

Sample from Growing in Grace

Small Group Questions:

- What does it mean to love as God loves?
- How is growing in love an act of God's grace, rather than simply human effort or willpower?
- What are practices you/we can do so God can bring about growth in love?
- How are you as an individual (or you as a community) more loving today than one year ago?
- What are your areas of growth when it comes to being more loving?
- What does the primacy of love in our Wesleyan theology and spirituality say about how we United Methodists understand God?
- How is love a way of life, as opposed to simply a feeling or emotion?
- What are the characteristics of a person growing in love?
- What stories in the Bible best express the nature of God's love for you?
- How would the world be different if followers of Jesus were deeply committed to making the love of God visible in the world?

Spiritual Practices:

- Grounding passages (Commit the following passages to memory, or create a piece of art (or write a poem), or write them on a piece of paper where you see them regularly)
 - "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7, NRSV)
 - "...God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." (1 John 4:16b, NRSV)
 - "Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves has fulfilled the law." (Romans 13:8, NRSV)
 - "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34b-35, NRSV)
 - "...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength'... 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:30-31, NRSV)
 - "And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13, NRSV)
 - "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony". (Colossians 3:14)
- Each day this week, take one of the passages of scripture above and meditate on what it is saying.
 - How is God speaking to you through the passage?
 - How is God speaking to the Church?
 - Sit in silence for 10 minutes, asking God to speak a word to you.
- Ask God to show you one thing you can do this week to make God's love more visible in the world. (If this is part of a small group study, report back to one another what you did and what the experience was like).

Everyday Disciples: John Wesley's 22 Questions

These are 22 questions the members of John Wesley's Holy Club asked themselves every day in their private devotions over 200 years ago.

- Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
- Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
- Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
- Can I be trusted?
- Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
- Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
- Did the Bible live in me today?
- Do I give it time to speak to me everyday?
- Am I enjoying prayer?
- When did I last speak to someone else about my faith?
- Do I pray about the money I spend?
- Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
- Do I disobey God in anything?
- Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
- Am I defeated in any part of my life?
- Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
- How do I spend my spare time?
- Am I proud?
- Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
- Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
- Do I grumble or complain constantly?
- Is Christ real to me?