

Faith Bible Study Guide
For the Week of January 21, 2024
3rd Sunday After Epiphany - "There's Always a Catch"



Be still [2 Minutes]: As you hear these Centering Words, let us greet each other, greet the Holy Spirit, and begin with 1 minute of silence, breathing in the breath of God and allow the group to open themselves to the Holy Spirit today:

CENTERING WORDS: God is not a taskmaster keeping track of our good deeds. Rather, God intervenes boldly and relentlessly for the purpose of life and the restoration of creation.

OPENING PRAYER: God of unifying grace, we come distracted by the world. Our minds wander and are filled with thoughts other than you. Our hearts are confused, and we are uncertain where we belong. Call us to follow you once more. Redeem the night and bless the day that greets us this morning. May your relentless ways never fail as we strive to live as your beloved people. Amen.

Be the Word: Scripture Lesson: Jonah 3:1-5, 10 & Mark 1:14-20

JONAH 3:1-5, 10

The Lord's word came to Jonah a second time: ² "Get up and go to Nineveh, that great city, and declare against it the proclamation that I am commanding you." ³ And Jonah got up and went to Nineveh, according to the Lord's word. (Now Nineveh was indeed an enormous city, a three days' walk across.)

⁴ Jonah started into the city, walking one day, and he cried out, "Just forty days more and Nineveh will be overthrown!" ⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God. They proclaimed a fast and put on mourning clothes, from the greatest of them to the least significant.

¹⁰ God saw what they were doing—that they had ceased their evil behavior. So God stopped planning to destroy them, and he didn't do it.

MARK 1:14-20

After John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee announcing God's good news, ¹⁵ saying, "Now is the time! Here comes God's kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news!"

¹⁶ As Jesus passed alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ "Come, follow me," he said, "and I'll show you how to fish for people." ¹⁸ Right away, they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ After going a little farther, he saw

James and John, Zebedee's sons, in their boat repairing the fishing nets. ²⁰ At that very moment he called them. They followed him, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired workers.

L: The Word of God for all people

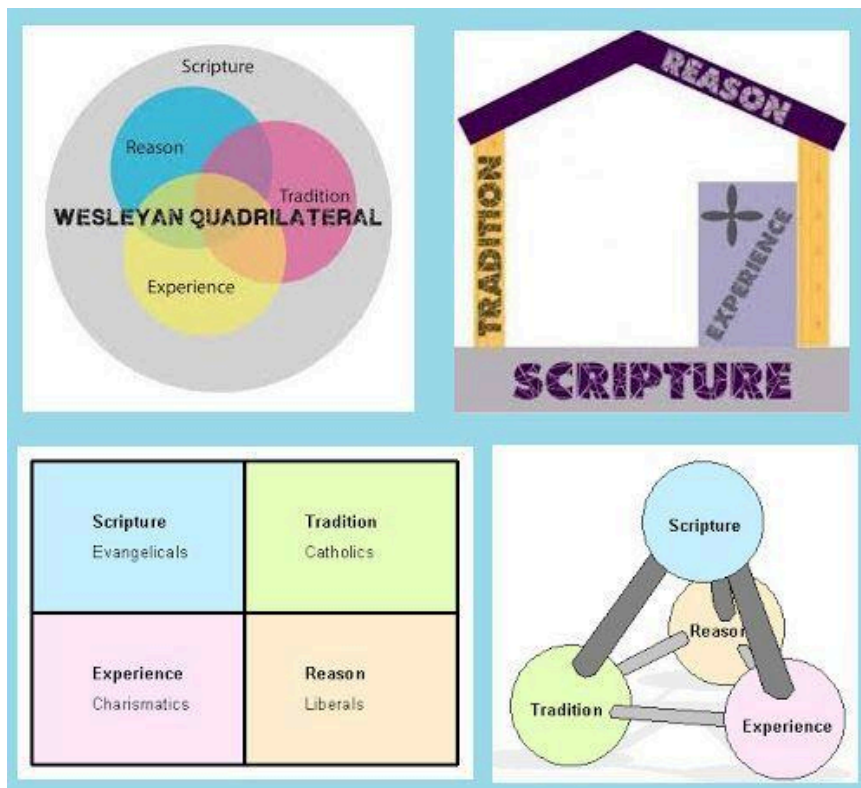
P: Thanks be to God

Be present: [Being mindful of others and sharing time]

1. Take a deep breath. How is it with your soul?
2. When someone asks you to do something, what is your immediate natural response? (Pause to process? Immediate response? "I'll get back to you on that...")
3. If Jesus asked you to "Come Follow Me, and I will show you how to fish for men." –what would your immediate reaction be?

