

Christianity's Family Tree

Introduction / Orthodoxy

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader's Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about one of the branches of the Christian family tree, Orthodoxy. We ask you to remind us that our aim is not to critique the Orthodox faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

- **Introduction: A Family Reunion**

- What churches would be represented if you had a broad family reunion?
- At your last reunion, how closely did you remain with your nuclear family vs. independently mingling?
- With which Christian denominations have you worshiped?

- **Background**

- *AD 1054 – Pope Leo X and Patriarch Michael I excommunicated each other*
- *Orthodox = "right doctrine" – believe they are the one true church*
 - Is this different from other denominations?
 - *Orthodox clergy seem agnostic about salvation for non-Orthodox members*
- *Emphasis on Christ, scripture and tradition*
- *Worship is a mystical experience to help worshipers see divine reality*
- *Dome, icons, reading of the Word, Eucharist are important elements of worship*
- *Worship is a reminder of being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses*
 - *Recall the Polycarp story of defiantly being set afire by Roman atheists*

- **Discussion**

- Nicene Creed – Council of Nicaea (AD 325); Council of Constantinople (AD 381); Toledo, Spain (AD 589)
 - Filioque - inclusion of "and the Son" by Western churches (... "Holy Spirit...proceeds from the Father and the Son")
 - What other historical divisions, secular or religious, have occurred over words?
 - *Constitutional amendments (e.g. 2nd)*
 - *Literal interpretations of the OT*
 - *Clinton – "It depends upon what the meaning of the word 'is' is."*
 - What are the contemporary conflicts today which divide the church?

- **Review the Nicene Creed – [20]**

- What are the three main statements of belief in the Nicene Creed?
- How important is the Filioque to you?
 - Is it sufficient to divide you from your Orthodox brethren?
- How does the Nicene Creed differ from the Apostle's Creed (AD 400)?
 - *Apostle's - UMC deletes the line about Jesus descending into hell*
 - *Nicene - "We believe" vs. "I believe"*
 - *Nicene – developed at the Council of Nicaea in 325*
 - *Apostle's – although originally attributed to the Apostles, origins are in a 2nd century baptismal creed of Rome*

- *Apostle's – frequently said during Lent and Easter due to its baptismal roots*
- **Beliefs and Practices –**
 - Where on this scale do you rate each of the following?
Critical/Important/Ambivalent/Contrary/Heretical
 - No original sin
 - 7 sacraments: baptism, chrismation (confirmation), Communion, holy orders (ordination), penance (confession), anointing of the sick, marriage
[Catholic last rites = confession+anointing+Communion]
 - Baptism by immersion followed immediately by chrismation through anointing of oil
 - No female priests
 - Priests can marry prior to ordination
 - Christians of the first five centuries were important interpreters of Scripture (as opposed to Protestant concept of *sola scriptura* – “scripture alone”)
- **Book**
 - What important points did you highlight that we haven't covered?
 - *West = gospel in concrete terms*
 - *East = experiential terms*
- **Closing Discussion**
 - What appreciation do you have for your Orthodox brethren?
 - Who are your cloud of witnesses that bolster your faith?
 - Emphasis on God being constantly by your side
 - How do or would you live differently with such an emphasis?
 - Aim of Christian life is becoming like God
 - Is this your aim?
 - [23] Our daily lives are not the “real world.” The real world is heaven and we must work to see this divine reality.
 - Reactions?
- **Scripture –** [15] Read Hebrews 11:1-3,8-10,13-16; 12:1-2
 - How do these verses align with Orthodox beliefs?
 - *Cloud of witnesses*
 - *Assurance of things unseen*
 - Other reflections?

