (SRT) to strengthen the sector's preparedness and response measures. The SRT and National Curriculum Development Centre developed print home-study materials, radio and television scripts for some selected subjects for all learners from Pre-Primary to Advanced Level. The materials will enhance continued learning and learning for progression during this period of the lockdown, and will still be relevant when schools resume.

The materials focused on critical competences in all subjects in the curricula to enable the learners to achieve without the teachers' guidance. Therefore effort should be made for all learners to access and use these materials during the lockdown. Similarly, teachers are advised to get these materials in order to plan appropriately for further learning when schools resume, while parents/guardians need to ensure that their children access copies of these materials and use them appropriately. I recognise the effort of National Curriculum Development Centre in responding to this emergency through appropriate guidance and the timely development of these home study materials. I recommend them for use by all learners during the lockdown.



Alex Kakooza

Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Education and Sports

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National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) would like to express its appreciation to all those who worked tirelessly towards the production of home-study materials for Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Levels of Education during the COVID-19 lockdown in Uganda.

The Centre appreciates the contribution from all those who guided the development of these materials to make sure they are of quality; Development partners - SESIL, Save the Children and UNICEF; all the Panel members of the various subjects; sister institutions - UNEB and DES for their valuable contributions.

NCDC takes the responsibility for any shortcomings that might be identified in this publication and welcomes suggestions for improvement. The comments and suggestions may be communicated to NCDC through P.O. Box 7002 Kampala or email admin@ncdc.go.ug or by visiting our website at <http://ncdc.go.ug/node/13>.



Grace K. Baguma
Director,
National Curriculum Development Centre

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

Dear learner, you are welcome to this home-study package. This content focuses on critical competences in the syllabus.

The content is organised into lesson units. Each unit has lesson activities, summary notes and assessment activities. Some lessons have projects that you need to carry out at home during this period. You are free to use other reference materials to get more information for specific topics.

Seek guidance from people at home who are knowledgeable to clarify in case of a challenge. The knowledge you can acquire from this content can be supplemented with other learning options that may be offered on radio, television, newspaper learning programmes. More learning materials can also be accessed by visiting our website at www.ncdc.go.ug or ncdc-go-ug.digital/. You can access the website using an internet enabled computer or mobile phone.

We encourage you to present your work to your class teacher when schools resume so that your teacher is able to know what you learned during the time you have been away from school. This will form part of your assessment. Your teacher will also assess the assignments you will have done and do corrections where you might not have done it right.

The content has been developed with full awareness of the home learning environment without direct supervision of the teacher. The methods, examples and activities used in the materials have been carefully selected to facilitate continuity of learning.

You are therefore in charge of your own learning. You need to give yourself favourable time for learning. This material can as well be used beyond the home-study situation. Keep it for reference anytime.

Develop your learning timetable to cater for continuity of learning and other responsibilities given to you at home.

Enjoy learning

THEME: MAN AND WOMAN

Sub-theme: Courtship and marriage

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to;

- i) state the meaning of courtship.
- ii) explain the advantages and disadvantages of courtship and marriage.
- iii) describe the factors of considering a marriage partner.

Materials needed

- Pen
- Notebooks
- Internet access where applicable

Instructions

- Try to do all the exercises programmed
- Make use of any material near you or any source of information
- In some cases, you may need to consult an elder or guardian or parent for guidance.

Introduction

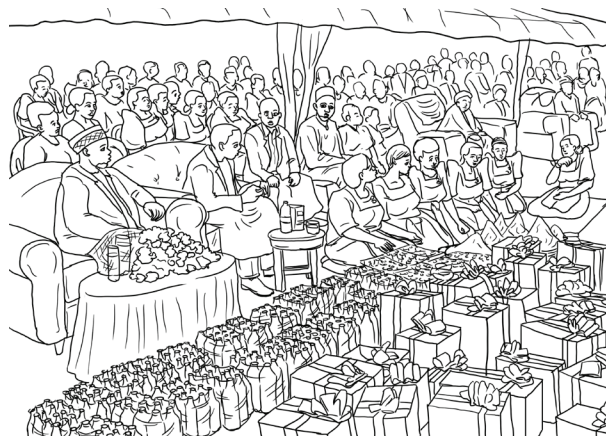
In the previous lessons you learnt about family life, sex difference and the person. You were made aware about the different types of families i.e. nuclear and extended family. In the sub-theme of Sex Difference and the Person, you learnt about: the value of a person regardless of sex; people grow into manhood and womanhood; the role of man and woman in the community as well as the church.

