

## EYE-WITNESSES TO EARLY METHODISM

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It is Saturday, July 1, 1989, at the first Historical Convocation of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church, meeting in Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. For some months I, Frank Baker, have been musing about the request that I should speak about "the roots of our heritage in the life and theology of the Wesleys." During sixty years as a Methodist preacher I have already touched on this subject—several times. But how should I approach it on this occasion? I suggested one theological approach to my wife, who vetoed it as too heavy. Weeks earlier, however, I had deliberately committed the theme to my subconscious mind—which may also be termed prayer. What finally emerged, with a measure of clarity, was somewhat unusual. Perhaps it arose from my reading during coffee-breaks *Eye-witness to History*, by John Carey, some three hundred brief historical accounts recorded by eye-witnesses in seven hundred pages, with dates ranging from 430 B.C. to 1986 A.D. Why not gather together the memorable moments in our Methodist heritage as recorded by the participants?

Mind you, this would be a very special and very serious word-game, quite different from a normal academic paper—and it turned out to be much harder work in many ways, especially in the matter of choice and omission. It included a set of very strict self-made rules, which I have never fully played before—and may never play again. Every word in the paper proper must come exact from a primary document, and must be verifiable from a set of appended footnotes. The only exceptions to the first-hand rule would be titles or introductions prefixed to each document in italics, occasional words added within square brackets, and the indication of passages omitted by the three points of ellipses. A general picture of the birth and growth of the early Methodist movement must be given by quotations, hints, and clues. Everyone should learn something fresh. No good Methodist should be *completely* bored, and the time limit, including this introduction, must be forty-five minutes.

Would it really be possible to select a dozen or two dated, memorable, and representative first-hand documents, to squeeze them into fifteen or sixteen pages, and to read them slowly enough to convey the feel of the Wesley brothers' shaping of early Methodism, with only occasional explanatory comments, but no running commentary? I decided that it might work. I hope it will!

*Oxford, April 15, 1725, John Wesley began to keep a diary, as advised in Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living. Later he recorded his spiritual growth during the following months.*

When I was about twenty-two my father pressed me to enter into holy orders. At the same time the providence of God directing me to Kempis's *Christian Pattern*, I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. . . . I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading [Kempis], such as I was an utter stranger to before. And meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I had never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon *a new life*. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sins, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for inward holiness. So that now, doing *so much and living so good a life*, I doubted not but I was a good Christian.<sup>1</sup>

*Oxford, September 22, 1725, John Wesley was ordained deacon; on March 17, 1726, he was elected fellow of Lincoln College, and underwent a deep spiritual experience.*

Removing soon after to another college, I executed a resolution which I was before convinced was of the utmost importance, shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins; I advised others to be religious, according to the scheme of religious by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call* (although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet) they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul that everything appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him as I had never done before. And by my continued *endeavour to keep his whole law*, inward and outward, *to the utmost of my power*, I was persuaded that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.<sup>2</sup>

*Oxford, July 19, 1733. The 30-year-old John Wesley solemnly dedicates himself to God as priest and tutor.*

In the Name of God! Amen!

I do resolve to devote the remainder of my life to God my Creator, God my Redeemer, and God my Sanctifier,

First. By immediate application to Him, either

1. By prayer, public or private, or
  2. By reading (1) the Fathers, (2) true, affectionate divinity, or
- (3) absolutely necessary miscellanies.

<sup>1</sup>*The Works of John Wesley*. Oxford/Bicentennial Edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), Vol. 18, *Journal and Diaries (1735-38)*, I:121, 243-44.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, I:244-45.

3. By meditation, at least from 4 to [4].30 every afternoon, unless company or absolutely necessary business [prevent].

Second. By application to my fellow servants, either

1. By speaking to (1) pupils, (2) relations, (3) friends, (4) acquaintance, (5) the afflicted, (6) wicked, or

2. By writing—either by composing (1) genses [inquiries] and letters for my pupils, relations, friends, acquaintance, (2) practical treatises for the p[oo]r and wicked, (3) sermons for all:

Or by abridging (1) uncommon treatises for pupils and acquaintance, (2) plain ones (as *Christian Monitor*) for the poor and wicked:

Or by translating true divinity for all.<sup>3</sup>

*Off Land's End, January 24, 1738. John Wesley reflects upon his mission to Georgia, after a frustrating finish and a stormy passage home to England.*

I went to America to convert the Indians; but Oh! who shall convert me? Who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well; nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, "To die is gain!"<sup>4</sup>

*London, May 1, 1738, in the home of James Hutton, Peter Boehler and John Wesley agree to establish a society for searching Christian fellowship, having two rules:*

1. That they will meet together once a week to confess their faults one to another, and to pray for one another that they may be healed [James 5:16].

