

Adult Spiritual Formation Lunch & Learn

Walk in Love – Chapter 6

Following are statements from the 'Walk in Love' book offered for discussion – in addition to something you read that raised a question in your mind, or a statement about which you would like to hear the thoughts of others in the group.

Chapter 6 – Grow in Grace Through the Years – Sacramental Rites: Confirmation and Marriage

I wonder, did you learn something new in reading Chap 6? If so, how did this new information impact you?

How would you characterize the difference between a Sacrament and a Sacramental Rite? (Ref BCP pg 857, 860) Do you think this is a significant difference, or splitting hairs? Why?

What preparation did you go through for your own confirmation? What part/s of that has stayed with you since then? (WIL pg 80)

Baptism, becoming a Christian, like most of the prayer book liturgies is accomplished via the parish priest. Confirmation is accomplished only by a bishop. What words would you use to describe the reasoning for this? (Ref WIL pg 70-71)

Liturgy for confirmation echoes the service of baptism – confirmands and congregation renew their baptismal covenant (WIL pg 72). How do you see the connection between these two acts of commitment?

Except for particular circumstances, confirmation is expected but not required (WIL pg 74). What do you think the reasoning behind that is? Do you think it should be required for full membership? Do you think it is a good idea for the parish priest to require a meeting with each confirmand for them to explain why they want to be confirmed? (WIL pg 80)

As with Baptism, confirmation is a promise to endeavor, to strive, to commit to God, who has in our baptism committed to us (WIL pg 74). How do you respond to the idea that we commit to God, above all else, because we believe God has already committed to us?

Civil marriage is a legal contract between two parties. Christian marriage is a covenant – a sacred promise that involves the two people being married, God and the gathered community (WIL pg 75). How do you perceive the difference between the legal contract of marriage relative to the state, and the sacred covenant of marriage relative to the church? What are your thoughts as to how marriage relates to the gathered community?

The *sacrament* of marriage does not take place at a wedding, but only begins at a wedding. The sacrament of marriage is enacted in the ongoing relationship (WIL 79). Sacramental rites deal with the highs and lows, the joys and sorrows of life. Marriage, unlike other rites, encompasses the same. Do you think it is possible to actually *be prepared* for marriage? If so, how?

The Episcopal Church, usually amenable to variations and alternatives is considerably less so when it comes to the marriage ceremony, despite its movement toward same-sex marriage. This is counter-cultural in our world. What are your thoughts?