

# A BRIEF STUDY ON THE METHODIST CHURCH

By  
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I have no personal hatred toward the Methodist church. I do however hate that the Methodist Church is at significant odds with God's Word (**Psalm 119:104; Romans 12:9**). Being a group of folks who propagate error, I cannot not subscribe to the "live and let live" mindset (after all they are dead spiritually – **Romans 6:16-17**). As this brief study will demonstrate, the Methodist Church is not abiding in the doctrine of Christ and, thus, they are not pleasing to God (**2 John 9**). Inasmuch as they are enemies of God (**Colossians 1:21; Matt. 12:30**), I cannot extend them any fellowship (**Ephesians 5:11; 1 John 1:4-7**), for such would be fellowship with devils (**1 Corinthians 10:15-22**). Yet, while I in no way wish the Methodist Church God speed (**2 John 10-11**), I do wish that they would hear aright the Word of God and be converted (**Matthew 13:15; Acts 3:19**). I care so much for their souls (**Philippians 3:18**), and pray for them often just as I do for all men (**1 Timothy 2:1-4**).

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE METHODIST CHURCH

(Note: I have not cited many sources in this section. If you would like the sources please contact me - SP)

The two principle men associated with beginning the Methodist Church are John and Charles Wesley. These two men were brothers; John being the elder of the two. Both men were brought up in the Episcopal Church and were ordained as priests per the Episcopal format: John in 1728, and Charles in 1735.

The origin of the Methodist Church came as a bi-product of religious meetings conducted at Oxford University in England in 1729. It was there that a small group of students (including the Wesley brothers) formed "holy clubs." The clubs were also known as "Bible bigots." It was not long before those who attended such clubs became dubbed "Methodists" because of their strict regime of daily religious exercises (prayer, fasting, reading, etc). The thrust of these "holy clubs" was to overcome and circumvent the cold formalism that was prevalent in the Episcopal Church.

Sometime later, the Wesley brothers were sent on a mission to the American colonies by England. It was aboard ship on the way to the colonies that the brothers came under the influence of a group of Moravians (another denomination). The brothers were deeply impressed with their piety and humble lifestyle.

The turning point in the life of John Wesley came after the brothers had returned from the American colonies. On May 24, 1738 John attended a prayer meeting of the Moravian movement. After listening to someone read aloud Martin Luther's preface to the book of Romans, John Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed" as Luther's doctrine of justification by faith, "sank deep within his soul." John revealed this experience to his brother, Charles, and a friend, George Whitefield. Both men bought into this idea of experiential theology.

The three men soon thereafter began preaching the need for a religious "experience" of conversion. The Episcopal Church closed her pulpits to these men. Thus, they took their message to the streets and to the common man. The movement gained quick momentum and soon spread across the ocean to the colonies. The movement survived the American Revolution and continued to grow steadily thereafter. It is a major denomination in the United States today.

# SOME TEACHINGS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH COMPARED WITH THE BIBLE

## ◆ What do they think about the Bible?

- In their creed book, The Methodist Discipline, it is stated, **“The holy scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required as an article of faith, or be thought required or necessary for salvation”** (Vol. 5, p. 26).
  - If that statement is true then why do they need the Methodist Discipline? By their own statement whatever is not according to the scripture is not to be accepted.
- Also, in their creed book we can read, **“...the Discipline would be administered, not merely as a legal document, but as a revelation of the Holy Spirit working in and through our people”** (1952 edition, page 1).
  - This is essentially placing the Methodist Discipline on equal footing with the Bible.
  - This does not gel with God’s plan for revealing His will since the close of the apostolic age.
  - **Hebrews 1:1-2; Acts 1:1-2; John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10.**

## ◆ What do they teach about reconciliation?

- **“There is one Christ who truly suffered, was crucified, died, and buried, to reconcile his Father unto us and to be a sacrifice not only original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men”** (Discipline Article II, page 26).
  - They have this backward - **2 Corinthians 5:19.**

## ◆ What do they teach about sin?

- They believe in original sin (ibid, page 27).
  - The Bible teaches otherwise.
  - **Ezekiel 18:20; Psalm 106:36-38; Romans 7:9; Ecclesiastes 7:29; et al.**

