



The Burning Bush

Exodus 3:1-20 - selections

Level C

Ages 11-14

Series Theme: The Lord leads and provides for us, and we can choose to follow Him.

Lesson Focus: The Lord invites all people to make good choices and follow Him in freedom.

Reading Summary: One day, while Moses was in the desert taking care of a flock, he came to Mount Horeb. He saw a bush on fire, but he could see that the bush was not burning up. As he turned aside to look at it, God called to him, and he answered, “Here I am.” God told him to take off his sandals saying “I am the God of your father Abraham. The ground you are on is holy.” Moses was afraid and hid his face. Telling Moses that he had seen how badly Pharaoh was treating His people, God asked Moses to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. When Moses asked who he should say had sent him God instructed him to say, “I AM has sent me.” He told Moses that He would lead the children of Israel to a land flowing with milk and honey, but that it would be difficult to leave Egypt. Moses was worried that people would not believe him, so God gave him three signs to show Pharaoh. And Moses’ brother Aaron would go with him to speak on his behalf.

<h2>Lesson 2</h2>		Materials Supplied	Materials Needed
1. Welcome Warm-up Activity (2-3 minutes)	Game	Secret Leader directions p. 2	
2. Focus on the Word Use all activities (5-7 minutes)	Read the Word and Talk About It	see <i>Reading Summary</i> above; <i>Moses and the Burning Bush Readings</i> , p. 5 discussion guide p. 2	
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Discuss and Make discuss the Lord’s great love for us and create a luminary to illustrate the Lord’s love within His Word	Burning Bush Luminary directions p. 3 <i>Burning Bush Luminary Directions</i> p. 8	brown paper lunch bags, black or brown water-based paint, straw; <i>optional</i> : tea light candles or electric tea light, sand or small rocks to weight the bag, hair dryer for faster paint drying
	Trust Games play an indoor or outdoor game illustrating trust and discuss the issues of trusting the Lord and trusting others	In You I Put My Trust directions pp. 3-4 <i>Trust Games</i> p. 7	supplies vary depending on activity choice (see activity choices on p. 39)
4. Wrap It Up (2-3 minutes)	Take the Message Home introduce the take home page	How Do I Follow the Lord? p. 8	

1. Welcome Warm-up Activity

Secret Leader

Seat or stand students in a circle. One student leaves the room. While the person is out, the group chooses a leader. Everyone remains in a circle, including the leader. The leader will do actions that everyone will copy or “mirror”. Once a leader is chosen, the student outside the room is invited back and sits or stands in the middle of the circle. He or she watches the group and tries to identify the leader. Repeat as student interest, engagement and time allow.

1. What made it easy/hard to identify a leader?
2. How easy is it to pick out a leader in a group of people?
3. What makes a good leader, or a good follower?
4. In what ways is the Lord a secret leader?

2. Focus on the Word

Read: Selections from Exodus 3:1-20 on p. 5.

Moses grew up, left Egypt and moved to Midian. There He married Zipporah, and took care of her father Jethro’s flock. When Moses was about 80 he was on Mount Horeb when he saw something amazing. What caught his eye? A bush on fire, but not burning up.

How did Moses experience the Lord calling Him? The angel of the Lord called his name.

The Lord appeared to people through angels throughout the Old Testament.

How might the Lord call you? Through His Word, conscience, the voices of people who love you and love the Lord such as parents and friends.

What job did the Lord want Moses to do? Lead the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt to the promised land—a land flowing with milk and honey.

Moses was on ‘holy’ ground. What makes something holy? How do we treat things that are holy? ‘Holy’ things relate to the Lord, e.g. His Word, or His life in ourselves or in other people. **We treat the Lord and our neighbor with respect and special care.**

The Lord told Moses His name was “I AM”. “Jehovah”, which is the Lord’s name in the Old Testament, means “I AM”. It’s a way of saying that the Lord is the life in every living thing.

Why was Moses worried he wouldn’t be able to do what the Lord was asking? He wasn’t sure people would believe the Lord had appeared to him.

