

# Holy Clubs

“Doing Life Together”

This movement began with a few young college men who started the first small group in Methodism. Commonly known as the “Holy Club”, the concept of personal holiness and social holiness caught fire. The holiness of life was attained through these small groups that were called class meetings. Class meetings gathered in homes for prayer, study and accountability for the Christian life. Later, after Methodism spread from England to the United States, the movement of small groups and spreading scriptural holiness would emerge into congregations and eventually a denomination.

For your Holy Club Time:

- Talk about what the youth are learning in the general sessions and in their workshops.

## Friday Night:

Share with the youth how John Wesley’s Holy Clubs began (above) and read and discuss the questions that members asked themselves and each other - every single day!

How can using these questions for self-reflection (taking an honest look at ourselves) help us to follow Christ? How can we help each other to be faithful?

## Saturday Night:

- Go for the Goal activity and discussion
- Means of Grace: Work of Piety & Works of Mercy
- Name That Spiritual Discipline Activity & Discussion
- Continue with Holy Club questions if time allows



# John Wesley's Small Group Questions For Youth

*Based on John Wesley's Class Meeting Questions.  
Updated wording by Jeremy Cole and Michael Deen, St. Mary's UMC*

1. Do I think I give the impression that I'm better than I might be (whether I might know it or not)?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I make things up or try to do things in secret?
3. Do I gossip or not?
4. Am I giving too much priority to having the newest clothes, popularity, working or hobby/fun activities on church days?
5. Do I spend too much time thinking about what everyone else thinks about me?
6. Do I seek ways to make excuses for when I do things I shouldn't?
7. Do I put myself down in how I speak and think about myself?
8. Did I use God's word or his love in me to encourage others this week?
9. Do I take time to study (not just read) God's Word everyday?
10. Am I comfortable praying (in private and out loud in a group)?
11. When is the last time I talked with someone (outside of church and home) about my faith?
12. Am I making smart money decisions that God would be proud of?
13. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time (am I taking care of myself physically with my body's rest)?

14. How have I disobeyed God lately?
15. Am I doing things I'm tempted to do that I know I shouldn't?
16. Am I feeling like a failure in anything?
17. Do I want what others have, lust after anyone, put others down, lose my temper easily, or lie?
18. How do I spend my spare time?
19. Am I trying to take on too much on my own when I could and should be asking for help?
20. Do I compare my sin to others' sins to make me feel better about myself?
21. Is there anyone I fear, dislike, put down, or cut out of my life? If so, what am I going to do about it?
22. Do I whine and complain constantly?
23. Is Christ real to me?

## Go for the Goal! (Activity)

Form a large circle by holding hands- moving back 3-4 steps and then dropping hands. Place a Bible in the center of the circle. Give these instructions:

- 1) Move one step closer if you've ever prayed for a friend.
- 2) Move one step closer if you've ever prayed for a parent.
- 3) Move one step back if you've ever broken one of the Ten Commandments.
- 4) Move one step closer if you've ever told someone about God's love.
- 5) Move one step back if you've ever made fun of a classmate at school or a colleague at work.
- 6) Move one step closer if you've ever fed or helped a stranger.
- 7) Move one step closer if you've ever believed in someone when no one else would.
- 8) Move one step back if you've ever pretended not to see someone in need.
- 9) Move one step closer if you've ever been honest when it would have been easier to tell a lie.
- 10) Move one step closer if you've ever sought out someone who was alone so they would feel less lonely.

Continue with the instructions such as these until someone reaches the Bible in the middle of the circle. Have the youth sit down on the floor where they are and discuss:

*How did you feel as you moved closer to the center of the circle?*

*How did you feel as you moved back from the center of the circle?*

*What did you notice about the group as the activity went on?*

Spiritual Disciplines help us to make space in our hearts and time in our lives for God. Through these practices of faith, we grow increasingly closer to the one who loves us and we are better able to see those around us with God's eyes!

# Means of Grace: Works of Piety & Works of Mercy

John Wesley taught that God's grace is unearned and that we were not to sit around waiting to experience grace but we are to **engage** in the means of grace. Participating in the means of grace provides a way for us to grow deeper in our faith. Wesley taught that the complete Christian has a well-rounded spiritual life, sometimes tending to his or her own soul and other times serving others. He called these "acts of piety" and "acts of mercy." Some practices are for our personal holiness, while communal practices are designed to be done together as the body of Christ. Have youth and adults share how they experience these in everyday life.

**Works of Piety:** reverence for God or devout following.

## Individual Practices

- reading, meditating and studying the scriptures
- prayer, journaling
- fasting
- regularly attending worship
- healthy living
- sharing our faith with others

## Communal Practices

- regularly share in the sacraments
- Christian conferencing (accountability to one another)
- Bible study

**Works of Mercy:** the ways Christ calls us to love our brothers and sisters, and in so doing, we see clearly how Christ first loved us.

## Individual Practices

- doing good works (service)
- visiting the sick
- visiting those in prison
- feeding the hungry
- giving generously to the needs of others

## Communal Practices

- seeking justice
- ending oppression and discrimination
- addressing the needs of the poor

# Name That Spiritual Discipline! (Activity)

Read a description of the spiritual discipline and issue the challenge to name it! Give a bonus point for identifying it as either a work of piety or of mercy. Ask why it is one or the other – or both!

- 1) This spiritual discipline invites us to the table of Christ. (Holy Communion- piety)
- 2) This spiritual discipline helps us realize that food and other earthly things do not make us who we are, but it is God who makes us and feeds us. (Fasting-piety)
- 3) This spiritual discipline is like keeping a diary with the emphasis being on conversation with God. (Journaling-piety)
- 4) This spiritual discipline challenges us to take care of someone else's needs before our own. (Service, work of mercy)
- 5) This spiritual discipline involves making a commitment to learning God's Word. It is often done in a group, such as at Sunday school, but individuals can also do it. (Bible study- piety)
- 6) This spiritual discipline usually means reading Scripture and perhaps the writings of someone else who helps us think about God. Frequently done before going to sleep or when they first get up. Sometimes groups will also set aside a special time for this discipline. Some people call this practice "mini-worship". (Devotions-piety)
- 7) This spiritual discipline is a special kind of talking with God. Its focus is on the need of other people (Intercessory prayer- mercy)

Invite your youth to talk about their experiences with the Spiritual Disciplines thus far. Have them identify any of the disciplines they would like to practice.

***Fill out their "I Will Continue The Journey card" for Sunday morning (handed out Saturday evening). These will be used during our Communion time.***