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Revivals : Past and Present

Editorial: Our Constant Need for Reformation and Revival

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As one reads the New Testament (NT), one is struck by two complementary truths regarding the proclamation, defense, and the passing on of the gospel to the next generation. First, there is the sad fact at how quickly we who confess our loyalty to Scripture as God's word and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ drift away from the truth and substitute it for another gospel. It seems that we as fallen creatures—even those who profess that God has done a work of regeneration in us and brought us to saving faith in Christ—tend to embrace error faster than we do the truth. Second, considering this sad reality, Scripture also constantly warns and exhorts us to be vigilant, to guard our hearts, and to stand for the truth of the gospel, by looking to our Lord and depending on the sanctifying, renewing, and reviving power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the church.

The first truth is evident throughout the entire NT. For example, think of the church at Galatia. Paul is astonished at how quickly this church has turned

to another gospel, which he vociferously argues is "no gospel at all" (Gal 1:6). Unfortunately, Galatia is not an isolated occurrence. Think of Paul's warnings to his young pastor-apprentice Timothy where he describes the "last days" as one which is characterized by those in the church who are "always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth" (2 Tim 3:7). In Scripture, it is crucial to remember that these "last days" are not future days to Paul, Timothy, or us. Instead, the last days refer to the entire time between the first and second coming of Christ, which we now presently live, and as such, they describe our day. In addition, Paul characterizes these days as in which "people will not put up with sound doctrine" (2 Tim 4:3) but instead people will seek to find teachers who will say and teach them what their "itching ears want to hear" (2 Tim 4:3). Or think of the church that the author of Hebrews addresses. After much encouragement to think of the glory and supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ, the author also must repeatedly warn them not to drift away from the truth of the gospel but instead preserve to the end (Heb 2:1-4; 12:1-13). Or think of the seven churches of Asia Minor that our Lord addresses in Revelation 2-3. How many times does our risen and exalted Lord warn his church to stand for the truth, both in word and deed, in the face of those within the church who are introducing false doctrine and unholy living and thus departing from the gospel? The sad answer is far too many times.

But the second truth is also unmistakably taught in the NT. Given the tendency for so many in the church to drift away from the truth of the gospel and the glory of Christ, Scripture constantly warns and exhorts us to "guard the deposit" (2 Tim 1:14), for leaders to "keep watch over yourselves and all the flock" (Acts 20:28), for the entire church "to test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1). The NT is clear: To withstand the danger of theological and spiritual drift, we must not only love the Lord and the truth of the gospel, but we must do so by being vigilant in proclaiming it, standing against those who attempt to replace it by "another gospel," and faithfully passing it on to the next generation. And the NT is also clear: we will only be able to do so by crying out to the Lord of the church and to ask him constantly to reform and to renew us by the sanctifying and reviving power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the church. In fact, apart from the constant reform, renewal, and revival of us as individuals, and the entire church, we will be unable to stand for the truth as we ought, and

inevitably we will experience theological and spiritual drift, as witnessed in the NT and throughout church history.

For this reason, a study of God's work of reformation, renewal, and revival in church history is important. First, it not only reminds us of our great need to depend on our triune God for our spiritual life and health the life and health, as well as the life and health of the church. But second, it also teaches us how to think about true revival and what to expect when it occurs. As with our drift away from the truth, so true works of God in reformation and revival can be counterfeited, hence the crucial distinction between true and godly "revival" and "revivalism."

The former, namely, "revival," is a sovereign work of God whereby he visits us in power and grace. The results of such a work is that God's people are convicted of their sin and stirred with holy desire and affection to know him according to the truth of Scripture. When the Spirit of God is truly at work in us and the church, he stirs within his people a commitment to Scripture, a love for it in exposition and teaching, and a desire to obey all that it teaches. No longer do we desire to have teachers who tell us what we want to hear; instead, we surround ourselves with those who faithfully teach and proclaim the whole counsel of God in power and deep conviction. Also, true revival is always theo- and Christocentric: it renews us to trust, love, and obey our triune God in the face of our Lord Jesus as we look to him alone by the power of the Spirit. True revival leads us to yearn for holiness of thought and life, and the aim to be pleasing to our Savior in all that we say and do. True revival not only affects the church but also has a salt and light effect on those outside the church. It leads the church to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, and it even impacts entire societies as God not only revives his people but often extends common grace to those outside the church. However, the latter, namely, "revivalism," is too often a human-centered attempt to manipulate and manufacture revivals by our own strength and power. The result of such "revivalistic" attempts, as history teaches us, is a poor substitute for a true work of the Spirit, and thus it may witness some short-term results, but it rarely has results that stick over the long haul.

A fair assessment of the state of the evangelical church in the West is that we need once again the reviving work of God among us. Given drift in biblical-theological conviction, a tolerance for that which God does not tolerate in terms of our lives, a disregard for God's holiness, and a basic absence of the

fear of God in our lives, we need God's reforming, renewing, and reviving power once again to visit us. This is one of the reasons we decided to focus this issue of *SBJT* on the topic of revival. By looking at God's reviving work in the past, we want to learn lessons for us today. Our focus is primarily on God's work of revival in Europe and America in the past 300 years in such places as the Netherlands, Germany, France, and Ireland, the United Kingdom, and our own nation. Our aim is to remind ourselves of what God has gracious and sovereignly done in the past to encourage us in our present day to ask God once again to revive his church. If the present state of the evangelical church is disconcerting, then as we look at what God has done in the past, may we cry out to our great and glorious triune God once again: "O Lord, will you not revive your church once again?" This is my prayer for this issue of *SBJT* and may also be our collective prayer as his people.

Experiences of Revival in the Dutch *Nadere Reformatie* Tradition: The Legacy of Four Divines in the Netherlands and North America

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The Protestant Reformation first spread to the Netherlands through the ideas and influence of the Lutherans (around 1517), followed by the Anabaptists (around 1531).[1] From 1545 onward, however, the Reformation

in the Netherlands generally followed the doctrines of the Reformed (or Calvinist) tradition as expressed in the Belgic Confession of Faith (1561), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and the Canons of Dort (1618–1619). The Reformed churches in the Netherlands flowered in particular through the experiential emphasis of the *Nadere Reformatie* (or the "Further Reformation").[2]

The *Nadere Reformatie* was primarily a seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century movement that roughly paralleled English Puritanism. Early representatives of the movement include Jean Taffin (1529–1602) and Willem Teellinck (1579–1629), while its last major contributors included Alexander Comrie (1706–1774) and Theodorus van der Groe (1705–1784). Like the English Puritans the divines of the *Nadere Reformatie* emphasized the necessity of vital Christian piety, fidelity to the teachings of Scripture, conformity to the Reformed confessions, and a consistent outworking of the biblical faith in every aspect of the believer's daily life.

Scholars define the *Nadere Reformatie* as a movement within the Dutch Reformed Church "which, as a reaction to the declension or absence of a living faith, made both the personal experience of faith and godliness matters of central importance," thereby seeking to reform church, society, and state according to that vision of piety.[3] The *Nadere Reformatie* has sometimes been called "Dutch puritanism" because of its similarities with English Puritanism in both doctrine and practice, and because the Reformed divines of the Netherlands were enriched by hundreds of writings from English Puritans translated into Dutch.[4]

The *Nadere Reformatie* stressed orthodox, biblical beliefs and warm, personal spirituality resulting in vital, practical obedience. It was, primarily, a God-centered movement. In the words of Willem Teellinck, God is "simply the very best," a "spring," a "full ocean," a "sun," "the holy fountain of everything that we desire," and "better than life itself."[5] He wrote in another place, "When the preachers preach, that men should die to the world, and crucify the old man, etc., their meaning is not to make men wretched, and miserable thereby (as some imagine) but their purpose therein is only to bring men to the true happiness, which all of us seek."[6]

The *Nadere Reformatie* was a movement—especially in its earlier stages—that was energized by the preached Word and the saving operations of the Holy Spirit. It was a Reformed, experiential movement that,

by faith, overflowed from the heart with practical obedience and good works, inspiring its leaders to promote genuine piety, evangelism, and discipleship.

From this combination of biblical doctrine and vital piety sprang the ministry of *Nadere Reformatie* pastors in the Netherlands (as well as among Dutch diaspora communities in North America) who witnessed various measures of revival in their times. In this article, we will consider the small revivals that occurred during the ministries of Willem Teellinck (1579–1629), Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635–1711), and Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen (1691–1747).

Willem Teellinck (1579–1629)

Willem Teellinck is often called "the father of the *Nadere Reformatie*," much as William Perkins (1558–1602) is called "the father of English Puritanism."[7] What few know about him, however, is that he was instrumental in what could be considered a small revival during his pastorate in Middleburg.

The Life of Willem Teellinck

Born into a godly, prominent family in Zierikzee, Teellinck spent nine months with the Puritan community in England as a young man. He lodged with a godly family in Banbury (Oxfordshire), who profoundly impressed him with their heartfelt piety which they lived out through family worship, private prayer, discussions about sermons, Sabbath observance, fasting, spiritual fellowship, self-examination, and good works. At that time, Psalm-singing could be heard in every corner of Banbury, particularly on the Sabbath.

Teellinck believed that the Lord converted him during his stay in England. From that time, his zeal for God's truth and Puritan piety was never quenched. He surrendered his life to the Lord and, upon his return to the Netherlands, he began studying theology at Leiden University.

Teellinck was ordained into the pastoral ministry in 1606 and served the Burgh-Haamstede parish on the island of Duiveland for seven fruitful years. There were several conversions, but Teellinck, much like his predecessor, Godfridus Udemans (1582–1649), struggled with village life, which was rough and undisciplined. The classis minutes of that time frequently address such problems as alcohol abuse, Sabbath desecration,

fighting, carnival attendance, and a general spirit of disorderliness.

During his pastorate in Burgh-Haamstede, Teellinck wrote his first books. In his first publication, *Philopatris, ofte Christelijke bericht* ("The Love of the Fatherland, or A Christian Report"), published in 1608, he insisted that the Dutch government needed to implement strict laws to combat the sins and faults of the people. In 1610, Teellinck visited England to renew ties with his Puritan colleagues Thomas Taylor (1576–1632), John Dod (1550–1645), and Arthur Hildersham (1563–1632). During his visit, he preached to an expatriate Dutch congregation in London. In 1612, he was delegated by Zeeland to go to The Hague to lobby the National Estates General for a national synod dedicated to resolving the growing problems associated with Arminianism.

From 1613 until his death in 1629, Teellinck served as a pastor in Middelburg, a flourishing city with six Reformed churches—four Dutch, one English, and one French. Many were drawn to his ministry by his godliness and self-denial, sincere conversation and preaching, faithful visiting and catechizing, godly walk and selfless demeanor, and simple and practical writings. He demonstrated the conviction that a pastor ought to be the godliest person in the congregation. When disease swept through Middelburg in 1624, for example, Teellinck not only called the townspeople to public and private repentance, but he also visited infected homes even as he urged others not to put themselves at risk by doing so.

Teellinck's diligent labors in Middelburg bore fruit and could be considered a small revival. Five years after his arrival, he wrote to his congregation in his *Noodwendig vertoogh* ("Urgent Discourse"): "We have every reason to thank the Lord. You come to church in large numbers each Sunday; our four church buildings cannot contain all the people. Many of your families may be called 'little churches.' There is good order according to good rules. Many of you use the means of grace diligently and you gladly listen to our admonitions to exercise godliness." Yet, like many of his contemporary English Puritans, Teellinck remained burdened for the indifference in and beyond his flock even though God was blessing his work significantly. The "constant hurt and pain" he carried in his heart because of the spiritual laxity and carnality that prevailed in church and society moved him to use his prodigious energies and gifts in speaking and writing to strive to bring about a comprehensive reformation in every sphere of life.

Teellinck battled ill health for most of his ministry. He died at the age of fifty on April 8, 1629. Thousands mourned his death, and he was buried in the churchyard of St. Pieters Church in Middelburg.

The Legacy of Willem Teellinck

In his preaching, Teellinck infiltrated the Dutch scene with English Puritan pathos. His sermons focused on the practice of godliness, and he preached often on the necessity of repentance. He was skilled in rebuking sin and pronouncing God's impending judgment while simultaneously drawing people to the love of God and alluring them to Christ. He despised trivialities from the pulpit, such as flowery expressions and petty illustrations. In his preaching, he was blunt and forthright.

Teellinck was a practical preacher who addressed current events. For example, when Admiral Piet Hein captured the Spanish Silver-Fleet and the entire Dutch nation rejoiced, Teellinck preached from 1 Timothy 6:17–19, stressing that the riches of this world are counterfeit and that only the riches of Christ endure forever. Teellinck also denounced the trends and fashions of his day. At times, he was criticized for legalism as he preached against luxury in dress, erotic literature, excessive drinking, dancing, traveling on the Sabbath, overindulgence in feasting, and the neglect of fasting. However, that was only one strand of a complex web of practical godliness that Teellinck sought to weave in the hearts and lives of his parishioners. Although he castigated the ethical insensibilities of some professing believers and deplored spiritual deadness in the church, his overarching emphasis was to build up the believer's "most holy faith" and to move the church toward "new life in Christ." In these matters, his preaching and writing bore much fruit and began to spread throughout the Netherlands.

In his preaching, Teellinck was profoundly influenced by William Perkins (1558–1602), who advocated the Puritan "plain method" of preaching. After exegeting a text, Teellinck expounded various doctrines, explained how these doctrines should benefit the hearer by means of comfort and admonition, and then applied wisdom gleaned from the text to both saved and unsaved hearers. Although he was not an eloquent orator, Teellinck was an effective preacher. After hearing Teellinck preach on a few occasions, Gisbertus Voetius wrote, "Since that time my heart's desire has been that I and all other preachers of this land could duplicate this kind of powerful preaching."[8]

The Netherlands was not as ready for Teellinck as England had been for Perkins, however. Teellinck's insistence on connecting the fruits of love with the acts of justifying faith did not appeal to some of his peers. They found his call for renewal in church, school, family, government, and society much too intense. So on the one hand, Teellinck's preaching against dead Reformed orthodoxy brought him under suspicion by the orthodox Reformed, while on the other hand, Arminians censored him for his devotion to that same Reformed orthodoxy and resented his popularity with laypeople.

The influence of Teellinck's writing ministry can scarcely be overestimated. Although he died at the age of fifty, he managed to write 127 manuscripts, sixty of which were published and which included twenty full-length books. His writings can be divided into five major categories: his *exegetical works* (such as his books on Judges 13—16, Malachi, and Romans 7:14–25); his *catechetical works* (such as his commentary on the Compendium of the Heidelberg Catechism and a doctrinal family manual); his *edificatory works* (such as his treatises on sickness, affliction, and the marks of true conversion); his *admonitory works* (such as his treatises on specific sins such as immorality and the use of images, as well as on God's threatened judgments against a backsliding nation); and his *polemical works* (such as his writings against Roman Catholicism, Arminianism, and even against forms of Calvinism that lack godliness). Major themes that pervaded many of Teellinck's writings include personal sanctification, godly devotion, conscientious Sabbath-keeping, and a Christ-centered celebration of the Lord's Supper.

After his death, Teellinck's sons began collecting and printing his treatises, but could not produce more than three folio volumes entitled *Alle de wercken van Mr. Willem Teellinck* ("All the Works of Mr. Willem Teellinck"). Over 150 editions of his books were printed in Dutch alone. Four of his titles were translated into English in the 1620s but were never reprinted: *The Balance of the Sanctuary*, *Paul's Complaint against His Natural Corruption*, *The Christian Conflict and Conquest*, and *The Resting Place of the Mind*. In 2003, his *The Path of True Godliness* was reprinted.[9] Gisbertus Voetius, another major writer in the Dutch Further Reformation tradition, carried on the practical piety that pervaded all of Teellinck's writings.

Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676)

Gisbertus Voetius (Voet)[10] stands as a theological giant in the time of the Dutch Further Reformation. He profoundly influenced the Dutch Further Reformation in at least three main areas—the development of an *intelligent piety*, the development of *pastoral theology*, and the development of *polemical theology*, each of which contributed to revival and reformation during his ministry.

Voetius was born in Heusden on March 3, 1589, just two months before Spanish troops besieged his native village.[11] Voetius began his education at the Latin school of Heusden and then the University of Leiden. During his early student years, he demonstrated a keen interest in theology and eagerly followed the disputations held between Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609) and Franciscus Gomarus (1563–1651) at the University of Leiden. He was eventually nominated to the Synod of Dort as its youngest delegate. He further studied philosophy through Bartholomäus Keckermann (ca. 1572–1609).[12] His educational training demonstrated both a depth and breadth of knowledge that shaped his academic output in later years.

In terms of personal piety, Voetius was heavily influenced by the Devotia Moderna (or "Modern Devotion" movement), a late-fourteenth century movement in the Low Countries that emphasized the reform of the church as well as the rediscovery of personal piety. The movement was championed by Gerard Groote (1340–1384) and heavily influenced later by Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471), who authored *The Imitation of Christ*, a book that had enormous influence throughout the centuries as a manual for the promotion of personal piety.[13] This work also had a profound influence on his spiritual formation.[14]

Voetius was ordained to the ministry in 1611 and served faithfully for the rest of his life as a pastor in various congregations. He also served as a theologian and theological instructor at the University of Utrecht, where he trained a generation of pastors in the Dutch state church. Voetius's influence continues to extend far and wide in the Dutch context, particularly his emphasis that "theology had to be practical and lead to a lifestyle that glorifies God."[15] It is this combination of theology and piety that marked his contribution to the Dutch Further Reformation in both his teaching and preaching.

The Influence of Gisbertus Voetius in the Development of Intelligent Piety

Voetius was to the Further Reformation what John Owen was to the Puritan movement in England.[16] One of his distinctive contributions to the Dutch Further Reformation and to the development of Reformed theology in general is his combination of intellectual rigor and deep, warm spirituality, or what is commonly referred to as *pietatis cum scientia conjugenda*— "the wedding together of knowledge and piety."[17] Two of his works are notable for their influence in the development of this intelligent piety: *Prove van de Cracht der Godsalichheydt* ("Proofs of the Power of Godliness") and *Meditatie van de Ware Practijcke der Godsalicheydt of der goede Wercken* ("Meditation on the True Practice of Godliness or Good Works"). Beeke and Pederson note that these two works "established [Voetius] as a writer of practical piety who insisted on a converted life as the attestation of an orthodox faith."[18]

Furthermore, C. A. de Niet also notes the profound influence that Voetius exercised on the Dutch Further Reformation through his careful expositions entitled *Ta Asketika sive Exercitia Pietatis* ("'Ascetica,' or The Exercise of Godliness").[19] This work is a comprehensive manual of piety in both theory and practice drawing from the early church fathers, medieval streams of piety, and the Puritans. Voetius required his students to read this work as part of their preparation for pastoral and pulpit ministry.[20]

The Influence of Gisbertus Voetius in the Development of Pastoral and Practical Theology

While Voetius served as a pastor for many years, he never lost his pastoral heart as a theologian and teacher. Two works stand out in Voetius's corpus of writings that reveal his influence in the development of pastoral theology and contribute to the ethos of the Dutch Further Reformation and its emphasis on personal piety. The first is his massive work entitled *Politica ecclesiastica*. In this work, Voetius considers numerous questions concerning ecclesiology and provides invaluable insight into a Reformed understanding of ecclesiology. In particular, he expresses his concern for the reformation of the church through a sincere confession of faith in Christ. For example, in writing about public confession of faith, he writes that the sincerity of one's confession should not only be discerned through a vocal confession, but that vocal confession must cohere with an inward confession as well through acts of piety. These aspects of confession cannot be separated but must be

taken together.[21] This concern to connect both confession of mouth and confession of life was a pastoral response to the nominalism that plagued the Dutch state church. In dealing with practical questions like these, Voetius attempted to correct and reform the direction of the church.

Like other divines of the Dutch Further Reformation, Voetius also shows great concern for a proper understanding of ecclesiology. His concern is manifested in *Politica ecclesiastica*, where he considers the nature of the church. First, he shows that the church can be understood in a mystical way, where he refers to the church as an invisible, spiritual entity.[22] The visible church is the association of believers which they enter on a voluntary basis. By participating in the visible church, believers can participate in the communion of the saints and can mutually communicate with one another in matters relating to salvation.[23] For Voetius, the invisible church exists within the visible church. These definitions became important in the debates with the Labadists over the nature of the church, who sought a pure church separate from the state church.

In his *Politica ecclesiastica*, one can hear the heartbeat of Voetius's teaching and training of men for sacred ministry as well as the importance of preaching in the reform of the church. As Voetius discusses the manner of preaching, he argues modestly that he contributes very little to this subject. He then goes on to quote a plethora of preachers and homileticians throughout church history, showing affinity and appreciation in particular for several English Puritans, such as William Ames (1576–1633), Arthur Hildersham (1563–1632), and Nehemiah Rogers (1593–1660).[24]

Voetius's advice to candidates for the ministry is to read and listen to those men who excel in preaching and to absorb their methods to develop their own best method of preaching.[25] The absorption of such preaching provides good examples of "careful and clear explanation of the text; others of the elaboration and deduction of doctrines; still others of a careful and clear argument concerning them, of a sound and clear defense and refutation; of consolation; of exhortation; of a serious, fitting and wise rebuke; of a powerful prayer; of style and adornment; of a heart-moving presentation or of the right accompaniment of gestures."[26] In the method of preaching, Voetius allows personal freedom and argues that the edification of the congregation is the first law in pursuing a particular method of preaching. He concludes, "It is enough for us, if only Christ is preached to the heart of

the people and faith and conversion are powerfully aroused in them."[27] This view of preaching lies at the heart of the Dutch Further Reformation, for the divines of that movement sought to present Christ and stir believers up to obedience in the Christian life based on the Scriptures.

Unique among Voetius's writings is his work on spiritual desertion. Because of pressing demands in his ministry, he requested his colleague, Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617–1666), complete the book he had started to write.[28] This work on spiritual desertion is motivated by pastoral concerns for those believers who struggle with a sense of spiritual desertion or abandonment. Voetius's definition of spiritual desertion is particularly helpful in the context of pastoral ministry:

> It is an inner cross or spiritual sorrow and trial as a result of which a person, now being truly converted to God, fails to feel his or heart's delight in God and divine things. It results from the darkening of one's assurance and clarity with respect to appropriation by a personal faith. The worst but least frequent occurrence is the suffering of a constant painful deficiency; a more frequent occurrence is the cross of believers; most frequent is the inner cross.[29]

As Voetius works out the causes of desertion, he seeks to deal judiciously with the consciences of those plagued by this desertion. On the point of conscience, Voetius demonstrates close affinity with Puritan writers who have written treatises dealing with the consciences of believers who are afflicted.[30] Despite his towering intellect, Voetius showed himself to be a sensitive pastor who cared for afflicted souls under his care as he sought to nurture the faith of those who were afflicted with spiritual desertion. In this work, he comforts afflicted believers by teaching them that faith and assurance are still present although their lived experience dictates otherwise.[31] Voetius thus shows that revival does not remove the need for clear and consistent pastoral care of afflicted souls. Rather, it requires a balanced ministry that involves rousing hypocrites from their spiritual doldrums and blindness, while simultaneously counseling and comforting afflicted souls.