Today, boys and girls have many opportunities to meet and get to know each other. As friends share so much together and encourage each other, they actually help create each other.

Adolescents growing through changing periods of self-discovery need friends to help them understand themselves.

Activity

Study the pictures and attempt the tasks that follow.





Tasks:

1. What do you think is happening in the pictures?
2. How are the occasions an opportunity for young men and women to meet?
3. List down six occasions or events where teenage boys and girls meet these days.
4. Write down the reasons why young people like to meet in these events.

In the tasks above, you will find out that boys and girls will use the advantage to engage themselves into relationships that always result into marriage.

Therefore, courtship may refer to,

- i) A close or intimate relationship between a man and a woman who are mutually attracted to each other with the intention of getting married.
- ii) It may also be used to mean the friendship developed between a man and woman attracted to each other.
- iii) It is the period of interaction between a man and a woman who are attracted to each other.
- iv) Today, many people refer to courtship as dating. This is characterised by constant visits, sharing of ideas and exchange of gifts, among others.

Note: Sex is not part of courtship especially in Christian and traditional settings. This period of studying each other, as youths prefer to call it, has advantages and disadvantages, some of which include:

Advantages	Disadvantages
✓ The man and woman are able to discover each other's dislikes and likes. This enables the partners to appreciate their differences and accept one another the way they are.	✓ It may be difficult for each partner to identify whether or not the other one is true and committed to the relationship or simply pretending.
✓ It enables the partners to make proper choices. This is because marriage is arrived after a long interaction.	✓ It may not be necessary to lead the man and the woman into marriage. This is especially after one has realised the weaknesses of the other.
✓ It enables the partners to know the strength and weakness of one another. This makes it possible for one partner to accommodate the other's weaknesses.	✓ It is also difficult for the young partners to find the ideal and suitable partner. Because of this, they may be forced to keep moving in search of a better relationship.

✓ It tests the love that each partner has got for another. This lays a strong foundation for a future stable marriage.	✓ It may lead to breaking of cultural values. Young people tend to choose their own partners independently.
✓ It gives the opportunity for the partners to grow into a mutual understanding and give respect to one another.	✓ Some partners may be attracted to each other because of material benefits. Therefore, in the absence of such benefits like money, the relationship is most likely to come to an end.
✓ It gives time necessary for the partners to know each other properly before deciding to marry.	✓ It can make some youth to become rebellious towards their parents and their relatives. This is especially if such relatives disapprove their relationship
✓ It allows each partner to introduce each other to the relatives. This enables the partners appreciate their family differences	✓ It can easily lead to fornication especially if it is prolonged. Fornication has its own problems like unwanted pregnancy and acquisition of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS
✓ It enables the partners to know each other's character. This helps the partner to decide whether or not they can be together with the identified character in future.	✓ It is possible that people with ill intentions can ruin the partners through rumours. This can easily bring their relationship to an abrupt end thus leaving the partners heart-broken.

Marriage is a union of an adult male and female living together as husband and wife. Marriage is categorised into the following;

- i) Customary or traditional marriage
- ii) Religious marriage
- iii) Civil or state marriage

Customary Marriage

This is a type of marriage which takes place within the established customs of a given community. In other words, it is a marriage arrangement where the customs or the cultures of a given community or a particular group of people are followed. This is a type of marriage common in an African setting.

Religious Marriage

This is a marriage arrangement where the religion or the faith of the couple is followed. It is a marriage conducted following the religious beliefs or practices of the couple.

Civil or State Marriage

This is a marriage arrangement conducted following the law of the land as provided in the constitution of a given government.

Introduction

African Tradition

You have read about the different types of marriage in the modern society. You also

discovered aspects of courtship in the modern society. Let us learn about what used to happen in Africa before the coming of foreigners.

In the African past, the following were very important in choosing a marriage partner.

- i) It was a customary type of marriage conducted in accordance to the customs of a given society. The parents of the boy and the girl could come to a common understanding or agreement followed by the giving of bride wealth.
- ii) Marriage was a communal affair. The parents and the relatives were actively involved in the marriage affairs of the children through offering sex education, making choice of a partner and contributing towards the bride wealth.
- iii) Marriage was heterosexual. It had to be between people of opposite sexes. They only accepted and recognised the marriage of a woman and a man.
- iv) Marriage was sealed by the payment of bride wealth. This meant that before its payment, the partners had to stay away from each other.
- v) Marriage was exogamous. It had to be between people of different clans. Marrying from the same clan was sinful because the two were considered brothers and sisters.
- vi) Polygamy was highly practiced. This had a number of benefits like providing wealth and labour and, it ensured sexual satisfaction on the side of the man.
- vii) Marriage was a process. It involved a number of continuous activities before, during and after the marriage ceremony. Such activities included exchange of services and visits among family members.
- viii) Marriage was compulsory for every adult. Without getting married, a person remained a child and therefore excluded from adult work.

