

*Pastor Nick offers the following about Charles Wesley, basically retrieved from the Wikipedia article with some additional notes.*

Charles Wesley was born on Dec. 18, 1707, the 18th child of Susanna Wesley and Samuel Wesley. His older brother, John, was the 15th child. Charles was born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, where his father was rector. He was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford, where he was ordained. At Oxford, Charles formed a prayer group among his fellow students in 1727; his elder brother, John, joined in 1729, soon becoming its leader and moulding it in line with his own convictions. They focused on studying the Bible and living a holy life. Other students mocked them, saying they were the "Holy Club", "the Methodists", being methodical and exceptionally detailed in their Bible study, opinions and disciplined lifestyle. "Very well," said John. "We will be the People called Methodists." After graduating with a master's degree in classical languages and literature, Charles followed his father and brother into Anglican orders in 1735.

On 14 October 1735, Charles and his brother John sailed for Savannah in Georgia Colony in at the request of the governor, James Oglethorpe. Charles was appointed Secretary of Indian Affairs. While John remained in Savannah, Charles went as chaplain to the garrison and colony at nearby Fort Frederica, St. Simon's Island. Matters did not turn out well, and he was largely rejected by the settlers. In July 1736, Charles was commissioned to England as the bearer of dispatches to the trustees of the colony. On 16 August 1736, he sailed from Charleston, South Carolina, never to return to the Georgia colony. It was here that Charles witnessed the shocking sights of the slave trade as Africans were corralled onto the the wharf of the Charleston seaport. He was moved so very deeply, calling the slave trade as an evil from Hell.

Charles Wesley experienced a conversion on 21 May 1738—John Wesley had a similar experience in Aldersgate Street just three days later. See the *Church History Review* about the conversion experiences of John and Charles Wesley. <https://lexloiz.wordpress.com/2009/07/13/the-conversion-of-the-wesley-brothers/>

Wesley felt renewed strength to spread the Gospel to ordinary people and it was around then that he began to write the poetic hymns for which he would become known. It was not until 1739 that the brothers took to field preaching, under the influence of George Whitefield, whose open-air preaching was already reaching great numbers.

In April 1749, he married the much younger Sarah Gwynne (1726–1822), also known as Sally. She was the daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne, a wealthy Welsh magistrate who had been converted to Methodism. Sarah accompanied the brothers on their evangelistic journeys throughout Britain.

Only three of the couple's children survived infancy: Charles Wesley junior (1757–1834), Sarah Wesley (1759–1828), who like her mother was also known as Sally, and Samuel Wesley (1766–1837) Their other children, John, Martha Maria, Susannah, Selina and John James are all buried in Bristol having died between 1753 and 1768. Both Samuel and Charles junior were musical child prodigies and, like their father, became organists and composers. Charles junior spent most of his career as the personal organist of the English Royal family, and Samuel became one of the most accomplished musicians in the world and is often called "the English Mozart." Furthermore, Samuel Wesley's son, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, was one of the foremost British composers of the 19th century. He composed hymn 473, "Lead Me, Lord" and wrote the music for "The Church's One Foundation" in 1864.

After ceasing field preaching and frequent travel due to illness in 1765, Wesley settled and worked in the area around St Marylebone Parish Church. He died 29 March 1788 at 80 years of age.

Wesley's conversion had a clear impact on his doctrine, especially the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. From Charles' published work "Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity" and in this hymn he writes "The Holy Ghost in part we know, For with us He resides, Our whole of good to Him we owe, Whom by His grace he guides, He doth our virtuous thoughts inspire, The evil he averts, And every seed of good desire, He planted in our hearts."

He has been said to be "the greatest hymn writer of all time,"having written about 6,500 hymns