How did the Lord help Moses? He gave him 3 signs. His rod could become a serpent, his hand could become leprous, and water could turn into blood (Exodus 4).

But even with these signs Moses was still worried, so the Lord told him that his brother, Aaron, could speak for him. After this Moses was willing to do what the Lord wanted him to.

What is one thing the Lord asks people to do? Do what the Word teaches. **This is how He leads people to the “promised land” of heaven flowing with milk (true ideas) and honey (good loves).** (See *Arcana Coelestia* 8056)

The Lord invites all people to make good choices and follow Him in freedom. When we hear the Lord calling us we can say, “Here I am”, showing that we are willing to listen. No matter how hard it seems to make good choices the Lord will support us just as He helped Moses.

3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Burning Bush Luminary

The burning bush Moses witnessed pictures how stories from the Word we have in our minds can become filled with the Lord’s love. This happens when we understand their purpose and feel inspired to use them for good in our lives.

This is why the Lord appears as a fiery sun to the angels in heaven—shedding light and giving warmth to all who love and look to Him.

Students will discuss the fire in the bush and create burning bush luminaries.



1. Have you been in a “heated” conversation? What was it like? What made it “hot”? (Passion or energy for something someone loved.)
2. Did you feel the same level of energy about the topic in your discussion as the person you were talking to?
3. The Lord talks to us in His Word. Do you think He is passionate about what He says there? (Yes!) It is how He talks to us. He wants everyone to enter heaven, but we can only do that if we learn about Him through His Word and do what He says.
4. Can people easily detect the Lord’s passion by reading His Word? (Answers may vary.) The Lord wants everyone to choose to follow Him *in freedom*, so He lets us choose to read the Word and learn about Him. How might we feel about following the Lord if we felt forced to do it?
5. When we go to the Word because we want to meet the Lord there and with a desire to do what He tells us, then we are inviting the Lord to fill what we know with the fire of His love—just as the bush burned with fire.
6. Introduce the project. Hand out the *Burning Bush Luminary Directions* (p. 6) and materials.

Choice

In You I Put My Trust

The Lord asked Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. The Lord did not promise it would be easy—in fact He predicted it would be difficult. Moses worried that people would not believe him or listen to him and so the Lord gave him three signs. His rod could become a serpent, his hand could

Materials Needed for Each Student

paper lunch bag, black or brown water-based paint, straw, spoon
optional: hairbrush to speed paint drying; tea light candles or electric tea lights, sand or small rocks to weight the bag

Prepare in Advance

Gather supplies. To complete the activity students will need sand to weight the bag and a tea light candle. Choose whether to supply these or suggest students get them at home. Parents may prefer battery powered tea lights since the bags are flammable. Make up water-based paint.

New Church Concept Fire in the Bush

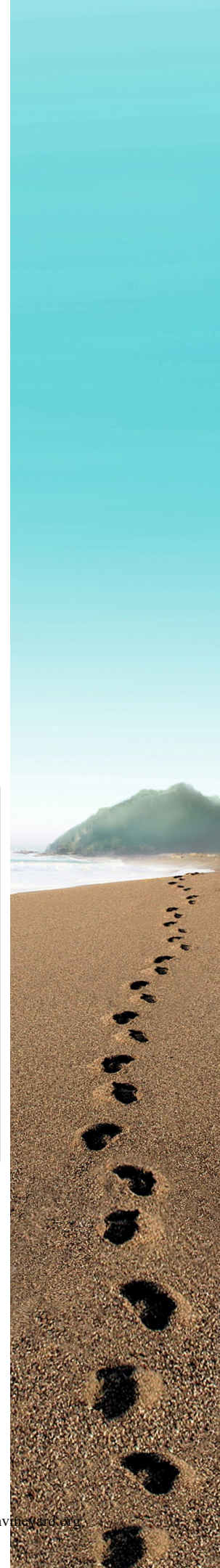
It is that life-giving fire which fills a person’s interiors with warmth, as one may recognize from what happens with love. To the extent that love increases in a person the person warms up; but to the extent that it diminishes the person cools off. This explains why...the Lord appeared...as fire and flame. *Arcana Coelestia* 6832.3

Materials Needed

Materials vary depending on the activity you choose. See *Trust Games* p. 7.

