

The Methodist Church



Origin & History: Methodism started as a movement and evolved into a branch of Protestant Christianity. It traces its roots back to 1739 where it developed in England as a result of an evangelistic revival movement within Anglicanism that introduced a new way of teaching as a means of bringing the gospel back into the church of England. This new teaching by a certain group of individuals, out of Oxford, was labeled "Methodist" because of the way the teachers used "rule" and "method" to go about their religious affairs and the way in which they carried out their Christian faith. It is said that the conversion of the original founders was the spark that started the first Great Awakening in America.

Who: John Wesley. Though both Wesley brothers (John's brother Charles was also involved as a hymn writer) were ordained ministers of the Church of England. John Wesley used the term Methodist himself to mean the methodical pursuit of biblical holiness. They were barred from speaking in most of its pulpits because of their evangelistic methods. They preached in homes, farmhouses, barns, open fields, and wherever they found an audience. Another major influence in the spread of Methodism was George Whitfield.

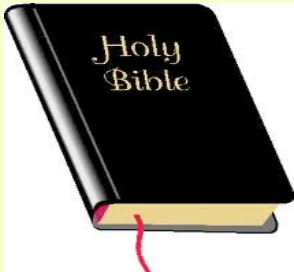


When: The beginning of Methodism as a popular movement began in the eighteenth century around 1738. The movement did not form a separate denomination in England until after John Wesley's death in 1791

Where: Originated in England

Total Members/Followers: Worldwide estimated at 30-40 Million

Sacred Text: Scripture alone in The Holy Bible is inspired but for most currently, not infallible, the sole, final rule of faith. (The standard protestant canon of 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books)



Core Beliefs:

Deity: One creator and Lord of all existing eternally as the Triune (Trinity) of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost)

Jesus: The eternal Son incarnate, full God and fully man. Conceived and born of the Virgin Mary. Was crucified, died and rose again, ascended into heaven and will come again as written in scripture.

Salvation: Forgiveness of sin (by God) and personal salvation is entirely by *Grace* alone, as gracious free gift from God, through *Faith* alone (*sola fide*) in Jesus Christ who died for our sins. We can do nothing to earn or even prompt this gift. Good works are the result of true faith but obtain forgiveness or save us.

Death and Eternal Life: Methodists believe in the traditional idea of an immortal soul that spends eternity (life forever) either in a literal place of blessedness called heaven (with God) or a literal place of torment called hell (separated from God). Upon dying, the souls of believers go immediately to be with Christ in heaven. The souls of the unbelievers suffer eternally, separated from God in hell.

Sacraments – Methodists recognize the two sacraments practiced and acknowledged by Jesus Christ

Baptism: Baptism is not necessary for salvation but is a sign of the new covenant of grace for adults and infants. Through baptism we are joined with the church and with Christians everywhere. Baptism is a symbol of new life and a sign of God's love and forgiveness of our sins. Persons of any age can be baptized. We baptize by sprinkling, immersion or pouring. A person receives the sacrament of baptism only once in his or her life.

The Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist)

The Lord's Supper is a holy meal of bread and wine that symbolizes the body and blood of Christ. The Lord's Supper recalls the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and celebrates the unity of all the members of God's family. We practice "open Communion," welcoming all who love Christ, repent of their sin, and seek to live in peace with one another.