

WELCOME  
to the  
CHURCH  
of the  
NAZARENE

*An Introduction  
to Membership*

## Leader's Guide

2006 Continuing Lay Training Denomination-Wide Study  
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# Contents

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<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Continuing Lay Training Registration</b> .....	1
<b>Teaching Tips</b> .....	2
<b>Session 1:</b> <i>May I Introduce You to the Church of the Nazarene?</i> .....	3
<b>Session 2:</b> <i>Common Values and a Shared Path</i> .....	5
<b>Session 3:</b> <i>Organization: A Path to Unity and Effectiveness</i> .....	8
<b>Session 4:</b> <i>Living Life as a Christian</i> .....	11
<b>Session 5:</b> <i>Journeying Together: Sharing the Privileges and Responsibilities of Membership</i>	14
<b>Continuing Lay Training Class Reporting</b> .....	17

# Introduction

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“What does your church believe?” is one of the basic questions asked of any church member today. Too often the response is met with incomplete answers that leave the questioner with more confusion than satisfaction.

This year’s Continuing Lay Training denomination-wide study, *Welcome to the Church of the Nazarene*, helps provide an answer to such questions. It will also, I believe, become an ongoing resource to local churches as they orient members and nonmembers alike to the great history, ministry, and opportunities of the Church of the Nazarene.

Through this leader’s guide and available web-based resources, this study will help your church provide a top-quality learning experience. During the sessions each participant will learn about

- The history of the Church of the Nazarene
- What Nazarenes believe
- How the church is organized and why that organization is important

- The importance of spiritual disciplines and utilizing personal talents and spiritual gifts
- Why life as a church community is essential to spiritual growth

As you read the leader’s guide, make sure you take the time to review all the web resources available at <[www.clt.nazarene.org](http://www.clt.nazarene.org)>. There you will find handouts, presentation materials, and on-line testing—all free. You will also want to visit <[www.nph.com](http://www.nph.com)> for other resources that will help your church provide top-quality materials for anyone wishing to know more about our church and its teachings.

And don’t hesitate to call if you have questions or concerns. Your conversations help us keep Continuing Lay Training as a cutting-edge resource for your church.

In Christ,  
Larry Morris  
Director, Adult Ministries  
Church of the Nazarene

# Continuing Lay Training Registration

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Welcome to Continuing Lay Training. Before you proceed, make sure you have properly registered this class with the Continuing Lay Training (CLT) office in Kansas City. You may telephone your course registration at 888-243-2767 or e-mail it to <[clt@nazarene.org](mailto:clt@nazarene.org)>.

Once registered, make sure you have a class report form. When the course has been completed, return the class report form to the

CLT office or print off and use the on-line class report form. Each participant will be awarded CLT credit for his or her participation.

For full details on reporting, see “Continuing Lay Training Class Reporting” at the end of this guide.

# Teaching Tips

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Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your preparation times for your class sessions.

## Resources

The resource web site designed for this study has many other items that can be used to enhance or implement the issues discussed in this leader's guide. Included here you will find handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and on-line testing. Please visit us at <[www.clt.nazarene.org](http://www.clt.nazarene.org)> to see a complete listing of products for pastors, church leaders, and interested laypeople.

## Preparation for Teaching

Class leader, please follow these steps as you prepare to lead this study:

- Advertise the class, and plan a special registration time.
- Register the class with the CLT office, and make sure you have a class report form.
- Order textbooks directly from Nazarene Publishing House at least three weeks before the starting date. A 10-percent discount is available if you order more than five of the same book. Unused books may be returned for credit if done promptly, postage paid, and the books are in good condition.

- At the close of the class, report the class to the CLT office in Kansas City. Keep a copy for your file.
- Read this leader's guide in its entirety to get an overview of the study.
- Write down the teaching resources needed for each session as you think of them: chalkboard or dry-erase board, chart paper, markers, overhead projector, laptop computer, 3" x 5" cards, Post-it notes, and so on.
- Think of people in your class who will need to be contacted ahead of time to secure permission to use their personal stories or to ask them to share their personal testimonies.
- Outline each lesson plan in your own words, or map it on paper to give yourself a sense of direction for each session.
- Pray for the direction of the Holy Spirit (1) in the way you prepare, (2) in what you say in class, (3) in the way you respond to comments or questions by class members, and (4) in the way you give time for the Spirit to speak to class members' hearts as each session progresses.

