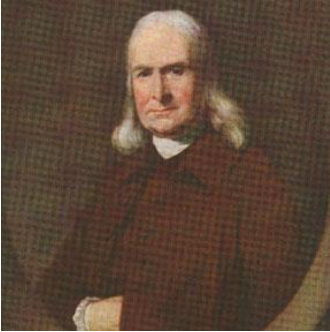


Polly's Pondering



This is a picture of the Anglican minister and theologian John Wesley, who was born in 1703 and died in 1791. This man is largely responsible for shaping my faith, even through I never met him...*I am not that old!* LOL

You might be wondering how an Anglican minister would have become so important to a child baptized by immersion, taught, and married in the Baptist faith. That is because I was introduced to his theological understanding of the authoritative nature of the Bible, the mercy of God's justice and the grace of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

John Wesley is credited with the foundation of Methodism so those of you who have grown up in the Methodist faith have also been impacted by this man – even if you don't know it. And many who have come to us from other denominations have discovered the power of his understanding of the grace of God. While we were yet sinners. So glad I don't deserve or have to earn the grace of God. It is a free gift of Jesus Christ.

While we do not have to earn grace in any way, the receipt of God's saving grace certainly does compel us to respond with mercy toward our self and our neighbors. Social justice was important to John Wesley individually and in the formation of Methodism under his leadership. Methodists took the lead on a number of social issues including education, prison reform and the abolition of slavery.

Starting this month, we will be known once again as Franklin Methodist. We will continue in the legacy of a denomination that was unintentionally begun by John Wesley who said: "I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship and the whole world for my mission field." As we link with other like-minded Methodists to form a new denomination we never intended to create (but are truly blessed to be a part of,) The Global Methodist, let us continue in the heritage that has always been part of true Methodism and recite these words: "I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship and the whole world for my mission field."

I don't know about you but I am excited about a new focus, new opportunities, new visions of ministry and mission that come with a new year. Are you ready? Are you up for the challenge? Let's be prayed up and mission ready!