In the African past, marriage was a community affair therefore there were many factors to consider when choosing a marriage partner. These included:

- i) The children had freedom to choose their own partners. In such a case, it was a boy to show interest in a girl and make an approach.
- ii) The parents could also make choices on behalf of their children. This was by identifying a potential marriage partner for their children. Some could approach the family of the girl and declare their intentions. In such cases, the parents could not approve the choice made by their children. The children had to respect the views of their parents about their choices.
- iii) Some choices made included capturing the girl. This was arranged and organised by the boys after carefully identifying the girl. The bride wealth was taken later after the parents' acceptance.
- iv) There was also the use of a go-between or mediator. The boy intending to marry used someone or a messenger to declare the intention.
- v) In some societies, choices were made by making the girl and the boy to have a fight (wrestling). The choice could only be approved upon the boy wrestling the girl down.
- vi) In some cultures, choices were made through elopement. The boy and girl could secretly begin living together.

Summary

In the African past, choice of partners in marriage was the concern of the whole family group, polygamy was very common and divorce was very scarce since they tried to minimise its occurrence. However, divorce was accepted on grounds that,

- i) The woman was barren i.e. in the case of infertility
- ii) Loss of virginity
- iii) Prolonged illness like bleeding for some time.
- iv) Evil practices including witchcraft.
- v) Failure to meet the bride wealth
- vi) Marital unfaithfulness especially adultery on the side of a woman. etc.

Lesson 3: Courtship and Marriage in the Church History

By the end of the lesson, you should be able to,

- i) explain how marriage was understood in the church history.
- ii) explain the changes created by the following;
 - a) Early centuries Christians
 - b) Middle ages and reformers
 - c) Missionaries in African churches (in 19th - 20th century)

Introduction

Courtship and marriage in the church history was majorly based on monogamous marriage and freedom of choice of a marriage partner was emphasised. Marriage was seen as a continually developing relationship of love.



Activity

Using the picture provided,

1. In your notebook, outline the reasons why people make church weddings.
2. In your church, identify the conditions that should be fulfilled in order to have a church wedding.
3. Explain the reasons why many youths avoid church wedding.

In the period of church history, different people introduced different changes in the way courtship and marriage was perceived.

The Early centuries Christians,

- i) Christians put emphasis on where the married couple had to stay and live.
- ii) There was no fixed marriage ceremony among the Christians.

- iii) The period witnessed divorce becoming common.
- iv) New standards of faithfulness and love between the husband and wife, however, were later set.
- v) Prostitution became common. However, the Christians discouraged it.
- vi) The couples were encouraged to live permanently and peacefully with one another with love and respect.
- vii) Polygamy also became common among the Christians. However, the church and state came up in the open to condemn it.
- viii) Christians questioned whether or not they could marry pagans.

Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages, the reformers emphasised the following;

- i) The church divided itself into two. The Eastern Church (the Anglicans) and the Western Church (Catholics).
- ii) The Eastern Church praised and encouraged believers particularly the religious leaders to marry.
- iii) The Western Church praised celibacy (single life) for the sake of the gospel of Jesus.
- iv) Marriage laws came to be written down in books and believers were encouraged to follow these laws strictly.
- v) The Christians also came up with a marriage ceremony to which everybody was expected to observe.
- vi) Marriage was viewed as a sacrament and something important for the salvation of the believers.

19th and 20th Century

In the 19th and 20th century when the missionaries came to Africa, they emphasised the following about courtship and marriage;

- i) Equality between the husband and the wife. They said the two are created in God's image therefore they were the same.
- ii) Advised the parents to give freedom to their children to make choices of their partners.
- iii) Introduced the idea of living single life (celibacy) for the sake of the gospel of Christ.
- iv) Encouraged married couples to love each other and to give respect to one another.
- v) The couples were to stay permanently in their marriages, therefore no divorce.
- vi) Discouraged inheritance of widows emphasising that those women had the right to decide on their own.
- vii) Discouraged bride wealth. They looked at it as exchanging women for marriage.
- viii) Encouraged baptism of the children instead of initiation of rites like the circumcision of their male children.
- ix) Recognised and gave respect to marriage between slaves.