2. That any others, of whose sincerity they are well assured, may, if they desire it, meet with them for that purpose.<sup>5</sup>

*London, May 23, 1738. Charles Wesley writes a hymn celebrating his conversion on May 21, 1738.*

At nine I began an hymn upon my conversion, but was persuaded to break off for fear of pride. Mr. Bray coming encouraged me to proceed in spite of Satan. I prayed Christ to stand by me, and finished the hymn. . . .

Where shall my wond'ring soul begin?  
How shall I all to heaven aspire?

<sup>3</sup>Frank Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England* (London: Epworth Press, 1970), 36.

<sup>4</sup>Wesley, *Journal and Diaries*, I:211.

<sup>5</sup>Daniel Benham, *Memoirs of James Hutton* (London: Hamilton Adams, 1856), 29-30. This small group was the foundation both of the Fetter Lane Moravian Society and of Wesley's London Society. Cf. *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* (henceforth "WHS" Vol. 46 (May 1988), 122, 128, 145-46, 149; and Wesley, *Journal and Diaries*, I:236-37.

A slave redeemed from death and sin  
 A brand plucked from eternal fire  
 How shall I equal triumphs raise,  
 Or sing my great Deliverer's praise? . . . .<sup>6</sup>

*London, May 24, 1738, 8:45 p.m., John Wesley feels an assurance of salvation.*

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.<sup>7</sup>

*London, May 24, 1738, 10 p.m. Charles Wesley welcomes John's "conversion."*

Towards ten my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared, "I believe." We sang the hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer.<sup>8</sup>

*[December], 1738. Having himself discovered the spiritual power of faith, John Wesley publishes his favorite definition of it from the Church Homilies.*

And this true Christian faith neither any devil hath, nor yet any man who in outward profession, in his receiving the sacraments, in coming to church, and in all other outward appearances, seemeth to be a Christian, and yet in his life showeth the contrary. For how can a man have this "true faith, sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God, when he denieth Christ in his works?" Surely no ungodly man can have this faith and trust in God!<sup>9</sup>

*May 21, 1739. Charles Wesley writes a hymn "For the anniversary day of one's conversion."*

Glory to God, and praise, and love  
 Be ever, ever given;

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<sup>6</sup>Charles Wesley, *Journal*, ed. Thomas Jackson (London, Wesleyan Methodist Book-room, 1849) 2 vols. (henceforth "CWJ"), I:94, and John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London, Strahan, 1739), 101 Cf. *The Works of John Wesley*. Oxford/Bicentennial Edition, Vol. 7, *A Collection of Hymns, 1780*, 116.

<sup>7</sup>Wesley, *Journal and Diaries*, I:249-50.

<sup>8</sup>CWJ, I:95.

<sup>9</sup>John Wesley, *The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works. Extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England* (Oxford, 1738), 13.



By saints below, and saints above,  
The Church in earth and heaven.

On this glad day the glorious Sun  
Of righteousness arose,  
On my benighted soul he shone,  
And filled it with repose.

Sudden expired the legal strife,  
'Twas then I ceased to grieve,  
My second, real, living life  
I then began to live.

Then with my *heart* I first believed,  
Believed, with faith divine,  
Power with the Holy Ghost received  
To call the Saviour *mine*. . . .

O of a thousand tongues to sing  
My dear Redeemer's praise!  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of his grace. . . .<sup>10</sup>

*February 23, 1743, John Wesley recounts the origin of his own societies in 1739 or 1740, and prepares membership rules for them.*

In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to me in London who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work I appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely on Thursday, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), I gave those advices from time to time which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.<sup>11</sup>

*June 1, 1744. Wesley prepares to hold the first of the annual conferences with the preaching helpers whom he has gathered around him. This was his doctrinal agenda.*

<sup>10</sup>John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London: Strahan, 1740), 120-21; cf, *A Collection of Hymns*, 7:79-80.

<sup>11</sup>John Wesley, *The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, King's-wood, and Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle: Gooding, 1743), 3-4; cf, *The Works of John Wesley*. Oxford/Bicentennial Edition, Vol. 9, *Methodist Societies*, 69-73.

What do we meet for?

To consider before God: 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. 3. What to do? i.e., doctrine, discipline, and practice.

1. Are we justified by faith alone? The only condition?
2. What is implied in being justified?
3. What is justifying faith? Assurance? Or—[?]
4. What *must* go before? Repentance? Works meet for repentance?
5. What *must* follow? Peace, joy, love, power? In what degree?
6. Is faith seeing God? A divine *elenchos* [evidence]?
7. Does anyone believe who has not the witness in himself? Or any longer than he sees, loves, obeys God?

