

Legaspi - Lesson 1

Supplies Needed for this Unit

- Student guide for each student
- Bible for each student
- Writing utensil for each student
- Optional: binder for each student, and three-hole punch, so that students can compile their student guide handouts all in one place.

Big Question: If we accept the adage that "life is a journey," what is the end of our destination? And what are the implications for our lives now?

Key Points

Teachers should understand these key points before the lesson, and students should take these points away from the class.

- A. The Christian understanding of life is always dynamic and never static, with human beings continually in movement towards a goal.
- B. It is essential to obtain guidance when undertaking any journey in order to arrive at our desired destination. This is especially so in the journey of life.
- C. The Scriptures provide us with guidance for the journey of life, not merely in terms of a road map or instruction book, but more so in terms of a narrative trajectory of a life to be embodied.

Unit Introduction

Begin the unit by saying something like:

- For the next several weeks of class, we're going to be viewing short clips of lectures by an Orthodox professor, Dr. Michael Legaspi.
- At the beginning of our first video, we will learn some biographical information about Dr. Legaspi.
- Context of the video: Dr. Legaspi is teaching at the CrossRoad Summer Institute, a program of the Office of Vocation & Ministry at Hellenic College Holy Cross in Brookline, Massachusetts. (For more information on CrossRoad visit www.crossroadinstitute.org or contact us at crossroad@hchc.edu.)
- Optional point: Can a layperson (such as Dr. Legaspi) know enough to teach theology well? YES! It is the vocation of some to learn and study the faith extensively and to teach in Orthodox and non-Orthodox settings. We can bring our Orthodox faith in Christ into any profession. It is not just the job of priests and monastics to know the faith well, but all of us.
- Introduce Student Guide: For each class, you will receive a student guide for you to follow along with the lesson. The student guide has a lot of questions for you to write answers for/to. The spirit of the student guide is to give you space to think through writing... a way to explore your own thoughts, interact with the teacher's thoughts, and learn.

Opening Reflection

Say something like:

- Take a moment to ask yourself this question, and write some thoughts:

1. Where am I going in life?

- Give students 3-5 minutes to write down some of their reflections in their student guide. For this question, you can ask them to each say something of their response if they feel comfortable, or you don't have to at this stage, because the whole lesson will go on to try to broaden their thinking on this issue.
- Continue with your own reflection. There are many different ways to answer this question:
 - In terms of getting an education and eventually starting a career
 - In terms of where I want to live
 - In terms of finding a spouse and starting a family
- But when we get a good education, a good job, a family, etc., have we simply "arrived" at life's ultimate destination? Or is there a larger journey of life that we are all on?
- Furthermore, if there is a larger "journey of life" in which we all take part, what is the end of our destination? And what are the implications for our lives now?
- Before we discuss this question in depth, let's use the following two images to gauge our discussion (students can read along in their Student Guide):
 - In this day and age, we have all used a GPS, probably on our cell phones, at some point. If we are unfamiliar with our destination, we might depend completely on the GPS and not question its judgment as it leads us on. However, we have probably all had the experience of using a GPS to go to a destination with which we are somewhat familiar. In this case, it is not uncommon to become more skeptical of this or that turn the GPS tells us to take. "That can't be right," we say to ourselves. "This way will be much quicker."
 - We've probably all seen at some point a line of ants on the ground or on a tree, each following the one in front in single file. In fact, ants are wired this way, to follow the ant in front of them. This usually works out generally well, except in some situations where the ants somehow get themselves into a circle. Known as the "ant death spiral," each ant faithfully follows the ant in front of it in an endless circle until they all die.

Preparation for Video Clip

- In this clip, Dr. Legaspi presents two paradigms for understanding life as a journey:
 - First, he presents a typical American understanding of success as the goal of life: a family, a good job, wealth, a nice house, etc.
 - Second, however, he looks at the Christian understanding of life as a journey from beginning to movement to rest.
- In other words, the point of the journey of life is not merely to fill up space, but to arrive at our desired destination.

- This enables us to begin to ask the big question: If we accept the adage that "life is a journey," what is the end of our destination, and what implications does that have for our lives now?
 - This imagery also enables us to begin to ask about seeking appropriate guidance as we move through this journey of life.
 - Encourage students to take notes in their student guide as they watch and listen to the video clip. Tell them that you will discuss the lecture afterwards.
 - Take a moment to help students get oriented with the student guide, and then play the lecture.
2. Fill in the points Dr. Legaspi makes in his lecture
- a. The Christian life is a _____ life; it is a life characterized by _____.
 - b. According to St. Maximos the Confessor, life is characterized by three components: _____, _____, and _____.
 - c. The Bible is a text, but is an _____ text. When the Scripture is read, _____ am being addressed; _____ am being guided.
 - d. The Scriptures address us _____ and _____, so that we might lead a _____-shaped life.

Reflection on the Video

Ask students:

- 3 How does the Bible serve as a guide in our journey through life? Are there times when, as in our first image of the GPS system given above, we have ignored the guidance of the Bible and followed our own judgment instead?
1. Think about our second image above of the "ant death spiral." What does this tell us about seeking wise guidance on a journey? How does this apply to Dr. Legaspi's talk?
2. Have you ever experienced the Bible (through hearing it in Church or reading it) as giving you wise guidance for your life? If so, how?

Depending on the time, you can have them share their responses to questions one question at a time, or you can have them pick one of their answers from the questions to share.

Close with any of the key points that they might not have addressed in their own sharing/discussion.