Summary

In this lesson, you have learnt about;

- how marriage was understood in the church history.
- the ways in which the early century Christians, Middle Ages reformers, and the missionaries viewed courtship and marriage

The Old Testament

You read about marriage and its values during the Church History times. You are going to learn more about what the Bible teaches about courtship and marriage.

Marriage, according to the Old Testament, was willed by God. It is a way of sharing God's creativity. This is in Genesis 2:18-25. God also shows the need for laws to help married persons treat each other with love and respect. This is found in Exodus 22:16-17.

In Genesis 1:28 we see the finest expression of the purpose of marriage. Marriage was highly regarded in ancient Israel. However, there was inequality between man and woman.

According to the book of prophet Hosea, marriage is presented as a covenant. Hosea, however, spoke from a bitter experience because he had an unfaithful wife. A relationship can grow only if it is based on integrity, tenderness, justice, love and faithfulness.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament in Mark 2:19, Jesus refers to the joy of marriage. People in marriage relationship are expected to love and forgive each other. Marriage is a covenant of love where the two submit to each other in love.

Marriage is not selfish and the foundation of a Christian marriage is a new life in Christ, this is clear in Romans 6:11. As earlier noted, some people remain celibate to serve God better. St Paul teaches that both celibacy and marriage are gifts from the Holy Spirit. Paul also teaches that as Christ loves the Church, so should the husband love his wife.

Lesson 4: Man's Quest for God

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to,

- i) state the meaning of quest for God.
- ii) explain the characteristics/attributes of God.
- iii) explain the ways in which people search for God.

Introduction

The term "**quest**" may refer to a long search for something with the view of understanding it better. At the end of the search, truth and knowledge is obtained. Therefore, the phrase "**man's quest for God**" refers to the continuous effort human beings put in their attempt to find out the truth and obtain knowledge about God. In other words, it refers to people's activities that are directed towards finding out more about their own existence as they relate with God.

In short, it means an attempt to know more about God and relate with him in the ways He desires.

As humans look for God, they have given Him various names and qualities He has alone possessed including the following;

- i) God is the creator. The whole universe came into existence through His creation work.
- ii) God is the provider. He gives to those who ask of him. Humans, therefore, are dependent on Him.
- iii) God is one. This is shown by praising and worshipping Him alone because the same God is found in the whole universe.
- iv) God is the source of life. He gives and takes life at will and at any time.
- v) God is holy. This has to do with the purity of God. He is sinless and therefore, human have to approach Him in that state.
- vi) God is unique. He cannot be compared to any other being and no one can make

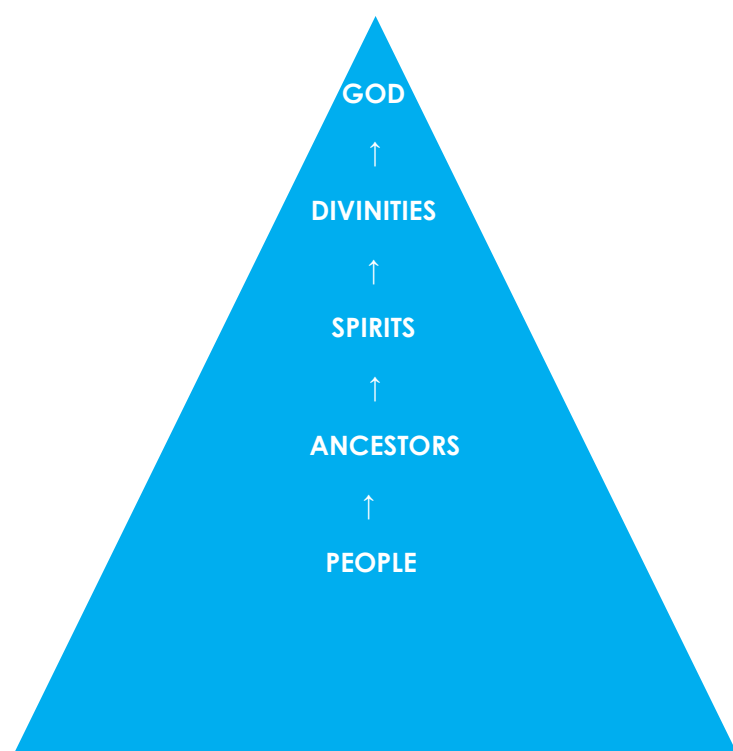
- images of Him apart from symbols.
- vii) God is real. People have given various names to prove that He is real. He is referred to as the Almighty, the Great I am and many others.
- viii) God is immortal. This means that God cannot die. He was there yesterday; He is there today and will be there tomorrow.

