

## Revivals And Church History :: Wesley's Societies

### Wesley's Societies - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/1/3 11:40

England at the beginning of the eighteenth century was a spiritual cesspool. Drunkenness was rampant, and gambling was so extensive that one historian described England as "one vast casino." Newborns were exposed in the streets, and 97% of the infant poor in workhouses died as children.

The Divine remedy was the 18th-century revival that transformed England and America in the 1730's. This revival cut across denominational lines and touched every class of society. One of the primary leaders in the awakening was John Wesley, who organized thousands of converts during the revival into what he called "societies".

Wesley's societies were characterized by intimate sharing of personal spiritual experiences. These were not merely "prayer and share" groups, but an attempt to live godly lives through accountability to others in the group.

At these meetings, advice or reproof was given as need, quarrels made up, and prayer and thanksgiving engaged in together. Punctual attendance as well as financial giving was nonnegotiable. The depth of honesty and vulnerability practiced is evident from the questions drawn up for each meeting.

1. Do you desire to be told your faults?
2. Is it your design to be entirely open... without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?
3. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting? What temptations have you met with?
4. Has no sin, inward or outward, dominion over you?

It was inconceivable to Wesley that anyone could go on toward Christian maturity outside of the fellowship and accountability the society provided. Remarkably, instead of creating a stifling atmosphere of suspicion, judgement or legalism, the discipline of the Methodist societies created a perfect environment for Christians to grow.

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from: The Disciplined Christian Community Under John Wesley by Benjamin S. Sharpe, Jr.

### Re: Wesley's Societies - posted by Gideons (), on: 2005/1/3 12:12

This is great.

How many "cell groups" do we have like this in America?

I'm fortunate to have some godly brothers, who will call sin sin if it's apparent in my heart. Thank God for these dear brothers.

### Re: Wesley's Societies, on: 2006/4/13 14:11

I just had to bring this thread back... just found it in the archives and it didn't seem like it got much attention.

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Wow... we need this more of this in our churches!

For, this is practically what was used by God to change England!

Become honest and vulnerable, ye church-goers! For this is the way we become a holy Bride.