

## **JOHN WESLEY: A POLITICAL MANIFESTO FOR TODAY?**

- 1. Reduce the gap between rich and poor**
- 2. Seek to ensure full employment**
- 3. Introduce measures to help the poorest, including a living wage**
- 4. Offer the best possible education**
- 5. Empower individuals to feel they can make a difference**
- 6. Promote tolerance**
- 7. Promote equal treatment for women**
- 8. Create a society based on values and not on profits and consumerism**
- 9. End all forms of enslavement**
- 10. Avoid engaging in wars**
- 11. Avoid narrow self-interest and promote a world view**
- 12. Care for the environment**

### **Who said this? JOHN WESLEY in the 18<sup>th</sup> century:**

1. Be ye ready to distribute to every one, according to his necessity.

(Sermon 28: Eighth Discourse on the Sermon on the Mount, 1747/8)

2. Wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, 'They are poor only because they are idle.... Find them work.... They will then earn and eat their own bread.'

(First sentence: 8 Feb 1753 Journal; second sentence is from Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions 1773)

3. How many are there in this Christian country that toil, and labour, and sweat... but struggle with weariness and hunger together? Is it not worse for one, after a hard days labour, to come back to a poor, cold, dirty, uncomfortable lodging, and to find there not even the food which is needful to repair his wasted strength?

(Sermon 47: Heaviness Through Temptation 1754/1760)

4. Beware of that common, but accursed, way of making children parrots .... Regard not how much, but how well, to what good purpose, they read.... The end of education....[is to] help us discover every false judgement of our minds, and to subdue every wrong passion in our hearts... [and] to understand as much as we are able .'

(Lessons for Children 1746)

5. '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.'

(Attributed to Wesley but source unknown. Possibly written after his death as a summary of his teaching).

6. Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?

(Sermon 39: On a Catholic Spirit 1749/50)

7. May not women as well as men bear an honourable part.....yield not to the vile bondage any longer. You, as well as men, are rational creatures. You, like them, were made in the image of God.'

(Sermon 98: On Visiting the Sick 1786)

8. In seeking happiness from riches, you are only striving to drink out of empty cups. And let them be painted and gilded ever so finely, they are empty still'

(Sermon 126: Danger of Increasing Riches 1790)

9. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary action. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion!.... Do with everyone else as you would he should do to you..

(Thoughts on Slavery 1774)

10. War: What farther proof of do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations from the plainest principles of reason and virtue? Of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind?

(The Doctrine of Original Sin according to Scripture, Reason and Experience 1757)

11. I look upon the whole world as my parish

(Letter written to John Clayton March 1739)

12. Lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for the well-being of the birds in our backyards, the fish in our rivers, and every living creature on the face of the earth.

(Sermon 60: The General Deliverance 1781)