

STUDY GUIDE

Doctrine of Discovery

Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts

A documentary produced by Anglican Video
in collaboration with the Primate's Commission on
the Doctrine of Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice.

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The film and study guide are available from the Anglican Church of Canada.

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Images: Anglican Video



We gratefully acknowledge a grant from the Anglican Foundation of Canada



Anglican Church of Canada

anglican.ca

March 2019



THE “Doctrine of Discovery, Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts” is a challenging, truthful documentary. It is meant to educate people on the Doctrine and create an awareness of its legacy. We offer this study guide in hopes that it will allow for those watching an opportunity to discuss, ask questions and reflect.

It is recommended that the video be viewed in its entirety (67 minutes) and then broken down into discussion, reflection by the chapters, one or two at a time. You may want to add prayer or think of scripture that speaks to the concerns that are raised by the documentary. We have provided some suggested passages and questions for study at the end of this guide, should scripture be part of your custom. The message is important and will give understanding to the current state of Indigenous affairs on Turtle Island or North America. Understanding the Doctrine of Discovery and its manifestations are important as we strive for reconciliation. If appropriate, open and close with prayer. Smudging may also be appropriate depending on the customs of the community.

As is our custom, we ask you to sit in a circle, or around a table and live with these guidelines:



We live and breathe in a sacred circle of trust, hope and love. In the Sacred Circle we will honour the Seven Traditional Teachings: Love, Truth, Honesty, Bravery, Wisdom, Humility and Respect. The Circle will conduct their deliberations in a circle using the Seven Guiding Principles to Create and Sustain the Circular Model of Leadership:

- **SACRED SPACE:** Where spirituality is fully present, a place where the Holy Spirit guides who we are and who we are called to become. Sacred space will be created using culturally appropriate ceremony.
- **SHARED LEADERSHIP:** Each person is equally valued for themselves and equally shares the power within the community. Decisions are made by consensus and all information and resources are shared. Individual talents, skills and gifts are recognized and empowered.
- **VISION:** When we dream it together, then it happens. A shared vision, owned and articulated by everyone, guarantees excellence in leadership.

- **NORMS:** Standards of behavior agreed upon by the group. Norms are constantly reviewed and updated.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** To the vision, to shared leadership, and to all tasks. “First among equals” means there is an elected or designated chair of the Circle who relates to other interested parties. This person(s) is empowered by the Circle to act on its behalf, honouring the consensus model of decision making.
- **PRAYER AND CEREMONY** are important to sustain the spirituality of self and the Circle.
- **CREATIVITY:** Comes from the Creator and resides within everyone. The Creator gives everyone the power and authority to carry out the vision. The creative arts – graphic art, writing prose/poetry, music and dance, drumming and singing, drawing, drama, and meditation are examples of creative energy that give life to the Circle.



THE following questions are guides. You may not have time to use all of them and your circle may have other questions for discussion and reflection. It is our intent that these and other questions will give people a better understanding of the Doctrine of Discovery and how it still impacts both Indigenous people and settlers.

OPENING – 2:29

Had you heard of the Doctrine of Discovery before viewing this documentary?

What questions arise for you?

What surprises you about the information in the Opening?

How have resource extraction/greed played into colonization from the beginning?

What do you know about the “discovery” of Canada?

How did you get here?

OUT OF THE ETHER – 4:48

What does “Out of the Ether” mean to you as a settler, as an Indigenous person?

What does it mean that the land was “made empty through law”?

Can you think of other instances of “out of the ether?”

NOT AN EMPTY LAND – 5:12

What does it mean that Indigenous Peoples have “inherent Rights”? Where did these rights come from?

Give some examples of inherent rights.

What characterized Indigenous Peoples’ relationship to the land pre-contact?

The respect of gifts is important to Indigenous and settlers – what are these gifts?

How does the meaning/perception of “gifts” differ between settlers and Indigenous peoples?



THE INDIAN PROBLEM – 6:19

What is the significance of relationship?

What broke the early relationship between settlers and Indigenous Peoples?

What actions were taken to eliminate the “Indian” problem?

In what way is the Doctrine of Discovery connected to the Indian Residential Schools System?

*What is the legacy of the Residential Schools?
Who does the problem(s) belong to?*

THE LEGACY OF PAIN – 6:27

What and where are the pains?

How does the “pain” differ between Indigenous and settler peoples?