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- [Christianity's Family Tree – DVD](#)

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Italics imply important points or example answers the leader can convey

Catholicism

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Catholicism. We ask you to remind us that our aim is not to critique the Catholic faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

- **Background**

- *AD 1054 – Orthodox and Catholic churches divided*
- *Represents the largest group of Christians. Approximate numbers as of 2024...*
 - *2.4B Christians*
 - *1.3B Catholics*
 - *800M Protestants*
 - *220M Eastern Orthodox*
 - *1.9B Muslims*
 - *1.2B Hindus*
 - *487M Buddhists*
 - *...*
 - *15M Jews*
 - *1.1B Non-religious*
- *20% of US population (43% Protestant)*
- *2 US Presidents (Kennedy and Biden)*

- **Introduction**

- Primary source of faith and practice
 - Protestants – scripture
 - Catholics – scripture with the addition that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the church into truth through church leaders
- Where does your local church sit on this topic?
- Catholic teachings about Mary
 1. Divine motherhood
 2. Immaculate conception (free of original sin)
 3. Perpetual virginity
 4. Assumption at death (her body not subject to decay)
- Why do you think Catholics were led to the latter three beliefs?

- **Discussion**
 - [36] Ritual
 - Define the word *ritual*
 - What are some of your rituals (everyday and spiritual)?
 - When do rituals become *sacred*?
 - *Examples in the book:*
 - *Observing seasons of Christian year*
 - *Praying the Stations of the Cross*
 - *Praying the Rosary (stories of Mary and Jesus)*
 - *Monasteries*
 - What are the seven Catholic sacraments – *Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick, Penance, Holy Orders, Matrimony*
 - In what ways do you admire Catholics for their practice of these sacraments?
 - Do you agree with Hamilton that Protestants tend to throw out ritual as something dead or devoid of meaning?
 - [38] Reverence
 - How would you define *reverence*?
 - Catholic reverent practices:
 - Nothing thrown away
 - Worshipers bow the knee when facing where the Host is kept
 - When the Gospel is read: they make the sign of the cross on forehead, lips, heart
 - When the name of the Trinity is proclaimed: they cross themselves
 - How would you feel if your local church adopted any of these practices?
 - [39] Eucharist
 - Point of the entire worship service
 - In what ways might you agree/disagree with this assertion?
 - What are your thoughts on the doctrine of “transubstantiation”?

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Lutheranism

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Lutheranism. We ask you to remind us that our aim is not to critique the Lutheran faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

- **Scripture** – Have a volunteer read Romans 3:21-24

- **Background**

- Early 1500s – Catholic church had veered off course (even the *Catholic Encyclopedia* agrees)
 - Pope raised funds to erect St. Peter’s Cathedral in Rome (1506-1615)
 - Selling indulgences – promises of prayers to lighten the burden of Purgatory
- October 31, 1517 – Martin Luther mailed 95 theses to the archbishop of Mainz, Germany
 - Almost 34 years old
 - Augustinian monk
 - Debate over whether he nailed them to the door of Wittenberg’s Castle Church
 - A friend of Luther’s indicated this, but Luther never mentioned it
 - Around 2010, a handwritten note by Luther’s secretary indicated he had nailed the theses to the doors of the Wittenburg churches
 - Reproduced (from Latin to German) using the Gutenberg printing press (invented 1436)
 - Questioned indulgences, and launched the Protestant Reformation
- In what ways might the church have similarly veered off today?
 - What might a modern-day Luther write to our church?
- Have you ever taken a stand for your faith that was uncomfortable or even put you at risk?

- **Luther’s Struggle**

- *Anfechtungen* – “tribulations”
 - *Luther adopted term for his personal spiritual crises and search for a God of mercy*
- All men and women can come to God through Jesus without the intervention of a priest
 - Why do you think Catholics gravitate toward priestly intervention?
 - In what ways do Protestants still require pastoral intervention?
- *Reformation was successful because it was a top-down approach through magistrates*
 - *No separation of church and state*
- [47-49] *Diagrams – Lutheranism branched off Catholicism to return to Apostolic center*

- **Priesthood of all Believers**

- Everyone is called to use their God-given gifts
- Have a volunteer read 1 Peter 2:4-9
- In what ways do you act as a member of this holy priesthood?