The Influence of Gisbertus Voetius in the Development of Polemical Theology

Even as Voetius cared tenderly for afflicted souls as part of his ministry, he

also did not tolerate any theology or philosophy that might destroy the church of Christ or lead to moderatism within the church. Voetius did not hesitate to engage in polemics with enemies of the truth as they threatened the spiritual vitality of the church. Most notable of these opponents was René Descartes and his philosophy. Jonathan Israel notes that Voetius's polemics struck at the heart of Descartes's new philosophy that was based "on doubt and discarding all traditional (Aristotelian) science and philosophy, including existing proofs of God's existence."[32] Cartesianism thus exalted human reason as the final arbiter of truth, thereby striking at the heart of the authority of Scripture. Voetius rightly viewed this philosophy as damaging to the church's spiritual vitality and teaching. Voetius also sparred with Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669) over the subject of covenant theology, insisting that Cocceius's views "would undermine both Reformed dogmatics and practical Christianity."[33] Jean de Labadie (1610–1674), a powerful preacher whose ministry was accompanied by revival activity, also came into the polemical crosshairs of Voetius's pen for his views on the church, his separatist tendencies, and his subjective mysticism.[34]

Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635–1711)

Among Dutch Reformed Christians to this day, Wilhelmus à Brakel is often affectionately referred to as "Vader Brakel" (or "Father Brakel"). Many during (a after) his lifetime ascribed this unique title to him for his defining role and influence on the Dutch Further Reformation.[35] Brakel was born in Leeuwaarden on February 1, 1635, to Theodorus à Brakel and Margaretha Homma.[36] Within the nurturing context of this godly family, young Wilhelmus began to evidence sincere love for Jesus Christ. His God-fearing parents prayed constantly for their young son and faithfully admonished him to find his life in Christ alone.[37] At a tender age, Brakel evidenced a clear love for Christ, a love that would pervade his ministry and writings for the rest of his life.[38]

At an early age, Brakel studied at a Latin school in Leeuwaarden and then began his university studies at the University of Franeker. He matriculated at Franeker with a standard seventeenth-century education in languages, philosophy, history, medicine, and theology.[39] At that time, Franeker was heavily influenced by the teaching of Johannes Cocceius and his followers.

In accordance with his father's advice, Brakel continued his studies at the University of Utrecht, then dominated by Voetius and his followers.[40] Brakel enjoyed the best of education in the milieu of the Dutch university; in fact, it would profoundly shape his piety as well as how he viewed the necessity and importance of a well-rounded education for pastors.[41]

Brakel served the Lord in ministry for nearly fifty years, serving a total of five churches throughout the Netherlands. De Reuver remarks that the Lord blessed Brakel with sound health, a sharp mind, and a loving disposition to those under his pastoral care.[42] In his ministry, he saw evident spiritual blessing in the lives of those whom he pastored. For example, his first pastorate was in Exmorra, a village in Friesland, where he faced the nominalism and spiritual indifference of the Dutch church. However, through faithful preaching, teaching, and pastoring, there were stirrings of spiritual life through his ministry there.[43]

Brakel's faithful ministry likewise bore fruit in his second pastorate in Stavoren, of which ministry his contemporary Abraham Hellenbroek (1658–1731) remarked, "The extraordinary fruit which he enjoyed in Stavoren has been very significant and widely recognized."[44] He saw similar spiritual fruit in his third pastorate in Harlingen where he witnessed a number of young women evidencing evangelistic zeal after he had taught about the prophetical office of Christ and believers. These young women spoke to others within the congregation and "stirred people up to acquire knowledge and to repent," with evident conversions as a fruit of their words and admonishments.[45]

Controversies in the Ministry of Wilhelmus à Brakel

Although he saw Spirit-worked conversion, Brakel nonetheless faced several major challenges in his ministry. However, it must be noted that none of these challenges arose because of deficiency in his moral character or a lack of faithfulness in his ministry. Rather, these controversies surrounded various pastors and theologians and highlighted the spiritual condition of the Dutch church. Brakel's responses to these challenges demonstrate his influence in the spiritual revival during the Dutch Further Reformation, as well as his strong desire to see the church reformed and flourishing with genuine spiritual vitality. Indeed, conflict can often be the catalyst or context for revival. As Beeke observes, "Revival often happens in the midst of great conflict."[46]

The first controversy arose during his third pastorate in Harlingen. This period was fraught with turmoil in Dutch society with the aristocratic segment of society exercising undue power and influence in society. In addition to this, the Dutch Republic also faced military assaults from France, England, Münster, and Cologne.[47] Brakel and other ministers of the churches in the province of Friesland intervened with officials in the government, petitioning them to address the ills of Dutch society and these foreign invasions. Overall, these societal, political, and military challenges were resolved through Dutch resilience in military self-defense, but also through a general synod held in Friesland where there was a general sentiment that the work of reformation needed to be undertaken.[48] The synod emphasized the importance of church discipline and reaffirmed the obligation of ministers to preach from the Heidelberg Catechism every Lord's Day.[49]

Another controversy through which Brakel shaped the spiritual lives of the people whom he shepherded came through his pastorate in Leeuwaarden. This controversy involved the gathering of conventicles. Conventicles were small groups of believers who gathered to discuss spiritual matters of the heart centered around the exposition of the Word of God. These conventicles were often responses by pastors and laypeople to preaching that was tepid and weak within the Dutch state church. Brakel encouraged these conventicles, for he considered them to be an impetus for spiritual revival among individual believers as well as a catalyst for revival on a wider scale within the church.[50] He did so amid opposition to conventicles by state authorities and church leaders who viewed the conventicles as schismatic, potentially mystical "churches within churches." Rather than viewing conventicles as an opportunity to encourage schism or divide the national church, Brakel believed that conventicles could help believers seek vital piety and godliness in contexts where such godliness was often lacking—even among spiritual leaders.

Brakel found himself embroiled in another controversy after he invited Jacobus Koelman (1631–1695), another preacher of the *Nadere Reformatie* movement, to fill his pulpit in Leeuwarden. Koelman was a blunt and direct preacher, but at the heart of his ministry was the desire to promote further reformation within the Dutch state church. Both he and Brakel joined forces to address moral laxity among the laity, the failure of pastors to warn

their congregations against ungodliness, and the tardiness of the government to enact policies to curb immorality and vice in society.[51] The controversy spilled over into the courts of both church and state as Koelman proved to be controversial in other matters of worship, arguing against form prayers in liturgy and Christian feast days as practices which inhibited true piety and spirituality.[52] As Brakel supported his fellow minister, they confronted the governing authorities in church and state, eventually winning the day for their defense of the spiritual authority of the church. As a result, Brakel was catapulted into national fame in the Dutch Republic and as a central figure of the Further Reformation.[53]

Another controversy erupted over the issue of biblical hermeneutics. In 1679, a minister named David Flud van Giffen preached a sermon on Psalm 8 in which he argued for a Cocceian interpretation of the psalm as a prophetical type of the Lord Jesus. Brakel disagreed with van Giffen's hermeneutic and preached what he viewed to be the correct interpretation of Psalm 8. Eventually, the two men were reconciled. In response to the controversy, Brakel eventually published a treatise on the covenant of grace entitled *Hallelujah, ofte lof des Heeren over het genadeverbond opgesteld* ("Hallelujah, or The Praises of the Lord Relative to the Covenant of Grace."[54] It is in this work and others that Brakel developed his theology within the framework of the covenant of grace.[55]

The last significant controversy worthy of note was Brakel's conflict with Jean de Labadie. Although de Labadie was trained as a Roman Catholic Jesuit, he later became a Reformed pastor. The main emphasis of de Labadie's ministry became the idea and pursuit of a pure church. Brakel and other *Nadere Reformatie* divines resonated with de Labadie's views, especially his strong warnings against the moral laxity of many so-called Christians and his clarion calls for fasting and seasons of prayer. Over time, de Labadie separated himself from what he perceived to be the worldly state church and set up his own church of exclusively regenerate persons.

Paired with his increasingly extreme theological and ecclesiastical views, these initiatives alienated him from other Reformed ministers who, at first, had given him a rather warm reception. De Labadie's followers (who were known as "Labadists") eventually came into conflict with Brakel. While they shared the view that the state church was largely corrupt, they differed in their schismatic tendencies; Brakel preferred to stay within the church

and work for her reform, while the Labadists desired to separate from it. Brakel and the Labadists likewise differed over theological issues such as the nature of justification, the nature of love, and the ability to have absolute knowledge of the regeneration of one's neighbor. On these three points, Brakel maintained the orthodox position over against the extreme ideas of the de Labadie and his followers.

Ecclesiological Perspectives in the Ministry of Wilhelmus à Brakel

In each of the controversies with which Brakel contended during his ministry, two themes emerge and demonstrate his centrality to the *Nadere Reformatie* movement—his emphasis on ecclesiology as well as his emphasis on preaching as a means of revival and reformation. Issues of ecclesiology lay at the heart of the *Nadere Reformatie*. As van Lieburg points out, there were two basic poles regarding ecclesiology in the Dutch context. On one hand, there was the civil government's ideal of a broad church that could encompass the largest number of its citizens. On the other hand, there was the clergy's view of the church as a pure church preserved through rigorous church discipline.[56] Van Lieburg further captures the decline of the Dutch Reformed church as the *volkskerk* (or "the people's church") gained ascendancy in the Dutch cultural and religious consciousness:

> This supposed growth of the church became visible in a weakening of the exercise of church discipline. Discipline pertaining to doctrine became less meaningful now that competition with non-Reformed Protestant groups had diminished. And discipline concerning one's life-style lost force, for it could no longer bear an exemplary character because the public sins of the members were too numerous to be brought before the church council or to be combated effectively. Celebration of the Lord's Supper became less an expression of belonging to the chosen community of Christ, and more a demonstration of social respectability within the local community. The Dutch Reformed church evolved from its ideal of a pure church into a (limited) people's church (*volkskerk*), just as the regents always had had in mind."[57]

Brakel maintained an ardent love for the church of Christ no matter its condition. In fact, his love for Christ's church in its deplorable condition drove much of his ministry. This love for the church is especially evident

in his writing ministry. Willem van Vlastuin notes that in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, Brakel places ecclesiology between Christology and Pneumatology.[58] Van Vlastuin observes that Brakel not only contributes to a *reordering* of ecclesiology but also to a *revaluing* of ecclesiology, so that "by using this ordering he revalues the church rather than underestimating it, as it traditionally had been . . . in this way the church was given intrinsic value as a form of eternal salvation."[59] This reordering of ecclesiology in Brakel's systematic theology was indicative of a retrieval of the ecclesiology of the early church, where the emphasis was more on the corporate dimension of Christian faith rather than the individual dimension[60] Much of this ecclesiological emphasis was thus contextually driven as Brakel addressed the more extreme elements among the Labadists, but this emphasis also preserves him from being labeled as overly individualistic and mystical in his emphases on the inner spiritual realities of the true believer. A modest conclusion can be drawn that Brakel preserves this objective-subjective distinction of the Christian life as he sought both the reform of the church and the revival of individual believers through the means of grace—particularly the preaching of the Word of God from the pulpit.

Second, in their attempts at the reformation of the church, pastors of the Further Reformation (such as Brakel) recognized that "truly apostolic revival could only take place within the framework of the official preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and the maintenance of discipline, these being the marks of the true Church of Christ."[61] Preaching played a central role in the revival of the church and its members. Van Lieburg writes, "Public preaching was an important medium of influence. The sermon was not to be a learned presentation or a theological argument, but an instruction in the godly walk of life and an application of the content of Scripture to various groups in the congregation: advanced and beginning believers, as well as the unconverted. Also highly valued were regular catechesis of children and adults, house visitation and pastoral guidance of members, and intensive maintenance of discipline concerning their beliefs and actions."[62]

Brakel also viewed the preaching of the Word of God as the primary means of grace through which God brings revival and reformation. He remarks in *The Christian's Reasonable Service* that the minister's objective in his preaching "ought to be to touch hearts, and thus while aiming for the heart,

to apply this, to comfort, and to stir up."[63] In his discussion of the keys of the kingdom entrusted to the church by Christ, Brakel teaches that the key of preaching has a discriminatory function in that it opens the kingdom to believers and shuts it against unbelievers through the authority of Christ.[64] Closely connected with this view of preaching was a strong emphasis on the use of church discipline as the other key of the kingdom exercised by the church. In fact, Brakel spills proportionately more ink about the right use of church discipline than on preaching in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*. This perceived imbalance was driven by the great dearth of a healthy use of church discipline in the church.

It is with this view of preaching that Brakel sought to reform the church through a discriminating style that clearly delineated between true and false believers, preaching the gospel freely and warmly focused on Christ and his work. This is clear from just a sampling of *De waare christen* ("The True Christian"), a series of sermons on select texts of Scripture.[65] In a sermon on Isaiah 28:16, Brakel describes the nature of true believers. Those who believe upon Christ as the Cornerstone are not those who have temporary faith or historical faith.[66] Rather, those who God describes as true believers are those who have a sincere knowledge of their own sinfulness. True believers are also distinguished from an insincere believer according to the foundation of their faith. The sincere believer is grounded upon none other than Jesus Christ and finds in Him the only ground and cornerstone of his salvation. By Him, he receives the forgiveness of sins, shelter from the wrath of God, and both sanctification and glorification.[67]

In another sermon on Job 8:13, "The Hypocrite's Hope Shall Perish," Brakel demonstrates his concern for uncovering the hypocrite and his false hope. He notes that there are two kinds of hypocrites—the *coarse* hypocrite and the *refined* hypocrite.[68] The coarse hypocrite is one who consciously plays the hypocrite without any qualms, such as Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9–25). The refined hypocrite combines a strong sense of religiosity with their hypocrisy.[69] While distinguishing between hypocrites, Brakel is more concerned with addressing the refined hypocrite, especially refined hypocrites within the church. Throughout the sermon, he uncovers refined hypocrites by pointing out that they are concerned with the outward show of godliness and piety but lack the inward compulsion and life of godliness.[70] Brakel's sermons on these subjects warrant further research and analysis,

but this small sampling demonstrates his concern for the vital piety of God's people, his desire to deal pastorally with such issues, and his desire to promote the kind of preaching that the Holy Spirit would use to bring about revival and reformation.

Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen (1691–1747)

A remarkable spiritual awakening occurred in the eighteenth century in the British colonies in America.[71] Leaders of that awakening were renowned preachers such as George Whitefield (1714–1770) and Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). Yet two decades before Whitefield preached on American soil, the Holy Spirit was working through the Dutch Reformed minister, Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen (1691–1747), to call sinners to Christ. Hundreds of people came to the Lord under Frelinghuysen's preaching. In 1739, George Whitefield wrote:

> He [Frelinghuysen] is a worthy old soldier of Jesus Christ, and was the beginner of the great work which I trust the Lord is carrying on in these parts. He has been strongly opposed by his carnal brethren, but God has appeared before him, in a surprising manner, and made him more than conqueror, through His love. He has long since learnt to fear Him only, who can destroy both body and soul in hell.[72]

Frelinghuysen has been described as a forerunner of the Great Awakening.[73] He was trained for the ministry with a combination of Reformed doctrinal purity and the vital piety of the Dutch Further Reformation. Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg (1711–1787), a Lutheran pietist and a "patriarch of the Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania and adjacent States"[74] who toured the Middle Colonies in 1759, referred to Frelinghuysen as "a converted Dutch preacher who was the first in these parts to insist upon true repentance, living faith, and sanctification, and who had much success."[75] His preaching declared the reality of divine judgment according to the moral law, the insufficiency of good works to save sinners, the sovereignty of divine grace, and the necessity of new birth by the Holy Spirit to produce the power of godliness.[76]

Regeneration and Repentance

Frelinghuysen preached his inaugural sermon in America on January 31, 1720. His text was 2 Corinthians 5:20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The sermon caused quite a stir as the new minister made it clear that he intended to labor among them "in Christ's stead"—that is, with the earnestness and intense personal examination of Christ Himself.

If the Dutch Reformed parishioners of New Jersey's Raritan Valley were surprised by their minister's zeal, Frelinghuysen was no less surprised by his parishioners' lack of spirituality and worldliness. Although he had heard rumors of their lack of spirituality while he was in the Netherlands, he soon discovered that the situation was far worse than he had thought. William Demarest notes, "He found that great laxity of manners prevailed throughout his charge . . . that while horse-racing, gambling, dissipation, and rudeness of various kinds were common, the [church] was attended at convenience, and religion consisted of the mere formal pursuit of the routine of duty."[77] In short, many parishioners showed no fruits or marks of conversion.

Consequently, Frelinghuysen began to preach for the conversion of sinners rather than for the nurture of believers. He insisted that an outward confession and upright life were insufficient for salvation. The Holy Spirit must first reveal to a sinner his sinful state and cursed condition before God, he taught. He once wrote, "The sinner is driven out of himself to the sovereign grace of God in Christ for reconciliation, pardon, sanctification, and salvation."[78]

Frelinghuysen said that only those who have begun to bring forth the fruits of conversion can consider themselves to be saved. According to the Heidelberg Catechism, these fruits include not only the knowledge of sin and misery but also the experience of deliverance in Christ, resulting in a life of gratitude to God. Frelinghuysen urgently pleaded with sinners to come to Christ, declaring, "If you are weary of sin and sincerely desire to draw near to God through Christ, then come."[79] He said with passion, "Jesus stands before us with extended arms, inviting sinners and the ungodly to repentance. Oh let him who senses his sins and his state of condemnation before God surrender himself to the Lord Jesus!"[80] He then explained that a true experience of joyous salvation in Christ will necessarily result in a life of Christian gratitude "marked by a new and hearty service" as one continually looks to Christ to overcome sin.[81]

Although many members of Frelinghuysen's church did not object to the scriptural and Reformed doctrines he proclaimed, others resented his forceful application of Reformed experiential theology to their souls. Had he said he was referring to people outside of the church as unregenerate, self-righteous hypocrites, church members might have been more accepting. But Frelinghuysen made it clear that he was speaking to his own parishioners. He said,

> Come here, you careless ones at ease in sin; you carnal and earthly-minded ones, you unchaste whoremongers and adulterers; you proud, haughty men and women; you seekers after pleasure; you drunkards, gamblers, disobedient and wicked rejecters of the gospel; you hypocrites and dissemblers. How do you think the Lord will deal with you? . . . Be filled with terror, you impure swine, adulterers, and whoremongers. Without true repentance you will live with the impure devils. All who burn in their vile lusts will be cast into a fire that is hotter than that of Sodom and Gomorrah.[82]

Furthermore, he sternly admonished his people against partaking of the Lord's Supper in a casual manner. He warned them, "Remember, that though moral and outwardly religious, if you are still unregenerate and destitute of spiritual life, you have no warrant to approach the Table of grace."[83]

At the heart of Frelinghuysen's theology—and indeed the entire Dutch Further Reformation—was the conviction that regeneration is necessary to true Christianity. In a typical sermon, Frelinghuysen would ask his listeners to examine themselves for evidences of the new birth. Instead of assuming that everyone was saved, he believed that pastors should address the assembled church with the recognition that their congregants were in various spiritual conditions. He explained,

> The church includes all kinds of people: wicked and unconverted persons, moral persons, and Christians in appearance and profession. This last group is the largest, for "many are called but few are chosen." There are also converted people in the church. These include babes in grace as well as those who are more advanced. Each has desires and needs. Each must therefore be preached to and dealt with according to his condition, as Jeremiah 15:19 says. Many zealous divines have shown how dangerous general applications can be (Ezek. 13:19–20).[84]

Frelinghuysen preached Reformed truth with fire. As James Tanis says, he was not an innovator but rather a "transmitter" between the Dutch Further Reformation and the New World.[85] But this transmitter was also an "amplifier" who powerfully proclaimed the new birth with such gravity, intensity, and fervency that it shocked nominal and complacent Dutch churchgoers. It also provoked reactions that were either strongly positive or strongly negative.

Revival and Renewal

Soon after he arrived in the New World, Frelinghuysen's stress on regeneration, heartfelt prayers, and criticism of material luxuries alienated him from two prominent Reformed ministers, Gualtherus Du Bois (1671–1751) and Henricus Boel (1692–1754). Frelinghuysen ministered to four small congregations along the Raritan River southwest of New York City. He preached a searching call to repentance and applied strict standards to exclude the unconverted from the Lord's Table.

The disciplinary actions of Frelinghuysen and his consistory upset many in the congregation, particularly the wealthy. They complained to influential Reformed ministers in New York whose views differed from those of Frelinghuysen. Some of the ministers sided with the complainants—most notably, Du Bois and Boel. The complainants levied serious accusations against Frelinghuysen in a formal complaint or *klaag* that was 150 pages long.[86] The situation became even more tense when Frelinghuysen referred to colleagues who opposed him as "unconverted ministers."

Although pastors such as Guiliam Bertholf (1656–1726), Bernardus Freeman (1660–1743), and Cornelius van Santvoord (1687–1752) supported Frelinghuysen, they cautioned him against sounding unduly harsh and judgmental. They insisted that his approach lacked tact, and his standards for the Lord's Supper were too high. Bertholf attested to Frelinghuysen's orthodoxy but privately wondered if Frelinghuysen's criticisms of fellow ministers were too extreme.[87]

The controversy raged for several more years, severely jeopardizing Frelinghuysen's mental and emotional health. Finally, on November 18, 1733, the churches served by Frelinghuysen adopted eleven "Peace Articles," which were read from their pulpits on the first three Sundays of 1734, then forwarded to Amsterdam for final approval. In

the articles, Frelinghuysen (and his consistories) forgave his opponents, who then accepted him as an orthodox Reformed minister. Although Boel's opposition to Frelinghuysen and the revivals continued, Du Bois eventually approved of peace. And Frelinghuysen regretted his judgmental castigation of his opponents as unconverted.

Despite relentless criticism, Frelinghuysen faithfully continued his work as a minister. He not only preached himself but he also trained lay preachers. Most notable among his students was Hendrik Visscher, who translated Frelinghuysen's sermons from Dutch into English. Visscher's own sermons were also influential; they were published and cherished for years by Reformed pietists in the Raritan Valley. Frelinghuysen trained several men for ordained ministry, including Samuel Verbryck, John Goetachius, and Thomas Romeyn, and he urged the establishment of a colonial theological seminary.

While Frelinghuysen's searching messages offended some people, God used them to bring many souls to a saving knowledge of Christ. Several small revivals (in 1726, 1729, 1734, 1739, and 1741) occurred under Frelinghuysen's ministry. In 1726, the Raritan congregation had only twenty communicant members. By 1741, however, the church had added 120 new members by confession of faith. The records of the New Brunswick church indicate that sixty more souls were admitted to communion.[88] The churches Frelinghuysen served, plus his ministry to people outside of his congregations, resulted in a spiritual harvest of at least three hundred people.

Other ministers took an interest in Frelinghuysen's ministry. The Presbyterian minister Gilbert Tennent (1703–1764) was particularly impressed by the soundness of the numerous conversions that occurred under his Dutch colleague's preaching.[89] What was it about Frelinghuysen's preaching that led, with the Spirit's blessing, to so many conversions? Visscher speculated that it was Frelinghuysen's skill in "discovering the state and condition of his auditors to themselves."[90] Frelinghuysen himself said, "Though I would not prescribe a method of preaching to anyone, yet I believe that the application should be discriminating, adapted to the various states of all hearers (Jude 20–21; Jer. 15)."[91] Tennent immersed himself in studying Frelinghuysen's preaching. It was not long before he so excelled in discriminatory preaching that Tanis could say, "Tennent's preaching

was Frelinghuysen's method perfected." He added, "Whitefield's own method of preaching was greatly affected by his instruction, and so the torch which Frelinghuysen bore from East Friesland passed to Tennent, on to Whitefield."[92]

Tennent's ministry became increasingly bound up with Frelinghuysen's. Occasionally, the two ministers held combined worship services in both Dutch and English. Although some people began to complain that Frelinghuysen was taking the churches out of "a Dutch way," that simply was not true, for his goal was the conversion of sinners. Whoever shared this vision was his friend, regardless of denomination or ethnicity.