Lorraine Land talks about institutional racism – where is it; where is it seen or felt?

How is the pain of colonization passed through generations?

What is the significance of spirituality in healing?

What is the cost of “shutting down” as Dr. Martin Brokenleg describes it?

What are the “new stressors” or legacy effects of the Doctrine of Discovery and the Residential School System?

LEGAL FICTION – 6:20

What does “Legal Fiction” mean to you? Where do you see it?

What is sovereignty? How is it related to self-determination?

Why are most people in power not willing to recognize Indigenous sovereignty?

What do you know about the Indian Act?

If Indigenous people could write a new “Indigenous Act,” what do you think it should say?



THE MÉTIS NATION – 5:21

What is distinct about the Métis Nation?

What is the significance of the Manitoba Act?

How does the Doctrine of Discovery affect Métis people in particular?

What gifts do the Métis bring to our societies?

Who was Louis Riel? Why was he significant in Métis history?

TRYING TO STAND – 6:08

What is unique about the Inuit experience?

What rapid changes are happening in the North now?

The Inuit live in a very challenging land, why do you think they stay there?

What gifts do Inuit bring?

Have you ever been to an Inuit community? What was it like?

What are some of the stereotypes of the Inuit that need to be forgotten?

How can you help the Inuit stand?

THE GOOD MIND – 6:30

What does it mean to be of a Good Mind?

Is there hope for all to be of a Good Mind? Where do you see it?

What are the structures of Terra Nullius?

The statement is made that if we close the gaps, we can have reconciliation. Where are the gaps in the Church/or other institutions?

As a Church/or other institution, what is our truth?

Is it possible to give back what was lost?





REPUDIATION – 2:09

Did you know the Anglican Church of Canada and other denominations repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery?

What does repudiation mean to you and where do you see it at work?

Should there be covenants of reconciliation? If so, what are the main principles?

What gifts do you bring in reconciliation? What commitments will you make in restoration of Indigenous rights?

How can we, who have lost our Indigenous roots remember and become allies for Indigenous rights?

SPIRITUAL ARROGANCE – 5:35

How has the Doctrine of Discovery affected theology?

What is the “two-fold responsibility” of a Christian person with regards to the Doctrine of Discovery. Are there ways you can take this responsibility?

Many Indigenous peoples have traditional teachings and values that have been handed down through the many generations. Many times they were considered “pagan” or “heathen” and were taken away. How can you help Indigenous people reclaim their spirituality?

Christian teachings tell us that we are made in the image of God, our Creator, traditional teachings tell us that we must have respect for all because each is a creation of the Creator. What can you do to promote these teachings in your communities?

WE ARE SEEDS – 6:24

“In the dust where we have buried the silent races and their abominations, we have buried so much of the delicate magic of life,” D.H. Lawrence.

Danielle Black says Indigenous people are seeds. What can you give to help these seeds grow?

Do Indigenous people need to reconcile by accepting “this is the way it is?” Why? If not, what needs to change?

What do traditional and Christian teachings say about seeds?



What would terms of co-existence look like?

What will it take to know that Earth is who we are?

How will we help heal ourselves from the past abominations and mend our sacred connections to the land?

How will we learn to live in harmony with one another in caring for creation?

How can we learn from Indigenous people in caring for the land?

What gifts do I bring in reconciliation? What commitments will I make in restoration of Indigenous rights?

REFLECTIONS

We suggest the following prose and poems for reflection.

“You might as well expect all the rivers to run backward as that any man who was born free should be contented penned up and denied liberty to go where he pleases. If you tie a horse to a stake, do you expect him to grow fat? If you pen an Indian up on a small spot of earth, and compel him to stay there, he will not be contented, nor will he grow and prosper. I have asked some of the Great White Chiefs where they got their authority to say to the Indian that he shall stay in one place, while he sees the white man going where they please. They cannot tell me.

Let me be a free man, free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to talk, think, and act for myself – and I will obey every law or submit to the penalty.”

—Hin-hah-too-yah-lat-kekht
(Chief Joseph), Nez Perce

Published in the book “Freedom and Indigenous Constitutionalism” by John Borrows



Ginny Doctor wrote this while traveling by train to New York City to present two workshops at the UN Women's Forum. The route travels along the Mohawk River, her aboriginal homelands. While she has traveled that route many times, a great sadness came over her, probably because of her work on the Doctrine of Discovery. Anyway, she took up pen and paper and wrote down her reflection on "While Traveling on a Train going East."