Today people search for God in the following ways,

- i) Through prayer. In prayer, one opens up the self to God and communicates his/her feelings.
- ii) Through alms-giving or charity work. This involves giving assistance to the needy like the orphans and the disabled. These disadvantaged people are provided with the basic needs including cloth and shelter, among others. This is done in following Jesus' way of life. He healed the sick and went on to say that the little good done here on earth for the benefit of another is rewarded in the heavenly kingdom. Places, objects and buildings are being named after the great Christian personalities.
- iii) Christian names including St Joseph, St Mary, St Peter and others are commonly used for example, St Joseph's Cathedral and St Mary's College Kisubi.
- iv) Some Christians are living a self – denial life. They deny themselves the pleasures of life like wealth. In the Catholic Church, the priests and the Nuns practice poverty in order to dedicate themselves to the work of God and live the life of Jesus Christ.
- v) Christians are actively involved in preaching the Good News of salvation. By preaching the gospel, Christians prepare themselves for the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- vi) Some people participate in pilgrimages. This involves visiting places of great religious significance in memory of great religious events. In Uganda, the Christians trek to and gather at the Uganda Martyrs at Namugongo Shrine every 3rd of June to commemorate the bravery of the African Christians including Kiriggwajjo Anatoli who were burnt in 1886 because of their faith in God.
- vii) Christians continuously organise and attend bible studies. They come together to share the Word of God as written in the bible. Bible studies are a source of inspiration and help to keep the people committed and strong in their faith.
- viii) Some people organise crusades. This is where Christians go out to public places in a big gathering to devote themselves to God through prayers, preaching and praise and worship.
- ix) Many people today declare themselves as being born again or saved. Such individuals denounce their lifetime mistakes and declare Christ as being their personal saviour.
- x) Some Christians undergo water baptism in the search for God. For a Christian, this is a symbolic expression of joining God's family. It is also a means of cleansing oneself of the sin inherited from Adam, the first man.
- xi) The Christians compose and sing gospel songs to show belief in their God. In these songs, the people express their faith, seek for blessings and extend their appreciation for the good things God is doing in their lives.
- xii) Some people are taken to the writing of religious books or magazine as they express and explain their knowledge about God and his mighty work. For example, the Leadership magazine by the Catholic Church is released on a monthly basis.
- xiii) Other Christians give offertory to the church in their search for God. They give material things including money, foodstuff and clothes to help in running the affairs of God's house.

African Traditional Society

You have discovered how people search for God today. Let us now read about the ways in which people in traditional Africa searched for God. Africans had a special relationship with God and it is what guided all their daily activities.



The figure shows the hierarchy of beings in religion. This is how the people in Africa understood the relationship between man, the spiritual world and God. The people looked for God through offering of sacrifices to those beings. They also prayed to the same beings to get what they desired in life. Through prayer, the worshipper surrenders and opens to God. This was done in different ways such as dances, symbolism and silent prayers. There were also prayers that were expressed as religious rituals.

Apart from prayer and offering of sacrifices, Africans looked for God through

good social behaviour. There are many traditional myths relating to how human abuse of created things led to punishment.

The reasons why Africans searched for God are as many as the usual activities they participated in. These include desire for blessings, victory over war, getting children, becoming wealthy, and protection from enemies, getting rain and getting a good harvest, among others.

You can think of any other reasons and write them in your notebook.

The Church History Times

You read about ways in which Africans searched for God. You can read more about it or ask the elders to tell you more.

In this section of the lesson, you will learn about how people in the church History times looked for God.

You should know that at that time, it was not only Christians who lived. Therefore, many more people of different beliefs also looked for God. Muslims and Indian Hindus of the time also had ways through which they looked for God.

During the early centuries when Christianity was first preached, all people seriously looked for God. They felt it was the right way to live. The philosophers were mainly concerned with the right way of living. Christianity provided this very well.

There are two prominent people of the time who were known to be seekers after God. Have you ever heard of Clement of Alexandria? Alexandria is the modern-day Egypt. Clement was a Greek of a pagan family. He became a Christian and searched for true knowledge of God. He later became a Christian teacher of religion in Alexandria.

You can read more about him and see how he truly searched for God.

