

Ten Things Every Christian Ought to Know (from a United Methodist Point of View)

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1. The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
 - proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome and gather persons into the body of Christ;
 - lead persons to commit their lives to God through baptism by water and the spirit and profession of faith in Jesus Christ;
 - nurture persons in Christian living through worship, the sacraments, spiritual disciplines and other means of grace such as Wesley's Christian Conferencing.
 - send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed, being and becoming a compassionate, caring presence, and working to have social structures consistent with the Gospel; and
 - continue the mission of seeking, welcoming and gathering persons into the community of the Body of Christ. *UM Book of Discipline, 2004* ¶¶120-122, ("O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing," UMH 57; "Here I Am, Lord," UMH 593)

2. God is triune, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Matthew. 28:16-20) ("Maker in Whom We Live," UMH 88)

The Christian Life is composed of a series of steps, which are best understood as follows:

3. "We are saved by grace through faith." (Ephesians 2:8-10) The way you move from one step to the next is by using God's prevenient, justifying and sanctifying grace made available through means of grace: Scripture, prayer, communion, worship, Christian conferencing and Christian action. The Church of Jesus Christ is itself one of the chief means of grace. ("Amazing Grace," UMH 378)

4. Humanity (both male and female) is created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26-27) ("Many and Great, O God" UMH 148)

5. All human beings are sinners (original and actual) who need of God's forgiveness and transforming grace. (Psalm 51, Romans 2:1, Romans 3:23) ("Depth of Mercy," UMH 355)

6. Every human being needs to repent, turning one's life around toward God. At this stage one produces works appropriate to repentance. (Mark 1:15, Luke 15:17) ("Sinners, Turn" UMH 346, Tune is same as 399)

7. Justification, or pardon, forgiveness for the guilt of sin, and entering a relationship with God as son or daughter. (Romans 5:1) ("And Can It Be" UMH 363)

8. New birth, seeing a brand new world that is very different from the old one. (John 3:1-16) ("Freely, Freely" UMH 389)

9. Assurance of one's present salvation, being confident of your relationship with God. (Romans 8:14-17) ("Blessed Assurance," UMH 369)

10. Perfection, (maturity, or entire sanctification), being so filled with love of God and love of neighbor that all one's conscious, intentional actions are motivated by love. This includes concerns for justice for the poor and marginalized. (Matthew 5:48, Philippians 2:5-13, Romans 12:1-13, I Thessalonians 4:3) ("Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" UMH 384)

Sources of United Methodist Doctrine

Scripture

Constitutional Standards of Doctrine: Constitution, Articles of Religion, Confession of Faith, General Rules, Wesley's 53 Sermons, Wesley's Notes on the New Testament

Contemporary Statements of Doctrine: Book of Discipline (especially parts 2, 3 and 4), Book of Resolutions

Liturgy: Hymnal, Book of Worship

Resources on United Methodist Doctrine:

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Scott J. Jones, Ten Things Every Christian Should Know

-3-

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1984- *The Works of John Wesley. Sermons*. Edited by Albert Outler. Vols. 1-4. Bicentennial Edition, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984- .

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