While traveling on a train going East . . .

*Sadness surrounds me
traveling through aboriginal homelands
See things that others can't
Longhouses, smoke billowing from the center
surrounded by wooden palisades
Brown women tending the Three Sisters
Corn, beans and squash
Men wandering through the bush
hunting for deer and other sustenance
Children running through the woods
playing games, laughing
Mohawk River flows*

*Creator's artery bringing fish for harvest
waterway for travel
Can smell the sweetgrass
the strawberries, first fruit of summer
But then I see blood
My ancestors covered in red lifelessness
Settlers blood too
Who was right, who was wrong?
Both wanted good life, good land
Now I see farmlands
wonder if they grow the Three Sisters
See hard pavement
that was once soft trail
good to walk with deerskin moccasins
Old stone buildings and homes
carved out of once pristine land
Now replace Longhouses
and a good, Creator given life
that was before
We are left with Kenolonkkwa,
The great love from the ancestors
and with that we go on
to grieve and heal
to be strong like our ancestors
To keep the Good Mind*

—gdoctor, March 2018



What did you do once you knew?

“It’s 3:23 in the morning and I’m awake... because
my great great grandchildren won’t let me sleep.
My great great grandchildren ask me in dreams,
What did you do while the planet was plundered?
What did you do when the earth was unraveling?
surely you did something?...
When the seasons started failing?
surely you did something?
As the mammals, reptiles, and birds were all
dying?
surely you did something?
Did you fill the streets with protest when
democracy was stolen?
What did you do once you knew?”

—(Excerpts from *Hieroglyphic Stairway*,
a poem by Drew Dellinger)

SOME ANSWERS TO “WHAT CAN I DO?”

If you are not an Indigenous person, find one relationship with an Indigenous party, group, congregation, family, or individual and just foster that friendship. The goal is not do DO something but rather to BE in a real relationship.

If you are an Indigenous person, then I would say the same thing but with a non-Indigenous party or persons. I think these friendships are a crucial building block in a strong Canadian society.

—*from* Martin Brokenleg

Take time to think: How do I have to change myself in order to do something – anything – to effect change in the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and The Rest of Us.

—*from* Jean Koning

What surprising insight have you had into the way you have been impacted by the Doctrine of Discovery?

—*from* Mark MacDonald



Explore your own history and where you came from. We often forget that one of the reasons why Indigenous people were oppressed is because those doing the oppressing were also oppressed!

Learn more about the history of the Indigenous people of the area in which you live. And, then share what you learn with others.

Read the 94 Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

—*from* Ginny Doctor

Looking at the Doctrine of Discovery through the Lens of Scripture

For those who profess faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it may be helpful to look at the Doctrine of Discovery through the lens of scripture. The Bible has a lot to teach us about how to view one another and how to treat one another. Here are some readings and questions to get your conversation started:

1. Read: 2 Corinthians 5:16-20.

- a. How are we to see one another according to this passage?
- b. How does the Doctrine of Discovery conflict with this message?
- c. How does this new way of looking at one another promote true reconciliation?

2. Read: 1 Corinthians 12:14-21

- a. In what ways has the Doctrine of Discovery caused us to say we are not part of the body?



- b. In what ways has the Doctrine of Discovery caused us to exclude others from the body?
 - c. What changes do you think would need to happen for the body to be “one body”?
3. Read: Matthew 28:18-20
- a. This passage has often been used to biblically “defend” Doctrine of Discovery thoughts and actions. Having watched this film, what do you think/feel about this passage now?
 - b. How do you think that this passage has been used to promote what Primate Fred Hiltz called “spiritual arrogance” in the film?
 - c. What do you think Jesus had in mind when he said these words?
 - d. What would it look like to obey Jesus’ commission to spread the Gospel without attaching it to the Doctrine of Discovery and its ways of thinking and being?

4. Read: Acts 2:5-12
- a. What does the Doctrine of Discovery film have to say about language?
 - b. What is significant about the many languages spoken at the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?
 - c. What does this story have to teach us about how God “shows up” in our world?
5. Read: Ephesians 2:14-17
- a. How does the life and death of Jesus affect ideas like the Doctrine of Discovery?
 - b. Why is it so hard to be “one body” without all having to be the same?
 - c. Jesus “proclaims peace” – what would that peace look like to you?
 - d. Can there be peace without justice?



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