Some of the central elements of Frelinghuysen's ministry were the necessity of personal regeneration, the call to the unconverted for self-examination and repentance, and cooperation with likeminded ministers regardless of denominational boundaries. These remain some of the central elements of modern American evangelicalism. Tanis concluded, "His [Frelinghuysen's] influence in the developing structures of American theology was enormous."[93]

In the 1740s, revival touched northern New Jersey and southeast New York through the ministries of Frelinghuysen, Tennent, and Whitefield.[94] In New York City, Whitefield preached in the fields and in the pulpit of the Presbyterian minister Ebenezer Pemberton (1704–1777), after the local Church of England minister and the Dutch Reformed pastor, Henricus Boel, declared their opposition to him.[95] However, Du Bois sat on the outdoor platform with Pemberton, Frelinghuysen, and Whitefield, thereby showing his support as Whitefield preached.[96] Whitefield also preached to Germans in Skippack, Pennsylvania, and to the Dutch on Long Island.[97] Whitefield returned to New York to preach in 1754 and from 1763 to 1764.[98] In 1764 he wrote, "In New England, New York, and Pennsylvania the word has run and been glorified."[99] Samuel Buell also reported revival in 1764 among the English in East Hampton, Long Island.[100]

Charles Corwin summarized three effects of the Great Awakening upon the Dutch. First, it produced a great spiritual quickening of the church, which largely augmented the number and membership of Dutch Reformed churches, calling for more ministers. Second, it encouraged a new drive for theological education for Reformed ministers in America. And third, it promoted a restored emphasis on the central principles of

Christianity and love for brothers of differing church traditions. This gospel emphasis brought liberty to the church. It also encouraged a quest for political liberty while serving, as Corwin noted, "as a balance to the political revolution and prevented it from being hurled into the vortex of anarchy and ruin in which the French Revolution was swallowed up."[101] The First Great Awakening faded after the 1740s, but significant works of the Spirit continued through the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Conclusion

A modern reassessment of these four figures of the Dutch Further Reformation, both in the Netherlands and the Dutch colonies abroad, yields several important lessons for the encouragement of the church today regarding both the *need for* and *response to* revival.

First, preaching is the primary means of grace that forms the foundation of revival. Apart from preaching that addresses the mind, the heart, and the will, nominalism reigns rampant in the church. As in the days of the Dutch Further Reformation, the desperate need of the church today is such preaching. The pastors of the Dutch Further Reformation recognized the intersection of preaching that addresses both mind and heart with the powerful work of the Holy Spirit. They were convinced that the Holy Spirit used means for the conversion of sinners, especially preaching that was warmly and experientially Christ-centered, aiming at the hearts of the hearers to awaken them from spiritual slumber, pull in the backsliders, and encourage genuine believers.

Second, these four figures were convinced of the need for the church faithfully to exercise church discipline to address the problems of hypocrisy, lax morals, and nominalism. Church discipline has fallen on hard times today, much as it had in the context of the Dutch Further Reformation. These four ministers, however, were convinced that church discipline brought to bear the authority that was not their own, but Christ's, upon unrepentant and recalcitrant hearts. They were convinced that the combination of faithful preaching and church discipline were the keys by which Christ opened and closed the kingdom of heaven to sinner.

Third, when one thinks of revival, seldom does one immediately think of ecclesiology as an important theological distinction that affects the work

of the Holy Spirit. However, as we have seen with each of these ministers, ecclesiology was a central aspect to both the need *for* revival and the response *to* revival. Spiritual revival was necessary within the established church in order to reform the church and reset its spiritual vitality. Indeed, these ministers often viewed any notion of revival outside the established church as suspect. They also tended to view the Spirit's salvific activity as transpiring primarily within the established church, such that they saw no need for separatism in order for the Spirit to work. Their manifest love for the established church despite its flaws only increased the desire and prayer for revival, and when it came, they rejoiced that God had visited the church once again. This is a helpful reminder for the modern church as well with its individualistic focus and separatist tendencies. Revival often accentuates the catholicity of the church through the Spirit's unifying and reviving work rather than accentuating separatist tendencies.

Fourth, revival and the Spirit's heightened activity in the church highlighted the pastoral responses of these divines. The church today can also learn from these pastoral responses to a vast range of spiritual conditions within the church. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to pastoral ministry, visitation, and counseling. Rather the diversity of the body of Christ recognizes the need for a multifaceted approach to the care of souls. Rather than abandoning souls, these ministers showed the inextricable link between the two through their preaching and pastoring.

Finally, revival can often be viewed as anti-intellectual and merely emotional. What the Dutch Further Reformation underscores is the fact that the work of the Spirit in revival calls for a deeply grounded piety in the Scriptures that is both intelligent and that addresses the affections of believers. While some divines in this context tended toward a more mystical piety, most of those divines sought to biblically and pastorally balance the objective and subjective realities of spiritual life. The church today can learn much from this vital balance in its preaching, pastoral, and practical ministry. The work of the Spirit is often mysterious in its ways and effects, but it is never mystical in an unbiblical sense.

1 Parts of this article are adapted from Joel R. Beeke, "Revival and the Dutch Reformed Church in Eighteenth-Century America," in Robert Davis Smart, Michael A. G. Haykin, and Ian Hugh Clary, eds., *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 230–42. Used with permission.

2 For a more detailed treatment of the Dutch Further Reformation, see Joel R. Beeke, "Appendix: The Dutch Second Reformation (*De Nadere Reformatie*)," in *The Quest for Full Assurance: The Legacy of Calvin and His Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999), 286–309. See also Joel R. Beeke and Randall J. Pederson, "Introduction to the Dutch Further Reformation," in *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), 741–44.

3 *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie* 19 (1995): 108, as cited in English translation by Bartel Elshout, *The Pastoral and Practical Theology of Wilhelmus à Brakel: A Brief Evaluation of* The Christian's Reasonable Service (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 1997), 9.

4 Willem Jan op 't Hof, *Engelse pietistische geschriften in het Nederlands* (Rotterdam: Lindenberg, 1993), 636–37, 640, 645.

5 Willem Teellinck, as quoted in Arie de Reuver, *Sweet Communion: Trajectories of Spirituality from the Middle Ages through the Further Reformation*, trans. James A. De Jong (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 117, 126–28.

6 Willem Teellinck, *The Resting Place of the Minde* (London: printed by John Haviland for Edward Brewster, 1622), 35.

7 This section on Willem Teellinck is adapted from Joel R. Beeke, "Introduction," in Willem Teellinck, *The Path of True Godliness*, ed. Joel R. Beeke, trans. Annemie Godbehere (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021), 11–21. Used with permission. For the biographical details in this section, we are also indebted to the work of Willem op 't Hof on Willem Teellinck in various articles he has written over the years for the *Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie*.

8 Willem Teellinck, as quoted in Beeke, "Introduction," in Teellinck, *The Path of True Godliness*, 20.

9 Willem Teellinck, *The Path of True Godliness*, ed. Joel R. Beeke, trans. Annemie Godbehere (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2021).

10 "Voetius" is the Latinized name of the family name "Voet." Latinizing names was a common practice in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

11 C. A. de Niet,"Voetius, Gisbertus (1589–1676)," in *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie*, ed. W. J. op 't Hof, A. Baars, F. W. Huisman, J. van de Kamp, and A. de Reuver (Utrecht: De Groot Goudriaan, 2016), 2:467.

12 De Niet, "Voetius, Gisbertus," in *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie*, 2:468–69.

13 Carl A. Volz, *The Medieval Church: From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), 178–79.

14 De Niet, "Voetius, Gisbertus," in *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie*, 2:469.

15 M. Eugene Osterhaven, "Introduction," in Gisbertus Voetius and Johannes Hoornbeeck, *Spiritual Desertion*, ed. M. Eugene Osterhaven, trans. John Vriend and Harry Boonstra, Classics of Reformed Spirituality (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 16.

16 Joel R. Beeke and Randall J. Pederson, *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), 799.

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18 Beeke and Pederson, *Meet the Puritans*, 802.

19 This work has been translated into English and will be published by Reformation Heritage Books in 2026.

20 De Niet, "Voetius, Gisbertus," in *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie*, 2:475–76.

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23 Voetius, *Politica ecclesiastics*, as quoted in *Oude schrijvers*, 112.

24 Voetius, *Politica Ecclesiastica*, as quoted in *Oude schrijvers*, 107–108.

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26 Voetius, *Politica ecclesiastica*, as quoted in *Oude schrijvers*, 108.

27 Voetius, *Political ecclesiastica*, as quoted in *Oude schrijvers*, 108–109.
28 Osterhaven, "Introduction," in Voetius and Hoornbeeck, *Spiritual Desertion*, 22–23.
29 Voetius and Hoornbeeck, *Spiritual Desertion*, 30.
30 Voetius and Hoornbeeck, *Spiritual Desertion*, 35.
31 Voetius and Hoornbeeck, *Spiritual Desertion*, 47.
32 Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 584.
33 Beeke and Pederson, *Meet the Puritans*, 805.
34 Beeke and Pederson, *Meet the Puritans*, 805. At first, Jean de Labadie was warmly received by the divines of the Dutch Further Reformation, but as time progressed his separatist and mystical tendencies became apparent. After establishing a separate church, the Dutch Further Reformation divines began to write against him.
35 Wilhelmus à Brakel, *De waare christen* (Leiden: Johannes Deelbeek, 1755), 3.
36 W. J. op 't Hof, "Brakel, Wilhelmus à (1635–1711)," in *Encylopedie Nadere Reformatie*, ed. W. J. op 't Hof, A. Baars, F. W. Huisman, J. van de Kamp, and A. de Reuver (Utrecht: De Groot Goudriaan, 2015), 1:121.
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39 Fieret, "Wilhelmus à Brakel," in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:xxxii.
40 Op 't Hof, "Brakel, Wilhelmus à," in *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie*, 1:121.
41 Fieret, "Wilhelmus à Brakel," in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:xxxii.
42 De Reuver, "Wilhelmus à Brakel," in *Oude schrijvers*, 216.
43 Fieret, "Wilhelmus à Brakel," in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:xlvii–xlviii.
44 Fieret, "Wilhelmus à Brakel," in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:il.
45 Fieret, "Wilhelmus à Brakel," in *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 1:l.
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63 Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 2:139.
64 Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 2:159.
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A Theologian Who Fanned the Flames of Revival: August Tholuck and the German Awakening Movement[1]

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On April 9, 1822, a little over four years after his own conversion experience in the Berlin Awakening, August Tholuck wrote in his diary, "O burning in me is an unquenchable, blazing fire to be in Christ himself and to lead millions of souls with me into him."[2] Tholuck's spiritual zeal epitomized the German Awakening Movement, which rejected the rationalist theology dominating the German Protestant Church in the early nineteenth century. The Awakening Movement promoted a return to greater theological orthodoxy, but like the earlier Pietist movement (which exerted considerable influence on the Awakening Movement), it was decidedly opposed to an orthodoxy that was cold and lifeless. Instead, it urged church members to seek a conversion experience and to engage in Bible studies and other gatherings for Christian edification. It also promoted the establishment of Bible societies, mission societies, and many charitable institutions and organizations. Tholuck was involved in many of these activities.

It is unlikely that Tholuck personally led millions of souls to salvation. Nonetheless, as a theology student and adjunct professor at the University of Berlin in the early 1820s and as a theology professor at the University of Halle after 1826, he would have a profound influence over multitudes of people. Indeed, just a week after he expressed the desire to lead millions to Christ, he reported in his diary that he had already helped twenty-five people come to Christ.[3] In reflecting back on his career in 1873, Tholuck stated that early in his Christian life, "I adopted for my own life the famous motto of Count Zinzendorf: 'Ich hab nur eine Passion, und die ist Er, nur Er.' (I have but one passion, and that is He, and He alone). To bring back souls to Christ, was from that time the daily, nay, the hourly *problem* as well as the *joy* of my life."[4] Three years earlier, while celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his teaching career, Tholuck reminisced that he could look back "on hundreds and thousands of young men's hearts, which I have seen open up, and, like everything, it has only been, as Paul says, the fruit of an inner necessity: 'for I do not boast that I preach the gospel; a necessity has been laid upon me, and woe to me, if I do not preach.'" Tholuck confessed at that time that he was obsessed with "breathing new life from God into the lives of dead, degenerate, and straying young people. And one can only do that, where the spiritual fire from God is present and brings forth the breath of God." Tholuck expressed astonishment as well as thanks to God for "the spiritual fire from God's heart, which has been granted to me, since the time when I received the baptism of fire."[5]

From the time of his conversion through his long career, Tholuck tirelessly worked to promote revival. Through his writing, preaching, teaching, and personal interaction with students—including many Americans, such as the Princeton theologian Charles Hodge, who came to study under him—he converted many and inspired those who were already converted to greater spiritual activity. He not only supported mission organizations, but he also encouraged many of his theology students—such as the young George Müller, who later became a famous Bristol preacher and orphanage founder—to go forth as missionaries or pastors to win lost souls for Christ.

Except for Andrew Kloes's recent book, *The German Awakening: Protestant Renewal after the Enlightenment, 1815-1848*, historians in the Anglo-American world have paid little attention to the Awakening Movement or

to August Tholuck.[6] Kloes provides a helpful overview of Tholuck's role in the Awakening, but it is quite brief and relies on just a few sources (and no archival sources).[7] The only recent German-language work providing considerable discussion of Tholuck is Sung-Bong Kim, who focuses on only one of Tholuck's books, *Die Lehre von der Sünde und vom Versöhner* (*The Doctrine of Sin and of the Reconciler*), which was one of the most important books to spread the Awakening Movement.[8]

The Life and Ministry of August Tholuck

When Tholuck graduated from secondary school in Breslau in October 1816, he was so antagonistic toward Christianity that he gave a talk, in which he maintained that Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Confucianism were all superior to Jesus and Christianity. He was an ardent student of eastern languages, and at that time he intended to travel to the Orient to show how silly Christianity was compared to the wisdom of the East. He studied languages briefly at the University of Breslau, but in early 1817 he travelled to Berlin to meet Heinrich Friedrich von Diez, an expert in Oriental languages, who took him into his home as an assistant. Diez was a committed Christian, and though Tholuck did not convert to Christianity before Diez's death in April 1817, Diez's influence made Tholuck more open to Christianity.[9] Another powerful influence on Tholuck at that time was his favorite professor at the University of Berlin, the church historian August Neander. Neander held weekly meetings for his students, and by May 1817 Tholuck wrote to a friend that he had often been to Neander's home.[10]

The man whom Tholuck credited with bringing him fully into the Christian faith was a friend of Neander, Baron Hans Ernst von Kottwitz, whom Tholuck met sometime in mid-1817. Kottwitz, who had been converted by the Moravian Brethren in the late eighteenth century, moved to Berlin in 1806 and began a ministry for unemployed workmen there. Though he was not instrumental in launching the Berlin Awakening, which began when some young aristocrats had powerful conversion experiences in late 1816, Kottwitz's Voluntary Employment Institution in central Berlin soon became a gathering point for young men whose lives had been transformed in the Awakening.

Tholuck, who dated his conversion to January 1818,[11] continually honored Kottwitz as his spiritual father. He once wrote, "My Savior, how many false paths I would have trod, had you not given me a Kottwitz! had you not shown me, that it is not a chimera, that one can actually sacrifice for and devote oneself to the brethren."[12] After spending time with Kottwitz, he wrote in his diary in July 1823, "O you most holy Kottwitz! You immortal star of my life. As long as you remain happy and love me, my life is yet bearable."[13] In September 1827, Tholuck informed Charles Hodge that while he was in Berlin, he had visited "my patriarch," Kottwitz, who "streamed peace and love for the Savior into my heart without even speaking. When I see how much fellowship with such old disciples has contributed to our Awakening, I hope even more for such a close relationship with Christ."[14] Soon after Kottwitz's eightieth birthday in 1837, Tholuck paid tribute to him again, writing, "If I ask myself in my innermost being, what is the pulse that runs through all my work for God's sake—it is Father Kottwitz. He is my apologetics, who keeps me safe and secure from [David Friedrich] Strauss and everything else."[15] In December 1821 he wrote, "It is a special grace to live together with so many believers as are here in Berlin. It is like being in the earliest days of Christianity ... O you faithful Lord of glory! Thank you that you have given me such examples, like Spangenberg, Zinzendorf, and Kottwitz. Amen!"[16]

After his conversion, Tholuck's heart was so filled with joy and excitement—as well as love for others—that he wanted everyone to share his glorious experience. In 1870, while reflecting on his conversion, he stated, "Yes, I viewed it as a miracle, how since that time [his conversion] this passion [for Christ] came into my heart. At that time, this young man [i.e., Tholuck himself] viewed everyone who did not know Christ as a fortress to be conquered, to be stormed in the name of Jesus Christ."[17] In a sermon he preached to an annual mission festival in Halle in 1834 he expressed skepticism that people who were indifferent and cold toward missions and the saving of souls could truly be saved themselves.[18] Several times in 1821-22 Tholuck confided to his diary and to friends that he wanted to become a missionary.[19] However, when he was on the verge of accepting an appointment as a missionary to Malta, he ultimately concluded that his health problems did not suit him for foreign missions.[20] He also recognized that God was using him in Germany to win souls. In a diary entry in

November 1822, he expressed the wish to become a missionary to Malta, but he also mentioned that he had received a letter from a friend Julius Müller (who was later his colleague as a theology professor at the University of Halle), who credited Tholuck with being his awakener (*Erwecker*).[21] Indeed, in that letter Müller wrote that what Tholuck had done for him was so extraordinary that he found it impossible to express fully his thankfulness and love for Tholuck. He stated, "When we stand before our Savior and he asks me, 'Who brought you to me?' I will point to you."[22]

Though Tholuck did not become a foreign missionary, he ardently supported missions in whatever way he could. Shortly after his conversion in January 1818, he wrote at the top of his diary nine principles that he wanted to live by. The first one was to pray every morning and evening for love, humility, faith, his brothers in Christ, his enemies, and for missions.[23] Tholuck also volunteered in 1820 to provide language instruction to missionary students in Pastor Johann Jänicke's missionary school in Berlin. Initially Jänicke asked him to teach Arabic to two of his students.[24] A year later Tholuck joined the board of directors for the Prussian Main Bible Society in Berlin, a position he held until 1825.[25]

Tholuck, together with other leading figures in the Berlin Awakening, helped found two mission societies in Berlin. In 1822 the British ambassador to Germany, Sir George Rose, urged Christians in Berlin to form an auxiliary to the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (which carried the same name translated into German—Gesellschaft zur Beförderung des Christentums unter den Juden). Not only did Tholuck attend the founding meeting and agree to become one of three secretaries of this new missions organization, but in 1823 his offer to become a paid representative of the London Society was accepted. His duties included not only corresponding on behalf of the society, but also translating tracts for Jews into German, as well as editing a periodical, *Der Freund Israels* (*The Friend of Israel*), which discussed missions to the Jews.[26] Tholuck was so excited about reaching the Jews with the Christian message that he wrote in his diary in May 1824 that he and some friends "spoke with delight about the awakening of Israel. I recognize it as grace that the Lord has awakened me for this or rather assigned me to this."[27] Apparently the Berlin Society had some success, for Tholuck reported in 1824 that they had already baptized fifty Jews and the following year they baptized another hundred.[28] Though his

periodical ceased publication after two years (1824-25), Tholuck continued supporting missions to Jews after moving to Halle in 1826. Another mission society Tholuck helped establish and support was the Berlin Mission Society (formally known as the Society for Promoting Protestant Missions among the Heathen). Tholuck was one of ten men at its founding meeting in February 1824.[29]

When Tholuck moved to Halle in 1826 to take up his professorship there, he continued promoting missions. In 1829 he and a couple of friends formed the Halle Mission Society, which was an auxiliary of the Berlin Mission Society. By the mid-1830s Tholuck was speaking at almost every monthly meeting, despite efforts to recruit other speakers. He complained to a friend that he did not have the calling to interest people in missions, but it seems that Tholuck was probably more successful than he thought. He reported in February 1835 that the mission meetings were so full that many people had to be turned away.[30] A close friend of Tholuck, Rudolf Stier, a pastor in nearby Frankleben who had earlier taught at the Basel Mission School, occasionally addressed the Halle Mission Society, though not as frequently as Tholuck wished. Stier insisted that he did not have the time to come very often, despite Tholuck's invitations. Stier recognized Tholuck's quandary, however, stating, "Tholuck does everything possible to make it stirring, though one knows that he takes it upon himself merely as a duty."[31] At the second annual missions festival in Halle in 1834 Tholuck preached a moving sermon from Romans 9:1-5, about Paul's willingness to perish himself if it would bring his fellow Jews to salvation. At the close of this sermon he challenged his audience with the words that had aroused the young Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf over a century earlier. Tholuck stated, "Before you all today the Son of Man with the crown of thorns on his royal forehead stands and asks you: 'I did that for you, what are you doing for me?'"[32] In addition to addressing the mission festivals in Halle, Tholuck also preached at mission festivals in other cities, such as Wittenberg, Naumburg, and Magdeburg.[33]

Tholuck also encouraged his students to become missionaries. When Tholuck arrived in Halle in 1826, one of the few students with a vibrant faith, George Müller, was already interested in becoming a missionary. Because his father opposed these plans, Müller decided that he should no longer accept any funds from his father. Tholuck intervened by providing Müller with

work as a German tutor for three of his American students—including the Princeton theologian Charles Hodge—who paid Müller well for his services. Later, using his connections with the British-based Continental Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge over the Continent of Europe, Tholuck helped arrange for Müller to go as a missionary to Hungary. A war broke out to scuttle these plans, but then Tholuck helped him try to become a missionary to Jews.[34] In 1828 the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews accepted Müller as a missionary to Jews, contingent upon him completing their training in London.[35] While in England, Müller eventually broke with the Jewish missionary society and became a pastor in the Plymouth Brethren movement. In December 1836, Müller wrote to Tholuck, telling him that he had already established six schools for children, one Sunday School, one adult school, and two orphan houses with 66 children. He then told Tholuck, "Take encouragement from my case. For without boasting I can say it, that God has led me forward since the year 1826, when first you began to take me by the hand ... I shall have reason to praise God for ever [sic], that you were instrumental in bringing me to England."[36] Despite their doctrinal differences (the Plymouth Brethren practiced believers' baptism, for instance), Tholuck remained on good terms with Müller.[37]

Tholuck's writings also played a major role in furthering the Awakening Movement. Many historians consider his 1823 book, *Die Lehre von der Sünde, und vom Versöhner, oder Die Wahre Weihe des Zweiflers* (*The Doctrine of Sin and of the Reconciler, or The True Consecration of the Doubter*), one of the most important books to emerge from the Awakening Movement and to stimulate further revival.[38] In the foreword to the seventh edition, Tholuck revealed that he wrote this book at the instigation of Samuel Elsner, a leading figure in the Berlin Awakening. Elsner asked him to write a tract addressing the question, "Do you believe that you are a sinner?" Tholuck admitted that initially he was not very interested in this project, but within three weeks he had written an entire book that was "a reflection of my own inner developments."[39]

In the preface to *Lehre von der Sünde* Tholuck exulted in the revival that had recently visited the German Protestant churches. He called the Reformation in the sixteenth century the time of the first resurrection, but after that time, he thought, the churches had died again. Three hundred years

later (thus in the early 1800s) the church experienced a second resurrection, according to Tholuck, who added, "Who would deny that we are living in this time of resurrection?"[40] The content of his book appealed to those who were already participating in this renewal, and it also helped spread the revival message. The German theologian Gunther Wenz calls Tholuck's book the "standard tract" of the Awakening. He then identifies several features of the book that reflected the primary concerns of the Awakening Movement: an intense awareness of sin, a focus on grace and reconciliation with God, an emphasis on the Bible, an eschatological vision of history, an inclination for the mysterious and visionary, and the intention of providing edification for believers.[41]

Die Lehre von der Sünde is a fictional account of two friends—Guido and Julius—corresponding about their religious life. In his extensive analysis of Tholuck's book, Sung-Bong Kim asserts that these two characters probably correspond to two of Tholuck's friends—Guido Neumann and Julius Müller. However, the correlation is probably rather loose, because the Guido in Tholuck's book becomes a zealous convert to Christianity, while Guido Neumann was not yet converted when Tholuck was writing. As Kim explains, Tholuck wove into both characters elements of his own inner struggle and experience, too.[42] In the case of Guido this is so pronounced that some commentators think Guido corresponds to Tholuck himself.[43] In their fictional correspondence, Julius informs Guido that he has experienced a radical change, a new birth. Guido is skeptical at first, so Julius explains to him the Christian doctrine of sin, which, he claims, provides the best explanation for how humans can have so many noble characteristics, yet at the same time can be so degraded.[44]

Later in the book Guido's life is also radically transformed. He then becomes enthralled with a godly man named Father Abraham, whose life is dedicated to caring for the poor and downtrodden. Tholuck obviously patterned this admirable character very closely after his beloved Kottwitz (later he explicitly admitted this).[45] When Guido asks Father Abraham if he thinks this is a time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the latter answers, "Yes, a great resurrection morning is breaking. Hundreds of young people are being awakened all over the place through the Spirit of God. In every community converted people are forming closer relationships. Even the scholarly world is becoming a servant and friend of the Crucified One."

