



“John Wesley lived until he was nearly 88 years old – an amazing age in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was still preaching regularly throughout his 80’s.

In fact, Wesley said that he was a better preacher in his 80’s than he was in his 20’s. And in his journal, when he’s 87 years old, he writes about one week in his life. He tells of how he preached eleven times in one week! Now, this is an 87-year-old! Eleven times in one week!

John Wesley was preaching outdoors the week before his death. He then caught a cold; the cold became a fever. All that week he was in and out of consciousness. His friends gathered around his bedside; and he mustered up strength to break into song. He sang: ‘I’ll praise my Maker while I have breath.’ Those standing around his bedside marveled at this. Then, he said this to them: ‘Best of all, God is with us.’ And then this final word: ‘Farewell.’

What are the practices of a Methodist that John Wesley would want us to remember?

I think first of all that he would want us to hold on to the General Rules: the three simple ways in which you can grow in your faith. Do no harm; do all the good you can; and stay in love with God.

Then I think Wesley would want us to be sure that we were getting our hands dirty in service to humanity.

And finally, I think he’d want us to be proud of our heritage. He would want us to never forget our spiritual DNA! Remember Wesley’s greatest fear: *‘I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist, but I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power.’* Wesley would want us to fall in love and stay in love with God.”