*Must* a man come into darkness or the wilderness after he is justified?

*Will* he, unless by unfaithfulness?

*Need* a believer ever doubt or fear?

*How* is faith “made perfect” by works?

Do we think or speak high enough of justification?

Are works necessary to the continuance of faith? . . . .<sup>12</sup>

*June 28, 1744. Wesley enunciates God’s design in Methodism.*

*Q[uestion].* What may we reasonably believe to be God’s design, in raising up the preachers called Methodists?

*A[nswer].* To reform the nation, and in particular, the Church, to spread scriptural holiness over the land.

*[Then as now the Conference proceeded by question and answer, the question from Wesley’s agenda, the answer his reply, or a summary of the discussion.]*<sup>13</sup>

*June 29, 1744. Wesley draws up rules for his leading preachers, his “Assistants.”*

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be trifling employed. Never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be “Holiness to the Lord.” Avoid all lightness as you would avoid hell-fire, and laughing as you would cursing and swearing.

3. Touch no woman. Be as loving as you will, but hands off. Custom is nothing to us.

4. Believe evil of no one. If you see it done, well; else take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on everything. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner’s side.

5. Speak evil of no one; else your word especially would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

<sup>12</sup>Transcript of Richard Viney’s Diary, Moravian Archives, London, cf. WHS, 14:200-02.

<sup>13</sup>“Large” *Minutes*, London, 1763, 2, as quoted of this date in 1744.

6. Tell everyone what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, and as soon as may be, else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste, therefore, to cast the fire out of your bosom.

7. Do nothing as a *gentleman*. You have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing-master. You are the servant of all, therefore

8. Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood, if time permit, or drawing water; not of cleaning your own shoes or your neighbour's.

9. Take no money of anyone. If they give you food when you are hungry, or clothes when you need them, it is good. But not silver or gold. Let there be no pretence to say we "grow rich by the gospel."

10. Contract no debt without my knowledge.

11. Be punctual' do everything exactly at the time. And in general do not *mend* our rules, but *keep* 'em, not for wrath but for conscience' sake.

12. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but "as a son in the gospel." As such, it is *your part* to employ your time in that manner which we direct: partly in visiting the flock from house to house (the sick in particular); partly in such a course of reading, meditation, and prayer, as we advise from time to time. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do *that part* of the work which we prescribe, at *those* times and places which we judge most for his glory.<sup>14</sup>

*Bristol, the Conference, May 14, 1746. Wesley tests those who believe themselves called to preach.*

Q.8. How shall we try those who believe they are moved by the Holy Ghost and called of God to preach? A. Inquire.

(1), Do they know in whom they have believed? Have they the love of God in their hearts? Do they desire to seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

(2), Have they *gifts* as well as *grace* for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear sound *understanding*? *Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith?* And has God given them any degree of *utterance*? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

(3), Have they success? Do they not only so speak as generally either to convince or affect the hearts? But have any received remission of sins under their preaching? A clear and lasting sense of the love of God?

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<sup>14</sup>Manuscript Minutes of Wesley's 1744 Conference, collating four copies to secure the most authentic text.

As long as these three marks undeniably concur in any, we *allow* him to be called to preach. These we receive as sufficient reasonable evidence that he is moved by the Holy Ghost.<sup>15</sup>

*May 14, 1746. Wesley identifies the most useful sermons.*

Q.18. What sermons do we find by experience to be attended with the greatest blessing? A. (1). Such as are most close, convincing, and practical. (2). Such as have most of Christ the Priest, the atonement. (3). Such as urge the heinousness of men's living in contempt of or ignorance of him.<sup>16</sup>

*November 6, 1746. Wesley introduces as a doctrinal standard his own sermons.*

The following sermons contain the substance of what I have been preaching for between eight and nine years last past. . . . I design plain truth for plain people. . . . I labour to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which are not used in common life. . . . I have accordingly set down in the following sermons that I find in the Bible concerning the way to heaven, with a view to distinguish this way of God from all those which are the inventions of men. I have endeavoured to describe the true, the scriptural, experimental religion. . . . And herein it is more especially my desire . . . to guard those who are just setting their faces toward heaven . . . from formality, from mere outside religion, which has almost driven heart-religion out of the world.<sup>17</sup>

*June 15, 1747. Wesley insists upon the right of private judgment for all.*

Q.5. . . .How far does each of us agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest? And it was answered, In speculative things each can only submit as far as his judgment shall be convinced. In every practical point, so far as we can without wounding our several consciences.

