



The Journal of John Wesley

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Author, evangelist, preacher, organizer, theologian, and pietist John Wesley is arguably one of the most important Christian voices of the 18th century. We continue to be influenced by him nearly three centuries later. He was a founder of the Methodist movement, and was used by God to spread the gospel to countless souls. The Journal of John Wesley is composed of 50 years of Wesley's reflections. These writings offer a first person view of the thoughts, feelings, and prayers of a man whose intelligence and organizational skills were only surpassed by his enthusiasm for spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Journal of John Wesley Details

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From Reader Review The Journal of John Wesley for online ebook

David says

In January I set out to read John Wesley's journal. Over the years I have found great spiritual nourishment in reading the works from Christian saints through the ages: Theresa of Avila, Brother Lawrence, Julian of Norwich, John Calvin, John of the Cross and more. Since I consider myself "Wesleyan" in my theology, I figured I would read Wesley's journal.

Four months later, I give up.

I still like Wesley. Wesley was an awesome person with a life to be admired by any Christian. Yet I found his journal, his account of parts of that life, boring. It started out well. Reading about his early life and his conversion experience at Aldersgate was both enlightening and encouraging. But once he was fully converted and got into the groove of his ministry throughout England...well, that is when the book got dull. It was a lot of "we preached here, then traveled there, then faced opposition, then we went over here" and so on.

One reviewer said that the last 1/4 or so breaks this monotony and is worth slogging through the rest to get to. I just couldn't do it.

Sorry Mr. Wesley.

Deke says

My copy is a hard cover published by Moody Press in 1951

Dwight Walker says

This is an excellent collation of John Wesley's life via his own diary. I enjoyed how towns how we went back to that had thrown rocks at him later had churches and the town had turned around. It was very inspiring and prescient re Uniting Church of Australia later when ministers went astray and he had to bring them back on track or encourage them.

Lynda Newman says

It really is a journal. It is unbelievable what all Wesley went through in order to preach. Was treated worse than Paul.

Nate Perrin says

Great firsthand thoughts and stories from an important church figure. Fantastic writing style.

Rebecca Call says

One of the tedious type books... this is not an airline/bath time relaxation book you can get through in an hour. Take your time and enjoy it.

Justin Griffiths-Bell says

John Wesley goes about on a horse.

Naísia says

Longo.

Você precisa ser um leitor experiente e persistente para encarar este aqui e encontrar as pérolas escondidas. Fala de dificultosas viagens a cavalo, de tempestades do mar e das turbas que sempre queriam interromper o pregador - e de como Deus permitiu que ele cumprisse sua missão infatigavelmente até os 86 anos.

O clima ruim do Reino Unido é um dos personagens principais destes registros do cativante fundador do Metodismo :P

"I cannot write a better sermon on the Good Steward than I did seven years ago; I cannot write a better on the Great Assize than I did twenty years ago; I cannot write a better on the Use of Money, than I did nearly thirty years ago; nay, I know not that I can write a better on the Circumcision of the Heart than I did five-and-forty years ago.

Perhaps, indeed, I may have read five or six hundred books more than I had then, and may know a little more history, or natural philosophy, than I did; but I am not sensible that this has made any essential addition to my knowledge in divinity. Forty years ago I knew and preached every Christian doctrine which I preach now".

On Sermons

E Owen says

Not being a Methodist, I wasn't sure what to expect by reading this as my knowledge of John Wesley is fragmentary. Methodism's strength in Wales, Cornwall and the south-west of England is self-evident with chapels on almost every high street so I wanted to find out about who started it and how it was started. It is easily one of the most recognisable non-conformist Protestant denominations and if you are not a Methodist, the odds are you probably may know one.

I've read other journals of non-conformist figures (such as *The Journal* by George Fox) and this conforms to a similar combination of recorded day-to-day activities and religious testimony. What did strike me with Wesley is that unlike many of the non-conformists of the 17th century, he did not set out to found a new "religion" or even "denomination". The "Holy Club" as he founded in Oxford University was meant to be a religious society within the Church of England. Throughout the *Journal* Wesley stresses his fidelity to the Anglican Church as an ordained Vicar and right up until his final entries in his 80s maintains that the Arminian Methodists were to be a force within the state church. The schism which led to the split only occurred after Wesley's death through one of his final acts: ordaining ministers as a presbyter to practice in the newly independent United States.

The book gave me a good idea of how Methodism diverges from Anglicanism (and Calvinistic Methodism for that matter) through Wesley's teaching and preaching. As with many denominations, "Methodism" was an insulting term applied to their movement by detractors which accidentally stuck and one that Wesley came to embrace. As you would expect, the book is heavily descriptive of the towns and villages he visits and the reactions of his words. There is something terribly evocative of him standing on top of his father's tomb in the graveyard St. Andrew's Church in Epworth to preach to the people. It is interspersed by his observations of people and places and stories he has received of those embracing Methodism. Events sometimes touch on his almost-singular mission in amusing and interesting ways such as the panic of the '45 Jacobites whilst he is in Newcastle, or encountering Dr Johnson in London. As a man of God, he is capable of making glib remarks that stand wonderfully timeless:

"Tuesday, January 25 1785. I spent two or three hours in the House of Lords. I had frequently heard that this was the most venerable assembly in England. But how was I disappointed! What is a Lord, but a sinner, born to die!..."