Another seeker after God of the time was Augustine of Hippo. Unlike Clement, Augustine was born to a Christian mother. For long, he searched for the meaning of life. He went from Africa to southern Europe to understand the scriptures. He was later baptized and spent the rest of his life a devoted Christian teacher of religion.

What do you think about the two men? Write down your thought in the notebook.

There are Christians of that time who thought of themselves as having the whole truth. These despised the non-Christians. The most prominent group were the crusaders.

Other Christians such as Robert de Nobili and Matthew Ricci respected the non-Christians. They tried to understand their culture and live in harmony with them.

Do you know any true seeker of God in your community? What does he or she do to show that? Write your responses in your notebook.

Old Testament

You have discovered how people looked for God. In the Old Testament, God looked for the people and they responded. It was after God's call that many of the people realised the need for faithfulness in God.

Read the text on the call of Abram in Genesis and answer the questions that follow;

The Call of Abram: Genesis 12

12 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."^[a]

³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."^[b]

⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. ⁵ He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

⁶ Abram travelled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time, the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring^[c] I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

⁸ From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. ⁹ Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

Tasks

1. How did Abram respond to God's call?
2. Why do you think he responded in the way he did?
3. What did God ask him to do?
4. If you were the one called at that age, what would you have done?

You can also read about the call of Moses in the extract and reflect on the tasks.

Moses and the Burning Bush: Exodus 3:1-12

3 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire, it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵ "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father,^[a] the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷ The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁸ So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹ And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

¹² And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you^[b] will worship God on this mountain."

Task

1. What did God ask Moses to do?
2. How did Moses respond?
3. If you were Moses, what would you have done?

There are other people in the Old Testament who were called by God. Some of these include prophets. They all responded by doing what God had told them to do. They fulfilled all missions despite the difficulty of the tasks. Some of these include Samuel, Jeremiah and Isaiah, among many others.

In the New Testament, the fullness of God's revelation, the Son of God, made man. Jesus declared that he had come for the salvation of all not for the Israelites alone.

The disciples brought Good news of God to the Gentiles. Paul, for example, recognised that God was within reach of the Roman society. Due to Jesus' coming, new hope is available to them. He acknowledged God revealing himself to the gentiles. Peter also recognised that God was offering the revelation of himself in Jesus Christ, not only to the Jews but also to all people.

Summary

In this lesson, we have learnt about the characteristics of God and also seen the ways in which people search/look for/seek for God. We have also learnt that in the Old Testament, God revealed himself to the people.

Follow-up activity.

Consult elders or any priest in your community and find out the reasons why people search for God. Write them down in your notebook.

Lesson 5: Mans Evasion of God

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to;

- i) state the meaning of man's evasion of God
- ii) explain the ways in which man has evaded God.
- iii) explain the biblical teaching about man's evasion from God.

Introduction

In our daily experiences as we search for God as we have seen in our previous lesson, on many occasions, there are many people who run away or turn away from God. This is referred to as evasion from God. Therefore, the phrase "**Man's evasion of God**" can be interpreted to mean the following

- i) Inability of human beings to consider God and respond to His requirement in their daily activities or behaviour.
- ii) The sinful acts of humans which are contrary to God's expectations.
- iii) Behaving contrary to the principles required to live a godly life.

Today, many people have run away from God in different ways examples of which include;

- i) Through practicing sexual immorality like homosexuality, bestiality and prostitution. These are sexual deviations which are against the divine intention of God for sex. Accordingly, sex is for procreation, mutual love and companionship. Besides, the body of every believer is the temple of God. Therefore, such acts defile God's temple.
- ii) People getting involved in murder or killing each other. However, God blessed the human beings to multiply and fill the world. This meant that God had empowered us to continue bringing up and preserving but not to destroy.
- iii) Some people worship many gods. This is against the monotheistic faith of the believers and therefore, against the oneness of God.
- iv) People evade God by practicing witchcraft, magic and sorcery. This tends to cause harm onto others resulting into death and disharmony among others. Besides, believing in such powers reflects distrust in God's power and people's desire to act independent of Him.
- v) Some people are selfish and therefore they tend to ignore the needs of those who are unable to fend for themselves. However, Jesus encouraged every believer to share with others so that they are rewarded in the heavenly kingdom. He