Q.6. Can a Christian submit any farther than this to any man, or number of men, upon earth? A. It is undeniably plain he cannot, either to Pope, Council, Bishop, or Convocation. And this is that grand principle of every man's right to private judgment, in opposition to implicit faith in man, on which Calvin, Luther, Melancthon and all the ancient Reformers, both at home and abroad, proceeded: "Every man must think for himself, since every man must give an account for himself to God."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Manuscript Minutes of Wesley's 1746 Conference, collating two copies to secure the most authentic text.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>*The Works of John Wesley*, Oxford/Bicentennial Edition, ed. Albert C. Outler, Vol. 1, *Sermons I*, 103-06.

<sup>18</sup>Q.5 from manuscript Minutes of Wesley's 1744 Conference, Q.6, from the manuscript Minutes of his 1747 Conference, collating two copies to secure the most authentic text.



*June 18, 1747, Wesley discusses field preaching.*

*Q.1.* Have we not limited field preaching too much?

*A.* It seems we have. (1). Because our calling is to save that which is lost. Now we cannot expect the wanderers from God to seek us: it is our part to go out and seek them. (2). Because we are more peculiarly called, by going out into the highways and hedges (which none will do if we do not) to compel them to come in. (3). Because that reason against it is not good, "The house will hold all that come." The house may hold all that will come to the house, but not all that would come to the field. (4). Because we have found a greater blessing in field preaching than in any other preaching whatever.<sup>19</sup>

*November 16, 1749. John Wesley's tentative beginnings of a Methodist Connexion.*

Might not all the societies throughout England be considered as one body, firmly united together by one spirit of love and heavenly-mindedness?

Might not that in London be accounted the mother church? And the stewards of this consult for the good of all the churches? Might they not answer letters from all parts, and give advice, at least in temporal affairs?

But it may be asked, How can the temporal state of all the societies be known to the stewards in London?

I answer, Very easily, by means of the Assistants. Let each Assistant make diligent inquiry at every Quarterly Meeting concerning the temporal as well as spiritual state of each society. . . .

And the answers he receives, let him transmit quarterly to London. . . .

By this means we might not only be able to discharge all debts, but in a little time have a small fund, out of which a society under persecution or in real distress, upon application made to the stewards in London, might speedily be relieved. Being thus united together in one body, of which Christ Jesus is the head, neither the world nor the devil will be able to separate us in time or in eternity.<sup>20</sup>

*August 14(?), 1766. It may have been noted that in the preceding 1749 extract the word "church" slipped into Wesley's vocabulary to describe the Methodist societies — apparently for the first time and almost the last time. Elsewhere, as in the following extract from the Minutes of 1766, he makes it clear that Methodist worship was not intended to supersede Public Prayer in the Church of England, but to supplement it. Nevertheless by 1749 the Methodist Societies were a clearly established ecclesiastical*

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Manuscript Minutes, in the hand of John Jones (Methodist Archives, London).

entity, disturbed by little except the continuing question about the possibility of official separation from the Church of England, and the validity of Wesley's ordaining his preachers to serve in America and Scotland.

Q. Are we not . . . Dissenters?

A. We are irregular: (1), by calling sinners to repentance *in all* places of God's dominion [i.e., even in the fields]; (2), by frequently using *extemporary prayer*. Yet we are not Dissenters in the only sense which our law acknowledges; namely, persons who believe it is sinful to attend the service of the Church; for we do attend it at all opportunities. We will not, dare not separate from the Church. . . .

And as we are not Dissenters from the Church now, so we will do nothing willingly which tends to a separation from it. Therefore let every Assistant immediately so order his circuit that no preacher may be hindered from attending the church more than two Sundays in the month. Never make light of going to church, either by word or deed. . . .

But some way say, "Our own service is public worship." Yes, *in a sense*—but not such as supersedes the Church service. We never designed it should; we have an hundred times professed the contrary. It presupposes public prayer, like the sermons at the university. . . .

If it were designed to be instead of Church service, it would be essentially defective. For it seldom has the four grand parts of public prayer: deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. Neither is it, even on the Lord's day, concluded with the Lord's Supper. The hour for it on that day, unless where there is some peculiar reason for a variation, should be five in the morning, as well as five in the evening. Why should we make God's day the shortest of the seven?