- **Sola Scriptura (“Scripture Alone”)**

- *Led the laity to greater access to the Bible*
- *Scripture is the primary authority in faith and practice*
- How essential is scripture to you?

- What would your faith be like without it?
 - How would you rate the biblical literacy of our church today?
 - Luther used it to argue against priests not being able to marry (no scriptural prevention)
 - Why or why not is this a compelling argument?
 - Only two Biblical sacraments [defined as an act specifically commanded by Christ that communicated the grace of God] - Baptism and Eucharist
 - What are your reactions to this reduced list as compared to the Catholic seven?
- **Justification by Faith**
 - Hallmark idea: humans are justified by faith, not by works
 - In what ways do you find this easy/hard to adopt in your life?
 - Aldersgate experience of Wesley at the reading of Luther's preface to Romans – “while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”
 - Has there been a moment or chapter of your life when you realized this aspect of justification by faith alone?

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Presbyterianism

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Presbyterianism. We ask you to keep us mindful that our aim is not to critique the Presbyterian faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

- **Background**

- *John Calvin (1509-1564) – 8 years old when Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses*
- *Studied law in Paris, broke with Catholicism when he was ~21, and then moved to Switzerland*
- *[63] At 26, wrote Institutes of the Christian Religion – “most important book published during the Protestant Reformation”*
- *He and his protégé John Knox were in the second wave of Protestant reformers (Luther didn’t go far enough)*
 - *Reformed (Swiss, Dutch, some Germans) and Presbyterian (Scotch and English)*
 - *Knox was key in forming Church of Scotland – mother church of Presbyterians*
 - *Calvin is seen as the father of both Reformed and Presbyterian traditions*
- *Luther – Any church practice that was forbidden/contradicted in the NT should be thrown out*
- *Later Reformers – Any church practice that was not explicitly pointed to in the NT should be thrown out*
 - *What is your reaction to these approaches?*

- **Emphasis on Bible Study and Intellect**

- *Do you know any Presbyterians?*
 - *Have they exhibited this emphasis on Bible study and intellect?*
- *How does this emphasis compare to a Wesleyan approach?*
- *Dr. Rumfield, Presbyterian Pastor...*
 - *Presbyterians experience God first by a “touch of grace”*
 - *Moment of conversion or a moment of recognition*
 - *Presbyterians love God with their minds*
 - *Love ideas, theology, meditation, reflection, creeds, and encountering God through His Word*
- *Calvin’s theology – TULIP [What are your reflections on each?]*
 - *Total depravity – born into sin and can’t save ourselves*
 - *Unconditional election – pre-chosen to be saved by grace, not merit*
 - *N.B. – many Presbyterians today distance themselves from predestination*
 - *Limited Atonement – Jesus’ death atones for the sins of the elect (not for others)*
 - *Irresistible grace – Nothing the elect can do to resist God’s grace*
 - *Perseverance of the saints – The elect cannot lose their salvation*
- *Presbyterian comes from “presbuteros” meaning “elders”*
 - *No bishops; elders lead local congregations (pastors - teaching elders; lay elders - lay leaders)*
 - *How might John Wesley view this arrangement?*
 - *How important are bishops to the United Methodist Church?*

- **Predestination**

- *Have a volunteer read Ephesians 1:3-14*

- What does this say about predestination?

