

For the last seven weeks, we have had an outward focus on our discipleship. We have been challenged to engage in Acts of Mercy and do something to aid a person that might be in need. Wesley had a strong desire for the people called Methodist to be in the business of helping others. At Trinity UMC, we are seeking to carry out that mission on a regular basis. For many people, helping someone else is an easy thing to do.

Disciple Life

The Wesleyan Way

Week # 17

This week, though we shift to an inward focus by looking at what Wesley defined as acts of piety. Google's online dictionary defines piety as: "the quality of being religious or reverent."

It lists the following as possible synonyms—"devoutness, devotion, piousness, religion, holiness, godliness, saintliness."

You will note from this definition and its synonyms that we are not talking so much about actions that we do towards others when we talk about piety. Instead, we are now talking about an attitude or a way of life that produces within us a form of holiness or godliness. For many people, this is a much more difficult thing to achieve than it is to be merciful. Piety involves the very core of who we are and how we interact with and respond to God and God's call upon our lives. The scriptures make it clear that we have been called to be holy. Acts of piety help us to achieve that end.

According to Steve Manskar at the UM Blog: Equipping Disciples, piety can be viewed in two ways. First of all through acts of devotion. Manskar states: "Acts of devotion are the personal works of piety. They are practices performed alone with God. John Wesley recommended at least three acts of devotion:

- Personal and family prayer
- Searching the Scriptures



Start the Conversation:
Provoke One Another in Love

PROVOKING QUESTION:

This week, you are encouraged to ask a church member the following:

Which is easier for you? Doing something for another person or spending an hour in prayer and reading the Bible.

- Fasting or abstinence"

Manskar further states: "Acts of devotion keep the heart open to grace that keeps you centered in Christ and what he is up to in your life. When the heart is open to grace it becomes more and more open to the world that God loves, which means that acts of devotion help equip you for acts of compassion and justice."

Manskar then suggests that "...(A)cts of worship are the social and public works of piety. They are what Christians do together when they gather in Christ's name."

John Wesley lists three acts of worship in the third General Rule:

- The public worship of God
- The ministry of the Word, whether read or expounded
- The Lord's Supper

In the weeks ahead we will take a closer look at these acts of piety and see how engaging in them can make us a stronger disciple of Jesus Christ.

Carry the cross  **and follow me.**
Luke 14:27, NRSV