

## **Rooted: Broadway United Methodist Church, Fall 2021**

### **Week 2, September 15/16, 2021**

*Guiding Question: How do we come alive in Christ?*

And I pray that y'all, being **rooted** and **established** in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that y'all may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:17-19

#### **Prevenient Grace:**

God's initiating love through which God's grace is at work in every person all the time before we are even aware of it.

#### **Justifying Grace:**

The grace that reconciles us to God when we recognize the depths of what God has done and our need for God, our guilt from sin, and our inability to solve it on our own.

#### **Sanctifying Grace:**

The work of the Spirit to transform our lives and to enable and empower us to grow in faith, to become more holy and Christlike, and to live abundant lives.

### **In some denominations, salvation is...**

- a prescribed prayer;
- mainly about avoiding hell and eternal damnation (pertaining to "the next life");
- dependent primarily on human actions; or
- precarious: easy to lose through bad behavior.

### **By contrast, in the Methodist tradition, salvation is...**

- a **process** initiated by God who has been calling us since before we were even born through **prevenient grace**; who reconciles us through Jesus' work and **justifying grace**; who makes possible our growth in holiness through **sanctifying grace**;
- still a **human choice**, though that choice is possible only through the work of the Holy Spirit that enables us to choose God;

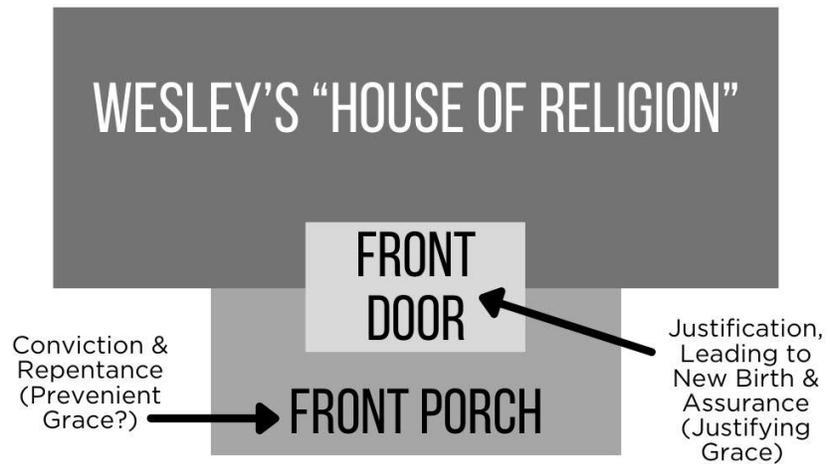
- **by faith alone**, though accompanied by **acts of piety** (actions like prayer, Bible study, and fellowship that bring about growth in one's personal relationship with God), and **acts of mercy** (activities that contribute to one's relationships with others and the created order, which include feeding the hungry, taking care of the environment, helping others grow in faith); and
- a way to **attain happiness** in this life through God's sanctifying grace, because God's wholeness begins now.

## Video

- "**God started it all.** The whole faith/salvation/spirituality/relationship thing was his idea and he takes primary responsibility for it." - Our dear Pastor Wayne Hunter, who pastored our Greenwood campus until his death in 2019
- **We are not responsible for our own salvation:**  
 "When we think of salvation as our responsibility the road eventually leads to stress, anxiety, and exhaustion...to the deep shame of feeling like you are not measuring up...to the unnerving fear of never being enough...to the constant competition to see how you are stacking up with others...to the profound loneliness of assuming that God must be distant. It can become so heavy that it crushes our spirit." – Pastor Laura Vincent

## Implications

- **All are welcome. No exceptions.**  
*We believe that before we even know how to recognize it or respond to it, God's grace is pursuing every person on the planet seeking to draw us into relationship with Godself.*
- **Baptism is for infants or adults, but we do not practice rebaptism.**  
*Baptism is a sacrament—an outward sign of an inward grace. In Methodism, it can be done for infants or adults, by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. We celebrate that God is already at work in the child's life, and the church commits itself to raising the child in such a way that they will have every opportunity to respond to God's grace. We emphasize that baptism celebrates God's work and thus need not be repeated. Children confirm their commitment to God and may reaffirm their baptismal commitments through a class in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade.*



## Discussion

1. What did you think of the video—what was surprising, troubling, or new to you?
2. What is gained/lost when we view salvation as a process?
3. What is the difference between emphasizing God's work in salvation versus human work?
4. Where are you at with this? Where would you like to be?