 - **God's Sovereignty**
 - What does it mean to you that God is *sovereign*?
 - Emphasis on "reign" – God does what God chooses
 - Nothing happens apart from the will of God, including evil and natural disasters
 - How might this bring comfort? How might it bring anxiety?
 - [65] *Dr. Tom Are, Presbyterian Pastor, doesn't believe God causes evil or natural disasters*
 - *...but nothing is outside of God's influence*
 - *God will ultimately fold these events into his purposes*
 - Hamilton: *The question is not why God brought Hurricane Katrina to bear on the Gulf Coast, but, in a world where hurricanes will occasionally bring destruction, what response the Sovereign of the Universe, our King, wishes us to make.*
 - For you, is this an adequate reaction to God's sovereignty?
-

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Anglicanism

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Anglicanism. We ask you to keep us mindful that our aim is not to critique the Anglican faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

- **Scripture**

- Have volunteer read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
 - What does Paul mean to “pray without ceasing” and “give thanks in all circumstances”?
- Have volunteer read Philippians 4:6-7
 - How would your life be different if you turned every worry into a prayer?
 - What hinders you from doing so?

- **Background**

- *150 years before Martin Luther – John Wycliffe (1320-1384) priest in England called for reform in the Catholic Church*
 - *Translated Bible from Latin (Vulgate) into Middle English*
- *King Henry VIII (1491-1547)*
 - *Divorced Catherine of Aragon and married Ann Boleyn without the pope’s annulment*
 - *Pope excommunicated him*
 - *Declared the pope was no longer head of the Church of England*
- *Edward VI (1537-1553) moved in a Protestant direction*
 - *Book of Common Prayer was prepared*
- *Mary Tudor (1516-1558), Catherine of Aragon’s daughter, attempted to reverse English Reformation (“Bloody Mary”) 280+ dissenters were burned at the stake during her reign*
- *25-year span – Went from Roman Catholic to English Catholic to Protestant back to Roman Catholic*
- *Elizabeth I (1533-1603) forged Via Media (“middle way”), drawing from both Catholicism and Protestantism*
- *James (1566-1625) King of Scotland extended to King of England*
 - *Clung to Anglican tradition – center of the faith*
 - *Authorized King James translation of the Bible (1611)*
- *Episcopal Church is U.S. Anglican Church*

- **Reflections on Background**

- Do you find any details of the history surprising/shocking?
- How might this have influenced John Wesley (1703-1791) as an Anglican priest?

- **Practices and Beliefs**

- *Catholic influence*
 - *Bishop/priest/deacon*
 - *7 sacraments (emphasis on communion and baptism)*
 - *Reverence in liturgy*
 - *Reliance on spiritual disciplines*
- *Protestant influence*

- *Clergy can marry*
- *Clergy can be women*
- *Laity share in the ministry*
- 3-legged stool (Reason, Scripture, Tradition)
 - What's missing from Wesley Quadrilateral? *Experience*
 - Why do you think Wesley added this?
- **Prayer**
 - *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi* (law of prayer is the law of belief)
 - *Harkens to Wesley's Moravian influence ("preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach faith")*
 - *Pray the Hours*
 - *Morning Office (lauds) – praise God, place your life in his hands, invite him to guide you that day*
 - *Noon Office (sext) – reset spiritual compass, thanks for the morning, grace for the afternoon, Psalm*
 - *Sunset Office (vespers) – prayer and worship*
 - *Bedtime Office (compline) – thanks for the day, examine what you've done, ask God's help to see where you sinned and to seek his will for the following day, Psalm*
 - What benefits result from setting aside certain times of the day to pray, worship, and read Psalms?
 - What are the hindrances to this?
 - What disciplines/practices do you follow in your prayer life?
 - What have you experienced when you neglect prayer?
 - What examples of prayer can we draw from Jesus?
 - Why did he take time apart to pray?

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Baptists

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Baptists. We ask you to keep us mindful that our aim is not to critique the Baptist faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

- **Scripture**

- Have volunteers read John 3:16 & Romans 6:23

- **Background**

- *1600s – in England, dissatisfaction with Via Media*
- *Movement to purify the church to its NT roots – Puritans*
- *Some stayed within the Church of England*
- *Some of the more radical left – Pilgrims and Baptists*
 - What were you taught in grade school about the Pilgrims?
 - How many of you realized the historical connection between the Pilgrims and Baptists?
- *Baptists adopted church practices from those explicitly mentioned in NT*
 - *Since no baptism of children, baptism is restricted to adults*
 - What are your thoughts on when baptism should be conducted?
 - Can you sympathize with the perspective of the Baptists?
- *1609 – John Smyth, former Anglican priest and first Baptist pastor on record*
 - *Established Baptist church in Holland – re-baptizing adults*

