

----- Through The Years -----

Here are some things about John Wesley that you probably don't know. First, Rev. Wesley actually wrote a medical text. It was one of the best selling text's in Britain in the eighteenth century. It was entitled Primitive Physick. It discussed many home remedies for treatment of ailments. Some of these are still considered significant today while others are viewed as questionable. One of the overall themes of the text instructed doctors to stop treating their patients as machines and more like humans. Wesley felt understanding and compassion could play a role in a patient's recovery.

Rev. Wesley is also credited with coining the phrase "agree to disagree". Over the years, he had many theological differences with George Whitefield, another of Methodism's early pastors. At Rev. Whitefield's memorial service, Rev. Wesley mentioned their differences and uttered the statement about agreeing to disagree. However, he pointed out that he and Rev. Whitefield disagreed on only "minor essentials" of theology and that they were in agreement on the true essentials of theology. Perhaps in our current environment, we could all learn a lesson from this phrase.

Rev. Wesley traveled constantly. In fact, it is estimated he traveled on horseback over 250,000 miles. That is ten times around the diameter of the earth! He must have had a strong constitution. Speaking of his constitution, one of Rev. Wesley's favorite sayings was to "eat a little less than you desire" in order to stay in good physical condition. It is estimated that he was 5 feet, 6 inches tall and only weighed about 128 pounds!

He also believed a person couldn't become a Christian on their own. By that, he meant a person needed a community of Christians in order to grow in their faith. He referred to the Gospel of Christ as a "social gospel" requiring people to be together.

Rev. Wesley would also have doubts along his spiritual journey. He stated that doubts occur and the overcoming of them are a part of making one's own belief system. He believed each person's faith journey had a unique quality to it.

Whatever Rev. Wesley did with his faith, it certainly produced spectacular results. During his lifetime the number of followers he had grew from 4 to 132,000 at the time of his death.

Do you have any MUMC history you would like to share with the congregation? Please send it to:

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