• Born In Ireland
• Moved To America At A Young Age
• Fell Under Influence Of Methodist Episcopal Church
• Ordained A Methodist Preacher
Methodism & Its Influence

• John Wesley, Anglican Bishop Who Landed In Georgia In 1735
• May 1, 1739 In England Began First Methodist Society
  • Giving Christianity A More Personal Appeal, Became Very Attractive To People
• He Never Left Anglican Church
• In 1784 Sent Letter To American Churches Giving Them Independence From British Churches

• Francis Asbury Was Appointed Head Of American Methodist Church, Dec. 25, 1784
• Asbury’s Methods Were Harsh, Most Difficult To Follow
• Took Control Of The Circuit Riding Preachers
James O’Kelley &
The Methodist System

- Asbury Sent Circuit Riding Preachers To Outlying Churches
- An Elaborate Program
- O’Kelley Felt He Should Be Able To Go Where He Wanted
O’Kelley Leaves Methodism

- O’Kelley’s Concerns
  - Didn’t Like One Man Being Placed Over The Church
  - Thought Circuit Riders Should Go Where They Felt The Need
- By 1792 – Other Than Asbury, O’Kelley Was Probably The Most Influential Preacher Among Methodists
  - In 1789 – He Had Written *Essays On Negro Slavery*
  - He Was A Personal Friend To Thomas Jefferson
  - Had Addressed & Preached Before The U.S. Congress
- December 24, 1792 – Awkward Conference Of Methodist – Made Two Suggestions
  - If Circuit Riders Did Not Like Their Assigned Circuit, They Could Appeal To The Conference For Change
  - Proposed That The Bible Be Taken As Final Authority In All Doctrinal Matters
  - Neither Were Accepted
O’Kelley Leaves Methodism

- Broke With Methodists With Many Followers
- They Called Themselves Republican (Free) Methodists
- August 4, 1794 – At A Meeting At “Old Lebanon” Surry County, Virginia A Momentous Event Took Place
- At The Suggestion Of Rice Haggard They Took The Name “Christian” Only And Determined To Go Back To The Bible
Christian Movement In Virginia & North Carolina

- The First “Christian” Church Was Established Near Flavana, Virginia
- Marked A Coming Together Of The Smith, O’Kelley & Jones Movements
- O’Kelley Lived Near Durham, North Carolina And Planted Christian Churches
- His Beliefs
  - Lord’s Supper On 1st Day Of Week
  - Collection – Free-Will Offering
  - Singing, Preaching, Praying
  - Failed At Baptism
An Indiana Movement

John Wright (1785-1851)

- John Wright was a member of a German Free-Will Baptist Group
  - Known as “Dunkers” – German for “Immersers”
  - Began comparing Baptist doctrine to Baptist doctrine and found discrepancies
  - When comparing Baptist doctrine to scripture, found discrepancies
- Taught that the Bible was all-sufficient for faith & practice
- The Lord’s Supper should be taken on the 1st day of every week
- Thought baptism was essential to eternal salvation, but not for forgiveness of sins – later changed this belief
- His actions: took 16 Baptist churches away from Baptists near Salem, Indiana
- In all this he had never heard of Alexander Campbell