

Roots: Exploring the Core Values of the Brethren in Christ

Discussion Questions, Wk 1

Roots is a series that explores the identity and core values of the Brethren in Christ (BIC). As a historic Anabaptist congregation, the Grantham Church affirms the most basic beliefs of orthodox Christianity, but we also hold to distinctives that reflect practices of the early church, and values that are rooted in three theological traditions. In our *Roots* series, we will look a bit at the history of the BIC and the core values that constitute our deepest and most central convictions. We believe that these values have never been more relevant for Christians living today within a post-Christian America.

Sunday, February 5th

Core Value #1: *"We value the free gift of salvation in Christ Jesus and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit."*

Sermon Title: Experiencing God's Love & Grace

Scripture Reading: Colossians 2:6-7; Ephesians 2:8-10; John 3:3

Sermon Focus: Experiencing the love and grace of God is the foundation for all that the Brethren in Christ hold dear. Everything that we value begins and ends here. Our faith can't simply be an exercise of the mind. It must also be about heart-change and life transformation that comes from knowing Christ. In *Experiencing God's Love & Grace* (1 of 10), Pastor David shares what it means to really know God and be changed.

1. See pg 8-9 in *Focusing Our Faith*. Talk about the three streams that have influenced the BIC. Are you familiar with these traditions? What challenges you the most? Explain. What resonates with you and inspires you the most?
2. Evangelicalism is the fourth stream that BIC leaders have acknowledged is now influencing us, for better or for worse. What aspects of evangelicalism are good for the BIC? What aspects challenge the uniqueness of our Anabaptist beliefs?
3. The early Brethren in Christ said that they wanted to embrace a "heart-felt religion" that goes beyond ideas and doctrines. Would you characterize your current faith as being "heart-felt" or more cerebral in nature? What is God saying to you about that? How can our church embrace a heart-felt faith?
4. Share with the group about a time you experienced God's love and grace. What happened? How did an experience of the Holy Spirit change you?