# Session 1

## Chapters 1 and 2

### *May I Introduce You to the Church of the Nazarene?*

#### Session Goal

This session will introduce students to the Church of the Nazarene. It will help them realize that by exploring its history, we can better understand its mission and doctrine.

#### Tool Box

- Assign someone to prepare coffee, water, and so on.
- Have index cards and pens or pencils on hand for each student.
- Make copies of handouts: No. 1–Interview Questions; No. 2–Family Tree; No. 3–Monologue: Phineas F. Bresee; No. 4–The Church of the Nazarene.
- Enlist someone to present the story of Phineas F. Bresee as a monologue, or ask several persons to be readers (pp. 21-25).

#### Getting Started

Choose *one* of the following options.

✓ Arrange to conduct an interview with a church member about how he or she came to be a part of your local congregation. Contact the interviewee before the session, and provide him or her with the interview questions (handout no. 1–Interview Questions).

Interview questions might include any or all of the following:

- How long have you been a church member?
- How did you hear about our church?
- What drew you to this church?

● What was your religious background prior to becoming a church member?

✓ Share the history of your local church.

✓ Say, “Our stories are important. We all come from somewhere.” Distribute the index cards and pens or pencils. Ask each person to create a personalized “license plate” by using a word or phrase (for example, Arky, Wee Lass, Rocky Mountain High, Four of Five) that tells something about his or her “roots.” Invite those who wish to share the meaning of their license plates.

#### Facts of the Matter: “Getting at the Roots”

✓ Say, “Knowing where we came from helps us know where we’re going.”

✓ Present a brief history of the Church of the Nazarene using the four-point outline from the book (pp. 16-26). For a look at the broader roots of the Church of the Nazarene, reference the “Family Tree” (handout no. 2).

● *The Church of the Nazarene was born in a spirit of revival.* Review the three key consequences of the revival (pp. 17-18).

► Several denominations had grown and expanded under the influence of the revival.

► The revival gave rise to new colleges, Bible schools, and other training centers.

► The revival gave birth to several denominations. The largest of the classically Wesleyan-Holiness denominations

is the Church of the Nazarene.

- *The Church of the Nazarene was born in a spirit of unity.* Emphasize that the same things that brought people together to form the Church of the Nazarene—the message of holiness and unity through God’s Spirit—still welcome people into the church today.
- *The Church of the Nazarene was born in a spirit of great people.* Ask the person(s) you enlisted to present the story of Phineas F. Bresee (handout no. 3, Monologue: Phineas F. Bresee) or give a brief history as described on pp. 21-25).
  - Phineas F. Bresee: His early years.
  - A spiritual quest: lost and found.
  - A new beginning.
  - Growing a church.
  - Testing of faith.
  - A new church: The Church of the Nazarene.
- *The Church of the Nazarene was born in the spirit of God.* Share the five characteristics of early Nazarenes (p. 25).
  - The government of the church was to be thoroughly democratic.
  - The chief aim of the church was to preach the message of holiness.
  - The discipline in the early church was dependent primarily upon the work of the Holy Spirit.
  - The church’s statement of belief was central and made the concept of God’s holy love most important.
  - The church was characterized by a spirit that was joyously free.

## Wrap It Up

- ✓ Distribute copies of “The Church of the Nazarene” (handout no. 4). Review the summary of the statements that describe the

Church of the Nazarene (pp. 13-15). Where possible, support each statement with an example from your life or your church.

1. The Church of the Nazarene is characterized by a great spirit of optimism about what God can do through those who love Him and are willing to yield themselves fully to His service.
2. The Church of the Nazarene uses creative methods to meet people’s needs and bring them into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Master of their lives.
3. The Church of the Nazarene is unified in its system of beliefs and organization.
4. The Church of the Nazarene views money as a means to an end, not an end in itself.
5. The Church of the Nazarene is committed to maximize ministry through laypersons.