Prepare in Advance

See next page.



Trust Games *continued*

become leprous, and water could turn into blood.

Finally Moses said he was not good at speaking and so the Lord gave him Aaron to speak for him. Moses had to trust both the Lord, and Aaron, his brother.



Choose one of the *Trust Games* (p. 7) to do with your group and follow up with a discussion on trust (below).

Discussion

1. How did it feel to put your trust in your friends?
2. What did it feel like to be responsible for the safety of your friend(s)?
3. Describe how it felt to lead a friend to safety.
4. Why is trust in friends important?
5. What does it mean to put your trust in the Lord?
6. In what ways can people be “blind” to spiritual dangers that are around them?
7. How might we experience the Lord’s leading?
8. Have you ever looked back on something in your life and realized that the Lord was leading you even though you didn’t know it at the time? (Perhaps give an example from your own life.)
9. When is it hard to put your trust in the Lord?
10. When does it feel easy to trust in the Lord?

4. Wrap It Up

Closing

The Lord called on Moses to follow Him and to also lead all the children of Israel to follow Him on a journey to the promised land. He calls on each of us to follow Him as well, every day. And every day, we have the opportunity to choose to listen to Him, to take His journey and follow His path. Our truest happiness—our eternal happiness—will come from doing so.

Take the Message Home

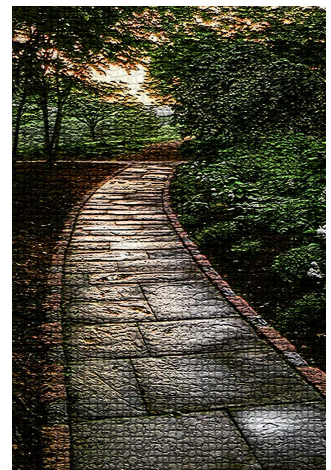
Hand out a copy of *How Do I Follow the Lord?* (p. 8) to each student. Read the quotation at the top of the page aloud together. Encourage the students to take the page home and think about it.

Prepare in Advance

Choose one of the *Trust Games* p. 7. Read the Discussion Questions through. No other advance preparation is needed. Students will enjoy doing any set-up during class.

New Church Concept Freedom

A human being has reason and freedom...and these two faculties are present in a person from the Lord.... It is a goal of Divine providence that a person act in freedom in accordance with his reason. Through the exercise of his freedom the Lord continually leads a person away from evils, and to the extent that the person can...be led away, to the same extent the Lord uses the exercise of his freedom to implant goods. *Divine Providence* 72, 97



Moses and the Burning Bush Readings

Exodus 3:1-8,10-14,19-20 - *selections*

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.”

So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!”

And he said, “Here I am.”

Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.” Moreover He said, “I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

And the Lord said: “I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey....

Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” So He said, “I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”*

Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

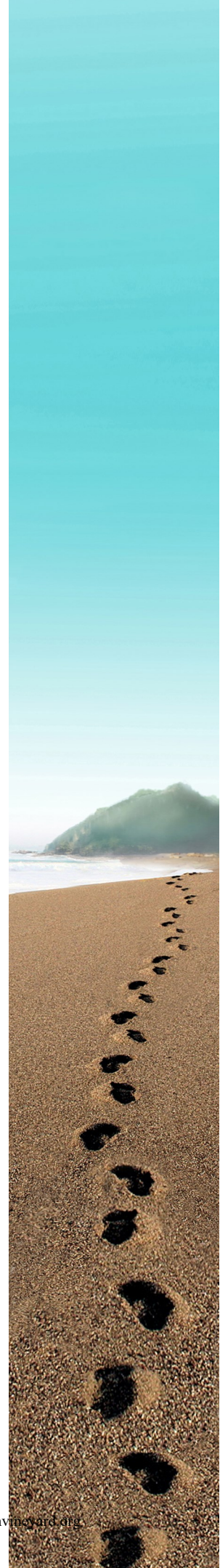
And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you....’”

“But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go.”

