

Susanna Wesley Mother Of Methodism

Most historians consider John and Charles Wesley the two founders of the Methodist church. But behind these men stood a strong mother whose influence molded and shaped their destinies.

Susanna Annesley was born on January 20, 1669, in London, England. She was the youngest of 25 children.

Her minister father took special interest in Susanna and gave her rare opportunities for “formal” education. He also allowed her to take part in theological discussions with his minister colleagues.

When Susanna was 19 years old, she married 26-year-old Samuel Wesley. He was a newly ordained Anglican priest who was named rector of the Epworth parish.

For the next 19 years, a child was born to the Wesleys each year. Only 10 of their 19 children survived to adulthood.

The people in the village of Epworth could not properly support their minister and his family. And Samuel was not good at managing what little money he had. Eventually he was thrown into debtors’ prison.

Amid these hardships Susanna stood strong. In addition to her regular domestic duties, she handled the religious and educational training of her children.

In 1711 Susanna began holding family devotions on Sunday evenings. Soon people outside the family found out about these inspirational meetings, and they eventually drew over 300 people.

Susanna set up a systematic methodology of training her children from an early age. The training was composed of six hours of formal education. Additionally, she gave her children several hours of religious training each day and spent quality time alone with each child every week.

Of all her children, John was the closest to her. Susanna saw special qualities in him and invested much time developing his gifts and skills.

Eventually John left home to pursue a higher education. Years later, along with his brother Charles, he started a revival movement in England.

The people involved in the movement became known as the Methodists, and their denomination spread quickly throughout the world. Almost everything John taught in the Methodist movement was based on principles his mother had instilled in him as a child.

Because of her influence, Susanna Wesley is considered the mother of Methodism. She lived long enough to see the movement birthed but died in 1741.