## ◆ What do they teach about the free will of man?

- They claim that there is nothing man can do to turn to God or prepare himself to call on God. Instead, they teach man must have direction from the Holy Spirit, separate and apart from the word of God, to be saved.
  - The Bible teaches otherwise:
  - **Acts 2:38; 26:20; Luke 8:15; Ephesians 6:17; Joshua 24:15; et al.**

## ◆ What do they teach concerning what one must do to become a member of the church?

- A person seeking to be saved will be instructed in Methodist history, take vows of admission, receive the rite of baptism and is then enrolled in the membership of the Methodist Church (ibid, page 39).
- They also teach that a member in good standing of any denomination can join the Methodist Church.
  - The Bible teaches that the Lord adds those who have obeyed the gospel to the church.
  - **Acts 2:40-47; 1 Corinthians 12:18; Colossians 3:15.**
  - You cannot “join the church” if the Lord adds you to it.

- ◆ **What do they teach about justification?**
  - **“We are justified by faith only... this is a wholesome doctrine...”** (ibid, Article IX, page 28).
    - The Bible teaches a contrary view (**James 2:14-26**).
- ◆ **What do they teach about baptism?**
  - **“Baptism is a sign of profession and mark of difference...”** (ibid, Article XVII).
    - The Bible nowhere speaks of baptism as a sign of profession or a mark.
    - The Bible teaches that baptism is what one does to become a Christian, not something one does as a Christian.
    - **Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:1-17; Colossians 2:11-13; Acts 22:16; et al.**
  - **“The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church”** (ibid).
    - They assume that the early church did, in fact, baptize children.
    - This cannot be proven and is out of harmony with what the Bible teaches.
  - **“Let every adult person and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring or immersion”** (ibid, page 519).
    - God gives man a choice—to obey or disobey—but not a choice as to what he will obey.
    - All reputable grammarians and lexicographers agree that the definition of the word “baptism” is an immersion in water.
    - The bible teaches that baptism is a burial.
    - **Romans 6:3, 4; Acts 8:38, 39; Colossians 2:11-13.**

## SOME OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST REGARDING THE METHODIST CHURCH

- ◆ **The name “Methodist” is not in the Bible.**
  - Why wear a name that is foreign to scripture?
- ◆ **Some Methodists do not believe in the virgin birth; yet the church accepts them in this unbelief.**
  - There can be no unity in diversity when it comes to doctrine - **Rom 16:17-18; 1 John 1:7; et al.**
- ◆ **They believe in two sacraments: baptism and the Lord’s Supper.**
  - The word “Sacrament” is a carry over from Catholicism. This word is not in the Bible.
- ◆ **They have a complex system of church government which is foreign to the Bible.**
  - **Philippians 1:1; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.**
- ◆ **No member of the Methodist Church is permitted to preach without a license.**
  - This is not in harmony with the Bible (**Acts 8:1-4**).
- ◆ **Women may engage in the ministry of preaching.**
  - This is against clear Bible precepts - **1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11-12.**
- ◆ **Women may pray in the assembly or in a mixed setting.**
  - This is not God’s plan - **1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:8.**
- ◆ **Elders and deacons are appointed by church leaders at the annual Methodist conference.**
  - This is a concept foreign to, and out of harmony with, the Bible.
- ◆ **The term “reverend” is applied to Methodist men.**
  - This term appears once in the Bible (**Psalms 111:9**) and applies to God, not to man.

- ◆ They use mechanical instruments of music in worship.
  - This is not authorized in the New Testament - **Ephesians 5:29; Colossians 3:16.**
- ◆ They teach that baptism is not essential to salvation.
  - This is clearly hostile to the New Testament - **Mark 16:15-16.**
- ◆ They partake of the Lord's Supper once per month.
  - The Bible teaches otherwise; teaching a weekly observance (**Acts 20:7**).
- ◆ Methodists believe that the church is composed of many denominations.
  - This is not a Bible truth - **Matthew 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:16; 4:4; Colossians 3:15; et al.**

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

People are instructed to not go beyond what is written in the Word of God (**1 Corinthians 4:6**). To go beyond the teachings of Christ is to lose proper standing with God (**2 John 9**). Those good and honest people who are caught up in the maze and confusion of Methodism (or any other denominational church) need to answer the question posed to Jesus in **Matthew 21:23 – *By what authority do you do these things?*** Methodists are not Christians and must be taught the truth in love (**Ephesians 4:15**). I pray this study has better equipped you to do so.