* Mount Horeb and Mount Sinai are both mentioned in conjunction with the giving of the Ten Commandments, which happened a few months after the children of Israel fled from Egypt.

Summary of Ideas Exodus 4:1-17

Moses was worried that the people would not believe him, so the Lord gave Moses three signs he could do: his rod could become a serpent, his hand could become leprous, and he could take water out of a river and it would turn to blood when he poured it out on the land. In addition, the Lord gave Moses his brother Aaron to speak on his behalf.



Burning Bush Luminary Directions



1. **Supplies needed:** drinking straw with bendable end, lunch bag, dark colored water based paint, spoon; *optional:* hairdryer to speed drying, tablecloth to protect from splattering paint, sand to weight bag preventing it from tipping when candle is lit inside, tea light or electric tea light



2. Mix water based paint in a bowl to a runny consistency. (Experiment with paint consistencies until you find one that works for you. Paint shown here is fairly runny.) Drop some paint on to a bag using spoon.



3. Using straw, blow the paint into a bush shape.



4. Steady blowing will create larger “trunks”. Short bursts of air will make the paint splatter creating finer “branches”.



5. Allow to dry. Use a hairdryer to speed drying if needed.

6. To finish at home, put sand in the bottom of the bag to weight it down and place a tea light or votive candle or electric tea light on the sand. Put the luminary outside at night and light the candle to reveal the bush on fire.



Trust Games

Choose a game that will work for your group. Divide students into smaller groups as indicated. After doing the activity talk about it, using the discussion questions on p. 4.

Mine Field

pairs of players

Supplies needed: blindfolds for half of the students, an obstacle course

1. Choose a location for the game with some obstacles, but nothing dangerous. If you are outside, a location with trees and bushes might work well. If you are inside, create obstacles using chairs, sofas, pillows, cushions, etc.
2. Students will work in pairs. One person is the navigator, the other person is blindfolded. Once the blindfold is put on the navigator turns the blindfolded person around several times so he or she does not know which way they are facing. From then on the navigator cannot touch his or her partner.
3. The navigator gives verbal directions to cross the room, such as, "About 3 steps in front of you there is a chair/branch. Step around it/over it slowly."

Blind Millipede

any number of players

Supplies needed: blindfolds for all but one member of the group, obstacle course

1. This activity may be played indoors or outdoors. If you are indoors, create an obstacle course by scattering objects on the floor. If you are outdoors, choose a walk that involves navigating around objects.
2. Blindfold all but one member of your group. Players should form a line, each holding the shoulders or elbows of the person in front of them. Place the sighted person at the front of the line. The sighted person leads the group through the obstacle course. There is no talking during the game, but players may agree beforehand on directional signals.

Leading the Blind

groups of 4-5

Supplies needed: one blindfold, ropes or long scarves, obstacle course

Scatter a variety of objects on the floor to create an obstacle field. Blindfold one member of the group. Tie 2-4 (depending on group size) ropes to the arms and legs of the blindfolded person. Three or four people will take the ends of the ropes and lead him or her through the obstacle course by tugging gently on the ropes or scarves. No talking is allowed.

Thumbs Game

3-6 players

No supplies

Players stand in a circle with their hands made into clenched fists in front of them. Players take turns predicting aloud how many thumbs will be up on a count of 3. Each person can put up 0, 1 or 2. Multiply the number thumbs by the number of players and make a guess. Trust your fellow players to help your prediction come true.

How Do I Follow the Lord?

To “follow the Lord” or “to walk after Him” means to acknowledge, to obey, and to act and live from the Lord and with Him (see *Apocalypse Explained* 864).

1. **To acknowledge** the Lord is to recognize Him as real and true. It can also mean thanking Him for what He has done. What is one thing that you are thankful to the Lord for?
2. **To obey** the Lord is to do what He wants you to do. Name one thing you do to obey the Lord.
3. **To act** refers to things a person says or does, things that other people can hear or see. What is one thing you can do that comes *from* the Lord?
4. **To live** is about what a person does and says, and is focused on the choices we make. What is an example of a good choice that is on the path of following the Lord?



Photo by
Anita Fiske Halterman