✓ Ask the group to choose one of the statements that expresses something they feel their local church is doing well.

✓ Ask the group to choose one of the statements that expresses something they feel the local church needs to work on. Have them suggest ideas that could help the church better achieve this goal.

✓ Encourage the class to read chapter 3 before the next session. Tell them the next session will examine the beliefs at the root of the Church of the Nazarene.

## Closing

Ask for individual prayer requests. Pray that as you continue in these sessions, you will be united by a common desire to be all that God wants you to be. Pray that God will make you one in heart and purpose and that He will use these sessions to help you better understand all it means to be a part of the Church of the Nazarene.

# Session 2

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## Chapter 3

### *Common Values and a Shared Path*

#### **Session Goal**

This session will introduce students to God's ultimate goal for humanity. It also examines the 16 basic tenets of the Church of the Nazarene.

#### **Tool Box**

- Assign someone to prepare coffee, water, and so on.
- Make copies of handouts: No. 5—Articles of Faith; No. 6—Salvation, Justification, and Sanctification; and God's Spirit at Work in Us.
- Be prepared to share your personal salvation experience with the class.
- Before the class session, enlist one or two volunteers to share their personal salvation stories.
- Assign readers for Rom. 3:22-24, 28; 1 Thess. 5:23; Phil. 1:6.

#### **Getting Started**

Choose one of the following options.

✓ Agree/Disagree. Read the following statements, and have the students express their opinions by raising their hand or giving a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down."

- I believe for every drop of rain that falls a flower grows.
- I believe black coffee is an acquired taste.
- I believe toilet paper should come off the roll over the top.

● I believe the toothpaste tube should be squeezed only from the bottom, not the middle.

● I believe you should put on both socks before putting on your shoes.

● I believe turkey stuffing should be made only with corn bread.

✓ Say, "This was a silly [fun] way to get you to consider things you believe or don't believe. Now I'm going to read some statements that refer to beliefs that are central to our faith."

● I believe my good works will outweigh any evil that may be present in my life.

● I believe there are many roads to salvation.

● I believe the Bible is God's inspired Word.

● I believe that Jesus died on the Cross and rose again on the third day.

✓ Say, "Beliefs are important to the life of the Christian and the Church. They're not merely intellectual—they're foundational to a right relationship to God. The pioneers of the Church of the Nazarene shared common beliefs with other Christians. They also possessed optimism about what God would have each Christian become through the Spirit."

✓ Share your personal spiritual journey and how God has made you more optimistic about His work in the world. This may include a story of personal healing or a gift of hope in a difficult time.

✓ Ask one or two volunteers to share their personal spiritual journeys.

## Facts of the Matter: “A Statement of Beliefs”

Say, “The Christian faith is more than a personal experience; it also involves certain shared beliefs about God, ourselves, and our relationship to Him. It’s part of the responsibility of the church to pass these beliefs on to its members.

“Last week we looked at the roots of the Church of the Nazarene. Today we will look at its 16 Articles of Faith. Each of these doctrines or beliefs is affirmed by other Christians around the world. We will look at those that are universally affirmed by Christians first, and then we’ll look at some articles that are especially emphasized in the Church of the Nazarene.”

Distribute a copy of the Articles of Faith (handout no. 5). Read the following brief summary of the 16 Articles of Faith (pp. 27-28). Refer to the most recent copy of the Articles of Faith (in the *Manual*) for a full description or in chapter 3 (pp. 35-44).

- We believe in one God, the Creator of all things, who reveals himself as Father, Son, and Spirit.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man at the same time, who became like us to bring about our salvation.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is active in the world through conviction, regeneration, sanctification, and revelation of the truth in Christ.
- We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, giving us all we need to know about salvation.
- We believe that we are all sinners by both nature and act and need God’s forgiveness and cleansing.
- We believe that Jesus Christ died on the Cross and that by trusting in Him we can be restored to a right relationship to God.

