Good Questions – Week 3

Opening reflection:

Read 1 Peter 1:13-16

**Discuss: What do you think it means to be “holy”?**

*On Sunday, we discussed Wesley’s model for small groups (which we get our Good Questions from). What follows are a number of quotes from Kevin Watson’s book on John Wesley’s model for small groups, “The Class Meeting”. After each quote are some discussion questions.*

The state of the American church:

*“In our context, one of the great challenges American Christianity faces is that salvation seems unnecessary to many Americans, who feel that they are the source of their own life and security. But the gospel is only good news to those who realize their need for salvation and that only God is able to save us. The good news is that God is able and willing to save!”*

**Discuss: Do you agree or disagree with this statement above? Why? Or Why not?**

Salvation is the starting line:

*“Instead of seeing justification by faith as the end, it morphs into the starting line. Now that your past has been fully addressed, forgiven, and redeemed by God in Christ, you are given a fresh start, sin no longer reigns, and you are able to live a new life of faithfulness. Note, then, that being forgiven of past sins and entering into God’s household is not the end; it is only the beginning!”*

**Discuss: Have you ever been guilty of thinking of salvation as the finish line, instead of the starting line? What would this kind of life look like?**

At the heart of the Wesleyan movement, which we are a part of, there was a teaching of entire sanctification, or the belief that you could reach spiritual perfection:

*“Wesley believed that by God’s grace we could be made perfect in love in this life. By “perfect,” Wesley meant love excluding sin. Christian perfection, or entire sanctification, means giving all that I know of myself to all that I know of God. This is a dynamic process because tomorrow I will know more about myself than I do today, and as a result, I will have more of myself that I can give to God.”*

**Discuss: Do you agree with Wesley’s understanding of Christian perfection? Are there legitimate reasons that holiness, or deep obedience to Christ, is impossible? If so, why?**

**Regardless of whether you agree with this or not, what might be the benefits of believing that it’s possible of reaching holiness or being made perfect in love? What might be the dangers?**

There’s a basic analogy for God’s grace:

Grace that draws (prevenient)*: God draws you to the house, invites you over*

Grace that saves (justification)*: You pass the threshold, from the porch to the entry way.*

Grace that changes (sanctification)*: You enter fully into the house and make it your home. You learn to live in this new life that’s been given to you.*

**Discuss: Can you tell a story of when you (or someone you have observed) stepped onto the porch of God’s house, crossed the threshold into God’s house, or moved your life more completely into God’s house?**

Quotes taken from Watson, Kevin (2013-11-01). The Class Meeting: Reclaiming a Forgotten (and Essential) Small Group Experience (Kindle Locations 537-540). Asbury Seedbed Publishing. Kindle Edition.