

MINI DISCUSSION GUIDE

Three Simple Rules

A Wesleyan Way of Living

*with prayers and excerpts by
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For use with Rueben P. Job's
inspirational videos available on



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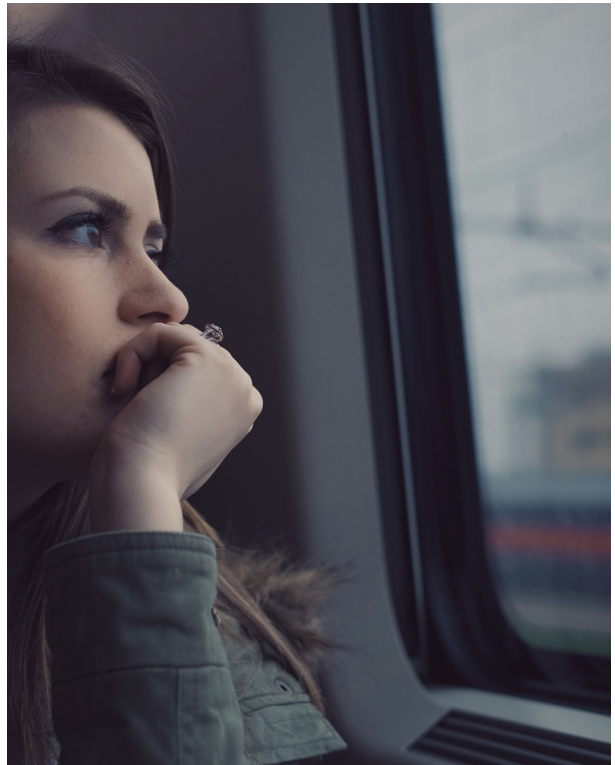
STAY IN LOVE WITH
GOD

INTRODUCTION

Jesus replied, "The most important one is Israel, listen! Our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength.[a] 31 The second is this, You will love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these."

-Mark 12: 29-31

Dear God, the world you love is so confused, needy, divided and conflicted; and we desire a world of peace, goodness, and plenty for all. Therefore, we ask for your help and guidance as we reach out to you for grace and strength to live faithfully and fruitfully this day and always. We offer our lives and our prayers to you in the names of Christ.



DO NO HARM

But if you bite and devour each other, be careful that you don't get eaten up by each other!

-Galatians 5:15

This rule is difficult even to consider because we believe it is going to cost us too much. We will be judged as weak and indecisive. Our culture tells us "Do no harm" is not a good way to go. But Jesus says this is the way to go - it is the way he practiced and taught.

Consider the following questions together:

1. What is the value of this rule and what makes it difficult?
2. What is it that prompted Wesley to establish the General Rules?
3. What other examples of rules of life come to mind?
4. Identify some possible results of living this rule in your life, in your family, in your community, in your congregation?
5. What would help you live this rule every day?

Closing Prayer: God of love, mercy, and justice, teach us today how to make these qualities of your life the very center of our own. We are yours and we ask you for grace to live as your faithful children. Amen.



DO GOOD

Dear friend, don't imitate what is bad but what is good. Whoever practices what is good belongs to God. Whoever practices what is bad has not seen God.

-John 3:11

Opening Prayer: God of goodness, teach us today how to do good in every circumstance of life. We do not ask for the easy way, but we do ask for grace and strength to follow you in the path of goodness, peace, and love. Amen

To do good is a serious challenge from Wesley and a direct command from Jesus. (Page 36) The words of Jesus and of Wesley suggest that doing good is a universal command. That is, doing good is not limited to those like me or those who like me. This way of living will require a careful and continual assessment of my life and the world in which I live. It will require an even more bold and radical step than not doing harm to those who may disagree with me and even seek to harm me. For now, I am committing myself to seeking good for everyone in my world and everyone in God's world (page 38).





Consider the following questions together:

1. Can you remember an instance when someone did good in your presence today? What was your response? How did it “feel”?
2. List the opportunities to do good that came your way today. How did you respond? How did it “feel” to do good?
3. Have you seen good rejected? What were the circumstances and results?
4. What might be the results of practicing this rule in your life, in your group, in your family, in your community, and in your church?
5. What resources do you have to help you incorporate this rule into your daily pattern of living?



CLOSING PRAYER

Closing Prayer: Good God of love and peace, grant us grace to walk in your transforming presence so that your goodness may wash over us and flow through us to touch those who touch our lives. We offer our prayers and our lives in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying, "Our Father..."

STAY IN LOVE WITH GOD

So live in Christ Jesus the Lord in the same way as you received him. Be rooted and built up in him, be established in faith, and overflow with thanksgiving just as you were taught.

-Colossians 2:6-7

Opening Prayer: God of love without limit and strength without measure, teach us by your presence how we may always stay in love with you. We do love you and desire to love you more deeply and fully; so, we offer ourselves now as open vessels and invite you to fill and form us as you will, for we are yours. Amen.

To stay in love with God suggests a more active role in our relationship with God. To stay in love with God requires some action on my part. It is not automatic but requires attention and action on a consistent basis. Staying in love with God keeps us on the path of faithfulness as we move toward God and gives us access to the gifts of God that redeem, guide, sustain, companion, and keeps us always in God's loving embrace. The first two rules are about our relationship, our interaction with neighbor; and this last one is about our interaction and relationship with God.

Stay in Love with God





When John Wesley spoke about keeping the ordinances of God, he was describing the practices that kept the relationship between God and humans vital, alive, and growing. He names public worship of God, the Lord's Supper, private and family prayer, searching the Scriptures, Bible study, and fasting as essential to a faithful life. Wesley saw this discipline as central to any life of faithfulness to God in Christ. He saw that the consistent practice of these spiritual disciplines kept those who sought to follow Christ in touch with the presence and power of Christ, so they could fulfill their desire to live as faithful disciples (page 53).

Today we may name our spiritual disciplines different, but we too must find our way of living and practicing those disciplines that will keep us in love with God - practices that will help keep us positioned to hear and be responsive to God's direction.

Consider these questions together:

1. What are some modern-day practices that align with those that Wesley wrote about?
2. How did Jesus stay in love with God?
3. What practices have you found most helpful as you have sought to stay in love with God?
4. What changes would you like to make to your own way of living? What would you need to make these changes?





CLOSING PRAYER

Closing Prayer: God of all creation, we give you thanks for the gift of life we enjoy this day. Help us to remember that you have made us and that we belong to you, and grant us grace and strength to be a reflection of your divine image this day and always. To this end we offer to you our prayers and our lives in the name of Jesus. Amen.



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