- We believe that God has granted us the ability to choose between right and wrong with its benefits and consequences.
- We believe that each person must repent, turn away from sin, and trust Christ for salvation.
- We believe that when we turn from sin and trust in Christ, the old record of sin is wiped clean, and we are born anew, thus becoming part of the family of God.
- We believe that after being born anew, we need the fullness of God’s Spirit in our hearts. When we make a complete commitment to Him, He cleanses our hearts, fills us with His perfect love, and gives us the power to live victoriously.
- We believe that the Church is the Body of Christ, carrying on His mission through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- We believe in baptism and urge people to be baptized as Christians.
- We believe in the Lord’s Supper.
- We believe that God can heal. We pray for healing. We also believe that He can work through medical science.
- We believe that Jesus Christ is coming again.
- We believe that everyone will face the judgment of God with its rewards and punishments.

Say, “A statement of belief has little value without the action of believing. To believe is to trust God by being obedient.”

Say, “Salvation in the fullest sense is both an event and a process. Once we’re saved, we need to ‘press on to maturity.’” Explore the following biblical/theological terms, and help adult learners see how they relate to their personal growth.

- *Justification*—God accepts us by grace as if we had never sinned. Read Rom. 3:22-24, 28.

- *Sanctification*—The believer’s heart is cleansed from all sin and empowered for service through the Holy Spirit. Read 1 Thess. 5:23.
- *Glorification*—God’s final plan for humanity is realized upon Christ’s return. Read Phil. 1:6.

## Wrap It Up!

- ✓ Have class members turn to the charts on pages 31-32, or distribute “Salvation, Justification, and Sanctification” and “God’s Spirit at Work in Us” (handout no. 6). Briefly explain the points of reference A-F (pp. 32-33). Challenge students to privately determine, “Where am I on this continuum?”

- ✓ Encourage the class to read chapter 4 before the next session. Ask them to begin thinking about the importance of organization to the success of any group.

## Close with Prayer

Ask for individual prayer requests. Praise God that through His grace we can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Pray that we will allow the Holy Spirit to bring holiness into our lives.

# Session 3

## Chapter 4

### *Organization: A Path to Unity and Effectiveness*

#### **Session Goal**

The goal of this session is to help adult learners understand and embrace the necessity and benefits of the organizational structures of the Church of the Nazarene.

#### **Tool Box**

- Assign someone to prepare coffee, water, and so on.
- Make copies of handouts: No. 7—How We Are Organized; No. 8—I Am the Church.
- Have poster board or white board and a marker on hand. Prior to the start of the class, make a visual aid that shows the link between the local church, the district, and the general church. Draw three concentric circles (bull's eye), and label each: outside circle—general church; middle circle—district; inside circle—local church.
- Gather 31 index cards. Before the session, create the phrase “Welcome to the Church of the Nazarene” by putting one letter of each word in the phrase on an index card. On the back of each card (using a pencil in very small and light writing), mark with one of the following codes:

*Welcome*, write 7=1

*to*, write 2=2

*the*, write 3=3

*Church*, write 6=4

*of*, write 2=5

*the*, write 3=6

*Nazarene*, write 8=7

- Before class, enlist one or two volunteers to share how someone in church leadership has influenced their Christian walk.
- Assign someone to read Acts 6:1-7

#### **Getting Started**

Choose *one* of the following options.

- ✓ Before class, shuffle the index cards, and distribute them to your adult learners. If there are fewer adults than cards, assign more than one card to each.

Explain to them that the cards spell out a familiar phrase. When you give a signal, they are to try to figure out the phrase by putting themselves in order (give them 60-90 seconds).

Say, “I think you need a little help.” Have them look on the back of their cards.

- Give them a little time to find “like” cards (for example, all the 7=1 cards need to be together).
- Next, have them to spell the word within their groups.
- Finally, have them move their groups to form the phrase by getting in order by the last number of the code.

Say, “Leadership [the leader’s instructions], organization [codes on the cards], and cooperation were necessary to get this exercise accomplished. Leadership, organization, and cooperation are also vital to the life of the church.”

