

The Means of Grace

John Wesley understood the importance of *drawing near to God* — and opening ourselves up to receiving God's grace. He taught that, while God's grace is unearned, we are not to sit idly by while we wait to experience the grace of God. He came up with a list of practices, which he called *The Means of Grace*. The means of grace are ways God works invisibly in disciples, hastening, strengthening, and confirming faith, so that God's grace pervades in and through disciples.

Wesley divided the Means of Grace into two different categories — works of *piety* and works of *mercy*. Some of these practices are *inwardly focused*, and some are *outwardly focused*. Some of these practices can be done in *private*, and some are to be done in *community*.

Works of Piety

Individual Practices – reading, meditating and studying the scriptures, prayer (both personal and family prayer), fasting, regularly attending worship, healthy living, and sharing our faith with others

Communal Practices – regularly partake in the Lord's Supper, Christian conferencing (accountability to one another), and Bible study

Works of Mercy

Individual Practices - doing good works, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison, feeding the hungry, and giving generously to the needs of others

Communal Practices – seeking justice, ending oppression and discrimination (for instance, Wesley challenged Methodists to end slavery), and addressing the needs of the poor