

LESSON 2

What's my Christian Heritage?

GOAL/PURPOSE: To understand what *Protestant* means, who *John Wesley* was, and what makes us *Methodists*. Overall, though, it is most important that the students see what it means to be a Christian. "Christian" is not just a label we have when we are born or something we call ourselves in our "religion" - it is professed belief in Christ and all that God has done for us through Him. Learning about Martin Luther, the Protestant Reformation, and John Wesley is significant because it helps us better understand our Christian faith and who we are as believers.

****Begin the class with prayer.***

****Offer a quick review of last week's lesson or the material so far.***

ACTIVITY:

Sit Down

Ask the entire group to stand. Tell students to sit down whenever a statement you read applies to them. If you read another statement that applies they are to stand up (or sit down depending on their current position). Basically they are to stand or sit anytime a statement applies. They should be as honest as possible. Below are some examples to get you started.

Sit down if you:

- have worn the same socks for two days
- sing in the shower
- have ever been told you have bad breath
- have eaten green jello
- use Sure deodorant.
- like to eat pickles
- have ever crashed your bike
- have ever lied to your parents
- have ever cheated on a test
- snoop to look at your Christmas presents
- like to dance
- enjoy going to church
- others?

NO MATERIALS NEEDED.

DISCUSSION:

- 1) Where does the term "Protestant" come from? What does it mean?
- 2) What kinds of things was Luther protesting against? What changes did he want to make?

- 3) Why is the term “Protestant” important to our faith today? (dependent on God’s grace, not works, etc.)
- 4) Luther protested against things that he believed were “unbiblical.” What does *unbiblical* mean? Why does it matter? How did he know the beliefs weren’t biblical?
- 5) Take some class time to talk about John Wesley. What time period did John Wesley live in? What was his family history? What words did he use to describe the way he felt when he was finally assured of Christ’s presence and salvation in his life?
- 6) John Wesley believed we should use our head and our hearts in matters of faith. Our manuals say too much of one or the other could be dangerous. How is that so?
- 7) If John Wesley was your friend today, would he be extraordinary or ordinary? (**Note: show the students that Wesley was just an ordinary man, but he did extraordinary things! They can be ordinary but do extraordinary things too!*)
- 8) How did Methodists get their name?
- 9) In general, how “methodical” do you say we are in our denomination today? As individuals? (refer to questions in reading about this) How can we strive to be more “methodical” and make John Wesley proud?
- 10) What are some things that make people Methodist?
- 11) How are Methodists similar to other denominations? **remind them that one of our duties as Christians is to love and accept Christians of all denominations, even if they worship or practice in ways that are different from what we do. Ex. Contemporary vs. traditional, Baptist vs. Methodist, etc.*

EXERCISE:

As a class, take a look at the Church History Chart/Family Tree at the end of this week’s lesson. Discuss how things have moved from Old Testament Judaism to Jesus to Pentecost (last lesson) to the Reformation (this lesson) and then “forked” in a bunch of different directions, Methodism’s being just one of them.

DISCUSSION, CONTINUED:

- 1) How does our past (Luther, Protestant, Wesley, Methodist history, etc.) affect our faith today? (**Refer to Church History Chart... we are, in many ways, like those who came before us; our past helps make us who we are, etc.*)
- 2) How will the things we learn in Confirmation affect our future as Christians? (know what we believe, how to grow as a disciple, etc.)
- 3) Remind youth that the Church, Christians all over the world, are unified by professed belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus. As a goofy closing, sing together, “*I am the Church; you are the Church. We are the church together. All who follow Jesus, all around the world – yes, we’re the church together.*”

**Finish with anything else they’d like to discuss (Go the extra mile) and then close the class in prayer.*