✓ Invite one or two persons to share how a church leader has positively influenced their Christian walk.

✓ Say, "Nearly everyone has experienced the frustration of opening a drawer and looking for a pen only to find piles of paper, paperclips, coins, batteries, screws, old receipts, rubber bands—everything but the item needed.

"When we finally locate a pen at the bottom of the drawer, we mutter under our breath, 'I just have to get this drawer better organized!'

"In our frustration we have discovered one of the main reasons for organization—efficiency. Throwing everything in one drawer and having to sort through the piles of undesired items to get to a pen is not efficient or effective. The same is true of the Church."

## Facts of the Matter: "Organized to Serve"

✓ Read Acts 6:1-7. Say, "One of the first tasks of the Early Church was to become efficient in ministry. The disciples did not want to fail in the mission due to lack of good stewardship of their resources. That's why they carefully organized themselves so essential ministries were given first priority."

✓ Say, "Early leaders in the Church of the Nazarene knew how important good organization is to the life and growth of the church. That's why they invested tremendous effort and significant time in creating the organizational structures they felt would be most beneficial.

"Historically, there are three basic patterns of church government: episcopal, congregational, and presbyterian. The Church of the Nazarene utilizes a mixture of these three models. Let's look at its organization."

✓ Display the poster or draw the three concentric circles representative of the local, district, and general church organizations. Using the information from chapter 4 (pp.

46-55) briefly explain the organization of the Church of the Nazarene. Distribute handout no. 7, "How We Are Organized."

### ● *How we are organized through leadership*

#### ► The General Church

- Board of six general superintendents
- General assembly
- International Headquarters
  - ◆ Departments—World Mission/ Evangelism, USA/Canada, Sunday School Ministries
  - ◆ General offices—General Secretary, General Treasurer, International Board of Education

#### ► The District Church

- Districts worldwide
- District superintendents
- District assembly
- District advisory board
- The local church
- Pastor and associate ministers
- Church board
- Sunday School Ministries board
- Members

### ● *How we are organized financially*

► Say, "The expenditures of the church are determined by

- the needs of the people,
- the budget,
- our faith."

► Say, "Sources of income for the church include

- special events
- special offerings
- consistent giving in the form of tithing."

(handout no. 8)

- *How we are organized for ministry*
  - Evangelism (sharing God's good news with others)
  - Education (discipleship)
  - Caring ministries (creating "family" through caring relationships)

## Wrap It Up!

✓ Have your group reflect upon the reasons the Early Church (Acts 6:1-7) quickly organized itself, and apply that to the Church of the Nazarene's organization structures. Then ask, "How are we being faithful to God through our organizational structure?"

✓ Summarize by saying, "The Church of the Nazarene chose its organizational structure so that there would be a balance of both freedom in ministry and unity in mission."

✓ Say, "There is a place for you in the leadership of the church. There is a place for you in the financial support of the church. There is a place for you in the ministry and outreach of the church. You are the church."

✓ Conclude the session by reading or telling the following story: "I Am the Church"

A missionary in the Church of the Nazarene told of planting a new church. One morning it struck him: *The church is whatever I am. If the church is going to pray today, I must pray. If the church is going to give today, I must give. If the church is going to call on the sick today, I must call on the sick.* He had discovered the truth that we all must do our part. The church is what we are. And what a privilege it is to serve God together!

✓ Encourage the class to read chapter 5 before the next session. Ask them to begin thinking about what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

## Closing

Ask for individual prayer requests. Pray for the leaders at the local, district, and general levels of the church. Pray that each participant will take responsibility for being and doing the work of the church in your community and in the world. Pray that God will be glorified through your church.

# Session 4

## Chapter 5

### *Living Life as a Christian*

#### Session Goal

This session will challenge adult learners to “fix their eyes on Jesus” as they live a life of discipline, godliness, and holiness.

