



Methodism 101

1. Thinking Theologically – The Wesley Quadrilateral

Criteria used in thinking about matters of faith.

Scripture

- Scripture is the primary authority for faith and practice.

Tradition

- Traditions of the church and insight of “cloud of witnesses” from other cultures and time periods illuminate our understanding of the Gospel.

Experience

- Personal life experience and experience of others inform Biblical interpretation.

Reason

- Using sound judgment based on rational thinking and acquired knowledge influence our understanding. Does it make sense?

2. Grace

Grace is central to our understanding of the Christian faith and life.

Prevenient Grace

- Grace that comes to us before a person knows God.
- God’s gift. Requires no action from the individual.

Justifying Grace

- In spite of our sin, we are made one with God through Jesus.
- A person’s acceptance of God’s gift of grace.

Sanctifying Grace

- The ongoing refining, cleansing and purifying process in a person’s life where the love of God and neighbor increases.
- The power that leads us to becoming more Christlike.

3. Means of Grace

- The means of grace are ways God works invisibly in disciples, hastening, strengthening; and confirming faith so that God's grace pervades in and through them.
- Practical Divinity- putting faith and love into action

Works of Piety

- Individual Practices – reading, meditating and studying the scriptures, prayer, fasting, regularly attending worship, healthy living, and sharing our faith with others
- Communal Practices – regularly share in the sacraments, Christian conferencing (accountability to one another), and Bible study

Works of Mercy

- Individual Practices - doing good works, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison, feeding the hungry, and giving generously to the needs of others
- Communal Practices – seeking justice, ending oppression and discrimination (for instance Wesley challenged Methodists to end slavery), and addressing the needs of the poor

Resources

ARUMC Children's Ministry Website

<https://arumc.org/our-ministries/childrens-ministry/>

How To Choose A Sunday School Curriculum

(basic things to consider – non-denominational)

<https://disciplr.com/how-to-choose-a-sunday-school-curriculum>

Our Wesleyan Heritage

("Methodism 101" article)

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/our-wesleyan-heritage>

Teaching Grace in Christian Education

(general article about why it's important to teach about Grace)

<http://www.umc.org/resources/teaching-grace-in-christian-education>

Teaching the who, what and why of The United Methodist Church

(links and answers to FAQs about the UMC)

<http://www.umcom.org/learn/teaching-the-who-what-and-why-of-the-umc>

Theological Guidelines

(article highlighting the Wesley Quadrilateral)

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/theological-guidelines>

The Wesleyan Concept of Grace

(links to articles and videos about prevenient, justifying and sanctifying Grace)

<http://www.umc.org/topics/the-wesleyan-concept-of-grace>

The Wesleyan Means of Grace

(outlines acts of piety and acts of mercy)

<http://www.umc.org/how-we-serve/the-wesleyan-means-of-grace>

United Methodist Sacraments, Rites and Rituals

(links to articles about sacraments, rites and rituals practiced in UMC churches)

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/united-methodist-sacraments-rites-and-rituals>

Using Approved United Methodist Curriculum

(how approved UM curriculum is selected-Cokesbury)

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/using-approved-united-methodist-curriculum>

What Every Child Should Experience

(scripture and faith development levels categorized by age-United Methodist)

<https://docs.arumc.org/Childrens%20Ministry/What%20Every%20Child%20Should%20Experience/>

WWYD?

(Based on true stories.)

Dad tells mom that lately, their three-year-old starts to cry and tries to hide while screaming “Noooo! Don’t take me!” whenever dad comes to pick him up after any church activities. Hint: this isn’t a case of suspected child abuse.

1. What do you think is going on here?
2. How might the Sunday school class curriculum be involved in creating this situation?
3. How can this situation be avoided?

An 8-year-old girl goes with a friend to her friend’s church for Wednesday night services. When she comes home, she tells her family that she was saved and baptized (“dunked”) during the worship service. “I told my friend that I was already baptized when I was a baby but my friend tells me that it only counts when you get dunked and I didn’t want to go to hell if I die tomorrow.”

1. What parts of this girl’s story do not align with United Methodist Theology?
2. What would you say to this child?

The Christmas Train was a popular activity for children in a large city during the holiday season. It was especially popular with tweens in the community. The miniature train took children on a ride from a world of laughter and Christmas carols through a desert and into a haunted house-type atmosphere of fire and screaming bodies. This is where children go if they aren’t saved or if they do something really REALLY bad.

1. What parts of this experience do not align with United Methodist Theology?
2. What would you say to your tween who wanted to ride on the train with a bunch of his peeps?

The story in Sunday school was about Moses telling the Pharaoh to “let my people go”. The leader’s guide said to describe Pharaoh as a bad man who God didn’t love.

1. How would you change that to include the concept of Grace?

A tween boy was having a tough day in Sunday school. He used racial and ethnic slurs when the class was talking about serving the people in their community. He bullied the student with autism. He offered to go down to the border wall and gun down any illegal immigrants who tried to get past him. The leader asked if he was afraid that God wouldn’t love him anymore because of the way he talked and acted. He replied “It doesn’t matter. I’m saved and that means God will always love me no matter what.”

1. Once saved, always saved is a belief embraced by many denominations. Do United Methodists embrace the OSAS concept?
2. How would you respond to this child?

Theology Jeopardy

	Sacraments	Grace	I Been a-Thinkin'	Real Life
\$100	How many sacraments are celebrated in the UMC? 2	The type of grace that comes to us before we know God. Prevenient	The name of Wesley's method of thinking about matters of faith. Quadrilateral	Dad tells mom that lately, their three-year-old starts to cry and tries to hide while screaming "Noooo! Don't take me!" whenever dad comes to pick him up after any church activities. Hint: this isn't a case of suspected child abuse. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think is going on here? 2. How might the Sunday school class curriculum be involved in creating this situation? 3. How can this situation be avoided?
\$300	Do UMs believe in re-baptism? No	Reading, prayer, worship and sacraments are examples of Works of Piety	Primary authority for faith and practice. Scripture	The story in Sunday school was about Moses telling the Pharaoh to "let my people go". The leader's guide said to describe Pharaoh as a bad man who God didn't love and would never love. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would you change that to include the concept of Grace?
\$500	Practice where everyone is welcome to receive communion. Open	Visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, seeking justice are examples of Works of Mercy	The great cloud of witnesses informs this criteria Tradition	A tween boy was having a tough day in Sunday school. He used racial and ethnic slurs when the class was talking about serving the people in their community. He bullied the student with autism. He offered to go down to the border wall and gun down any illegal immigrants who tried to get past him. The leader asked if he was afraid that God wouldn't love him anymore because of the way he talked and acted. He replied "It doesn't matter. I'm saved and that means God will always love me no matter what." <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once saved, always saved is a belief embraced by many denominations. Do United Methodists embrace the OSAS concept? 2. How would you respond to this child?
\$1000	Outward sign of inward grace. Baptism	The type of grace that refines, cleanses and purifies us where the love of God and neighbor increases. Sanctifying	Using sound judgement, rational thinking and acquired knowledge Reason	An 8-year-old girl goes with a friend to her friend's church for Wednesday night services. When she comes home, she tells her family that she was saved and baptized ("dunked") during the worship service. "I told my friend that I was already baptized when I was a baby but my friend tells me that it only counts when you get dunked and I didn't want to go to hell if I die tomorrow." <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What parts of this girl's story do not align with United Methodist Theology? 2. What would you say to this child?