- **Practices and Beliefs**

- Rejection of Catholic liturgical elements of worship
 - No processions, clerical vestments, acolytes, cross bearers, candles, altar
 - Communion is an act of remembrance/memorial rather than a sacrament by which God conveys grace; observed far less frequently
 - What’s your reaction to this?
- Radical reformers, thus persecuted by Church of England and Puritans
 - Reinforced their strong feelings toward separation of church and state
 - Where do you see Baptists in America on this position?
- Many factions: American, Southern, Free Will, ...
 - Not denominations – individual churches have autonomy, and group with other like-minded churches (“Conventions”)
 - In what ways do UMC churches have autonomy? In what ways do they not?
- 3 Core Beliefs – Where do you stand on each of these?
 - Inspiration, infallibility, and preservation of Scripture
 - Importance of personal relationship with God
 - Salvation by grace through faith alone
- 3 Lessons Baptists teach us (according to Hamilton)
 1. Love of God’s Word / Bible study
 2. Emphasis on missions/evangelism

How important do you feel this is to your personal faith journey?

3. Simple salvation message

- What things do you admire in Baptists?
- Altar calls to confess publicly and invite Christ to become their Lord
 - What are your experiences with altar calls?
- Most don't recite Lord's Prayer since it smacked of Catholicism
 - Reactions?
- Most don't observe Ash Wednesday, Lent, or Advent (although some have begun to explore them)
 - Is this the experience you've had with Baptist churches in the past?
- *1641 – moved from affusion (pouring water over believer three times) to immersion*
- *Pastors and deacons*
- *Ascribe to tenets of Apostles'/Nicene Creeds, but do not recite them*
 - *Instead, faith statements adopted by Conventions*
- Further Reflections in the book
 - *If you took all of the Bible away except for John... John 3... John 3:16, you'd still have enough to find salvation*
 - *We must claim Christ... Christ stands at the door and knocks, but does not force himself in. He must be invited.*
 - *When we are utterly lost, then we realize how much we need a Savior.*

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Pentecostalism

- **Opening Prayer** – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Pentecostalism. We ask you to keep us mindful that our aim is not to critique the Pentecostal faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

- **Scripture**

- Have a volunteer read Acts 1:8; 2:1-4

- **Background**

- *Pentecost – 50th day after Easter; Holy Spirit descending on the disciples*
- *Jewish festival (Shavuot) –*
 - *50 days after Passover*
 - *Start of wheat harvest and end of the barley harvest*
 - *Marks when Jews were given the Torah on Mount Sinai*
 - *1 of 3 major festivals (Passover, Feast of Booths)*
- *Conservative breakaway from Methodist church, including Nazarenes, Church of God, Adventists, Salvation Army, and the Wesleyan Church*
- *Known for energetic/passion-filled worship with an emphasis on supernatural*
- *What are your experiences with Pentecostals?*
- *1901 – originally founded in Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas*
 - *Charles Fox Parham, teacher with Methodist background*
 - *Studied if works of the Holy Spirit in Acts could still happen*
 - *“Baptism in the Holy Spirit”*
 - *demonstrated first by speaking in tongues*
 - *Parham’s student, Agnes Ozman, spoke in unintelligible language*
 - *Parham and William J. Seymour preached at an L.A. revival and the Spirit fell on the attendees*