But if the people put ours in the place of the Church service, we *hurt* them that stay with us and *ruin* them that leave us. For then they will go nowhere, but lounge the sabbath away, without any public worship at all. I advice therefore all the Methodists in England and Ireland who have been brought up in the Church, constantly to attend the service of the Church, at least every Lord's day.<sup>21</sup>

*August 30, 1785. Wesley on separation from the Church.*

Ever since I returned from America [in 1738] it has been warmly affirmed, "You separate from the Church." I would consider how far, and in what sense, this assertion is true.

2. Whether you mean by that term the building so called, or the congregation, it is plain I do not separate from either; for wherever I am, I go to the church, and join with the congregation.

3. Yet it is true that I have in some respects varied, though not from the doctrines, yet from the discipline of the Church of England; although

<sup>21</sup>Printed *Minutes* of 1766 Conference (np, np, nd), 8-9.

not willingly, but by constraint. For instance: above forty years ago I began "preaching in the fields"; and that for two reasons: first, I was not suffered to preach in the churches; secondly, no parish church in London or Westminster could contain the congregation.

4. About the same time several persons who were desirous to save their souls prayed me to meet them apart from the great congregation. These little companies (*Societies* they were called) gradually spread through the three kingdoms. And in many places they built houses in which they met, and wherein I and my brethren preached. For a few young men, one after another, desired to serve me as "sons in the gospel."

5. Some time after Mr. Deleznott, a clergyman, desired me to "officiate at his chapel" in Wapping. There I read prayers, and preached, and administered the Lord's Supper, to a part of the society. The rest communicated either at St. Paul's or at their several parish churches. Meantime, I endeavoured to watch over all their souls, as one that "was to give an account"; and to assign to each of my fellow-labourers the part wherein I judged he might be most useful.

6. When these were multiplied I gave them an invitation to meet me together in my house at London, that we might consider in what manner we could most effectually "save our own souls" and "them that heard us." This we called a *Conference* (meaning thereby *the persons*, not *the conversation* they had). At first I desired all the preachers to meet me; but afterwards only a select number.

7. Some years after, we were strongly importuned by our brethren in America to "come over and help them." Several preachers willingly offered themselves for the service; and several went from time to time. God blessed their labours in an uncommon manner. Many sinners were converted to God; and many societies formed, under the same *Rules* as were observed in England; insomuch that at present the American societies contain more than eighteen thousand members.

8. But since the late Revolution in North America, these have been in great distress. The clergy having no sustenance, either from England or from the American States, have been obliged almost universally to leave the country, and seek their food elsewhere. Hence those who had been members of the Church had none either to administer the Lord's Supper, or to baptize their children. They applied to England over and over: but it was to no purpose. Judging this to be a case of real necessity, I took a step which for peace and quietness I had refrained from taking for many years: I exercised that power which I am fully persuaded the Great Shepherd and Bishop of the Church has given me. I appointed three of our labours to go and help them, by not only preaching the Word of God, but likewise by administering the Lord's Supper and baptizing their children, throughout that vast tract of land, a thousand miles long and some hundreds broad.

9. These are the steps which, not of choice but of necessity, I have slowly and deliberately taken. If anyone is pleased to call this "separating from the Church," he may. But the law of England does not call it so; nor can anyone properly be said so to do, unless out of conscience he refuses to join in the service, and partake of the Sacraments administered therein. . . .

Is it not possible there may be such a separation after you are dead? Undoubtedly it is. But what I said at our first Conference, above forty years ago, I say still: "I dare not omit doing what good I can while I live, for fear of evils that may follow when I am dead."<sup>22</sup>

*On March 2, 1791. John Wesley died, and was buried without pomp at the rear of his own chapel in City Road, London, on March 9.*

*For his work and witness he is enshrined in the hearts of millions of his followers throughout the world. Lasting tribute was paid in the Dictionary of National Biography, which recorded: "Of other monumental memorials the most notable is the tablet (1871) in Westminster Abbey, with profile likenesses of John and Charles Wesley." The inscriptions thereon come from a letter from each of the brothers, and one of John's triumphant dying words:*

*I look upon all the world as my parish.*<sup>23</sup>

*God buries his workmen, but carries on his work.*<sup>24</sup>

*The best of all is, God is with us.*<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>*Minutes* (Bristol: Bulgin and Rosser, 1786), 19-22, collated with *Arminian Magazine*, 1786, 675-78.

<sup>23</sup>Based on *The Works of John Wesley*, Oxford/Bicentennial Edition, Vol. 25, *Letters*, 614-16, Mar. 28(?), 1739, to John Clayton(?); cf. JWJ, June 11, 1739.

<sup>24</sup>A Talmudic echo in a letter of Charles Wesley to James Hutton, Dec. 25, 1773.

<sup>25</sup>A fervently repeated saying of John Wesley's on his deathbed.