- demonstrated this by encouraging the rich fool to sell all his wealth and give the proceeds to the poor in order to attain the heavenly treasure.
- vi) Some people are involved in theft. By stealing other's property, one breaks the commandment of God which forbids such an act. Therefore, stealing is an act of disobedience before God.
 - vii) Some people swear falsely in the name of God. They take an oath promising to fulfil their duties which unfortunately they fail to do. This shows disrespect to the name of God.
 - viii) Some people evade God through discriminating each other basing on sex, tribe, religion and colour among others. This is sinful because all humans are equal before God.
 - ix) Some people live a prayerless life. They tend to put barriers to their communication with God and forget that He exists.
 - x) Some people are unrepentant and fail to put themselves right with others and with God. They continue to be sinful. They forget Jesus' teaching that only the righteous would inherit the kingdom of God.
 - xi) Some people drink alcohol excessively. However, wine is a mocker and it defiles the purity of one's body.
 - xii) Some people believe and practice superstition. These are strongly carried out by the belief that something bad is bound to happen by tagging particular events onto situations. This is lack of trust in God's power and protection.
 - xiii) People evade God through revenging and avenging on the wrongs of their enemies. However, Jesus encouraged every believer to forgive their enemies seventy-seven times seven. Besides, He said that the merciful here on earth would experience the Father's mercy in His heavenly kingdom.
 - xiv) Some people evade God by exploiting the needy including the disabled and poor. This is to under look God's creation.
 - xv) Some people evade God by participating in gambling. This is sinful before God who created human beings to be workers.

People in the African past also evaded God. This they did through different ways for example magic and witchcraft. Here people manipulated nature to cause harm and evil to others and society. They also failed to perform rituals rightly as society required them to do.

Church History

Just as there were people at all times and in all cultures, who sincerely searched for God, so there are people everywhere who evaded God. Some ignored God completely while others gave more attention to other earthly things.

In the early church, some Christians found it difficult to believe in the whole truth about Jesus. They expressed doubt in some of the teachings.

During the time of the reformation, some Christians escaped from the real demands of God and concentrated on ways of worship. Love of God and neighbour as Christianity demanded was in some case ignored.

A tendency towards secularism developed during the later years of Christianity in the early church. This was during the 14th to the 17th centuries. Some people opted to live without God completely. The reason for this kind of life was material progression which made them feel no need for God anymore. There were also another group which turned against religion because of the mistakes made in the name of religion.

You can think of any other reasons why people turn away from religion. Write them in your notebook.

Note that disagreements led and can still lead to quarrels rather than the love of God. No one can prove that God does not exist; it is a matter of faith and personal commitment.

Following the above, both the Old and New Testament has evidence that people evaded God in the following ways;

- i) The first human beings disobeyed the simple command God had given them by eating the forbidden fruit. By doing so, the people rebelled against and tried to equate themselves with God. They also expressed greediness and became unrepentant (Genesis 3:1-7).
- ii) In the story of Cain and Abel, Cain acted with selfishness and jealousy. This later resulted into murder when Cain killed his own brother and denied being responsible for him. It was for this reason that God disapproved his actions by punishing him (Genesis 4:1ff).
- iii) The builders of the Tower of Babel tried to act independent of God but with a disastrous ending. Their plan to reach God in heaven through their building involved false wisdom, selfishness, pride, lack of faith and trust in God and their desire to equate themselves with Him. This could be used to explain the reason why God punished them by mixing their language and destroying the building itself. (Genesis 11:1ff).
- iv) While in Egypt, the Israelites were oppressed and exploited through hard labour. The injustices against the Israelites displeased God as reflected in the call of Moses and the eventual liberation of the Israelites.
- v) The Israelites evaded God by worshiping idols. At the foot of Mount Sinai, they made a molten calf to represent Yahweh (Exodus 32:1-7). While in the Promised Land, they went on to worship the idols of foreign gods. This was against their monotheistic faith as established at the foot of mountain Sinai.
- vi) The Israelites practiced sexual immorality such as prostitution and incest. This was an evasion of God because it was against the covenant faith. A case in point was Hosea's wife who continued with her prostitution despite the husband's plea for her to stop it (Hosea 4:1-15).
- vii) The Israelites demanded to have an earthly king. This was a direct rejection of God's authority as their ruler and therefore against theocratic background (1 Samuel 8:1-10).
- viii) The Israelites evaded God by struggling for power. Their struggle for power showed their disrespect to God's divine choice of the persons He wanted to rule His people.
- ix) King Saul unsuccessfully tried to kill David after he realized that the Lord had rejected him and favoured David to become the next king of Israel (1 Samuel 19:1-4, and Kings 11:26-41).
- x) The Israelites disobeyed the Lord's command of carrying out the act of Herem. While in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land, God, through Moses commanded to destroy their enemies and their property. However, when King Saul and soldiers were told to do so, he spared king Agag and the fatty animals of Amalekites.
- xi) The Israelites evaded God by persecuting and despising the prophets. Prophet Elijah suffered greatly in the hands of King Ahab and his pagan wife Jezebel. Even Jeremiah was beaten up and chained upon the orders of priest Pashhur.
- xii) The Israelites become unrepentant. They continued with their sinfulness despite warnings from the Lord's prophets. For example, King Solomon continued with his sinful ways even when the Lord appeared to him commanding him to stop it.
- xiii) The Israelites evaded God by practicing religious syncretism. They worshiped Yahweh besides other gods like Baal and Molech- the disgusting god of Ammon. This was against the covenant faith, which demanded the worship of only God.
- xiv) Some of them disrespected their parents. The two sons of Eli, Phinehas and Hophni disrespected him and continued with their misbehaviour of sleeping with the women who served in the tent of the Lord's presence at Shiloh. This

