

The Grace of God

1. What are some important points in giving a personal testimony?

- *what Jesus Christ means to me
- *what my life was like before accepting Jesus Christ
- *how I became aware that I needed Christ and how Christ meets my basic needs
- *who influenced me most to accept Christ as my Lord and Savior
- *how I came to trust Christ Jesus as my Lord and Savior
- *how I discovered ways of serving in the name of Jesus in the world

2. What is a *graceful* pattern for inviting a person to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

As the Holy Spirit works in the life of the witness and also in the life of the other person, it is necessary for the person witnessing to be always alert to the opportunity to offer Christ, to share the good news, and to invite the other person to respond. The following is a graceful pattern for sharing the good news and assisting persons in receiving Christ.

*G = *God's Grace in Christ Jesus for All*

God's Grace in Creation

God's Grace in Redemption

God's Grace in Hope and Eternity (Romans 5:6-8)

*R = *Recognizing and Repenting of Sin*

Receiving Salvation in Christ

Responding in Trust

Reconciling Grace (Psalm 51; James 4:1-3)

*A = *Accepting God's Forgiveness*

Acknowledging Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior

Assurance Through the Witness of the Holy Spirit

Awareness of the Continuing Grace of God (1 John 2:1-2; Colossians 2:11-15)

*C = *Confessing Faith in Christ Jesus*

Committing in Trust to Christ Jesus

Commencing the Way of Christ

Continuing the Walk with Christ (Luke 15:17-20; 1 John 4:15)

*E = *Entering into the Reign of God*

Entering into the Fellowship of God

Entering the Way of the Grace-filled Life

Entering into the Mission of God (Romans 1:6; Acts 1:6-8; Ephesians 4:7-16)

3. Sharing Our Faith

+ The witness of God's Word:

John 5:24; 6:37 Colossians 1:21-23b Romans 10:9-10 1 John 1:9

+ The witness of the Holy Spirit:

Romans 8:14-16 Galatians 4:6 2 Corinthians 1:22 1 John 3:24

+ The witness of the human heart:

2 Timothy 1:12 1 John 3:18-19

****In Christ, we can know the forgiveness of sin, and we are given the power to live a victorious life.**

The Kingdom of God

1. What is a Christian?

A Christian is a person who believes that the living God is revealed in and through Jesus Christ, who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who lives in obedient communion with God through the power of the Holy Spirit, and who takes his or her place in the community of Christ's church.

Acts 11:26

John 1:1-5, 14-18

John 14:8-11

Hebrews 1:1-3

2. Who is Jesus Christ?

The word *Christ* comes from the Greek word that means "anointed" and is comparable to the Hebrew word *Messiah*. Jesus is the Christ because in Christ "all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell," and through Christ "God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things" (Colossians 1:19-20). The people of God in the Old Testament looked forward to a promised Messiah who would establish the reign of justice, love, and peace for the whole world. Jesus is that Messiah.

Acts 3:13-19

Acts 10:36-43

Acts 4:11-12

Colossians 1:15-20

John 1:1-5, 14-18

John 14:8-11

3. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit proceeds from and is one in being with God the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The Spirit leads human beings through faithful response to the gospel into the fellowship of the church. The Spirit comforts, sustains, and empowers believers and guides them in their pursuit of truth.

John 3:1-10

Romans 8:1-17

John 4:1-30

Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-13, 32-39

John 14:14-29

1 Corinthians 3:16; 12:13

John 15:26-27

1 Thessalonians 5:19

John 16:12-15

4. What is the invitation to Christian discipleship?

All people are invited by God to repent, to trust and follow Jesus Christ, to learn from his words and deeds, and to share in his mission, through the power of the Holy Spirit and in company with other Christians.

Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-15

John 20:21-22

Acts 1:8

5. What is the mission of Jesus Christ?

To proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, to call people to "see" the kingdom, to repent, to "enter" the kingdom, and to live obediently in the kingdom.

Mark 1:14-15

John 3:1-21

6. What is the kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God is God's active and sovereign reign over all creation, over all that God has made. It is a new order of things where antagonisms between peoples, nations, sexes, races, and generations are overcome and a new environment of justice, love, freedom, and peace prevails. Only those persons who turn from their sin and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord can fully "see" and "enter" the kingdom of God. In the end, God's reign will be acknowledged by all when God judges the whole human race through Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Revelation 4:11

Mark 1:14-15; 13:24-33

Matthew 25:31-46

Philippians 2:5-11

The Wesleyan Movement

1. What is a local congregation in the Wesleyan tradition?

A local church is a community of people who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives. ***It is a place where the gospel is preached and where the sacraments are celebrated.*** The function of the local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in accordance with Scripture, is to help people to know Jesus Christ personally as Lord and Savior and to live their daily lives in the light of their relationship with God. Local Methodist/Wesleyan congregations have an evangelistic, nurturing, serving and witnessing responsibility for their membership, surrounding area, and the entire world.