It's hard not to admire someone who from their 30s criss-crossed Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands and America with zeal and energy until their mid-80s with the same delight and joy. As you would expect, forming a base in Bristol and Kingswood meant his message was well received in the West Country, but struggled in the early days. He had little money and received hostility, most people don't like to be told that everything they believe in is wrong. His frequent trips to Ireland seem to be fruitful, but admits himself his message was primarily received by the Protestant Ascendancy. Rural Gaelic Ireland didn't seem that interested. He makes some incursions to Scotland and gives a wonderful description of Edinburgh at that time. I'm glad to report that the beauty he describes remains and the universities in Scotland have improved, as all of Scotland's four universities at that time apparently only admitted about 200 students between them! Unlike later preachers, he shows a willing to communicate with other groups, attending Catholic and Presbyterian churches, befriending Moravians and engaging with other Anglican vicars who disagree with his direction.

What I struggle to gauge is the man himself and his personality. He wakes up at 4 and preaches at 5 every morning, "electrocutes" people using his machine to cure them and rides and reads (frequently simultaneously) and prays all day. He is (as you'd guessed) methodical in his faith and gives little book reviews but is guarded in his personal and any romantic life. The only clue in the main journal is when he records that his "wife has died" which I find bizarrely laconic (his actual marriage to Mary Vazielle is never

expanded upon). Appendices to the text give a record of Sophia Hopkey, a woman he fell in love with during his time in America. He seems self-antagonised by the prospect of romance and marriage as he needs to dedicate himself to God and decides not to talk to her after drawing lots (as you do). I cannot tell if this is the impact of religious zeal, the concept that he is an instrument of God who cannot be preoccupied with a partner, or if he was perhaps asexual or had little desire in romantic company. Either-way it's a useful inclusion after the perplexing omission of his wife.

One of my personal frustrations is that the book is light on entrances in Wales. The country embraced Methodism and I wanted to find out how Welsh-speaking Wales received this Latin-speaking Oxonian from Lincolnshire. The entries are scarce and only pertain to his travelling to Holyhead (then the only way to reach Ireland). Quaker George Fox toured the country with the assistance of the first Welsh Quaker John ap John for translation but apart from mentioning an unnamed interpreter, there are no hints of attention paid to Wales (apart from a bit of Pembrokeshire) in this version of Wesley's journal.

I must offer a caveat in that as the name of the book suggests, this is a selection. There's long periods of Wesley pottering around in Ireland which has been omitted, and the dates jump around a lot (one day he's in northern England, the next day he's in London!). It's also a bit frustrating in that it doesn't go into any depth about his abolitionism. The fact that he wrote a diary for something like 60 years means that the unabridged version must be vast and full of minutiae.

Ultimately I found him an agreeable figure with an interesting story. He has undeniably made a big impact on history and theology and his influence is vast. Never included in the Journal, it's hard to disagree with what is attributed to Wesley, to:

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."

J. Ewbank says

My edition is 8 volumes and is not a Kindle Edition, rather it is edited by Nehemiah Curnock. It is a good read. We do not do journals today but during Wesley's days some did and his is very unusual. This is a fascinating read.

J. Robert Ewbank author "John Wesley, Natural Man, and the 'Isms'"

Danielle says

If you are interested in the origins on Methodism, or the works of a master evangelist, this massively abridged journal of an incredible man, John Wesley, is a great place to start.

Originally in multiple volumes, his journals spanning his adult life - covering 50 years & over 100,000 miles of field preaching on horseback, it has been condensed into this current form.

It has 2 introductions which nicely cover elements of Wesley's life that are excluded from the rest of the book; such as Wesley's influence and his family life. The latter 25% of the book is fascinating, either because of the selection of journal entries or Wesley just shared more of his observations and opinions as he got older. His faith in God is compelling and striking and inspiring, right until his very last breath.

Kindle format.

- It has a good interactive table of contents, as well as sub-tables of content.
- It has a footnote whenever a spelling or punctuation error was actually original to the journal as Wesley wrote it.
- Some of the footnotes shouldn't be there, they were just old English words not often used or with spellings that have changed since
- Some of the footnotes are not coded right so look like <=##&&
- There are lot of other distracting typos, such as an exclamation point written as 1 (such as Oh1 instead of Oh!); the letter m written as rn (such as hirn instead of him) and numerous others.

These are distracting, especially as at times there's a lot to concentrate on & it's the only thing preventing me giving it a 5 star review.

Ron says

Honestly, I didn't read the whole thing. But I found his honesty about his journey of faith very interesting and refreshing when I read it years ago.

Janice says

mentioned at church lay servant academy 2/1/14

Josiah Muhr says

How can you sum up the totality of a man's life in a few words? It is a task of which I am immensely under-qualified. What I can say is that for me, I was deeply touched and moved by Wesley's journal. There is much to admire in the man and much wisdom to be found within these pages. I found myself deeply affected by Wesley's early entries and inspired by his later ones. Reading this was a six month journey for me and I would encourage everyone to join in that journey as well. Who knows what you may find.