Guido also attends a fellowship meeting led by Father Abraham, who reads a sermon and prays. Guido is thunderstruck by the old man's closing prayer: "I had not believed, Julius, that a man could be so close to God, as this old disciple was in this prayer." Guido determines to emulate Father Abraham and pursue after Christ with all his heart.[46]

Tholuck's book was a sensation. It was released—anonymously at first—in July 1823, and by December the first edition was sold out.[47] During Tholuck's lifetime eight editions were published, and it was translated into English and several other languages. Tholuck's friend, the theology professor Hermann Olshausen, wrote to Tholuck from Königsberg in October 1823, "Here everyone is reading your book, men and women, young and old; they praise you."[48] A prominent pastor in the Berlin Awakening, Christian Ludwig Couard, wrote to Tholuck in 1824 that he had eagerly read Tholuck's book and was impressed by how it pointed to what is most important in life. Couard then wrote, "I thank you for much enjoyment for my heart, and much teaching for my mind. You have borne witness to the truth."[49] In October 1836 Tholuck told an American theology student that he continually received letters informing him about people who were converted through his book.[50] One person converted by reading his book was a pastor who thereafter played a significant role in the Awakening Movement, Karl Johann Philipp Spitta.[51] Interestingly, Tholuck's book so impressed a young woman, Henriette Heydrich, when she read it in 1826 that she prayed that God would allow her to marry the author, whom she did not know at the time. In 1829 they wed (though she died in 1831).[52]

To stir up his countrymen to seek revival, in 1834 Tholuck published a German translation of an English-language biography of the great eighteenth-century British revivalist George Whitefield. In his foreword, Tholuck explained that he thought Wesley was even greater than Whitefield, but he also considered Whitefield a powerful man of God. He did not think Germans knew enough about Whitefield. He hoped that this book would convince people that the apostle Paul's zeal for souls was not confined to the first century, but "can come even in these times into the hearts of those who seek their wisdom and strength by turning seriously and faithfully to the source of all power in the Lord." According to Tholuck, Wesley and Whitefield brought life into a dying church, which sometimes persecuted them for doing so. Tholuck continued,

> But if at that time such a small number of men, animated by the apostle Paul's spiritual fire, were able to bring forth new life from the dead masses, which spread to millions, why should it not also be possible now among us, through Gods' assistance in the midst of faithful and fiery struggles for the cause of the gospel? Hopefully the reading of this little book by some of our younger theologians will contribute toward igniting this hope and awakening this zeal.[53]

This Whitefield biography sold well enough to go into a second edition in 1840.

Tholuck also published many scholarly theological works that contributed to the Awakening Movement. In 1824 he published a commentary on the book of Romans, which was based on lectures he gave at the University of Berlin. This book presented a theological case for many of the doctrines he had discussed in more popular fashion in *Die Lehre von der Sünde*. Tholuck was calling his fellow theologians, pastors, and theology students to return to belief in the sinfulness of humanity and salvation by faith.[54] His commentary on Romans went through five editions by 1856. In 1827 Tholuck published a commentary on the gospel of John, which went through five editions in its first ten years. In addition to these and other commentaries, in 1837 Tholuck published *Die Glaubwürdigkeit der evangelischen Geschichte* (*The Trustworthiness of the Gospel History*), which was a book refuting David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. Strauss had denied the historicity of the gospel accounts about Jesus's life. Tholuck also wrote many articles on apologetics for a journal he established in 1830 and edited for twenty years, *Litterarische Anzeiger für christliche Theologie und Wissenschaft überhaupt* (*Literary Journal for Christian Theology and Scholarship*).[55]

Not only did he promote the Awakening through his writing and scholarship, but Tholuck was also a powerful revival preacher. In an 1834 sermon he explained the impact that he thought sermons should have on their audiences: "Every Sunday the word from this pulpit should fall as the fire of God into your hearts, so that every churchgoer goes home with a blazing heart. Every Sunday it should flow down like a spring rain on parched land, so that every Sunday new green shoots are awakened."[56] Many testified to the powerful impact Tholuck's sermons had. A review of a collection of his sermons published in 1829 stated, "The calling of this dear author as a preacher is to work to awaken those who are Christians in name

only to a true knowledge of themselves and their sins, and to encourage the quiet seriousness of the Christian faith and life."[57]

Even before he preached his first official sermon at a church in Berlin in July 1824, Tholuck often spoke to private fellowship meetings, both in Berlin and during his many trips, where he visited Christian colleagues. When Tholuck lived in Berlin, Kottwitz often asked him to share a message at the weekly gatherings at his Voluntary Employment Institution. By December 1821, if not earlier, Tholuck was preaching occasionally at Kottwitz's meetings.[58] Earlier that year during his travels, Tholuck had given a discourse on the Sermon on the Mount at a Bible study in Kiel with ten students present.[59] A pastor in Elberfeld, Karl August Döring, thanked Tholuck for sharing with his young men's meeting in the summer of 1823. Döring stated, "Your words in the young men's meeting ... penetrated deeply into the hearts. You brought more blessing through it than you can know or would expect."[60]

In his first two years in Halle, he only preached occasionally, but when he did, George Müller relished the opportunity to hear him.[61] In 1828-29 he spent a year in Rome as the preacher for the German Protestant Church there. The German ambassador, the Prussian Crown Prince, and others who heard him there were impressed by his ability.[62] After he returned to Halle in 1829, he preached often as the university preacher and drew large crowds. An American who studied under him, Henry Boynton Smith, wrote to a friend in May 1838, "I have been reading some of his [Tholuck's] sermons, and admire them exceedingly, they are so impassioned; there is so much movement, feeling, energy, and naturalness in them." A few months later Smith was travelling with Tholuck, and one Sunday just the two of them held their own church service; they prayed, Smith read a scripture, and Tholuck expounded on it. Smith reported that Tholuck preached as animatedly as if he were addressing a large congregation. A little later during that same trip Tholuck preached a sermon that Smith considered the best he had heard from Tholuck, and "all the auditory was melted to tears by its pathos and power." A couple of months later Smith wrote to a friend that he loved to hear Tholuck preach: "He has a very great sway over his audience. I have seen them almost all melted to tears."[63]

Indeed, Tholuck's sermons were potent enough to bring at least some of his listeners to repentance and conversion. The American Baptist

theologian Barnas Sears, who studied under Tholuck in 1833-34, reported that Tholuck drew large crowds to the local church when he preached. Sears stated, "Standing almost alone in his evangelical sentiments, Tholuck attracts throngs of rationalists to hear his melting appeals in behalf of a religion pure and undefiled. The first discourse that I heard from him was upon Luther's birthday. He preached like a reformer, and it seemed as if the congregation were ashamed of having departed so egregiously from the standards of the faith." Sears noted that Tholuck's sermons were powerful and then asserted, "As might be expected, he is often the instrument of conversion, not only in his preaching, but also in his private intercourse and in his extensive correspondence."[64] The German theologian and pastor Otto von Gerlach, a friend of Tholuck, wrote to Charles Hodge in February 1834 that Hodge would soon hear from an American friend who was studying in Halle "how powerful Tholuck's sermons were presently working." Gerlach added that one of his friends and his friend's wife had recently been "awakened" by Tholuck's sermons.[65] Gerlach's brother Ludwig reported that around 1833 a lawyer in Halle was converted after his wife and mother-in-law convinced him to go hear Tholuck preach.[66]

Tholuck's preaching also made a strong impression on the woman who would become his second wife, Mathilde von Gemmingen. She met him on July 29, 1838, when he spoke to an evening fellowship meeting in Bad Kissingen during one of his trips. After hearing him preach, she wrote, "Tholuck's sermon about love that serves others made an unforgettable impression on me. Both the content and the tone were overpowering for everyone; I was unable to think about anything else." Though she initially balked at his marriage proposal, Tholuck visited her family and received their permission, so she consented and became Mathilde Tholuck on October 9, 1838.[67]

The content of Tholuck's sermons was calculated to elicit a response. He often preached a message of repentance and faith. In a sermon in June 1833 he stated, "Repentance and self-knowledge—that is the threshold to the Christian temple." He also explained that repentance is not just a one-time event for those who are without Christ, but must be repeated throughout one's Christian life.[68] Elisha Ballantine, an American who studied under Tholuck in 1834-35, reported that Tholuck preached in Halle to a crowded church, and that in his sermons, "all is used to lead his hearers

to repentance."[69] In another sermon Tholuck called his contemporaries to repentance by telling them to return to the faith and practice of the early church.[70]

In addition to his writing and preaching, Tholuck used his position as theology professor to try to sway young men to embrace the gospel message. In April 1821, after his first semester as a lecturer (Privatdozent) at the University of Berlin, Tholuck wrote in his diary, "The Lord has granted me the most precious thing that I could ever wish; he has given me influence over immortal souls, to direct the immortal souls of those who are redeemed to their Redeemer. I never wish for anything greater, and I don't know anything more glorious."[71] Of course Tholuck used the classroom to try to bring revival to his students. Ballantine claimed that in his lectures Tholuck addressed the young men's hearts, not just their minds. Tholuck, he explained, "often turns the lecture-room into a Bethel [house of God]."[72] But Tholuck found other means to reach his students, too. Ballantine reported that Tholuck hardly ever dined or walked without two or three students with him. He also held weekly fellowship meetings for his students.

While lecturing at the University of Berlin in the early 1820s he began holding Thursday fellowship meetings in his home for theology students and other Christian friends. In 1821 twenty-six young men were involved with about twenty coming to any given meeting. At that time they would read a chapter of Romans and someone would expound on it, after which they would close with a song.[73] Later, in 1823-24, attendance at these meetings generally ranged from about twelve to twenty-five. During that time Tholuck would often read some edifying literature, such as a sermon by Wesley or an excerpt from Spener's writings.[74] When the revival preacher Ignaz Lindl, a leading figure in the earlier Catholic Awakening in Bavaria who had embraced Protestantism, was in Berlin in 1824, he spoke a couple of times at Tholuck's meetings.[75]

Tholuck's transition to Halle in 1826 was difficult for him, because the theology faculty and student body were imbued with Enlightenment rationalism, and he found few like-minded Christians there. Halle was a spiritual desert compared to the oasis in Berlin, where his spiritual father Kottwitz, his professor colleague Neander, several Awakened preachers, and many Christian friends lived. Not only that, but Tholuck faced considerable opposition from the rationalist faculty and

students in Halle. Of course, this was not his first experience with persecution for his beliefs. The theologian Heinrich Leonhard Heubner wrote to Tholuck in June 1821 that one of Tholuck's friends had shared with him "how you have recently had to endure testing by being laughed at and ridiculed by the children of this world."[76] In Halle the theology faculty protested against his appointment, and many of the students arrayed themselves against him.[77] At first many people scoffed at him and even hissed during his public worship services to express their contempt for him.[78]

One of the bright spots of his first year in Halle, however, was the arrival in late February 1827 of an American student, Charles Hodge, who had also experienced a revival when he was a student at Princeton College over a decade earlier. Tholuck and Hodge developed a close relationship and spent hours together each week. Hodge told the testimony of his salvation to one of Tholuck's friends, Ludwig von Gerlach, who recorded it that day in his diary. Hodge claimed that as a boy he had felt touched by God, but after that time he struggled spiritually. Despite his qualms, an older student at Princeton suggested he apply for church membership. He did and was accepted. On the following Sunday, he and fellow students were going into the church, and he parted from a friend to go among those taking communion, while his friend went among the non-communicants. His friend thought: "He goes to heaven, and I to hell." His friend's conviction of sin brought about the Princeton revival in 1815, where many students converted and prayer meetings were in every room. Gerlach related that Hodge's greatest joy was to remember this move of the Holy Spirit in Princeton.[79]

Tholuck considered it a "gracious providence of God" that Hodge came to Halle at that time, so they could spend time together. He often commented in his diary about the blessing that Hodge was to him. One Sunday he wrote (in English), "Had a delightful season of prayer with dear Hodge. Oh how much he refreshes my spirits."[80] Before heading off to Rome in 1828, Tholuck wrote to Hodge, who was in Berlin, "I cannot express what I feel at the idea of my not seeing you again. You have been sent to me through God's mercy as a messenger of God's tidings, as a comforter in cheerless hours, as an elder brother to show me the simple way to heaven."[81]

Hodge was likewise delighted to be able to spend so much time with Tholuck. He wrote to his brother that he loved Tholuck, whose knowledge amazed him. He then stated that "my intercourse with him has

been one of the principal sources of improvement which I have yet found in Halle."[82] When Hodge transferred to the University of Berlin in mid-1827, Tholuck put him in contact with Kottwitz and other Christian friends there.[83] From Berlin Hodge wrote to Tholuck in November 1827, "I shall retain as long as I live my deep sense of your kindness and cherish the recollection of the hours I have past [sic] in your society as the most agreeable & profitable I have enjoyed in Eur[ope]."[84] Hodge was so attached to Tholuck that he kept a picture of Tholuck on his desk for the rest of his life.[85]

A German student heavily impacted by Tholuck in his first year in Halle was Friedrich Beta, who had been instrumental in George Müller's conversion by taking him to a fellowship meeting. Beta wrote to Tholuck in late 1827 that "the Lord has truly done great things to me, even through you. Your sermons, your sighing, your praying often made me recognize my inadequacy and made me eagerly long for the pleasure of the glory of the children of God, when I was full of the love of the world."[86]

It is impossible to know how many of his students converted through his influence in these early years, but Adolf von Harless, who later became a theology professor at the University of Erlangen, credited Tholuck as the decisive influence on his spiritual transformation. He came to Halle in 1826 after reading Tholuck's commentary on Romans. He found new life through Tholuck and began zealously studying the scriptures and the church fathers. In 1828 Harless returned to Erlangen, where he was first a lecturer and later a theology professor. Harless, unlike Tholuck, embraced the Old Lutheran position, which rejected interdenominational cooperation.[87] Tholuck, on the other hand, rejected strict confessionalism and remained open to fellowship with anyone having a vibrant faith, whether Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist, Plymouth Brethren, Quaker, or some other denomination.

In January 1830, Tholuck faced a rather awkward situation, when a close friend of his, Ludwig von Gerlach, anonymously published an article in the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung*, which was highly critical of the rationalist theology of two of Tholuck's colleagues at the University of Halle. Tholuck implored the editor, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, who was a good friend of his, not to publish the article. Hengstenberg published it anyway. Tholuck did not disagree with the content of the article (and he remained a close friend with Gerlach), but he was concerned about the impact this article might

have on his ministry to students in Halle. Tholuck told Hengstenberg that God had been giving him a bounteous harvest the past few semesters, and he had seventy to eighty students who were coming to his meetings in rotation. He thought the article would stir up hatred toward him, and indeed it did, especially because some students suspected that Tholuck wrote it. Tholuck's first lecture after the article came out was interrupted by students, and they held other demonstrations against Tholuck, too. Tholuck claimed his wife could not even leave the house, because of the danger.[88]

Despite the intense wave of persecution in early 1830, Tholuck weathered the storm and continued winning souls to Christ. He wrote to Hodge in late March 1830 that he did not approve of Gerlach's article and thought it might hinder his ministry. "Yet," he admitted, "in the winter [semester] among perhaps thirty students a more intimate and more living bond of love was present than ever before."[89] Five years later he reported that God was blessing his work in Halle, and he had personal contact with eighty to a hundred students at that time.[90] In 1836, Tholuck told the visiting American theologian Benjamin Mosby Smith that he had endured considerable opposition. Smith recorded in his diary, "He has borne it all and is now reaping his earthly reward in the affection of a hundred young men who are attached to him individually and of many citizens who will attend his preaching, tho[ugh] designed mainly for the students."[91] In the 1830s Tholuck held Tuesday evening meetings for his students, and in 1835 he told Ludwig von Gerlach that more students were coming than he could accommodate.[92] This does not mean all opposition ended. Tholuck wrote to Hodge in February 1836, "The Lord has made me meet with much happy success all the time among the students, but I am still surrounded by enemies and intrigues."[93]

In the mid-1830s, his American student Ballantine called Tholuck "a man of powerful genius, immense learning, and a most devoted Christian and preacher."[94] Later he wrote to his wife that Tholuck's "life is yet eminently one of the humblest piety and closest walk with God. He is to me a most instructive and quickening example. I thank God for giving me his acquaintance and intercourse and friendship."[95] After returning to the United States, Ballantine wrote a series of articles about the status of theology in Germany. There he wrote about Tholuck that "it is right to say that I don't know any where [sic] a holier, more humble and devoted man."[96]

Another American student impressed with Tholuck's spirituality was

Henry Boynton Smith. In August 1838 he summed up his view of Tholuck in a letter to his parents:

> As we kneel together to pray, his prayers are so simple and so fervent; as we talk upon religious experience, his feelings are so deep, his faith so childlike and sincere; as we discuss questions in philosophy and theology, his knowledge is so extensive, and his philosophy so Christian; or as we talk upon men and manners, his remarks are so just, his criticisms so acute, and his detection of the humorous so rapid, that, take him all in all, I have never met and do not expect again to meet such a man. Here he is universally beloved. Wherever he goes troops of admirers and friends crowd around him.[97]

Smith's accolades almost seem like hyperbole, but so many of Tholuck's students shared his sentiments, that it seems credible—except that Tholuck was not really "universally beloved," because he faced opposition at times.

Indeed, the eminent Swiss-born American church historian, Philip Schaff, was also effusive in his praise of Tholuck. Schaff not only studied under Tholuck in 1839-40 in Halle, but he lived for six months in Tholuck's home. In his *Personal Reminiscences* Schaff wrote that Tholuck

> was a man of genius, extensive learning and fervent piety. His lectures were fresh, suggestive and stimulating. His chief power and usefulness lay in his personal magnetism and devotion to the students, whom he loved as his own children, himself being childless. He took daily walks at eleven and four with two or three of them at a time, instructing and entertaining them by easy conversation, anecdotes and sallies of humor. He took special interest in honest sceptics and inquirers. He had himself a sceptical vein, and knew how to deal with honest doubts.[98]

In the spring of 1840 Schaff accompanied Tholuck to Berlin, where Schaff intended to complete his studies. According to Schaff, "Dr. Tholuck introduced me to Baron von Kottwitz, his spiritual father who came as near being a perfect saint as any one I have ever known." Tholuck also introduced him to other Christian friends. In Berlin Schaff often visited Hegel's widow, who was Tholuck's wife's aunt.[99]

In Schaff's 1857 book on theology at the German universities, he devoted a chapter to Tholuck and paid him this wonderful tribute:

> Next to Neander [Schaff's professor for church history at the University of Berlin], no German divine of the present century is more extensively known in the Protestant churches of France, Holland, England and America, than Dr. Frederick Augustus Tholuck, of Halle. His disciples are scattered nearly all over the Protestant world, and gratefully remember his genial influence and personal attention. His name will always be honorably connected with the history of the revival of evangelical theology and piety in Germany.[100]

Schaff also pointed out that one of the ways that Tholuck contributed to the resurgence of more orthodox Protestant theology in Germany was by influencing the appointment of like-minded professors, including his own convert, Julius Müller, at the University of Halle.[101]

One of the main thrusts of the Awakening Movement and a primary concern of Kottwitz, his spiritual father, was charitable activity. Tholuck was not as well known for his good works as he was for his theological scholarship, interaction with students, and preaching. Thus, I was rather surprised when I visited Halle in 2017 to discover a Mathilde-Tholuck-Haus, named after Tholuck's second wife. Indeed, Tholuck and his wife founded a charitable organization that in 1857 opened a hospital with twelve beds for adults and six for children.[102] It seems to have been modelled on Theodor Fliedner's work in Kaiserswerth, since this hospital in Halle was staffed by deaconesses. The Mathilde-Tholuck-Haus in Halle today continues to carry on the Tholucks' legacy of good works by caring for elderly people with dementia. Tholuck also engaged in prison ministry at times. He wrote to Ludwig von Gerlach, probably in 1834, that he had just spoken to some jail inmates and "it brought me considerable joy."[103]

Concluding Reflection

In 1873 one of Tholuck's former students, Leopold Witte, who later became his biographer, delivered an address about Tholuck's life—written by Tholuck—to a conference in New York City. After reading Tholuck's essay, Witte remarked that Tholuck was being rather modest, so he added: "We

know that in a great measure the wholesome change from Rationalism to faith which has been granted to our native country within the past fifty years is, next to God's grace, owing to the restless zeal of this brave 'miles Christi,' [soldier of Christ] a genuine 'good knight without fear and without reproach.'" Thousands, Witte asserted, call Tholuck their spiritual father, because "His firmly clinging love embraces young hearts with heavenly power, and wrestles with God for the peace and victory of his students."[104]

Tholuck was indeed more than just an influential theology professor who rejected the dominant rationalist theology of his day. He was also a powerful revival preacher who converted both students and others through his sermons. He cultivated personal interactions with his theology students that brought new life to some and edification to others. He also promoted missions in whatever way he could. He had a tremendous impact on the lives of many theologians, pastors, and others, including some who later became rather famous, such as George Müller, Charles Hodge, and Philip Schaff. His spiritual zeal and his love for others, which motivated him to help others experience the wonderful gift of salvation that he had received, reflected the concerns of the German Awakening Movement in the early nineteenth century.

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1 This article is based on research that will hopefully result in a book-length study on the German Awakening Movement in the early nineteenth century.

2 August Tholuck, April 9, 1822, in Tagebuch, 1821-22, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/pageview/578418.

3 Tholuck, April 16, 1822 [Tholuck incorrectly wrote 1821], in Tagebuch, 1821-22, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/pageview/578418.

4 August Tholuck, "Evangelical Theology in Germany: Survey of My Life as a Teacher of Theology," translated and delivered by Leopold Witte, in *History, Essays, Orations and Other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, Held in New York, October 2-12, 1873*, ed. Philip Schaff and S. Irenæus Prime (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1874), 86.

5 August Tholuck, "Ansprache des Herrn Dr. Tholuck," in *Dr. Tholucks fünfzgijähriges Jubiläum am 2. December 1870* (Halle: Julius Fricke, 1871), 12, 10.

6 Annette G. Aubert, *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 81-83, briefly discusses Tholuck, but focuses entirely on his theology, not on his role in the Awakening Movement. David Ellis in *Politics and Piety: The Protestant Awakening in Prussia, 1816-1856* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), is interested in the political inclinations of the aristocrats involved in the Awakening; he has little interest in Tholuck and does not even render Tholuck's full name correctly.

7 Andrew Kloes, *The German Awakening: Protestant Renewal after the Enlightenment, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 62-68; another English-language work providing a brief discussion of Tholuck (along with some of his writing) is *The Spirituality of the German Awakening*, ed. David Crowner and Gerald Christianson (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 45-52.

8 Sung-Bong Kim, *"Die Lehre von der Sünde und vom Versöhner": Tholucks theologische Entwicklung in seiner Berliner Zeit* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992).

9 August Tholuck, "Mein Leben," Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, pp. 16, 19-20, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/titleinfo/577784.

10 Leopold Witte, *Das Leben D. Friedrich August Gotttreu Tholucks*, vol. 1: *1799-1826* (Bielefeld: Velhagen und Klasing, 1884-86), 83-84.

11 August Tholuck, February 9, 1822, in Tagebuch, 1821-22, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/pageview/578418.

12 Witte, *Das Leben D. Friedrich August Gotttreu Tholucks*, 1:124.

13 August Tholuck, July 29, 1823, in Tagebuch, 1822-23, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/titleinfo/577817.

