



The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Mission Resourcing



Information Pack

Some Social Principles of The Methodist Church

John Wesley

The ethical and social ideal of the Methodist Movement is the ideal of essential Christianity. Methodism's impact on the life of the eighteenth century was due in some degree to the rediscovery of a social message. In 1743 John Wesley wrote (*An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*): "We see, on every side, either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We should greatly rejoice if by any means we might convince some that there is a better religion to be attained, a religion worthy of God that give it. And this we conceive to be no other than love; the love of God and of all mankind, the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, as having first loved us, as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on the earth as his own soul."

Believing this and recognising that society at present falls far short of the Christian ideal, the Methodist Church stands for:

- 1) The sacredness of human personality and the equal value of all men and women in the sight of God.
- 2) Adequate opportunities of employment for all those willing and able to work, and reasonable standards of living for those, who because of age or infirmity, are not able to work.
- 3) The co-operation of employers and employees for the benefit of the community.
- 4) The duty of all to render conscientious service, the condemnation of scamped work, of sweated labour and of consumer exploitation.
- 5) The right to a just return for services rendered and the right to good housing, and a healthy environment.
- 6) The wise use and careful conservation of the world's physical resources.
- 7) The removal of the root causes of poverty, unemployment and war.
- 8) The promoting of social and industrial reforms by lawful means.
- 9) The right to freedom of conscience, constitutional liberty, secrecy of the ballot and access to the Courts.
- 10) Christian influence in politics and civic affairs.
- 11) The conviction that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ contains the message that will promote effectively the regeneration of reconstruction of society.

The Methodist Church reminds her people that Christian ethics cannot be maintained without Christian faith. The good life of the Christian and faith in Christ are inseparable. Where one fails the other cannot last.

Adopted by Conference 1952;
reprinted in the Minutes of Conference 1967; reaffirmed by Conference 1976