- **Adam Hamilton’s Background**

- *Pentecostal roots*
- *Called to be a Pentecostal pastor*
- *Attended Oral Roberts University and then graduate school at SMU*
- *Oral Roberts – 1918-2009*
 - *Televangelist*
 - *Faith healings around the world*
 - *Major founder of charismatic movement*
 - *1947 – Struggled as a part-time Oklahoma preacher; Bible fell open to 3 John 1:2 – “I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”; the next day he bought a Buick and God appeared directing him to heal the sick*
 - *1968-1987 – an elder in the OK Conference of the UMC*
 - *Founded Oral Roberts University and medical centers*
 - *Controversial lavish life (houses, cars, clothes)*

- **Practices and Beliefs**

- Infilling of the Holy Spirit
 - Happens when you commit your life to Christ
 - Evidenced by speaking in an unknown tongue
 - Can you describe a time in your life when you experienced a similar infilling?
- Personal relationship with Christ
 - Emphasis on the emotional dimension
 - How important is this aspect of Christianity to you?
- Second Coming of Christ
 - Many originally thought this would be in 1988 – 40 years after birth of modern-day Israel
 - How much time do you spend thinking about the Second Coming?
 - What are your thoughts on it? Do you think it is something you will witness in your lifetime?
- Modern-day miracles/healing
 - Where do you see God in the “miracle working business today”?
 - *Hamilton coining them as “Godincidences”*
- 3 things we can learn from Pentecostals
 1. Live daily in the power of the Holy Spirit – accept it as a gift and invite it to work in us
 - How much is this embraced by Christians today?
 - What are ways in which you might “live daily in the power of the Holy Spirit”?
 2. Identify and use our spiritual gifts
 3. Reclaim the healing power of the Holy Spirit

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Methodism

▪ Opening Prayer – [Leader’s Guide]

Dear God, we come together today to learn about another branch of the Christian family tree, Methodism. We ask you to keep us mindful that our aim is not to critique the Methodist faith tradition but to learn from it so that our own faith might be enriched. Help us through our study and discussion to become more authentic and effective disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ. We affirm that all who call upon his name are members of one body, one faith. May we be united in spirit, in love, and in service so that your kingdom work may be accomplished in our world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

• Background

- *Early 1700s – tired of religious conflict between Church of England, Rome, Reform*
- *John Wesley (1703-1791) wanted to build bridges vs. walls*
- *1726 – Fellow at Oxford*
- *1728 – Ordained Anglican priest*
- *Two years in unsuccessful ministry at Savannah in the Georgia colony*
- *Returned to England and joined a religious society led by Moravians*
- *Active “intellectual” until...*
 - *1738 – Aldersgate experience of salvation (“heart strangely warmed” while listening to Luther’s preface to Romans)*
- *Preached outdoors*
- *Remained in Church of England throughout his life*

• Practices and Beliefs

- Quadrilateral – Reason, Experience, Scripture, Tradition
 - Do you feel these are all on equal footing, or do you prioritize any higher/lower?
 - Is there anything missing (*Service? Personal Relationship with God?*)
 - Grace – prevenient, justifying, sanctifying
 - In what ways have you experienced these forms of grace?
 - *Combination of high-church Anglicans and low-church Puritans*
 - *Combination of grace and holiness*
 - How did you come to be a Methodist?
 - What appeals to you about the Methodist faith?
 - Do you consider Methodism to be a spiritual “extreme center”?
 - How is this good/bad?
 - What elements of the other denominations we’ve studied have appealed to you?
 - What do you wish would change in the Methodist faith?
 - Wesley’s 3 passions
 1. Changing lives
 2. Changing the community
 3. Reforming and revitalizing the church
 - How do you see the Methodist church pursuing these?
 - Hamilton suggests viewing the denominations of Christianity as a living tree with a common trunk, roots, and sap
 - What might the trunk, roots, and sap each represent?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages to viewing Christianity as a tree?
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References for material:

- [Christianity's Family Tree](#)
- [Christianity's Family Tree – Leader's Guide](#)
- [Christianity's Family Tree – DVD](#)

(page numbers from the text are noted in brackets [#] preceding quotes or relevant passages; note that e-book page numbers can differ from hardcopy books)

Italics imply important points or example answers the leader can convey