#### Tool Box

- Assign someone to prepare coffee, water, and so on.
- Make copies of handouts: No. 9—Quote: former General Superintendent R. T. Williams.
- Have on hand a serving bowl, sliced fruits, a pitcher of cream or half-and-half, a bowl of sugar and a spoon, individual bowls, and spoons
- Be prepared to share your personal experience of entire sanctification with the class.
- Before the class session, enlist one or two volunteers to share their experience of entire sanctification with the class.
- Assign someone to read Matt. 7:16-20; 1 Cor. 10:31; and John 1:7.
- Assign someone to read Heb. 2:12.
- Have poster board or a white board and marker on hand.
- Ask someone to be prepared to read the quote by former General Superintendent R. T. Williams.

#### Getting Started

*Why do we do what we do?* That is a good question we need to ask ourselves from time to time. It's an important question, because

the motivation for our actions, according to Jesus, impacts our relationship with God. “I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:20). The Pharisees were experts in following the rules. If they failed to meet Jesus’ standard of righteousness, then what is that standard, and how are we going to meet it?

Crucial to the life of the Christian is a love for God (Matt. 22:37-40). This love is founded upon God’s love for us through Christ. When our love for God is missing, our acts of obedience become hollow and even frustrating; the very actions meant to bring healing and fulfillment bring resentment instead.

So how do we find that love? The Church of the Nazarene, as well as other Holiness churches, believe it is the Holy Spirit who changes our hearts through the process we call *entire sanctification*. This act of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer brings him or her to a place of entire devotion to God. This act of the Holy Spirit changes us so that we’re turned from concern for self to a love for God and others. **Note:** For a fuller description of this experience and act of grace, review entire sanctification under the articles of faith in the *Manual*, Article X:13.

Upon this foundation of God’s love in the heart and life of the believer we now turn to the practices or disciplines of the faith.

Having a loving heart toward God is not the end of the process. We’re also called to exercise our love for God and others in tangible ways.

Choose *one* of the following options.

- ✓ Say, “For Christians, our conduct flows out of our loving relationship with God. It is His grace that grants us the capacity for doing His will. This bowl represents the Christian life—we need to fill our lives with the good things of God.”
- Read Matt. 7:16-20.
- Begin to fill the bowl with sliced fruit. Say, “Because we love Christ, we want to follow His will. Think of this fruit as representing our response to obedience, doing what God wants us to do according to Scripture.”
- As you fill the bowl with fruit, share the following points (described on pp. 66-67).
  - Loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves
  - Sharing the good news of the gospel with the unsaved
  - Being kind and courteous
  - Loving and living in unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ
  - Performing acts of kindness to the needy
  - Contributing to the support of the ministry
  - Embracing the ordinances of God
- When the bowl is full of fruit, say, “Although it appears this bowl is full, it can hold more. We need to go beyond ‘doing good’ to ‘avoiding evil.’”
- Read 1 Cor. 10:31. Pick up the pitcher of cream. Say, “Think of this cream as filling in your life with God so that actions that are destructive to Christ and the Church are prevented.”
- As you pour the cream, share the following points (described on pp. 67-68.)
  - Taking God’s name in vain

- Profaning the Sabbath
- Destructive physical habits
- Quarreling, gossip, slander
- Dishonesty, bearing false witness
- Indulging in prideful behavior
- Participating in music, literature, or entertainment that dishonors God

- When the bowl is full of cream, begin to sprinkle on the sugar. Say, “Although the bowl appears full, there’s still room for more. This sugar represents the Holy Spirit. It’s through the power and help of the Holy Spirit that we remain sweet, able to live a life of holiness, a life that’s pleasing to God.” Read 1 John 1:7.
- Share the fruit dessert.

- ✓ Share your personal experience of entire sanctification followed by growth in grace.
- ✓ Invite one or two volunteers to share their experience of entire sanctification and growth in grace.

## **Facts of the Matter: “Be All That You Can Be”**

✓ Invite the adult learners to name examples of things that require discipline (diet, exercise, study, and so on). Write their ideas on the poster or white board.

✓ Read Heb. 12:2. Say, “Living a holy life also takes discipline. Righteous living is a process that takes training and time with Jesus. The Church of the Nazarene has developed three general rules of guidance for applying Christ’s love in our daily lives. These general rules can guide you if when making decisions you ask—

- Is it positive, and will it draw me closer to God?
- Is it negative, or will it hurt my walk with God?
- Will it draw me closer to my Christian friends, or will it create a barrier between us?