14 August Tholuck to Charles Hodge, September 22, 1827, in Charles Hodge Papers, Princeton University Archives.

15 Adolf Hausrath, *Richard Rothe und seine Freunde*, 2 vols. (Berlin: G. Grotesche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1902-6), 1:139.

16 August Tholuck, December 9, 1821, in Tagebuch, 1821-22, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/pageview/578418.

17 Tholuck, "Ansprache des Herrn Dr. Tholuck," 11.

18 A. Tholuck, "Predigt an dem zweiten Jahresfeste des hallischen Missionsvereins," in R. Stier and A. Tholuck, *Weckstimmen für das evangelische Missionswerk* (Halle: Eduard Anton, 1834), 52.

19 August Tholuck, April 28, 1821 and July 3, 1821, in Tagebuch, 1821-22, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/pageview/578418.; August Tholuck to Rudolf Stier, July 15, 1821, in *Aus A. Tholucks Anfängen: Briefe an und von Tholuck: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der religiösen Erneuerung im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, ed. G. Nathanael Bonwetsch (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1922), 85-86.

20 August Tholuck, "Mein Leben," pp. 25-26, in Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/titleinfo/577784; August Tholuck, "Evangelical Theology in Germany: Survey of My Life as a Teacher of Theology," translated and delivered by Leopold Witte, in *History, Essays, Orations and Other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance*, edited by Philip Schaff and S. Irenæus Prime (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1874), 85.

21 August Tholuck, November 2, 1822, in Tagebuch, 1822-23, Franckesche Stiftungen Archiv, at: https://digital.francke-halle.de/fsha/content/titleinfo/577817.

22 Julius Müller to August Tholuck, n.d., but received November 2, 1822, in *Aus A. Tholucks Anfängen: Briefe an und von Tholuck*, 59-62.

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The Nineteenth-Century Genevan *Réveil* and Religious Awakening in France

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Since the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, French Protestantism's fortunes had always been connected with Geneva and with the French political order, or disorder. France witnessed the initial inroads of Protestantism during the reign of Francis I (1494-1547). The first synod of the Reformed Church took place in 1559 with a confession of faith written by Calvin who lived in exile in Geneva until his death in 1564. The conversion of the Huguenot Henry IV to Catholicism ended the Wars of Religion (1562-1598) and resulted in the 1598 Edict of Nantes with protections for Protestants. After Henry's assassination in 1610, his son Louis XIII (1601-1643) began to unravel the Edict of Nantes. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes under Henry's grandson Louis XIV (1638-1715) in 1685 outlawed the Protestant religion, and led to the devastating War of the Camisards (1702-1704) in the Cévennes region.[1] Finally, the Edict of Toleration under

Louis XVI in 1787 granted individual religious and civil rights to Protestants but was "written in a way to prevent Protestants from seeking a return to their situation before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685."[2]

The 1789 French Revolution ended the monopoly of the Catholic Church and was in principle embraced by most Protestants. After Napoleon Bonaparte seized power in 1799, French Protestantism enjoyed greater freedom than at any time of its precarious existence. Yet many people freed from obligatory religious duties and rituals fell away from organized religion that no longer wielded political power. At the dawn of the nineteenth century, a religious awakening took place in the Reformed churches of Geneva and France, whose history and destinies had been bound together for centuries, with a renewed emphasis on the teaching of the Reformers. The name given to this period from 1810-1850 is the *Réveil,* described as "a fundamental step in the life of French Protestantism during the first half of the nineteenth century."[3]

The *Réveil* has been called "one of the glories of modern Geneva," a reaction against the rationalism that had invaded Reformed churches in the eighteenth century.[4] In fact, "it would be as impossible to speak of the *Réveil* in France without first retracing the *Réveil* in Geneva as to speak of the French Reformation without speaking of John Calvin." The Reformed churches in Geneva "recalled what they had received during the Reformation and considered it a duty of honor and gratitude to take the Good News to France, long closed to the gospel, and now with doors reopened."[5] The *Réveil* restored and preached again the Reformed doctrines of grace that had fallen into discredit. In addition, new forms of worship and new ecclesiastical ideas appeared during the *Réveil* and under its influences.[6]

Literature on the *Réveil*

There are several important French-language histories of the *Réveil*. Some writers were eyewitnesses and participated in those glorious years. They provide a vast amount of information and details that cannot be reproduced here. J. Pédérzet, professor of the Faculté de Théologie Protestante de Montauban, wrote in 1896 of the *Réveil* as "the most beautiful memory of the century for us [Reformed believers]" and describes the pastors and evangelists God used during this time— Jean Monod, Frédéric Monod,

Athanase Coquerel,[7] François Delessert, Victor de Pressensé, Alexandre Vinet,[8] and many others.[9] Women also contributed to and participated in the *Réveil* and deserve more recognition and study—among them Madame Jules Mallet, Mademoiselle de Chabaud-La-Tour, the Countess Pelet de la Lozère, Baroness Bartholdi, and the Duchesse de Broglie.[10] Léon Maury's *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France* remains one of the classic texts on the *Réveil.* Émile Guers (1794-1882) was an eyewitness to the birth of the *Réveil* in Geneva. In his writings, he opined that many had written on the *Réveil* but found most of these works "too personal, too incomplete, too inexact, giving an idea more or less deficient, especially of its first phase." [11] Guillaume de Félice's extensive multivolume *Histoire des Protestants de France* has been reissued several times and translated into English. These works and others have been consulted for this article.[12]

Definitions, Descriptions, and Dates

A major "difficulty to overcome in speaking of the *Réveil* is vocabulary."[13] Sébastien Fath wrote in 2002 that "the definition of '*Réveil*' in reality is not simple. Even more, it has hardly been treated in depth by French historians ... the *Réveil* and revivalism constitute a historical field relatively new."[14] Further, he questioned the use of the word exclusively for Protestantism and asked if one could speak of a Catholic *Réveil.* Magraw agrees and asserts that for the Catholic Church "the years from 1810 to the 1870s were a period of religious reconstruction—even revival."[15]

The *Réveil* was described in the early twentieth century as "a great Christian movement that arose against the indifference and religious formalism generally found in Europe [of which] the original character was instantaneous conversion."[16] More recently, André Encrevé described the *Réveil* in Reformed churches as "primarily a spirituality influenced by Romanticism ... a reaction against the rationalism of the Enlightenment, but also with roots in Pietism."[17] Mark Noll recognizes "the revivalists' championing of *personal* repentance, *personal* commitment, *personal* Bible study, and *personal* evangelism [that] occurred during a period when influences from both the Enlightenment and Romantic movements greatly increased focus on the *individual*."[18]

Jean Decorvet notes the change in the definition of the word *revival* in the first half of the nineteenth century from "intense periods of religious fervor" and "divine providence [using] preachers appointed by the Holy Spirit for the advancement of the gospel" to the second half of the century and "the newer form emphasizing the attempt to perpetuate, by human activity, the spontaneous development of revival."[19] All the revivalists sought to return churches to the "fundamental doctrinal affirmations of the Reformers," a resurgence of what had existed in the churches since the sixteenth century. Yet in contrast with the Reformation, the *Réveil* was characterized by a "strong individualistic tendency and the sentimentality of Romanticism."[20] It should be noted that there are critics of the revivalists' elevation of "evangelical conversion" and of the intellectual deficiency of a movement that "put the heart before reason."[21] Claude Baty admits that the criticisms are not completely without foundation yet they fail to appreciate that the revivalists were opposed to "rationalism but they were not anti-intellectual."[22]

There were different phases of the *Réveil.* The first phase was a pietist *Réveil,* represented by Robert Haldane (1764-1842), Henri-Louis Empeytaz (1796-1853), and Ami Bost (1790-1874). The orthodox phase of the *Réveil* was represented by César Malan (1787-1864), Félix Neff (1798-1829), Adolphe Monod (1802-1856), and Louis Gaussen (1790-1863).[23] Haldane's visit to Geneva in 1817 is often credited with the commencement of the first phase of the *Réveil,* marked by "the conversion of the soul and the proclamation of biblical truth."[24] Goltz described Haldane as "the man whom God chose as an instrument of his power to bring a new seed of life."[25]

Encrevé dates the beginning of the *Réveil* to after 1815 following Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo which opened the door for British and Swiss missionaries to enter France and ignite the *Réveil.*[26] Others date the beginning of the *Réveil* to 1810 and contest the claims that the arrival of Haldane and foreign influences were responsible for the initial sparks. Maury insists that if the departure from the Reformed faith began in Geneva so did the revival of faith and life. He argues that during the first years of the *Réveil,* from 1810 to 1816, "no foreign influence had acted on this movement" and that "it is an error to argue, as has often been done, that the *Réveil* was due to Scottish or English influences. One must seek its true source among the Moravians, the *Société des Amis,* faithful preaching, and brotherly gatherings ... that little by little brought the students from darkness to light. When foreign Christians

arrived in Geneva, not only had the ground been seeded, but the harvest had begun to sprout."[27] In the first years of the *Réveil,* different theological tendencies collaborated in the formation of the *Société Biblique Protestante* in 1818. A new society was later created in 1833 due to disagreements over the distribution of Bibles to Catholics which those of a liberal tendency opposed.[28]

Rejection of Reformation Teaching

In the 1700s a slow departure from Reformation teaching eventually led to the abandonment of the Confession of Faith and Catechism of Calvin in Geneva. Much of this began under the influence of Jean-Alphonse Turrettini (1671-1737). During his studies in Geneva, Turrettini's thinking was shaped by Cartesian ideas and Arminian teaching through his voyages to England, Holland, and France. Initially, without wanting to abandon evangelical truth, he concentrated his efforts on shaking off the yoke of Calvinism and scholastic orthodoxy. He was preoccupied only with dogma which had a direct connection with ethics and a desire to unite all the confessions issued from the Reformation. Turrettini sought to move away from "the Reformed scholasticism of his father and toward a rationalistic or an enlightened form of orthodoxy."[29]

The effect of this new theological orientation became evident in churches. While the number of pastors grew, the number and length of sermons diminished, service times were limited to half an hour, a new Bible translation was undertaken, and hymns were added to the Psalter. The importance of the *Consistoire* was reduced and the influence of the *Vénérable Compagnie des Pasteurs* grew, leading to aristocratic tendencies and nepotism.[30] Pastors were assigned to ministry positions in consideration of the merit of their fathers or grandfathers. As the manners of high society were adopted by pastors, the common people's antipathy grew toward pastors and the gospel. Young people from well-connected families did not concern themselves with work, assured of civil or ecclesiastic positions. Other young people neglected their studies "knowing that all the wisdom of Solomon would not benefit them in obtaining a position reserved for the privileged."[31]

Voltaire entered the picture in 1755 when he resided at Ferney near Geneva intending to "destroy piety and morality." High society visited

Ferney and was seduced by their charming and brilliant host. They imbibed deeply of superficiality and proverbial frivolity. In response, pastors tried to defend the truth of the Christian faith with an apologetic concentrated on demonstrating the beauty and the necessity of the gospel or the utility of religion for social well-being and a sense of duty. To make Christianity more acceptable, the dogmas which frightened people were considered nonessentials. "These concessions were useless; the faithful remained callous; the enemies armed for battle."[32] Jean-Baptiste le Rond d'Alembert (1717–1783) visited Ferney in 1756 to prepare his article on Geneva in the *Encyclopedia*. He spoke highly of the tolerance, purity of morals, and simplicity of forms of worship. Yet he claimed that many ministers no longer believed in the divinity of Christ and did not hold any teaching from Scripture that might wound humanity and reason. They rejected all revealed mysteries and affirmed that the main principle of true religion was to never propose anything that offends intelligence. Pastors protested this accusation and sent an official manifesto throughout Europe and churches abroad affirming their faith in the authority of Scriptures and the divinity of Christ. There is little reason to believe that the pastors lacked sincerity in their reaction to d'Alembert's charges. The truth, however, is that the doctrinal foundation of Christianity was seldom mentioned and allusions to it had become rare toward the end of the eighteenth century.

For example, in *Instruction chrétienne*, a work by Jacques Vernet, pastor and professor in Geneva from 1734 to 1790, the divinity of Christ was described as God intimately in union with the man Jesus. There was no mention of original sin and the goal of the gospel was to render man happy and virtuous.[33] The effects of this teaching are evident in a sermon outline from that period on preparation for death. One must 1) have the right ideas about death and its consequences, 2) detach oneself to a certain extent from life itself, 3) put one's conscience in order, 4) live well each day, 5) keep one's affairs in order and make a will while in good health, 6) and avoid sluggishness. Although these are worthy principles, the preaching was far from "the folly of the cross" and the grace of salvation in Christ alone. This reasonable Christianity soon was known as rationalism in the evolution of religious ideas. The religion of Calvin had progressed from the austerity, moral vigilance, and dogmatism of the first Calvinists to a "natural religion, a religion of common sense," a religion deeply in need of a spiritual awakening.[34]

French Religious Context

The eighteenth century in France "witnessed the triumph of absolutism in the political domain and the triumph of natural theology, or rationalism, in the religious domain."[35] Rationalism initially affirmed the supernatural but "soon rejected what was unrealizable for man, what was not the object of his desires and actions."[36] The 1789 French Revolution was not completely beneficial for Protestantism although the established principle of the freedom of religion would permit future progress.[37] The chaotic Revolution introduced a constitutional monarchy, the disestablishment of the Catholic Church, a brief Reign of Terror (*La Terreur*) in 1793 and 1794, intense efforts of dechristianization, and the executions of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

The inauguration of a new political order included religious liberty and the previously unimaginable election of a Huguenot, Rabaut Saint-Étienne, for a short term as president of the *Assemblée Nationale* before his execution in 1792.[38] During the Revolution, many Protestant pastors and believers, seduced by patriotism or natural religion, readily accepted the worship of the Supreme Being and saw in it the cessation of confessional rivalries.[39] Temples of Reason dotted the French landscape.[40] Synods that functioned since the Reformed Church's reorganization in 1715 under Antoine Court (1695-1760) ceased. Forty-six percent of Protestant ministers resigned their positions during *La Terreur* and only 68 percent of them returned to ministry in 1794.[41] Protestant churches struggled to rebuild spiritually, and many were characterized by spiritual lukewarmness. Some of the pastors had been trained at the seminary in Lausanne and had come under the influence of Enlightenment philosophy and the rationalism of the day.[42] As Pédérzet describes the times, "Geneva sent us its rationalism after having abandoned its ancient faith. Rousseau took the place of Calvin. Jesus Christ was not God manifested in the flesh, nor the Savior of men ... If this was still religion, it was no longer Christianity."[43]

In the early 1800s French Reformed churches still formally upheld the *Confession de La Rochelle*. The preaching in the churches, however, had long undergone a change in the direction of rationalism. There was an emphasis on "morality, appeals to the conscience, and religious aphorisms. One strived for orations on the beauty of virtue and the ugliness of vice and constructed

moral theories, as did Socrates under the Portico of Zeus."[44] The words of Jesus were rarely quoted to avoid "difficult questions concerning his nature, the role of the crucifixion, or the profound meaning of the resurrection."[45] Some philosophers of the eighteenth century, including Voltaire, had been allies of Protestants in their struggle against religious fanaticism, and many churches and pastors succumbed to the siren call of morality and virtue separated from dogma. Duty and virtue figured prominently in sermons with references to the Supreme Being and the Architect of the Universe.[46] Church members were scandalized when faithful pastors, influenced by the Moravians, preached on man's state of sin, the condemnation under which all people stand by nature, and the necessity of salvation in Christ alone.[47] Pastor Étienne Gibert of Bordeaux appeared seven times before the *Consistoire* for his refusal to abstain from discussing these subjects and was assigned to another church. Rather than provoke a schism he left for England.[48]

Napoleon Bonaparte came to power in 1799 to reverse many of the gains of the French Revolution. Ten years earlier the Catholic Church had been forced to relinquish its possessions and land holdings. The Church had been nationalized and its ministers were elected by church members without any consultation with or approval of Rome. Napoleon sought to bring the Catholic Church under his control for political purposes. An alliance with the Church became a political necessity since many French were still attached to the Church. Pope Pius VII (1742–1823) was elected in 1800 and desired to restore the unity of the Church in a nation that was the most powerful Catholic nation at the time. The Concordat was signed in 1801 between Napoleon and Pius VII to restore the prestige of the Catholic Church. Catholicism, however, was no longer recognized as the religion of the State but as "the religion of the great majority of French citizens."[49] Although the Concordat offered a level of religious pluralism, Napoleon's objective was the control of religion for societal submission. Religions were considered a public service and on equal footing. The head of State appointed bishops while those bishops previously loyal to Rome were forced to resign. The State retained possession of Catholic property seized after the Revolution and assured the upkeep of certain properties.[50]

The *Articles Organiques* (Organic Articles) were administrative regulations unilaterally imposed and promulgated in 1802. They provided state

recognition of the Reformed and Lutheran confessions alongside the Catholic Church. Napoleon intended to prevent a return to past religious conflict and reorganize the Protestant religion. The legal protection and subsidies came at a price and placed Protestant churches and pastors under the surveillance of the State. Protestants were given access to most public positions and pastors became paid employees of the State with an oath of loyalty to the State. Churches were reorganized into consistories and appointments to pastoral positions required government confirmation.[51] Evangelical expansion in the country was hindered by Article one which prohibited ministry in France to all foreigners. Article three required pastors to pray publicly for "the prosperity of the French Republic and for the Consuls." Napoleon created a Protestant Faculty of Theology at Montauban in 1808 and seminary professors were appointed by the First Consul. Protestants were divided in their views of the Concordat and *Articles Organiques* which brought churches into the service of the State. The Napoleonic penal code harshly sanctioned all possibility of gatherings apart from official religious confessions.[52] Over time, however, some Reformed church leaders came to believe that defending the concordataire arrangement was not possible. They called Reformed believers back to their Reformation roots and Reformed doctrine.[53]

After over one hundred years of struggle and persecution since the Revocation of Nantes in 1685, it was not surprising that many Protestants welcomed the Concordat imposed by Napoleon. The number of Reformed believers reached its numerical peak in 1560 and steadily declined in the following decades and centuries because of war, plague, exile, and emigration.[54] Protestantism had lost half its population, and its spiritual forces appeared to be spent. Believers seemed to have conserved little of the Reformers' teaching and were marked by the rationalism of the eighteenth century. The law of 18 Germinal X (April 18, 1802), dispensed churches of any responsibility for the support of their pastors or the maintenance of their buildings and reinforced this indifference.[55] Religion was external to the lives of most people. French Protestants were finally at rest, "a rest resembling indifference ... Pastors preached, the people listened, the consistories met, and public worship conserved its forms."[56]

Precursors to *Réveil*

As there were reformers before the Reformation there were also awakenings before the *Réveil*. During the seventeenth century, Pietism made its appearance in Geneva with Jean de Labadie (1610–1674) who was exiled from France and found refuge in Geneva. Although called to a ministry in London, he made such an impression on the *Consistoire* and flock in Geneva that he remained as pastor for six years. He preached repentance, self-denial, and the necessity of a new life in Christ. But his activity also ruffled some ecclesiastical feathers which led to his departure in 1666. His co-laborers testified of his sound doctrine and holy living as a true disciple of Jesus Christ.[57]

Early in the eighteenth century, the prophetic phenomena manifested in the Cévennes region of France occurred in Geneva with the arrival of French refugees.[58] Although banned by the *Consistoire*, their simple assemblies continued until the mid-century with an emphasis on genuine conversion and individual piety. Little by little this movement merged with a Moravian community founded by Count Zinzendorf (1700-1760) in Geneva. There were also evangelical representatives in the official church such as François Turretin (1623-1687), Bénédict Pictet (1655-1724), and Antoine Maurice (1716-1795). These men were forerunners of the *Réveil* in Geneva. "As spiritual darkness thickened, they remained faithful and passed the torch of truth to those who followed."[59]

The *Réveil's* origins are inseparable from the work begun by Zinzendorf and the Moravians in 1741. Fifty believers accompanied the count on his voyage to Geneva.[60] The brothers and sisters immediately organized reunions in different districts of the city. Each day began with a daily religious service at Zinzendorf's residence for exhortations, and in the evening they gathered again to sing. The night hours were divided so that there was always someone praying. During his visit, Zinzendorf established relations with church officials, and when he left he sent a report about the community he had founded and its goals. He also dedicated a collection of Scripture texts to the church at Geneva and its pastors highlighting the divinity of Christ and his position as Savior. After Zinzendorf's departure, the community he established grew to over six hundred members with a small nucleus that continued until the beginning of the nineteenth century.[61]

Genevan Decline

The church in Geneva had been regarded as possessing the purest doctrine, the best example of Christian order and discipline, and exemplary practice of gospel precepts. Endowed with the Confession of Faith and Catechism of Calvin, the city was the epicenter for Reformed churches. The influence of Geneva's theologians spread to France, England, Scotland, Holland, and even Hungary. English exiles in 1555 effusively described what they saw in Geneva as "the very model of a Christian commonwealth: a society in which freedom and discipline were so perfectly in balance that none of them would ever forget the experience."[62] Two and a half centuries later, however, Goltz speaks of the disappointment of travelers to Geneva who sought "the city of Calvin, *la Rome protestante*."[63]

Beginning in 1802 the *Confession de La Rochelle* was no longer at the end of the Bible or used in the liturgy and "few Genevans believed that they should still follow all the confessions and practices of Calvin."[64] A new translation by the *Compagnie des Pasteurs* in 1805 modified passages concerning the divinity of Christ. The theology of the *Académie* in Geneva and the *Compagnie* was no longer the theology of Calvin.[65] At this time, Christian doctrine remained intact and on the surface seemed more firmly held than ever. There was, however, a loosening of moral standards, loose in a relative sense in permitting amusements and clothing that had been forbidden in earlier times. In particular, young people amused themselves with card games and the reading of questionable books. There were distinctions made between the aristocracy and lower classes of people with the practice of partiality in dress and amusements. An orthodox formalism and "growing indifference of the masses cried out for a new religious reformation."[66] These changes were connected to political changes following the French Revolution and the occupation of the city by the French. Protestant Geneva was annexed to France in 1798 and was attached to the department of Léman with a Catholic majority. The city lost "its political independence, and consequently, its liberty, but Geneva also witnessed the slow invasion of a population, both foreign in its mentality and foreign in its faith."[67] Geneva became a Swiss canton and the church of Geneva was no longer the church of all the people. The canton became bi-confessional and the *Consistoire* no longer functioned as a tribunal to enforce church law nor had the prerogative

to excommunicate wayward church members. Political and ecclesiastical authorities "lost their spiritual monopoly" on Genevans. The progressive separation of Church and State permitted people "to exist without recourse to the official Church."[68]

Many French pastors had studied at Geneva's *Académie*, created in 1559, and the events and religious struggles of the city reverberated in France. The prompting of Antoine Court had created the *Seminaire Français de Lausanne*.[69] Over four hundred pastors, many martyred for the faith, had been trained there for ministry in the "Church of the Desert" and Reformed churches in France.[70] In 1812 Napoleon decreed that pastors should be trained in France at the newly-created *Faculté de théologie de Montauban* or in Geneva.[71] The seminary in Lausanne closed its doors and its students went to the *Académie* in Geneva where the *Réveil's* early manifestation was among theology students, including Ami Bost. Theological teaching was in a deplorable state, the Bible was virtually unknown except to study Hebrew, and the New Testament was ignored. Bost came under the influence of godly pastors who gathered students to study Scripture to fill the void in their classes. The *Consistoire* "forbade students to preach on Christology, original sin, grace and predestination."[72] The early piety of Geneva no longer existed and the Moravian awakening had run its course. Bost and his father, along with several elderly persons, were all that was left of the Moravian community founded by Count Zinzendorf in 1741.[73]

