

The Absolute Basics of the Wesleyan Way – Chapter 1

1. The opening statement frames the chapter: “John Wesley knew his life had a purpose. He just didn’t always know what it was.”
 - a. What signs do you see in this chapter that point at Wesley’s lack of understanding?
 - b. What are some of the events in his life that helped Wesley clarify first, his lack of knowing his purpose, and second, come to understand his purpose?
 - c. What are some events that have helped you think about and come to understand your purpose?
 - d. Who are some of the people who intentionally or not, helped him along the way? How did they help him?
 - e. Who are some of the people, again, intentionally or not, who have helped you along the way?
2. The phrase from Zechariah 3:2 is repeated frequently in Wesley’s works in reference to himself and his sense of purpose.
 - a. What does Zechariah 3 tell us about this person (Joshua) who was a “brand plucked from the burning?” (Note: the endnote in the book is incorrect; the Joshua mentioned here is not the same person as Moses’ assistant.)
 - b. What does it mean to be a “brand plucked from the burning?” How would we express that idea in our current way of speaking (your modern Bible translation will likely help you here)?
 - c. Why do you think Wesley identified with this verse?
 - d. What verse in the Bible best captures your sense of your purpose in God’s sight?
3. Method was important in John Wesley’s life and ministry.
 - a. How did John Wesley learn to value being methodical?
 - b. What are some ways you see in this chapter that having a method helped Wesley? Are there any ways that having a method wasn’t helpful?
 - c. How methodical is your approach to life? To your life with God?

- d. What are some of the ways that being methodical strengthens the church? What are some ways it doesn't help (or even gets in the way of our life with God)?
4. John and Charles Wesley – and the Methodist movement they led – valued the pursuit of holiness.
- a. Why do you think being holy was so important to the Wesleys?
 - b. What did holiness look like in their lives?
 - c. What are some of the ways the Wesleys pursued holiness? How do those ways compare with ours?
 - d. Has the pursuit of holiness been a feature of your experience of Methodism? If so, what are some of the signs of it you've experienced?
 - e. Assuming scripture is correct in its claim that holiness is not merely important but essential, how do we learn a holiness that truly looks like Jesus rather than one that is bitter, brittle, and looks like an exaltation of our own self-righteousness?
5. Consider some of the people Wesley learned from; what did he learn from each of these:
- a. His parents
 - b. The Moravians
 - c. His misadventures with Sophia Hopkey
6. How did God work through the failures in Wesley's life?
- a. How has God worked through failures in your life?
 - b. In light of what you see in Wesley's life, what can we learn about dealing with failure that will bring us into deeper and healthier relationship with God and others?