✓ Say, “Because of the attitudes and changing worldview of our culture, the Church of the Nazarene has taken a moral stand concerning certain social issues and lifestyles.” Briefly review some of these social issues (pp. 69-71).

## Wrap It Up!

✓ Say, “There’s always the danger of rules and regulations becoming legalism. Salvation in Christ brings us joy and freedom. How can we guard that joy and freedom and not allow the quest for Christlikeness to become legalism?”

✓ Read the following quote (handout No. 9) of former General Superintendent R. T. Williams (p. 75). Have your adults react to the quote, reflecting upon the previous segment of the session.

“Legalism is the enemy to be feared. Legalism gives more attention to the law than it does to human beings. It emphasizes the letter of the law. In other words, it is law

without love. No church can survive unless it fulfills the law of love, both in experience and practice. *The Church of the Nazarene operates under grace, backed by law.* Legalism would draw us away from grace and put the entire emphasis of the ministry and of ethics upon the matter of law, without mercy and without love. This is a danger ever to be guarded against by the church.”

✓ Encourage the class to read chapters 6 and 7 before the next session. Ask them to begin thinking about the privileges and responsibilities of being a member of their local congregation.

## Closing

Ask for individual prayer requests. Pray that every day we invite the Holy Spirit to empower us to live a life of holiness as we “fix our eyes on Jesus.” Pray that we will guard against legalism and become people who respond with love to those who need grace.

# Session 5

## Chapters 6 and 7

### *Journeying Together: Sharing the Privileges and Responsibilities of Membership*

#### Session Goal

This session will challenge adult learners to embrace the privileges and responsibilities of being a member of their local congregation.

#### Tool Box

- Assign someone to prepare coffee, water, and so on.
- Make copies of handouts: No. 10—The Unspoken Sermon; No. 11—Spiritual Gifts Inventory; No. 12—Spiritual Gifts Definitions.
- Assign someone to read Eph. 4:12; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11; Rev. 1:6.
- Prepare a piece of candy (one for each adult learner) in the following manner: choose wrapped candies (small Tootsie Roll, a peppermint candy, Jolly Rancher, and so on) and put an additional “wrapper” on each piece (newsprint, comic strip, plastic wrap, aluminum foil, gift wrap, brown paper sack, and so on).
- Assign someone to read the illustration “The Unspoken Sermon.”
- Before class, prepare a list of opportunities for service/ministry within your local church. Make enough copies for each adult learner to have one.
- Before the session, invite each ministry leader to prepare a brief explanation of his or her ministry area and describe the opportunities for service in that area.

- Ask your pastor or an approved staff member to be available to answer questions about church membership.

#### Getting Started

Choose *one* of the following options.

✓ Read Eph. 4:11-12 and 1 Cor. 12:7, 11. Say, “The New Testament makes it very clear that Christians are called to ‘works of service.’ God has called all of us to be ministers, and we’ve each been given *spiritual gift(s)* that are to be used for ‘the common good.’”

Distribute a piece of the wrapped candy you prepared to each learner. Say, “Each of you has received a *gift*. In the same way, the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts ‘to each one, just as he determines.’ Not all the gifts I distributed were wrapped alike. In the same way, because of who you are, the way your spiritual gift is used in and for ministry will be original.”

Invite the learners to unwrap their gifts. Say, “Gifts have to be unwrapped if they’re to be enjoyed and used. In reality, the Church should look like the day after Christmas with the spiritual gifts unwrapped and being used.

“God has abundantly gifted the Church. In the secular realm, we often think of extraordinary giftedness as unusual and very special. However, in the spiritual kingdom giftedness is the norm. It’s not just for a few privileged people. All God’s children have gifts and have a responsibility to discover and develop their gift(s) if the Body is to function properly.”