Genevan Awakened

The *Réveil* in French-language countries was born in Geneva.[74] The city was "visited by a beneficial and sustainable religious *Réveil* ... superior to the formalism of a Church that had allowed its doctrine and practice to fall into deep decadence and which, after prolonged resistance, felt at this time the influence of a movement it had opposed."[75] Ami Bost asserted in his *Mémoires* that at this moment in history when French-language churches were at their lowest point since the Reformation, an upward movement began and the *Réveil* was "divinely prepared before the instruments God used had awareness of it."[76] He observed that although the *Réveil* broke out in Geneva in 1816 and 1817, beginning in 1802 God had begun preparing the soil in the hearts of his people. He connected the religious awakening

of Geneva with small gatherings at his father's home.[77] Although the "storm of a violent revolution had uprooted the Church of Calvin, on its ruins emerged new trees, less important by their grandeur, but full of youth and sap."[78] Geneva became the center of evangelistic work carried out in France. From Geneva, the first wave was diffused in Swiss Romandie and the Protestant Midi on soil prepared by the Quakers and the Moravians.[79] Despite differences among proponents of the *Réveil,* "ranging from a very individual Pietism to doctrinal orthodoxy (Reformed), there was common agreement on the necessity of reforming the church as an institution and on an individual conversion experience."[80]

In 1810, the *Société des Amis* community was founded, and Bost and Henri-Louis Empaytaz (1790–1853) were among the most fervent members.[81] They were both theology students at this time and were soon joined by others—Gonthier, Henri Pyt, and Emile Guers. At this time the gospel of salvation in Christ alone and the assurance of eternal life became clearer to them. The profound piety of the Moravians, their brotherly fellowship, their living faith, and their intimate assemblies all had an impression on the students completely different from what they experienced in the cold worship services and moralistic preaching in the national church. Bost recounts Good Friday services and the reading of Jesus's last words: "And he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit" (John 19:30). The reading stopped and the whole church fell to its knees and wept. Bost also described his attraction and aversion toward the Catholic Church, attracted by the exterior elements of worship, and horrified by its idolatry and the blood of Protestant martyrs. It was among the *Société des Amis* that he found the encouragement and fellowship his soul craved.[82]

The opposition to the *Société des Amis* came quickly from the *Compagnie des Pasteurs*. They were unhappy about gatherings in private homes and initially refused to visit them to see for themselves. Eventually, a few pastors visited these assemblies and were so shocked by the emphasis on sin, the divinity of Christ, sovereign grace, and justification by faith, that they refused to return. Several students were threatened that they would not be accepted into ministry if they continued their attendance at Moravian gatherings. Around this time Baroness Krüdener began to influence the gatherings and later claimed to have visions.[83] She made a great impression on Empaytaz who began to preside over gatherings, bringing him into conflict with

church leaders. Although she remained only two months in Geneva, she strengthened the desire for piety among the believers. Outsiders considered her crazy and her presence among the Moravians reinforced the prejudices against them.[84]

French Awakening

Henri Dubief connects the beginning of the *Réveil* in France with the end of Napoleon's *Grand Empire* in 1815. Protestants were associated with the *Consulat* (1799-1804) and the Empire (1804-1814/15) through their participation in political assemblies. They did not "consider the regime of Napoleon I as contrary to their religious principles."[85] Some pastors heaped inordinate praise on Napoleon, for having "the wisdom of Socrates, the courage of Alexander, the genius of Caesar, the mercy of Augustus, the zeal of Constantine, the goodness of Henri IV."[86] With his abdication in April 1814, the monarchy was reestablished with Louis XVIII during the Restoration (1814-1830). The Restoration was briefly interrupted by the famous "One Hundred Days" following Napoleon's escape from the island of Elba to retake the throne.[87] After Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815, the *Réveil* "accompanied the reestablishment of peace in all of Europe."[88]

Through the *Réveil* many Reformed believers in France, held in thrall to the liberalism of natural religion, were brought back to orthodoxy.[89] Public preaching underwent a massive change from moralism to evangelism that shook people from their slumber and made them tremble before a holy God over their sinful condition. Before the *Réveil,* sermons were characterized by "an almost superstitious concern for style and a monotonous elegance."[90] Preaching now emphasized "Jesus, his cross, his expiatory blood, his sacrifice for sin, the corruption of every child of Adam, their condemnation as children of wrath, conversion, an appeal to the crucified one, and the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit for the heart's renewal."[91]

The *Réveil* clashed with laws of the Restoration that attempted to restrict the development of Protestantism. The practice of evangelization proved difficult for Protestants accused of proselytism. Their temples were closed and reopened again only after appeals to the government to observe the equality of religions under the law.[92] The White Terror of 1815-1816 was the last great fiery ordeal suffered by French Protestantism when royalists

"encouraged Catholic gangs to murder or forcibly 'reconvert' hundreds of Protestants and purchasers of church lands."[93] There were forced conversions to Catholicism, houses were burned, and women were beaten before the authorities finally intervened.[94] Yet during this period, there was also an expansion of Protestant associations and from 1820 to 1848 "religious activity increased ten-fold under the inspiration of the *Réveil*."[95]

Ami Bost left Geneva and spent two years from 1820 to 1822 in Colmar where he met resistance. The local priest warned him that he would be watching him and that his flock were good Catholics ready to fight for their religion. Of three pastors Bost met, only one had evangelical convictions and the president of the *Consistoire* was an "ardent enemy of the gospel."[96] There was little apparent fruit but his evangelistic activity led to the formation of an independent church that thirty years later numbered one hundred members.[97] His mission expanded throughout Alsace where he distributed Bibles and pamphlets "in abundance."[98]

In April 1822, an American businessman, S. V. S. Wilder gathered with Protestants in Paris to form a society to advance the gospel. The result was the *Société des missions évangéliques de Paris*.[99] According to Encrevé, "This society, with a modest beginning, played an important role in the development of missions in the French language."[100] He adds that the word *évangélique* was not understood in the sense of "orthodox" until the late 1840s, and the *Société* worked with all denominations issued from the Reformation. Yet, "the *Société des Missions,* like most of the religious missions founded at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century in the Protestant world, were created by followers of the theology of the *Réveil*."[101]

Charles X (1757-1836) ascended to the French throne in 1824. The freedoms guaranteed by the Charter of 1814 were overturned with oppressive laws against individual freedoms and the press. He took measures to increase the power of the Catholic Church seen as necessary for national stability. When Charles modified the electoral system to favor keeping nobles in positions of power, the opposition took to the streets and erected barricades. The Revolution broke out in July 1830 after Charles signed laws abolishing the freedom of the press and dissolving the recently elected Chamber. Paris rose up, overthrew the Bourbons leading to the July Monarchy, and Charles X fled the country. Protestants did not directly participate in the revolution

but perhaps viewed with some satisfaction the irony that his path of exile led to a Protestant country, England. The Chamber of Deputies, sensing the urgent need to fill the royal void, called Louis-Philippe, Duke of Orléans as king (1773–1850).[102]

Many saw an end to theocracy when the Bourbon dynasty was overthrown. Protestants were amazed at the new freedoms and envisioned a new advance of the Gospel that would "renew the soul of the nation."[103] Protestants continued to advocate for the right to evangelize but the Catholic Church acted to prevent them from evangelizing in any commune that did not already have a Protestant community. Acts of intolerance against Protestants took place frequently, including kidnappings, desecration of tombs, and attacks on those distributing religious tracts. Most of these actions were the work of fanatics which the majority of Catholics condemned and the court system often came to the defense of the rights of Protestants.[104]

Expansion of the *Réveil*

For Protestants, the 1830 Revolution "was a cry of deliverance."[105] The 1830s became a period especially prosperous as churches multiplied. Independent churches of professing believers were founded and existed alongside Lutheran and Reformed churches which were divided into orthodox and liberal. Their beginnings were humble as scattered groups met with little contact among them. As the gatherings grew and the numbers increased, an organization of unofficial churches began to emerge.[106] The disciples of the *Réveil* had been welcomed by the national Reformed Church which saw numerous conversions. Yet many of the new arrivals were out of place in these churches and felt crushed by the formalism. Those born into Reformed churches held tenaciously to their traditions. The collision of different values and experiences led to division.

On the first Sunday of October in 1830, a gathering took place in Paris, rue Taitbout. The congregation grew and began meeting in a concert hall. A chapel was built and a school opened with six hundred children. A profession of faith and church constitution were adopted in 1839 that emphasized the individual character of faith and the independence of the church from the State. The movement spread into the provinces. One of the early leaders was Edmond de Pressensé, a descendant of a family of *gentilshommes* that had

adopted the Reformed religion in the sixteenth century. After completing his studies at the seminary in Lausanne he became pastor of an independent church in Paris where the doctrines of the *Réveil* were preached. De Pressensé emphasized "the regeneration of society through the regeneration of people."[107]

End of the *Réveil*

The February Revolution of 1848 overthrew the July Monarchy and ended the constitutional monarchy. After the abdication of Louis-Philippe, a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte (1808–1873), was elected as France's first president of the short-lived Second Republic. The new government sought to distinguish itself from the First Republic (1792-1804) in abolishing the death penalty for political reasons and affirming its respect for religious freedom. All citizens imprisoned for religious reasons, mostly Protestants, were freed.[108] The Second Republic ended on December 2, 1851, with a self-staged coup d'état by Louis-Napoleon to dissolve the *Assemblée Nationale*. He declared himself Emperor Napoleon III with the support of both the papacy and the majority of French Catholics. During the Second Empire (1852–1870), relations with the Catholic Church became more cordial, with a corresponding loss of religious liberty and the repression of non-concordataire churches.[109]

The late 1840s and early 1850s marked the intensification of efforts among Reformed churches for the separation of church and state and the necessity of a confession of faith, two simmering issues that would eventually divide Reformed churches.[110] Conferences were held among the different factions of the *Réveil.* Since 1802 Reformed churches had been recognized by the State during the reign of Napoleon. The absence of a national synod and doctrinal authority since the *Articles Organiques* of 1802 led to doctrinal dissension between orthodox evangelicals influenced by the *Réveil* and liberals who departed from confessional orthodoxy. Since the law of Germinal X did not mention the 1571 *Confession de La Rochelle* there was no consensus on its normativity. Even the partisans of a confessional standard recognized that the *Confession* was no longer adapted for the nineteenth century. Several leaders, among them Frédéric Monod and Agénor de Gasparin, maintained the necessity of a confession of faith.[111] A

general assembly refused to adopt a confession of faith leading to a schism and the formation of an independent church.[112] After failing in their attempts to persuade others of their conviction, Monod and de Gasparin resigned from their positions and called on others to follow them in organizing an evangelical Reformed church.[113] Few followed them in their resolve which led to their association with independent evangelical churches and the founding in 1849 of the *Union des Églises évangéliques de France* for which a confession of faith was adopted. The two articles were clear in their affirmation that their churches would be composed of members who made an explicit and personal profession of faith.[114]

During the Third Republic (1870-1940), the Reformed Church held its first general synod in 1872 since the introduction of the Concordat and *Articles Organiques* in 1801 and 1802. Evangelicals wanted to reassert the grand doctrines of the Reformation, establish a confession of faith, and advance the discussion on the separation of church and state. Liberals opposed the calling of a synod, contested its legitimacy, and called on the government to withhold official ratification of the synod's decisions. The liberal wing found itself in the minority among Reformed churches and protested against what they considered a restoration of the sixteenth-century Reformed Church. The Council of State declared the legality of the general synod and the authority and competence of this assembly were established. Soon after, the government authorized the promulgation of the synod's decisions which included the necessity of a confession of faith. The Reformed Church entered legally and definitively into possession of its ancient synodal institutions. The issue of the necessity of a confession of faith continued to divide Reformed churches throughout the 1800s and eventually would lead to new associations of churches and a schism in the Reformed Church in 1879.[115]

Conclusion

The arrival of the Law of Separation of Church and State in 1905 ended the Napoleonic Concordat and decades of conflict between political and religious powers. This law did not affect independent churches that "lived according to this principle for the past fifty years."[116] Neither did the law lead to the reunification of the Reformed Church as many had hoped. After 1905

several distinct groups represented Reformed churches—the orthodox *Union des Églises réformées évangéliques*, the liberal *Union nationale des Églises réformées unies*, and the *Union nationale des Églises réformées* positioned theologically between the two others.[117] Efforts intensified after World War I to unite separate confessions leading in 1938 to the creation of the *Église réformée de France* (ERF) which included several evangelical and Methodist churches. Fifty churches refused to join the ERF and continued as the *Union des Églises réformées évangéliques*.[118] The *Faculté Libre de Théologie Réformée*[119] was founded in 1974 in Aix-en-Provence to counter the inroads of liberal theology.[120] In 2012 the ERF united with the *Église évangélique luthérienne de France* to form the *Église protestante unie de France* (EPUDF) with acceptance of diverse viewpoints.[121] The influence of historic Reformed churches has diminished and the growth of Protestantism has taken place mostly among evangelical churches that can only slowly "modify the face of French Protestantism."[122]

The principle of secularism (*laïcité*) of the French Republic was enshrined in its 1958 constitution.[123] The decline of organized religion is undeniable, but there are unmistakable signs of religious inquiry in the wake of wars, terrorism, economic uncertainty, and failed governmental systems. French historian and philosopher Marcel Gauchet wrote of the failure of religious substitutes which filled the vacuum created by the decline of Christianity. For him, the great spiritual event at the end of the twentieth century was "the death of revolutionary faith in earthly salvation."[124] Catholic history professor Jacques Prévotat wrote that religious decline in France "did not signify the end of Christianity, but rather inaugurated a new mode of existence or a period of retreat momentarily necessary for the recovery of missionary momentum."[125]

Two hundred years after the nineteenth-century *Réveil* might there be another *Réveil* in the twenty-first century? Despite the growth of evangelical churches, the nation still bears the strong imprint of Catholicism, and Islam has become the second-largest religion. There may be no *Réveil* on the horizon and, as we have seen, the nineteenth-century *Réveil* ran its course. But the Lord of the Harvest works in his way and in his time to accomplish his purposes through the established ordinary means of grace, through his word, his Spirit, and the faithful witness of his people, in days of awakening and days of spiritual lethargy.

1 See Stephen M. Davis, *The French Huguenots and Wars of Religion: Three Centuries of Resistance for Freedom of Conscience* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2021); *The War of the Camisards (1702-1704): Huguenot Insurrection during the Reign of Louis XIV* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2024).

2 André Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française: De la Révolution à nos jours* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2020), 17.

3 André Encrevé, "Le Réveil en France (1815-1850)," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 155 (April-June 2009): 529. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24309165.

4 Baron H. de Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle* (Geneva: Henri Georg, 1862), vi.

5 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle*, 408.

6 Léon Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France: Étude Historique et Dogmatique* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1892), vi-vii.

7 Coquerel was a gifted theologian and preacher but hostile to all attempts to impose a confession of faith. Although "he remained committed to supernaturalism all his life, he was an enemy of the *Réveil* that he accused of doctrinal narrowness and lacking a true understanding of Christian liberty." See André Encrevé, "Dogme et morale dans la prédication selon le pasteur Athanase Coquerel," *Revue d'histoire du protestantisme* (Oct.-Dec. 2016): 579-80. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44850987. Beginning in 1820 evangelical partisans of the *Réveil* criticized the liberalism with which Coquerel identified.

8 According to Encrevé, Vinet was "the most prominent French religious thinker in the first half of the nineteenth century." See "Dogme et morale dans la prédication selon le pasteur Athanase Coquerel," 577n.

9 J. Pédérzet, *Cinquante ans de souvenirs religieux et ecclésiastiques* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1896), 2.

10 Clarisse Coignet, *L'évolution du protestantisme français au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1908), 53.

11 Émile Guers, *Le premier Réveil et la première église indépendante à Genève* (Geneva: Librairie Beroud, 1871), v.

12 All translations are my own.

13 Claude Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France: Leur histoire à travers la genèse et l'évolution de leurs principes jusqu'en 1951." Maîtrise en théologie, Faculté Libre de Théologie Evangélique de Vaux-sur-Seine, 1981, 6.

14 Sébastien Fath, "Réveil et Petites Églises," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 148 (Oct.-Dec. 2002): 1102-03. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43691778.

15 Roger Magraw, *France 1800–1914: A Social History* (Abington, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2002), 162.

16 Coignet, *L'évolution du protestantisme français au XIXe siècle*, 46-47.

17 André Encrevé, foreword to *The Genevan Réveil in International Perspective,* ed. Jean D. Decorvet, Tim Grass, and Kenneth J. Stewart (Eugene, OR: Pickwick), xi. As the title suggests, this excellent, recent work treats the extensive impact of the *Réveil* and some of its major actors.

18 Mark Noll, foreword to *The Genevan Réveil in International Perspective*, xiv.

19 Jean D. Decorvet, "Its Origins, Characteristics and Legacy," in *The Genevan Réveil in International Perspective,* 6.

20 Jean-Marc Daumas, "Les origines du réveil au XIXe siècle," *La Revue reformée* 194 (June 1997): para. 2. https://larevuereformee.net/articlerr/n194/les-origines-du-reveil-au-xixe-siecle.

21 Alice Wemyss, *Histoire du Réveil, 1790-1849* (Paris: Les Bergers et Les Mages, 1977), 11-12. Quoted in Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 8.

22 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 8.

23 See Daniel Robert, *Les églises réformées en France, 1800-1830* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961) for a later "liberal" or "intellectual" *Réveil* championed by Samuel Vincent (1787-1837) opposed to the pietistic/orthodox tendencies of the *Réveil* under consideration in this article.

24 Decorvet, "Its Origins, Characteristics and Legacy," 17.

25 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle*, 137.

26 André Encrevé, "Le Réveil en France (1815-1850)," 530-31.

27 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France,* 39-40.

28 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 10.

29 Martin I. Klauber, "The Drive toward Protestant Union in Early Eighteenth-Century Geneva: Jean-Alphonse Turrettini on the 'Fundamental Articles' of the Faith," *Church History* 61.2 (September 1992), 334.

30 The *Consistoire* (Consistory) was established by Calvin in 1541 to regulate the morality of Genevans. See William Monter, *Women in Calvinist Geneva (1550–1800), Signs* 6 (1980), 190. The *Consistoire* was akin to a tribunal to judge infractions to church law; the *Compagnie des Pasteurs* (Company of Pastors) applied

church law and surveilled how the regulations were followed. See Albert Olivet, "La Compagnie des Pasteurs de l'Église Protestante de Genève de 1543 à 1800," *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 3 (April-June 1915): 130. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44349206.

31 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 5–7.

32 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 8.

33 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 9–10.

34 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 11–12.

35 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française*, 20.

36 Karl Barth, *La théologie protestante au dix-neuvième siècle* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1969), 45.

37 Janine Garrisson, ed., *Histoire des protestants en France: De la Réforme à la Révolution* (Toulouse: Éditions Privat, 2001), 235-37.

38 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française,* 31.

39 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française*, 47.

40 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France,* 223.

41 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française*, 49. .

42 Protestant "rationalists" at the end of the eighteenth century were initially above all "non-Catholic," that is, they refused "the demand to sacrifice human reason" to accept Catholic dogmas (i.e., transubstantiation, veneration of saints and relics). The seeds of rationalism eventually influenced doctrine as well. See Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française*, 50.

43 Pédérzet, *Cinquante ans de souvenirs religieux et ecclésiastiques,* 44.

44 Alfred Vincent, *Histoire de la prédication protestante de langue française au dix-neuvième siècle, 1800-1866* (Paris: Librairie de la Suisse Romande, 1871), 3-4.

45 Encrevé, "Le Réveil en France (1815-1850)," 533.

46 Maury asserts that the indifference and unbelief of French Protestantism at the beginning of the nineteenth century has been voluntarily exaggerated by those who wanted to "justify sending foreign missionaries and attribute to them all the work of the *Réveil."* (*Réveil religieux,* 225).

47 The Moravians were also connected with the English Revival in the 1700s. See Colin Podmore, "The Moravians and the Evangelical Revival in England: 1738-1748," *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 31 (2000): 28-45.

48 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France,* 229-36.

49 "Le Gouvernement de la République française reconnaît que la religion catholique, apostolique et romaine est la religion de la grande majorité des citoyens français." https://www.legirel.cnrs.fr/spip.php?article527&lang=fr. Some of the Articles of the original text were later modified or annulled. The Concordat ended in 1905 with the Law of Separation of Churches and State. The Concordat survives today in the region of Alsace-Moselle. These departments were annexed to Germany following France's defeat in the 1870 Franco-Prussian War. They were returned to France in 1918 following Germany's defeat in World War I. The continuance of the Concordat was a condition of their reintegration into France.

50 See Paul Pisani, "La négociation du concordat de 1801," *Revue d'Histoire de l'Église de France* 7, no. 34 (1921): 17-29. https://www.persee.fr/doc/rhef_0300-9505_1921_num_7_34_2168; William Roberts, "Napoleon, the Concordat of 1801, and Its Consequences," in *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler*, ed. Frank J. Coppa (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 34-80.

51 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 1951, 1–2.

52 Jean-Yves Carluer, "Liberté de dire, liberté de croire: Deux siècles de défi évangélique, 1815–2015, in *Libre de le dire: Fondements et enjeux de la liberté de conscience et d'expression en France* (Marpent, FR: BLF Éditions, 2015), 42-43.

53 Guillaume de Félice, *Histoire des Protestants de France: 1521–1787*. Vol. 1-4 (1880; repr., Marseille: Éditions Théotex, 2020), 29.

54 For a detailed demographic analysis of Reformed believers see Philip Benedict, "The Huguenot Population of France, 1600–1685: The Demographic Fate and Customs of a Religious Minority," *American Philosophical Society* 81 (1991). https://www.jstor.org/stable/1006507.

55 The first year of the revolutionary calendar (*calendrier révolutionnaire*) corresponds to 1792 (*l'an I*). During the Revolution, there was a national organization of religion from 1790 to 1796 (*1790–l'an IV*) and a separation of Church and State from 1796 to 1801 (*l'an IV–l'an X*). See Anatole Bire, *La séparation des Églises et de l'État: Commentaire de la Loi du 9 Décembre, 1905* (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1905), 27.

56 Samuel Vincent, *Du protestantisme en France* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1860), 456-57.

57 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 13–15.
58 See Jean-Paul Chabrol, "Le prophétisme cévenol de 1685 à 1702," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 148 (Jan.-Mar. 2002) 211–16. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43691639.
59 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 15–17.
60 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle,* 117-18.
61 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 18-19.
62 Tom Holland, *Dominion: How the Christian Revolution Remade the World* (New York: Hachette, 2019), 9-30.
63 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle*, 1.
64 John B. Roney, "*Notre Bienheureuse Réformation*: The Meaning of the Reformation in Nineteenth-Century Geneva," in *The Identity of Geneva: The Christian Commonwealth, 1564-1864*, ed. John B. Roney and Martin I. Klauber (Westport, CT: Greenway Press, 1998), 175.
65 Daumas, "Les origines du réveil au XIXe siècle," para. 13.
66 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 2–5.
67 Gabriel Mützenberg, "Loss of Genevan Identity and Counter-Reformation in the Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Identity of Geneva: The Christian Commonwealth, 1564-1864*, 185.
68 Sarah Scholl, "Sortir du calvinisme d'État au XIXe siècle: les clivages genevois," *Revue d'histoire du protestantisme* 2/3 (2023): 336-37. https://www.droz.org/RHP_8.2-3_335-353.
69 See Claude Lasserre, *Le séminaire de Lausanne (1726-1812): Instrument de la restauration du protestantisme français* (Lausanne: Bibliothèque historique vaudoise, 1997).
70 The "Church of the Desert" refers to the period following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 when Protestantism was outlawed and believers assembled illegally in secluded places. This period recalled the wilderness wanderings of the children of Israel with echoes of the Exodus and the liberation of the people of God from the hand of Pharoah.
71 Hélène Kern, "Le Séminaire de Lausanne et le Comité Genevois," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 108 (Oct.-Dec. 1962): 218. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24292696.
72 William Edgar, "Education and Modernity in Restoration Geneva," in *The Identity of Geneva: The Christian Commonwealth, 1564-1864*, 203.
73 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 20–21.
74 See Scholl, "Sortir du calvinisme d'État au XIXe siècle," 335 for an analysis of three periods, 1810, 1830-1840, and 1860-1880, corresponding to three major issues in Genevan churches in the nineteenth century: theological, ecclesiological, and pastoral,
75 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle*, 4.
76 Ami Bost, *Mémoires pouvant servir à l'histoire du réveil religieux des Églises protestantes de la Suisse et de la France* (Paris: Grassart and Cherbuliez, 1854), 18–19.
77 Bost, *Mémoires pouvant servir à l'histoire du réveil religieux*, vii.
78 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle*, 8.
79 Henri Dubief, "Réflexions sur quelques aspects du premier Réveil et sur le milieu où il se forma," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 114 (July-Sept. 1968): 373-74. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24294597.
80 Roney, "*Notre Bienheureuse Réformation*," 170.
81 In 1816, Empaytaz published a pamphlet on the divinity of Christ directly attacking Genevan pastors and professors (Scholl, "Sortir du calvinisme d'État au XIXe siècle," 338). His good friend Bost, who affirmed the divinity of Christ, criticized "the choice of subject" as the wrong emphasis "to begin a réveil" (Bost, *Mémoires pouvant servir à l'histoire du réveil religieux*, 70).
82 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 29–32.
83 See Francis Ley, *Madame de Krüdener et son temps,1764-1824* (Paris: Pion), 1962; Clarence Ford, *The Life and Letters of Madame de Krüdener* (London: Adam and Charles Black), 1893.
84 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 34.
85 André Encrevé, "Protestantisme et bonapartisme," *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* 28 (2004): para. 5. https://journals.openedition.org/rh19/622.
86 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 239.
87 Dominique de Villepin, *Les Cent-Jours ou l'esprit du sacrifice* (Paris: Éditions France Loisirs, 2001), 11.
88 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle,* 117.
89 Dubief, "Réflexions sur quelques aspects du premier Réveil et sur le milieu où il se forma," 375-76.

