

“Why your current role in life is where you should be serving God”
Lossiemouth Church of Scotland Sermon – 09 February 2025

The Church as a Boat: A Study Guide Quiz

1. Where did many of the significant events in Jesus' life take place, according to the text?
2. How did Jesus approach his first followers, and what did he do with their existing resources?
3. What architectural feature is referenced as being a visual link to the text's themes in many churches?
4. What is the significance of the 'naomhógaí' and what architectural parallel does the text draw with it?
5. How does the text describe the journey of life within the church community, using a nautical metaphor?
6. According to the text, what is the core characteristic that defines the church?
7. The text outlines a recurring pattern in encounters with God, how is it described and in what three biblical examples does the text reference this pattern?
8. What does the text suggest about the nature of epiphanies, and how often may they occur in a person's life?
9. What story of King Henry III of Bavaria is used to illustrate the concept of faithfulness in one's current circumstances?
10. What is the final lesson the text attempts to impart about our roles and responsibilities within the will of God?

Answer Key

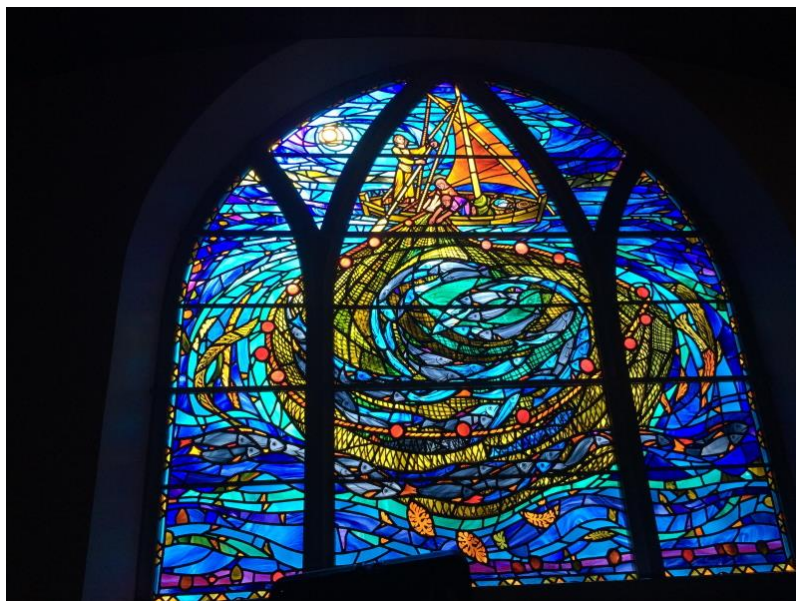
1. Many significant events in Jesus' life took place on the Sea of Galilee, also called the Lake of Gennesaret. This large body of water was the setting for interactions with his first followers and many key teachings.
2. Jesus actively sought out his first followers, who were fishermen, rather than waiting for them to come to him. He then used their boats as a platform to teach, adapting their resources to further his goals.
3. The text references the large stained-glass window which dominates Lossiemouth Church of Scotland, featuring the motif of fish in a net, as a visual representation of the text's imagery within many churches. The architectural structure of the nave is also referred to as symbolic.
4. The naomhógaí are upturned coracles, small boats used by the fishermen which resemble beetles from a distance. They are a direct parallel to the way the congregation sits in the nave, in an upturned vessel.
5. The journey of life is described as a sea voyage, where the church is a boat. There are calm spells, choppy waters and storms to navigate together, alluding to the various challenges and experiences of the congregation.
6. The core characteristic of the church, according to the text, is that it is a gathering of the imperfect who are drawn together by a willingness to embark on Christ's journey. It is not a place for the spiritually proud.



7. The text describes a recurring pattern: divine epiphany, a response of unworthiness, reassurance, and commission followed by obedience. This pattern is evidenced in Isaiah's vision, Paul's encounter with the resurrected Christ and the call of the first disciples.
8. Epiphanies, as the text suggests, are varied in form and may not be dramatic, and can occur repeatedly throughout life in the community of the nave or boat. It encourages introspection of personal experience and not to disregard or devalue the validity of individual experience.
9. King Henry III, tired of royal duties, sought to become a monk, where he was told instead to serve faithfully as king. It highlights that obedience to God may require faithfulness in current roles.
10. The final lesson emphasises that God has placed each person in a specific role where they are called to be faithful. It reminds the reader that fulfilling one's current responsibilities is a form of service to God.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Sea of Galilee/Lake of Gennesaret:** A large inland lake in northern Israel, significant in the life and ministry of Jesus.
- **Naomhógaí:** Small, narrow coracles or boats, traditionally used in Ireland and resembling large beetles when upturned.
- **Nave:** The central part of a church building where the congregation usually sits, often designed architecturally to represent a boat.
- **Epiphany:** A sudden and striking realisation or revelation, especially of a divine nature.
- **Commission:** The act of giving someone a task, duty, or role; in a religious context, often a call from God.
- **Obedience:** Compliance with an order, request, or law, particularly in a religious context, submission to God's will.
- **Lectionary:** A collection of readings from the bible for use in worship.
- **Coracle** A small, lightweight boat.



The Miraculous Draught at Lossiemouth Church of Scotland