Acts 1:6-8

Mark 14:22-26

I Corinthians 11:17-26

Luke 22:14-23

Ephesians 4:7-16

2. What are the distinctive features of the Methodist/Wesleyan movement?

Its message has been summarized as:

- a. All need to be saved
- b. All may be saved
- c. All may know that they are saved
- d. All may be saved to the utmost

3. Traditional features of the people called Methodist include:

- The importance of blending knowledge with vital piety, a quickened mind with a warmed evangelical heart - *I Corinthians 8:1*;
- The importance of shared leadership in the life and mission of the church - *Acts 6:1-4*;
- The importance of blending personal commitment with social responsibility; Methodists have always held that the purpose of Christian conversion is not only to get “one’s soul ready for heaven,” but also to taste the first fruit of heaven through a life of justice, love, and mercy in this world - *James 1:22*;
- The importance of singing in worship - *Mark 14:26*;
- The importance of expressing gratitude for God’s grace through service - *Romans 6:13*;
- The development of congregations into smaller groups for instruction, pastoral care, and fellowship - *Acts 2:46*;
- The importance of blending ardor with order in matters of faith and practice - *I Timothy 1:1*;
- The importance of a connectional system that links local congregations to districts, to conferences, and to the worldwide fellowship - *Colossians 4:16*

Conversion

1. What is sin?

Sin is the condition of estrangement from God that affects the whole human race and results in rebellion against God and God's kingdom. The rebellion leads to bondage. Sins are specific actions, words, or thoughts that arise from our sinful condition and deny the presence, purpose, and reign of God.

(Note: Various words for "sin" are used - offense, injustice, failure, godlessness, missing the mark)

2. What are the affects of sin?

Sin corrupts our relationship with God, with one another, with ourselves, and with the whole creation. The primary result of sin is bondage. Thus sin is more than a transgressions; it is bondage. It not only alienates us from God, but is also brings us into captivity. It is more than an outward act or habit; it is a deep-seated inward condition. It is not only a "contagious disease," but it is also a cumulative process related to the social and cosmic dimensions of the world. It pollutes not only us, but also every aspect of our existence and infects the very structures of human life and society as well.

Mark 7:21-23

James 4:1-3

3. What is the good news (gospel/evangel)?

II Corinthians 5:17

4. What is grace?

Grace is God's sovereign love and unmerited favor to all. It is initiated by God and freely given to undeserving and ungodly people. *Luke 15*

5. What is salvation?

Salvation is the forgiveness of our sin, deliverance from bondage, and the gift of new life in Christ. It is a process that begins now, gives victor over sin and death, and is completed with God in heaven.

Mark 2:1-4;10:28-31,45

Romans 5:15-21

II Corinthians 5:18-21

6. What is a Christian conversion?

It is the change that God works in us as we respond to God's grace in repentance and faith. Repentance and faith are the necessary responses to Jesus and his message of the kingdom. Through repentance and faith, the saving initiative of God is translated into human experience. *Acts 26:18;9:1-21*

7. What is repentance? What is Christian faith?

Christian faith is centered, personal, relational response to God that involves trust and obedience. Faith in Jesus Christ is trusting that through him alone, God gives us eternal life.

Acts 16:29-31

Ephesians 2:4-10

James 2:14-26

8. What is the new birth?

New birth, regeneration, and conversion are terms used to describe the process, in both its instantaneous and its gradual aspects, by which we are brought by God from the state of sin into new life in Jesus Christ, and in which we grow through the inspiration and workings of the Holy Spirit within us. To be born again is to see and to enter the kingdom of God. *John 3:1-8;14-17*
Ephesians 2:1-5

9. How are we put right with God?

We are put right (that is, justified) when we accept God's forgiveness of our sin in Christ Jesus and when we, through the grace of God, become God's children. God restores us to a right relationship. God does this on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done for us in his death and resurrection and on the basis of our faith. We are put right when God forgives our sin, accepts us, and declares us to be God's children.

Romans 5:1-2;8:1

I Corinthians 1:26-31