90 Vincent, *Histoire de la prédication protestante,* 13.
91 Vincent, *Histoire de la prédication protestante,* 22.
92 William Edgar, *La carte protestante: Les réformés francophones et l'essor de la modernité, 1815-1848* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1997), 82.
93 Magraw, *France 1800–1914: A Social History*, 162.
94 Maury, *Le Réveil religieux dans l'Église Reformée à Genève et en France*, 224-25.
95 Coignet, *L'évolution du protestantisme*, 52.
96 Bost, *Mémoires pouvant servir à l'histoire du réveil religieux*, 243-44.
97 Scholl, "Sortir du calvinisme d'État au XIXe siècle," 339.
98 Bost, *Mémoires pouvant servir à l'histoire du réveil religieux*, 251.
99 See David Bundy, "Pietist and Methodist Roots of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris," *The Asbury Journal* 70 (2015): 28-54 for his analysis of the influence of Pietism and Methodism in the formation of this mission. See also, Jérôme Grosclaude, "'The Protestants here are very particular: they used to be Methodists': A Historical Reflection on French Methodism," *Methodist History* 62 (2024): 62-76; Th. Roux, *Le méthodisme en France - Pour servir à l'Histoire religieuse d'hier et d'avant-hier* (Paris: Librairie Protestante, 1941).
100 André Encrevé, "Sur la Société de missions évangéliques de Paris au XIXe Siècle," in *Les Réveils missionnaires en France du moyen-âge à nos jours* (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1984), 249.
101 Encrevé, "Sur la Société de missions évangéliques de Paris," 254.
102 Edgar, *La carte protestante*, 51-52.
103 Coignet, *L'évolution du protestantisme*, 55.
104 Félice, *Histoire des Protestants de France*, 62-66.
105 Coignet, *L'évolution du protestantisme*, 59.
106 Goltz, *Genève religieuse au dix-neuvième siècle*, 236.
107 Coignet, *L'évolution du protestantisme*, 62
108 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française*, 99.
109 Pédérzet, *Cinquante ans de souvenirs religieux et ecclésiastiques*, 132. . Religious confessions were *concordataire*, officially recognized by the government, or *non-concordataire,* without legal protection or state subsidies.
110 Until 1875 there were few governmental initiatives for the separation of church and state. See Bire, *La séparation des Églises et de l'État*, 27.
111 Frédéric's younger brother Adolphe was another great figure of the *Réveil.* He chose to remain in the national church during the controversy over a confession of faith in which church he preached faithfully until his death in 1856. He asserted that the *Confession de La Rochelle* "had not been abrogated." See Adolphe Monod, *Pourquoi je demeure dans l'église établie* (Paris: Librairie protestante, 1849), 45; *Les Adieux d'Adolphe Monod à ses amis et à l'église* (Paris: Librairie de Ch. Meyrueis, 1856).
112 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française,* 114.
113 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 53-67.
114 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 294; Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française,* 117.
115 Félice, *Histoire des Protestants de France*, 189.
116 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 179.
117 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française,* 314.
118 Baty, "Les Églises évangéliques libres de France," 243n.
119 *La Faculté Jean Calvin* since 2011. https://facultejeancalvin.com/.
120 Berthoud, "La faculté libre de théologie reformée—Rétrospective et prospective," *La Revue reformée* 208 (June 2000). https://larevuereformee.net/articlerr/n208/la-faculte-libre-de-theologie-reformee-retrospective-et-prospective.
121 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française,* 570.
122 Encrevé, *Les protestants et la vie politique française,* 550.
123 The first article of the 1958 Constitution of the Fifth Republic states: "La France est une République indivisible, laïque, démocratique et sociale" (France is an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic). For the development of *laïcité* in France see the author's *Rise of French Laïcité: French Secularism from the Reformation to the Twenty-First Century* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020) and "France's Long March from State Religion to Secular State," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Religion and State Volume II: Global Perspectives,* ed. Shannon Holzer (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2023).

124 Marcel Gauchet, *La religion dans la démocratie: Parcours de la laïcité* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1998), 23.

125 Jacques Prévotat, *Être chrétien en France au XXe siècle: De 1914 à nos jours* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1998), 261.

Friendship with a Cause: Revival in the Thought of Isaac Watts and Philip Doddridge

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Introduction

If the names Isaac Watts (1674–1748) and Philip Doddridge (1702–1751) are remembered in modern times, it is often due to their place as ministers, authors, theologians, educators, or hymnwriters.[1] They both advanced the cause of Christ through a profound commitment to the early eighteenth-century dissenting church of England. Forged in the religious upbringings of English Puritanism, Watts and Doddridge understood the "dissenting interest" of their context in a similar vein. They shared many of the same doctrinal commitments, wrote hymns in an effort to reform public worship, and committed a lifetime of resources and vigor toward the formal education of dissenting ministers.[2]

Perhaps one overlooked aspect of the legacies of Watts and Doddridge is their providential friendship as co-laborers through a uniquely transitional era of church history. The closing of the seventeenth-century and beginning

years of the eighteenth-century functioned as a time of historic and unexpected change. The English Puritan movement had largely faded, while the rise of science, art, and law from the English Enlightenment began to take root in the spiritual contours of Christianity.[3] Even further, Evangelicalism was rapidly developing through the monumental influences of figures such as John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards. These factors capture a confluence of adjustment which formed a narrow transitional period between "old Dissent" and Evangelicalism. This transitional period, in which Watts and Doddridge were key leaders, brought about challenges due to the marked decline of the English dissenting church. Watts and Doddridge wrestled intellectually and spiritually with the nature of revival during this time, while simultaneously functioning as enthusiastic bystanders to the sweeping conversions on America shores and in Scotland. For the better part of three decades (from roughly 1720 to 1751), Watts and Doddridge navigated a discouraging, confusing, and often thrilling period in the kingdom of God. Their position as leaders during the era brought them face-to-face with important questions. Why were the dissenting churches of England declining? Were the awakenings of modern-day Massachusetts indicative of how revival might be prompted? And maybe, most importantly, how did transatlantic revival impact their thought as spiritual leaders during a period of religious decline in England? This article aims to help clarify answers to these questions through examining revival in the thought of Watts and Doddridge. As (1) bystanders to the eighteenth-century transatlantic awakenings and (2) key transitional leaders of the era, Watts and Doddridge forged a devote friendship around commitment to "real inward religion" as a means of revival.[4]

"Our Coldness in Religion": Watts and Doddridge Prior to 1737

On May 24, 1736, the rector of then Yale College, Elisha Williams (1726–1739), penned a letter to Isaac Watts. In this correspondence, Williams acknowledges gratitude for sermons and other publications Watts gifted to the library at Yale. As the letter continues, Willams makes note about a "remarkable revival of religion" in the Northampton area of modern-day Massachusetts. This is likely the first instance Watts gained any knowledge of what become the First Great Awakening. Williams notes,

> Since the advancement of Christ's kingdom is always your [Watts's] rejoicing it will not be disagreeable to you if I should acquaint you that there has been a remarkable revival of religion in several parts of this country, in ten parishes in the county of Hampshire, in the Massachusetts province where it first began a little more than a year since, and in near 20 parishes of this colony.[5]

At almost the same time, Benjamin Colman (1673–1747), the pastor of Brattle Street Church in Boston, sent correspondence to John Guyse (1680–1781) in London regarding the revival movement in Northampton. Specifically, Colman provided Guyse with brief details of the revival, upon which, Guyse communicated them to his congregation in a sermon during late spring of 1736.[6] These letters from Williams and Colman would generate significant interest among congregations and ministers in the London area. In July of 1736, Colman (by way of Jonathan Edwards's uncle William Williams) requested Edwards provide a detailed account of God's unique work in order to further inform the ministers and congregations of London about the happenings.[7] By November 6 of 1736, Edwards acquiesced to Colman's request and produced a detailed account of the situation, which was published in a now recognized epistle with the well-known title, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God.* Subsequent to Edwards's letter, the nature and contours of the "surprising work" began to spread a bit more rapidly. In December 1736, Colman published an abridged version of Edwards's letter as an appendix to a volume of sermons.[8] Colman immediately also sent a copy of the volume to Watts, along with a note insinuating that Watts should consider publishing a full extract of Edwards's insight.[9] Watts obliged, and in April of 1737, he and Guyse placed a deposit toward the printing of Edwards's letter. By October of 1737, Watts notified Colman that the first London edition of *A Faithful Narrative* was complete and ready for distribution abroad.

Perhaps the most overlooked portions Edwards's original publication is the preface, which was written by Watts and Guyse. Along with providing general details on how the letter's printing came to fruition, it also gave a key insight into the current state of religion in England. Watts and Guyse note, "we have reason to fear that our iniquities, our coldness in religion, and the general carnality of our spirits, have raised a wall of separation between God and us."[10] This sentiment captures a lingering, almost two-decades long,

concern by religious leaders regarding the dissenting church of England.[11] The epistolatory account of Edwards only served to further galvanize a commitment to revival by Watts and Doddridge. Nevertheless, it was several years prior to 1737 that Watts and Doddridge began crystalizing their thought on revival in the context of a challenging period in England's dissenting church. Through two publications, which contributed to a persistent debate among religious leaders, Watts and Doddridge began to formally address the "coldness of religion" during their era.

Debates Surrounding the Decline of the Dissenting Church

Beginning in 1730, Strickland Gough published, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Decay of the Dissenting Interest,* to detail his interpretation of the dissenting decline.[12] Part of Gough's aim was to clarify the causes of the decline, which was necessary to remedy the situation.[13] In his estimation, Gough found the "grand cause" of decline included "ignorance of their [dissenter's] own principles," not the least of which included liberty of conscience with respect to "discretionary" decisions regarding worship and preaching.[14] Disputes within the dissenting movement were examples of the lack of Christian liberty.[15] Gough harkened to the English Puritans as generational leaders in Christian liberty and pleaded for a refocus on liberty as a "fundamental principle of the Dissenters, and the support of their interest."[16] Therefore, the remedies, according to Gough, were practical in nature. Sermons needed shorting and delivered in a "more easy and natural manner," students for ministry should be selected with care, and the congregations should be "fewer… [with minister's] salaries larger."[17] In reply to Gough, another dissenting minister, Abraham Taylor, published a letter of opposition.[18] Taylor refuted the comprehensiveness of the decline and argued that Gough's "zeal" had taken him to the point of forgetting and contradicting his "own principles."[19] From Taylor's vantage, the Baptist, Independents. and Presbyterians all maintained a healthy level of autonomy and liberty in matters of church practice.[20]

Several months later, Doddridge published a reply to Gough's letter aimed at "common use," rather than a criticism of Gough or an addition to the polemics.[21] Doddridge affirmed that Gough was correct to note that dissenters had experienced "great damage" due to "unscriptural impositions and uncharitable contentions."[22] Doddridge aimed to identify

additional causes for the "decay" as a supplement to Gough's thoughts. In Doddridge's view, the decline was foremost about the conduct of dissenting ministers.[23] The manner in which ministers carried themselves in the course of the pastorate were of critical importance to spurring renewal of religion. Doddridge was thinking in terms of pastoral leadership, but not just any type of pastoral leadership. He categorized three broad issues with dissenting ministers: (1) the lack of piety, (2) the propensity for doctrinal controversy, and (3) preaching techniques. With respect to ministerial piety, Doddridge argued,

> [D]ivine warmth and fervency of our own souls [ministers' souls], will be the means to kindle the like holy fires in theirs [the congregations] ... The advanced piety of our fathers in the ministry, did eminently conduce to their remarkable success. The *Memoirs* which we have of the lives of several of them, manifest their great attainments in vital and inward religion; and I fear we shall never recover the dying interests of Christianity, 'till that be found in us, which render'd them so signally useful in their generation.[24]

Likewise, Doddridge grieved the propensity of dissenters to enter into doctrinal controversies in which "pulpit skirmishes have made sport for unbelievers."[25] The place for controversy is far beyond the scope of the pulpit. Rather, the minster "must be an evangelical, an experimental, a plan, and an affectionate preacher."[26] Though Doddridge's reply was certainly not aimed at being comprehensive, his entrance into the discuss spurred a close friend to pen the most comprehensive and authoritative work on the issue, Watts's 1731 publication, *An Humble Attempt Toward the Revival of Practical Religion*.

Similar to Doddridge, Watts was equally concerned with the "departed glory" of the dissenting interest and saw the issue in bipartite terms – the minister's role and the congregant's role. Watts's *An Humble Attempt* spans three-hundred and sixty pages, covering everything from the minister's private studies and personal piety, to the general congregant's approach to holiness and pursuit of Christian virtue. It even gives directive on how dissenting ministers should carry on godly conversation in their daily life. In the preface, Watts explicitly cites Doddridge's *Free Thoughts* as the authoritative "pamphlet" on the general contours of the issue because it

set the "whole affair in the best light."[27] For Watts, the matter was exactly as Doddridge estimated, with "vital religion in the hearts and lives of men" as the leading cause of decline.[28] Like Doddridge, Watts associated "vital religion" with practical matters of piety, but with an "evangelical" aim toward "the conversion of sinners . . . from a corrupt nature and the course of this world to a life of God by Jesus."[29] The work of salvation, according to Watts, functions as the "hope and design" for the dissenting church. As the work of salvation becomes more effective, the coldness of religion would begin to dissipate. Watts's *An Humble Attempt* built upon the assessment of Doddridge, with the aim of *being a guidebook* to ministers and congregants in their renewal of religion. Furthermore, Watts overarching aim was to stimulation of true inward religion. Like Doddridge, Watts believed "novelties and elegancies" were unnecessary, rather, "plan rules and duties of practical religion" would suffice to prompt "heavenly influences" of the Holy Spirit."[30]

Prior to Edwards's extraordinary and unforeseen letter, Watts and Doddridge were years into fashioning a unique friendship around mutual concern for revival and spiritual means toward that end. By 1737, the increase of "real inward religion" was foundational to Watts's and Doddridge's proposals for overcoming an era of church decline.

"Hints of a Scheme": Watts and Doddridge from 1737 Forward

Once Edwards's account of the revivals in New England was published in London, the reality of true awakening only served to intensify a focus on revival by Watts and Doddridge. The details of the New England awakenings became increasingly more commonplace in lives, ministry, and correspondence of Watts and Doddridge. By the end of October, 1737, Doddridge had received and began to read the first London edition of Edwards's *A Faithful Narrative*.[31] Through much of their subsequent correspondence from 1737 to 1744, Watts and Doddridge were in consistent exchange regarding the awakenings. Take for example a letter from Watts to Doddridge in December of 1741, wherein Watts notes using Doddridge's sermons on regeneration as part of their congregation's Sunday evening studies.[32] Watts's focus on a doctrine such as regeneration comes as no surprise given the events occurring in New England. At the conclusion of the same letter, Watts updates Doddridge on the nature of the transatlantic

revivals, with particular attention given the efforts receiving God's supernatural blessing:

> I have received several letters from New England this autumn and winter, wherein they give me an account of a great work of conviction and conversion going on, both at Boston and among other towns in those plantations, ever since the preaching of Mr. Whitfield there, last September or October was twelvemonths. God has certainly owned and blessed that man's zeal, piety, and itinerant labours.[33]

Beyond gratitude for the conversions, Watts's interest in how God was leveraging the piety of Whitefield is of particular note. Given Watts's and Doddridge's focus on the spiritual aspects of revival, it only reasons they were keenly interested in how men like Whitefield were operating on a devotional front. Two months later, in February of 1742, Watts penned Doddridge yet again to provide further updates. Once more, he explicitly notes his use of Doddridge's sermons on regeneration and their welcomed reception among the people of his congregation.[34] Watts also updated Doddridge on the nature of awakenings happening in both Scotland and Boston, by way of Whitefield.[35] The consistent updates on the transatlantic conversions indicates their continued preoccupation with the contours of the revival movement. Their mutual interest had now bloomed into a serious fervor to contribute to God's work, while possibly spurring a similar movement within the dissenting interest of England. As a result, Doddridge and Watts were involved in the publication of three more works regarding revival in 1742, 1744, and 1745. Each have an important place in understanding how the pair continued to approach revival.

The Evil and Danger of Neglecting the Souls of Men (1742)

In 1742, Doddridge published a sermon capturing his continued thought on revival—*The Evil and Danger of Neglecting the Souls of Men.*[36] This publication was originally given as a sermon at a gathering of ministers in Kettering, Northamptonshire, on October 15, 1741. Though a meeting of ministers was not uncommon for Doddridge, it was *the aim of this particular meeting* that is unique and often overshadowed. The gathering, according to Doddridge, was to "concert measures for the more effectual revival of religion."[37] The

content of the sermon is a rousing and grave reminder of the minister's duty to labor in God's work of saving the human soul. According to Doddridge, God chose ministers "to negotiate his cause and interest on earth" while "consign[ing] over to our immediate care that gospel he [Christ] brought down from heaven."[38] Though the sermon is a theological exhortation of sorts, it is in fact the dedication to the published sermon that provides a key insight into Doddridge's advancing thought on revival.[39] Doddridge makes detailed reference to an "interview" of ministers in Denton on June, 30, 1741. Similar to the Kettering meeting, the topic of the Denton gathering was that of religious revival. Doddridge notes he held a "private conference" wherein he "laid before" the ministers "some hints of a scheme, which I was then forming for the revival of religion in our parts."[40] Doddridge then goes on to provide a glimpse into ten organized and systematic "resolutions" that form his approach to revival. These resolutions were first presented at Denton, then discussed with ministers in London, again discussed at a meeting in August of 1741 in Northampton, and finally approved at the Kettering conference of October 1741.

The ten resolutions continue a familiar flow of thought by Doddridge because they largely cover matters of inward piety. For example, the first resolution is the commitment by ministers to preach one sermon a year on "family religion" and "secret prayer."[41] Resolutions two and three deal with pastoral visitation and commends the minister to visit the "head of the house" within each congregant's family. This visit would serve to charge the head of home with commitment to greater personal and family holiness.[42] Resolution four provides direction on the practice of catechizing, particularly with children, while resolutions five and six address the practice of properly taking communion.[43] Resolution seven asks congregations to commit to "little bands or societies" of Christian gatherings for "religious discourse and prayer."[44] Resolutions eight and nine function a short directive toward selecting individuals for local councils. These councils would aim to promote religion in their community, while also establishing associations of ministers that would gather for "united consultations" and prayer.[45] Finally, the closing resolution details the manner by which young ministers should be vetted and selected. Among other requirements, men aiming to enter the pastorate must produce a theological thesis in Latin and submit sermons to associations of ministers for purposes of examination.[46]

Perhaps one of most important aspects of Doddridge's dedication is found in an eleventh resolution that, by his own admission, only occurred to him after the sermon was preached at Kettering. According this outlying resolution, congregations must labor "towards assisting the propagation of Christianity abroad."[47] Doddridge visualized the formation of a society to systematically spread the gospel to "darker parts of our own land."[48] The particulars of this mission society included eight "rules," which Doddridge planned to use as the basis for formal subscription. Among other administrative matters, and beyond the general aim of spreading the gospel, an underlying thrust of the subscription is, yet again, about pietistic and devotional efforts. Take for example, the first two rules of the society which center around the explicit need to pray for revival. Doddridge believed daily prayer, along with a quarterly assembly of ministers for public prayer, was necessary to stimulate true revival. These times of prayer should aim toward clear petitions of God toward "the advancement of the gospel in the world, and for success of all the faithful servants of Christ ... among the heathen nations."[49] In his fourth rule, Doddridge asks all signers of the subscription to produce information regarding the progress of the gospel at their quarterly meetings. The updates served to encourage the society and make them "capable of judging how far God answers our prayers."[50] Doddridge's 1742 publication is thus a proving ground of his revival fervor. As the publication makes plain, Doddridge was expending significant effort, both intellectually and pastorally, to form and sustain efforts that might spur a renewal among nonconformist, similar to the awakenings beyond England. Perhaps it is Doddridge's conclusion to the dedication that best captures his anticipatory, and hopeful, sentiments during this particular period: "we are praying and waiting for that happy day, which, whenever it appears, will be the glorious earnest of the revival of the protestant, and of the Christian cause."[51]

The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors (1744)

In addition to Doddridge's 1742 publication on revival, Watts made his own contribution to revival thought in 1744, through a preface to a London edition of *The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors of Churches in New England*. In a letter to Doddridge, dated January 27, 1743, Watts makes mention of writing the preface to what he considered the largest and "best

attestation to the work of God in New England."[52] Through the testimony of one hundred and eleven pastors, this publication provides the name, church, and locations of each pastor, along with their accounts of revival. Each account was communicated at a meeting in Boston on July 7, 1743. The representations of the awakenings are at points astonishing. Take for example, the details of salvations occurring in Middleborough through the first-hand witness of the minister Peter Thachter:

> There have been above two hundred in a judgement of charity savingly wrought on since November of 1741… But on one day in November aforesaid, above eighty were pricked at the heart by a sermon from Rom. viii. i. had here from the Rev. Mr. Josiah Crocker…This revival of the power of godliness appears to be the genuine work of the Holy Spirit accompanying his Word, and in answer to a spirit of prayer poured out from God to plead with faith in Christ from this good. Spiritual things are now treated and felt as realities.[53]

Watts not only interpreted the updates as encouraging, but also as *paradigmatic to the English cause of revival*. In other words, as the title indicated, the testimonies serve as part spiritual wisdom, and part, spiritual warning. By Watts's estimation, one clear feature taken from these testimonies pertained to the devotional aspect of the movement. It was the pietistic efforts of pastors and ministers, coupled with the gospel doctrine, that "has been the happy means of [the] joyful work" in New England and Scotland.[54] Watts's mere involvement with the publication further indicates his desire to see God's unique work propagated through England by he terms "real inward religion."[55] Watts's preoccupation with the revival was part thankfulness and part visionary. Accordingly, he thought *The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors* was "proper to appear in London, that the world… may see and judge" what was occurring in the awakenings.[56] A robust testimony from New England, according to Watts, only served to "enliven the prayers, strengthen the faith, and raise the hopes" of those waiting for God to do a similar work in England proper.[57]

The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul (1745)

Though the aforementioned publications were central to Watts's and Doddridge's continued thought on revival, it was not until 1745 that their

friendship and labor for revival culminated in one of the most influential works of the eighteenth-century—*The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (1745). Perhaps no other publication fully illuminates the mature thought of Watts and Doddridge with respect to revival. Though Doddridge formally authored the book, Watts's influence upon the publication was immense and is often overlooked. The original idea for the book, and much of its structure, in fact came from Watts. Due to serious health issues, Watts passed the project along to Doddridge and entrusted him with its completion. As early as 1742, Watts was urgently heartening Doddridge to stay the course and complete the publication, over and against his other responsibilities.[58] By September of 1744, Watts had received a draft of the publication, and provided critical feedback to Doddridge through an edited manuscript. In his letter to Doddridge regarding the edits, Watts commends *The Rise and Progress of Religion* as the best "treatise on practical religion" to be found in the English language.[59] Watts's encouragement, Doddridge's laborious efforts, and a mutual fervor for revival all culminated in the production of this important work on real inward religion. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Doddridge dedicates the entire work to Watts as part of their profound and affectionate bond as co-laborers.[60] Doddridge's dedication typifies a love for and deference to Watts, which could only be cultivated through a lifetime of devout friendship:

> My much honored friend Dr. Watts had laid the scheme, especially of the former part: but as those indisposition, with which (to the unspeakable grief of the churches,) God has been please to exercise him, and forbid his hopes of being able to add this to his many labors of love to immortal souls, he was pleased in a very affectionate and importunate manner to urge me to undertake it. And I bless God with my whole heart, not only that he hath carried me through this delightful task…but he hath spared that worthy and admirable person to see it accomplished, and given him strength and spirit to review so considerable a part of it.[61]

In part, *The Rise and Progress of Religion* strikes a remarkable note of decades-long continuity between Watts's and Doddridge's sentiments about revival. As of its publication in 1745, Doddridge still bemoaned the "sad state" of religion in England. In an all-to-common refrain the unyielding

need of England, according to Doddridge, was to "revive the languishing cause of vital Christianity and substantial piety."[62] Furthermore, the work's design echoes a lifetime commitment by Doddridge and Watts toward the awakening of souls and the revival of a declining cause:

> When we look round about us with an attentive eye, and consider the characters and pursuits of men, we plainly see…many of them shamefully neglect it [religion]…if you hitherto have lived without religion, you may be now awakened to the consideration of it, and may be instructed in its nature and importance; or that, if you are already, through Divine grace, experimentally acquainted with it, you may be assisted to make a farther progress.[63]

Through thirty-three chapters, each concluding with a meditation and prayer, *The Rise and Progress of Religion* is a considerable work of spirituality that covers the gambit of the Christian life. From details on unrepentant sin, conversion, and sanctification, the work is a guidebook through the entire arch of God's work upon the human soul. It covers matters such as communion with God, temptation, affliction, self-examination, church communion, and even honoring God at death. The reception of *The Rise and Progress of Religion* was one of great esteem. Over the balance of his years after its publication, Doddridge would receive numerous accounts of how *The Rise and Progress of Religion* was useful in the conversions and edification of believers.[64] What begin in the mind of Watts, culminated in the pen of Doddridge, all under the banner of commitment to awakening true inward religion. *The Rise and Progress of Religion,* in many ways, functions as the magnum opus of a friendship grounded in commitment to revival, and bound by a providential place as transitional figures toward the unforeseen rise of Evangelicalism.