- was against the Lord's commandment which required respect of parents. It was for this reason that the Lord rejected them as his priest.
- xv) The Israelites got involved in murder. For example, King David plotted the death of Uriah – his faithful soldier and yet the law had forbidden murder.
 - xvi) The Israelites evaded God by selling parts of the Canaan land to foreigners. King Solomon sold off twenty towns in the region of Galilee to King Hiram of Tyre but this land belonged to Yahweh.

In the New Testament, gospel writers expressed the following as ways in which people evaded God;

- i) The Jews rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah. They referred to Him as the son of Joseph the carpenter and therefore remained opposed to his teaching. This was because Jesus Christ came as a spiritual Messiah at the time when the Jews expected a political messiah to set them from the rule of the Romans (Matthew 14:13).
- ii) The Jews turned the temple of God into a market instead of using it as a place of worship as referred to it. This was the reason Jesus overturned their tables and beat them up.
- iii) The Jews got involved in marital unfaithfulness. This was presented in the story of the woman caught in adultery whom Jesus forgave for the offense (John 8:1ff).
- iv) The Jews put a lot of emphasis on religious practices like fasting that it almost enslaved the people. When Jesus tried to correct their wrong attitude, the Pharisees regarded Him as a law breaker (Mark 2:18-22).
- v) The Jews, particularly the Pharisees, were very strict on the observation of the Sabbath day. It had become such a burden to the Jews. It was this reason that Jesus had to tell them that the Sabbath was meant for man but not man for the Sabbath. He meant that people had to enjoy freedom on such a day instead of being enslaved (Mark 2:23ff).
- vi) Some of the Jews rejected the teaching of Jesus Christ. They stubbornly remained opposed to the gospel truth as Jesus preached. Jesus explained this in the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1-77).
- vii) The religious leaders particularly the Pharisees were very proud of who they were. They took themselves to be more religious than anybody else.
- viii) There was persecution of the believers among the Jews. Paul, before his conversion to Christianity, was one of those who persecuted whoever believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- ix) The Jews had the thinking that Jesus Christ was only for them. This made them to think that salvation was only for them. However, they failed to realize that Jesus had come as a universal saviour. According to the gospel of St John, it was for the love that God had for mankind that He sent His begotten son to die in order for everyone to attain salvation (John 1:1ff).
- x) There was religious hypocrisy particularly by the Pharisees. As much as they were the custodian of the law, they behaved contrary to the expectations. There was discrimination among the believers. This was practiced even in the places of worship in respect of one's possession. The poor in particular were ignored and the rich favoured. The Jews also discriminated against the Gentiles or the non-Jews.
- xi) The Jews had the heart of revenge. They continued to serve God with their unforgiving hearts. Jesus illustrated this in the parable of the unforgiving servant. Accordingly, the servant beat up his fellow servant who owed him yet his master had just pardoned him for the same. (Matthew 11:21-77).
- xii) God was evaded through selfishness. This was demonstrated in the story of the rich fool who failed to share part of his harvest with the needy. (Luke 12:12-21).

Summary

In this lesson, we have learnt about the different ways in which people run away from God. This is both in the church History times and the Old Testament. You have also discovered how in the Old Testament the Israelites failed to live to the expectations of their God Yahweh and turned away from Him.

In the New Testament, you have discovered that the Jews on many occasions turned away from God.

Follow up activity

Explain the ways in which Jesus reacted against the people who turned away from God.



National Curriculum
Development Centre,
P.O. Box 7002,
Kampala.

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