Be rooted: [Bible Study]

1. How do the stories of Jonah and the Disciples connect? What are some of the similarities and differences between "the call" stories of these 5 men?
2. Where does Jonah's path seem to go astray? Where could it be helpful for Jonah to have used external sources in his decision making?
3. How did the first 4 Disciples make their decisions in following Jesus? How informed do you think they were when they were asked to follow? Do you think Jesus' appeal of fishing for people instead of fish spoke to their hearts? Or at least intrigued them?
4. How do you make your decisions? What do you keep in consideration in making difficult/life changing choices?



The Wesleyan Quadrilateral is an 18th-century decision-making framework in which scripture, tradition, reason, and experience intersect; used to apply an emphasis on spiritual discernment to ethical decision-making.

For United Methodists...

Scripture is considered the primary source and standard for Christian doctrine.

Tradition is experience and the witness of development and growth of the faith through the past centuries and in many nations and cultures.

Experience is the individual's understanding and appropriating of the faith in the light of his or her own life.

Through **Reason** the individual Christian brings to bear on the Christian faith discerning and cogent thought.

These four elements taken together bring the individual Christian to a mature and fulfilling understanding of the Christian faith and the required response of worship and service.

5. How can the Wesleyan Quadrilateral help to inform you in your:
 - a. Bible interpretation
 - b. Life-decisions (work, life, moves, family...)
 - c. Relationships
6. So which of the four experiences comes first? For you?

Be transformed: [Call to action]

1. What are some difficult decisions that you have had to make recently? How could the Wesleyan Quadrilateral inform you in your decision-making?
2. How would you teach the Quadrilateral to others?

Prayers & Concerns

Prayers for healing and wholeness...

Claretta Foster

Jack Hamada

The Sasaki Family; Jordan Sasaki, Sally, Ken, & Jason

Dave Cook

Jerry Osaka

Victoria Dela Torre

Diane & Destiny Ueda-Banda

Audrey Goto

Tak and Irene Ryono

Ralph Ichikawa's brother, Jim

Kurt Kuniyoshi (stage 4 colon cancer)

Alice Kajiya

Faye Toma

Virginia Flood

Jason's friend, Kaitlyn Sabedra

Scarlett Bone

Glenn & Millie Shimizu

Faith Tanaka

Uepi Isama'u

Prayers for Grieving Families...

Kirk Sinn passed on 12/4/23

Rev. Kim Scott (brother passed)

Akiko Kashiwagi (passed 1/7/24; service March 23)

Tom Tokishi (service on 1/20/24)

Helen Hayakawa passed, 11/27/23 (service

2/23/24)

Kim's niece of a friend, Asha (passed)

Rev. Allison's godfather's family in the passing of
Uncle Vincent "Buffalo" Randall and her
godmother's brother, Uncle Jack Brown.

Orion (Susan's niece), her father Bernard
passed away

Minister Ainise's cousin, James Jethro passed
away

For our hurting world...

Japan Earthquake

People of the Holy Land

Families rebuilding after natural disasters

And Know that He is God:

Intergenerational Closing

(inspired by Jonah 3, Matthew 4: 18-22, Mark 1: 14-20)

As you go out into the world

Follow me

At home with your household

Follow me

At school and work

Follow me

In everything you do this week

Follow me

And as you do, remember that I am with you always,
even to the end of the world.

— written by Carolyn Brown, and posted on her excellent **Worshipping with Children** website. Visit that site for many other excellent worship ideas and resources for intergenerational worship.

BIBLE STUDY EPIPHANY PARTY - January 28th - POTLUCK AFTER WORSHIP