

Sir, I can never think of that great revival of religion which took place within the Church of England one hundred years ago, without having before me the image of some ancient cathedral, with its lofty aisles and vaulted roof, and in the very centre of the marble pavee floor I see a few shivering decrepit old people endeavoring vainly to warm themselves over the flickering embers of an expiring fire, and, while indulging feelings of pity and commiseration, I see a brisk sprightly little man enter, and with characteristic promptitude and zeal, he begins to stir up the fire—that little man is John Wesley. While he is thus engaged I see the saintly Fletcher approach with an arm full of faggots and throw them on the brightening flame, and presently I see approach with eager steps a bluff and portly personage: his name is George Whitfield and he begins to blow, and blow mightily, and the fire begins to kindle; and, as the towering flame illumines and warms the Church, I see Charles Wesley, the sweet singer of Methodism, take his harp and as he touches the strings with a more than mortal inspiration, I hear the joyous strain,—

“See how great a flame aspires,  
Kindled by a spark of grace;  
Jesus’ love the nations fires,  
Sets the kingdoms in a blaze.

To bring fire on earth he came,  
Kindled in some hearts it is:  
O that all might catch the flame,  
All partake the glorious bliss.”

Methodism repeats the word of command through all her ranks, first issued by the great Lord and Captain of the “sacramental host;” she says, “Go—go ye into all the world. And, blessed be God her sons obey and march.

If, then, sir, this be a true version of Methodism, and I am still pressed with the questions, “What is the grand characteristic, the distinctive peculiarity of Methodism?” I would answer, it is to be found in one single word, **ITINERANCY**. Yes, sir, *this* under God, is the mighty spring of our motive power, the true secret of our unparalleled success. *Stop the itinerancy, let congregationalism prevail for only twelve months, Samson is shorn of his locks and we become as other men.* Sir, here I would make a central posi-