✓ Read the following illustration from handout no. 10, "The Unspoken Sermon"—

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the minister decided to visit him—it was a chilly day. That evening, the minister found the man at home all alone sitting by a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his minister's visit, the man welcomed him and led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited. The minister made himself at home but said nothing.

In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, he took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember, and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow, and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The minister glanced at his watch and chose this time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember, and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more, with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. With that, the minister smiled at his host, shook his hand, and let himself out.

Ask the following questions:

- What was the point of the minister's visit?
- Do you agree with his unspoken sermon?
- Are there any other reasons God has called us together as His Church?

Say, "Today we are going to investigate one of the significant reasons God has called His people into fellowship with one another, which is to exercise our spiritual gifts."

✓ Using background material from chapter 6, briefly describe your church's ministry areas, and distribute a list of opportunities to serve in your church.

✓ Invite leaders of various ministries to briefly explain their ministry areas (Sunday School superintendent, NMI president, NYI president, and so on). Distribute a list of opportunities to serve in your local church.

## **Facts of the Matter: "Born (Again) to Serve"**

✓ Say, "Our church wants to provide you with opportunities to discover the fullness of God's love in your life and to exercise your spiritual gift(s). There are four general areas of opportunities: to grow, to serve, to give, and to share as a Christian."

✓ Briefly present the four areas of growth as described on pages 77-80.

- An Opportunity to Grow as a Christian
  - Personal devotion
  - Public worship
  - Christian education (as in Sunday School)
  - Positive lifestyle
- An Opportunity to Serve as a Christian
- An Opportunity to Give as a Christian
  - Consistently
  - Through missions
  - Special opportunities
- An Opportunity to Share Your Faith as a Christian

## **Wrap It Up!**

✓ Read Rev. 1:6. Say, "The Church was created to serve. Each Christian has been given gifts that will build up, encourage, and serve the Body of Christ. You are a minister. God has a ministry for you."

✓ Distribute the Spiritual Gifts Inventory (handout no. 11) and Spiritual Gifts Definitions (handout no. 12) to all adult learners. Have them take the inventory and fill out the profile sheet (Time: 15-20 minutes).

✓ Give learners the list you prepared of opportunities for service/ministry within your local church. Challenge them to prayerfully consider how their gifts could be used in their local church or community.

✓ Have your pastor or approved staff member share the privileges and responsibilities of church membership as outlined in the study book. He or she should also be available to answer any questions about membership that might be asked by the participants.

**Note:** There are a number of free spiritual gift inventories that can be taken on-line. If adult learners express an interest in taking the inventory at home, provide them with the

following free inventory Web site addresses. It would be most appropriate to have someone on your pastoral staff review the spiritual gift inventory with the participant after it is completed. (Special note—these web sites and on-line resources are not endorsed by CLT or the Church of the Nazarene. They are simply free resources that may aid in this educational module.)

<<http://www.theseeker.org/gifts/chap9.htm>>

<<http://www.churchgrowth.org/analysis/index.html>>

## Closing

Ask for individual prayer requests. Pray that your adult learners will continue to grow in Christ and that they will discover ways to serve God through your local church. Pray that they will find God's perfect love as they learn to do the work of the Lord.

# Continuing Lay Training Class Reporting

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Thank you for participating in this CLT class study. We hope you will continue to study and train for ministry in your local church by using Continuing Lay Training (CLT) materials.

Please review the following important steps as you wrap up this study.

At the close of the class, report the book study to the CLT office in Kansas City. Keep a copy for your file. Use one of the following methods for reporting.

1. *Paper*—request a hard copy of the class report form, fill it in, and return it to the CLT office.
2. *Electronic version*—an electronic fill-in template can be sent to you via e-mail, or you may download it from the CLT web site at <clt.nazarene.org>.

In response to your reporting by paper or the electronic version, the CLT office will send a notice of credit along with “credit cards” for each of the participants of the class. You are to fill in the name, unit number, book title, date, and name of the sponsoring group. Sign the credit cards before presenting them to all participants in a public service.

When reporting on-line, you will be given the option to print out the credit cards for each of the participants. The class presenter can then sign the cards and present them to each participant in a public service.

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