

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE **METHODIST?**

Spring 2024

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO METHODISM

Objective: Provide an overview of the origins and key principles of Methodism.

Origins of Methodism

Introduction to John Wesley and the historical context of 18th-century England. Discuss the Wesleyan revival and the birth of Methodism.

Key Beliefs and Principles

Get oriented to the key theological beliefs of Methodism, including entire sanctification, prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace. Discuss the meaning of "Arminian" theology as distinct from Calvinist theology.

WEEK 2: WESLEYAN THEOLOGY: ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

Objective: Understand entire sanctification as the core theological distinctive of Methodism.

What Entire Sanctification Is NOT

It is not sinlessness, nor legalism.

Defining Entire Sanctification

Freedom from the guilt, power, and presence of sin. Freedom to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

The When and How of Entire Sanctification

Most Wesleyans agree on what entire sanctification is, but they disagree on when and how it happens. This section, then, discusses the short, middle, and long ways of entire sanctification.

WEEK 3: ARMINIAN THEOLOGY

Objective: Understand how Arminian theology differs from reformed theology.

Five-Point Calvinism and Reformed Theology

Discuss Five-Point Calvinism as represented in the acronym TULIP: Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, Perseverance of the Saints ("once saved always saved").

Arminian Theology

Discuss the notion of prevenient grace as enabling grace and the biblical doctrine of election.

WEEK 4: THE WESLEYAN QUADRILATERAL

Objective: Understand the Wesleyan Quadrilateral.

Defining the Quadrilateral

Discuss the Wesleyan Quadrilateral as the basis for drawing interpretive theological conclusions. The four parts of the Quadrilateral are: (1) Scripture, (2) Tradition, (3) Reason, and (4) Experience.

The Quadrilateral vs. The Equilateral

Explain the primacy of Scripture in Wesleyan thinking and offer an overview of the abuses of the quadrilateral that is largely responsible for the split in Methodism. This section will cover the nature of the "Our Theological Task" statement in the UMC Handbook of Doctrines and Disciplines.

WEEK 5: METHODISM WITHIN CHRISTIANITY

Objective: Compare and contrast Methodism to other Denominations and Christian sects.

Methodism and the Great Tradition

Comparison between Methodism and Roman Catholicism and the Eastern Orthodox church.

Methodism and Protestantism

Compare and contrast methodism and other mainstream protestant denominations such as Baptists, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Lutherans, etc.

WEEK 6: THE METHODIST DENOMINATIONS

Objective: Compare and contrast the various methodist denominations.

The Pan-Wesleyan World

Discuss the various denominations that are Wesleyan in their roots but do not call themselves "methodist" (e.g., Nazarenes, Salvation Army, the Wesleyan Church, etc.)

The "Methodists"

Discuss, compare, and contrast the various denominations who call themselves "Methodists" (e.g., United Methodists, Congregational Methodists, Global Methodists, Bible Methodists, Protestant Methodists, Independent Methodists, etc.)