Conclusion

Watts and Doddridge passed into their eternal inheritance within three years of one another. Their friendship was marked by an intellectual and pastoral kinship of providential accord and divine favor. They heralded the unique work of God in New England and Scotland as eager bystanders, while encouraging a fervor toward seeing an equal or greater awakening occur

within England among nonconformists. Watts's and Doddridge's spiritual wisdom on revival, and a kindred commitment to publishing on the matter, is often understated. These men labored intently to keep the embers of piety and practical devotion aflame in England during a time of serious challenge. Watts and Doddridge bridged an important gap between the English Puritans and the eighteenth-century Evangelicals through a concerted effort to emphasis a continued need for "real inward religion." Perhaps Bernard Manning's sentiments best capture the nature and results of Watts's and Doddridge's labor:

> Though Congregationalism in the eighteenth century did not lack great men, isolated individuals play in its story a less prominent part than at some other times. It is a century not of striking careers or of dramatic incident, but of *quiet piety and faithful stewardship*. In an age of spiritual depression these forefathers of ours walked and did not faint…They asserted triumphantly in the most unfavorable circumstances…[and] there fell in due time the fire from heaven, the fire of the evangelical revival.[65]

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1 For a recent survey of Watts's life and thought, see Graham Beynon, *Isaac Watts: His Life and Thought* (Fearn, UK: Christian Focus, 2013). For more on Doddridge's life and thought, see Alan C. Clifford, *The Good Doctor, Philip Doddridge of Northampton: A Tercentenary Tribute* (Norwich: Charenton Reformed Publishing, 2002).

2 For a treatment of Watts's thought as a pastor and leader during the era, see Graham Beynon, *Isaac Watts: Reason, Passion and the Revival of Religion* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016); W. Britt Stokes, *A Soul Prepared for Heaven: The Theological Foundation of Isaac Watts' Spirituality,* Reformed Historical Theology, vol. 72 (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022). For more on Doddridge's thought see, Robert Strivens, *Philip Doddridge and the Shaping of Evangelical Dissent* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

3 See D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 7–68.

4 For scholarly engagement on Watts as a type of transitional figure during this period, see Britt Stokes, "*Seculum Est Speculum*: Isaac Watts and Recovering the Use of Nature in Spiritual Formation," *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 152, no. 2 (2022): 224–48. Britt Stokes, "Natural Religion, Isaac Watts, and Early Eighteenth-Century Evangelical Devotion," *Evangelical Quarterly* 94, no. 4 (2023): 1-19.

5 Elisha Williams to Isaac Watts, May 24, 1736, in *Isaac Watts and His Gifts to Yale College,* Anne S. Pratt (New Haven: Yale University Library, 1938), 30.

6 Pratt, *Isaac Watts and His Gifts to Yale College*, 32.

7 Pratt, *Isaac Watts and His Gifts to Yale College,* 32.

8 The appendix of Edwards's letter included by Colman in the edited volume, is entitled: *Part of a Large Letter from Rev. Mr. Jonathan Edwards of Northampton, Giving an Account of the Late Wonder Work of God in Those Parts.* For more on the sermon publication and appendix, see Pratt, *Isaac Watts and His Gifts to Yale College,* 33.

9 Thomas Milner, *The Life, Times and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1834), 553-54.

10 Issac Watts and John Guyse, preface to *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*, 1st ed. (London: John Oswald), 1737, vi.

11 For more on the numerical situation regarding this period in the English dissenting church, see Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 509–10.

12 Strickland Gough, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Decay of the Dissenting Interest. In a Letter to a Dissenting Minister* (London: J. Roberts, 1730).

13 Gough, *An Enquiry*, 3.

14 Gough, *An Enquiry*, 4, 7. See also, Beynon, *Isaac Watts: Reason, Passion and the Revival of Religion*, 126.

15 For example, Gough makes reference to a recent headed controversy, Salters-Hall, as "insuring the dissenting interest more than all their enemies together." Gough, *An Enquiry*, 28. For more on the Salter's Hall debate, see Jesse E. Owens, "The Salters' Hall Controversy: Heresy, Subscription, or Both?," *Perichoreis* 20, no. 1 (2022): 35–52.

16 Gough, *An Enquiry*, 30.

17 Gough, *An Enquiry*, 41-44.

18 Abraham Taylor, *A Letter to the Author of an Enquiry into the Causes of the Decay of the Dissenting Interest. Containing an Apology for Some of his Inconsistencies; with a Plea for the Dissenters, and the Liberty of the People* (London: J Roberts, 1730).

19 Taylor, *A Letter to the Author*, 6.

20 For more on Taylor's sentiments, see Anonymous, *The True Cause of Declensions in Religion in a Letter to the Reverend Mr. Abraham Taylor or, Remarks on his Humiliation Sermon, Occasioned by what He Calls Spiritual Declensions, Preach'd in Hare-Court, Jan. 6, 1731–2* (London: Printed for T. Cox, 1732). A special thanks to Jacob Carron for bringing this source to my attention.

21 Philip Doddridge, *Free Thoughts on the Most Probable Means of Reviving the Dissenting Interest. Occasion'd by the Late Enquiry into the Causes of its Decay. Address'd to the Author of that Enquiry* (London: Richard Hett, 1730), 3.

22 Doddridge, *Free Thoughts,* 4.

23 Doddridge, *Free Thoughts,* 7.

24 Doddridge, *Free Thoughts,* 9–10.

25 Doddridge, *Free Thoughts,* 12.

26 Doddridge, *Free Thoughts,* 21.

27 Isaac Watts, *An Humble Attempt Toward the Revival of Practical Religion Among Christians, and Particularly the Protestant Dissenters, by a Serious Address to Ministers and People, In Some Occasional Discourses* (London: E. Matthews, R. Ford, and R. Hett, 1731), i.

28 Watts, *An Humble Attempt,* ii.

29 Watts, *An Humble Attempt,* ii

30 Watts, *An Humble Attempt,* viii.

31 Philip Doddridge to Samuel Clark, October 30, 1737, in *The Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge, D.D. Illustrative of Various Particulars in His Life Hitherto Unknown: With Notices of Many of His Contemporaries; And a Sketch of the Ecclesiastical History of the Times in Which He Lived,* ed. J.D. Humphreys (London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1829-31), 3:279.

32 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, December 24, 1741, in *Correspondence,* 4:62.

33 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, December 24, 1741, in *Correspondence,* 4:62.

34 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, February 26, 1742, in *Correspondence,* 4:75–76.

35 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, February 26, 1742, in *Correspondence,* 4:75–76.

36 For an excellent foreword to this work, see Michael A. G. Haykin, "Introducing Philip Doddridge" in, *The Evil & Danger of Neglecting the Souls of Men* (Ontario: H&E Publishing, 2021).

37 Philip Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger of Neglecting the Souls of Men, Plainly and Seriously Represented in a Sermon Preached at a Meeting of Ministers at Kettering in Northamptonshire, October 15, 1741* (London: M. Fenner, 1742), 1.

38 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* 33.

39 For more on often overlooked contribution of Doddridge to Evangelicalism, see, Alan Everitt, "Springs of Sensibility: Philip Doddridge of Northampton and the Evangelical Tradition" in *Landscapes and Community in England* (London: Bloomsbury, 1985), 211–12.

40 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* ii.

41 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* iii.
42 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* iii-iv.
43 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* iv-v.
44 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* v.
45 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* v.
46 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* vi.
47 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* vii.
48 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* vii.
49 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* viii.
50 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* viii.
51 Doddridge, *The Evil and Danger,* xii.
52 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, January 27, 1743, in *Correspondence,* 4:188.
53 Order of the Assembly, *The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors of Churches in New England, at a Meeting in Boston. July 7, 1743. Occasioned by the Late Happy Revival of Religion in Many Parts of the Land* (London: J. Oswald, 1744).
54 Issac Watts, recommendation to *The Testimony and Advice*, ii.
55 Watts, recommendation to *The Testimony and Advice*, ii.
56 Watts, recommendation to *The Testimony and Advice*, ii.
57 Order of the Assembly, *The Testimony and Advice*, 2.
58 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, February 26, 1742, in *Correspondence,* 4:76.
59 Isaac Watts to Philip Doddridge, September 13, 1744, in *Correspondence,* 4:354–57.
60 For this wonderful dedication to Watts, see Philip Doddridge, *The Works of the Rev. P. Doddridge, D.D. in Ten Volumes,* ed. Edwards Parsons and Edward Williams (Leeds: E. Baines, 1802), 1:211–12.
61 Doddridge, *The Works,* 1:214.
62 Doddridge, *The Works,* 1:219.
63 Doddridge, *The Works,* 1:219.
64 Job Orton, "Memoirs of the Life, Character and Writings of the Late Rev. P. Doddridge, D.D. of Northampton" in *The Works of the Rev. P. Doddridge, D.D. in Ten Volumes,* ed. Edwards Parsons and Edward Williams (Leeds: E. Baines, 1802), 1:90.
65 Bernard Lord Manning, "Congregationalism in the Eighteenth Century," in *Essays on Orthodox Dissent* (London: Independent Press, 1939), 195. Emphasis mine.

The Revival of the English Particular Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century[1]

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It was during the early 1640s that the Particular Baptists appeared on the English church scene. Reformed in their soteriology, congregationalist in church government, and espousing believer's baptism, they grew from seven congregations in London in 1644 to roughly 130 in 1660 to around 300 by 1689. The growth from 1660 to 1689 is particularly striking since it was during this period that a series of laws were passed, known as the Clarendon Code, which made it illegal to worship in any other setting but that of the Established Church and which basically reduced any but Church of England members to second-class citizens. From 1660 to 1688 the Baptists, along with other groups outside of the Church of England, were thus hurled into the fierce fire of persecution. Baptists who refused to go along with these laws often ended up experiencing state harassment, paying substantial fines or experiencing life-threatening imprisonment.

Religious toleration came in 1689, and the Baptists were now free to plant and build congregations, though it was still illegal for them to evangelize outside of their church buildings. Yet, despite the advent of toleration, the denomination as a whole began to plateau in its growth and, in some parts of England, it actually went into decline. In 1715 there were around 220 Particular Baptist churches in England and Wales. Some of these were very sizeable congregations. For example, in Bristol there were two Particular Baptist works: the Pithay and Broadmead. In the 1710s they would together regularly have up to 1700 attend worship on any given Sunday. By 1750 number of Particular Baptist congregations throughout the British Isles however, had declined to about 150.[2]

Various reasons can be cited for this declension. For example, since it was illegal for Baptists to engage in mass evangelism outside of their meeting-houses,[3] their money and effort began to be poured into the erection of church buildings instead of evangelistic outreach. Moreover, prior to the erection of a meeting-house, services might be held at a variety of geographical locations and thus a congregation could have an impact over a wide area. But once the building went up, members who lived at a distance were expected to make their way to the meeting-house, and thus the impact in the various locations was somewhat diminished. So it was that the monetary value of the property of the Particular Baptists increased, but its membership was beginning to decrease.[4]

Then there was the development of the theological position known as High Calvinism, sometimes called Hyper-Calvinism. Pastors and believers of this persuasion were rightly convinced that salvation is God's work from start to finish. On the basis of this conviction, however, they erroneously reasoned that since unbelievers are unable to turn to Christ, it was therefore unscriptural to urge them to come to the Savior. Genuinely desirous of exalting God's sovereignty in salvation, High Calvinist preachers shied away from calling all and sundry to repentance and faith, lest any of the credit for the salvation of sinners go to them. God, in his own time, would convert the elect and bring them into the "enclosed gardens" of the Particular Baptist community.

The most important Baptist theologian of the late eighteenth century, Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), was raised in a Baptist work in the small village of Soham, not far from the university town of Cambridge. Its pastor was

John Eve (d.1782), who ministered at Soham from 1752 till his resignation in 1771. Eve was a typical High Calvinist. His preaching, as Fuller later recalled, "was not adapted to awaken [the] conscience," and he "had little or nothing to say to the unconverted."[5] Not surprisingly, although Fuller was raised in this congregation, he never saw a baptism—there were no conversions happening—till his mid-teens. Thus, even though Fuller regularly attended the Baptist meeting-house with his family, he gave little heed or thought to the sermons that he heard. Nevertheless, and despite his own experience, Fuller found himself preaching much like Eve during the early years of his pastoral ministry. "Encumbered" with inhibitions, he could not bring himself to offer the gospel indiscriminately to sinners.[6]

Baptist Rejection of the Evangelical Revival

It is vital to note that while many Baptists were in this state of declension, from the mid-1730s on there was a tremendous movement of revival going on in Great Britain and America with such leaders as George Whitefield (1714–1770), the leading evangelist of the 18th century, Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) in New England, and the Wesley brothers, John (1703–1791) and Charles (1707–1788). Known as the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, or the First Great Awakening in America, the power of this movement is well depicted by the Welsh evangelist Howel Harris (1714–1773) in a letter that he wrote at the close of 1743 to George Whitefield. Writing of the ministry of his fellow Welshmen Daniel Rowland (1711–1790) and Howel Davies (*c.*1716–1770) under whose preaching Harris had recently sat, Harris told Whitefield that:

> The light, divine wisdom, and power to wound and heal, and to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ was such, that words can give no true idea of The outpouring of the Blessed Spirit is now so plentiful and common, that I think it was our deliberate observation that not one sent by Him opens his mouth without some remarkable showers. He comes either as a Spirit of wisdom to enlighten the soul, to teach and build up, and set out the works of light and darkness, or else a Spirit of tenderness and love, sweetly melting the souls like the dew, and watering the graces; or as the Spirit of hot burning zeal, setting their hearts in a flame, so that their eyes sparkle with fire, love, and joy; or also such a Spirit of uncommon power that the heavens seem to be rent, and hell to tremble.[7]

At the heart of the revival, superbly captured by this description, was the Christ-centered ministry of the Holy Spirit. Fully in line with the New Testament emphasis about this ministry (see John 16:14a), the Spirit inspired a profound appreciation for and devotion to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Spirit of God moved powerfully throughout British society on both sides of the Atlantic, tens of thousands of men and women were shaken out of spiritual slumber and death, and drawn irresistibly to adore and to serve the Lord Christ.

Many Particular Baptists, however, had deep reservations about the revival. The Wesleys, of course, were Arminians and thus beyond the pale for *the Particular Baptists*. Furthermore, the Wesleys' view of the Baptists was hardly conducive to good relations. Here is Charles Wesley in 1756 speaking about the Baptists in his diary. In his words they were "a carnal…, contentious sect, always watching to steal away our children, and make them as dead as themselves."[8] However, Whitefield and Howel Harris were Calvinists. Yet, the fervency of Whitefield's evangelism and his urging of the lost to embrace Christ, for example, prompted several Baptist critics to complain of what they termed his "Arminian accent."

Most importantly, the Baptists were disturbed by the fact that the earliest leaders in the revival belonged to the Church of England. Their Baptist forebears, after all, had come out of the Church of England at great personal cost and suffering, and they had suffered for their determination to establish true gospel churches. The heritage that came down to the eighteenth-century Particular Baptists was thus intertwined with a great concern for proper New Testament church order.

Though writing early in the century, the London Baptist Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) expresses the ecclesiological convictions that prevailed in the Particular Baptist community for much of the era. In his commentary on the parables of Jesus, Keach unequivocally states vis-à-vis Ezekiel 34:14 that this text implies that God's people

> shall wander no more on the mountains of error and heresy; Christ leads them out of all idolatry and superstition, out of Babylon and all false worship; they shall no more be defiled with women, that is, by the pollution of false churches, or with harlot worship; the church of Rome is called the mother of harlots. Are there no false churches but the Romish church? Yea, there are, no doubt;

> she hath whorish daughters, though not such vile and beastly harlots as the mother is; all churches that sprang from her, or all of the like nature, in respect of their constitution, and that retain many of her superstitious names, garbs, rites, and ceremonies, no doubt they are her daughters. Were the gospel churches national, or did they receive into those churches profane persons? No, no, they were a separate people, and a congregational and a holy community, being not conformable to this world; and into such a church Jesus Christ brings his sheep. And from hence it followeth, that he carries his lost sheep when he hath found them into his own fold, or into some true gospel church.[9]

Later in the eighteenth century this position was reiterated by the man who was the leading Particular Baptist divine for much of that century, John Gill (1697–1771). "The Church of England," he declared in no uncertain terms, "has neither the form nor matter of a true church, nor is the Word of God purely preached in it."[10] Similarly William Herbert (1697–1745), a Welsh Baptist pastor and a friend of Howel Harris, was critical of the latter's decision to stay in the Church of England. In a letter that he wrote to Harris early in 1737, a couple of years after the Evangelical Revival had begun in England and Wales, Herbert likened the Church of England to a pub "which is open to all comers," and to a "common field where every noisome beast may come." Surely Harris realized, Herbert continued, that the Scriptures—and he has in mind the Song of Solomon 4:12—describe God's Church as "a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed," in other words, a body of believers "separate from the profane world"?[11] From Herbert's point of view, Harris' commitment to an apostate institution put a serious question-mark upon the latter's entire ministry. Many eighteenth-century Particular Baptists were thus adamant in their refusal to regard the Evangelical Revival as a genuine work of God, for, from their perspective, it simply did not issue in "true gospel churches."

Of course, there were some noteworthy exceptions, but up until the 1770s far too many Particular Baptists seem to have assumed that a revival could only be considered genuine if it preserved and promoted the proper form of the local church. For many Particular Baptists of the first six or seven decades of the eighteenth century, outward form and inward revival went hand in hand. Their chief preoccupation was the preservation of what they considered the proper New Testament form of church. In their minds,

when God brought revival, it would have to issue in true gospel churches like theirs.[12]

The dilemma facing these Baptists was not an easy one. They rightly felt constrained to emphasize the New Testament idea of the local church as a congregation of visible saints and assert that the concept of a state church is antithetical to the whole tenor of the new covenant. Moreover, these were truths for which their forebears in the previous century had suffered much. To abandon them would have been unthinkable. But what then was to be made of the ministry of men like Whitefield and Howel Harris?

One possible solution would have been for the eighteenth-century Particular Baptists to have viewed the ministry of Whitefield and other Anglican Calvinists in the way that their seventeenth-century forebears viewed the labors of the sixteenth-century Reformers. The latter did not reject the ministry of the Reformers because they were not Baptists. Rather, they recognized that the Reformers had been greatly used by God to bring the church out of the Stygian darkness of the Middle Ages. Yet, though the Reformers did well, they failed to apply all that the Scriptures taught. As Benjamin Keach said regarding the Particular Baptist community's recovery of key New Testament principles:

> Why will not our Brethren keep to the great Institution, and exact rule of the Primitive church? Must we content our selves with the Light which the Church had in respect of this and other Gospel-Truths at the beginning of the Reformation,—since God hath brought forth greater (to the praise of his own rich Grace) in our Days?[13]

Similarly, it could have been recognized that God was indeed at work among the leaders of the revival, but that there were certain areas—particularly those dealing with the church and its nature—where they needed greater light.

Andrew Fuller and the Theological Reformation of the English Particular Baptists

As a denomination, the English Particular Baptists did not emerge from their spiritual "winter" until the last two or three decades of the eighteenth century.

Just as there were a variety of reasons for their decline, so there were a variety of reasons for their revival. Most notably, there was theological reformation, in which the Hyper-Calvinism of the past was largely rejected in favour of a truly evangelical Calvinism. *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, written by Andrew Fuller and first published in 1785, was the book that crystallized this movement of theological renewal. Though forgotten in many Baptist circles, Andrew Fuller was once described by Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) as "the greatest theologian" of his century.[14]

Fuller wrote major theological works on a variety of issues, many of them in apologetics. For instance, he wrote refutations of such eighteenth-century theological aberrations as Socinianism and Sandemanianism, and in 1799 published the definitive eighteenth-century Baptist response to Deism. But it was through his rebuttal of Hyper-Calvinism that he made his most distinctive contribution. As Philip Roberts, formerly President of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has noted in a study of Fuller as a theologian:

> [Fuller] helped to link the earlier Baptists, whose chief concern was the establishment of ideal New Testament congregations, with those in the nineteenth century driven to make the gospel known worldwide. His contribution helped to guarantee that many of the leading Baptists of the 1800s would typify fervent evangelism and world missions. …Without his courage and doctrinal integrity in the face of what he considered to be theological aberrations, the Baptist mission movement might have been stillborn.[15]

The youngest of three brothers, Andrew Fuller was born on February 6, 1754, at Wicken, a small village now on the edge of the Cambridgeshire Fens, about six miles from the cathedral city of Ely. His parents, Robert Fuller (1723–1781) and Philippa Gunton (1726–1816), rented and worked a succession of dairy farms.[16] Baptists by conviction, both came from a Dissenting background, of which there were various congregations in the area. When Fuller was seven years of age, his family moved to the village of Soham, about two and a half miles from Wicken. Once settled in Soham, they joined themselves to the Particular Baptist work in the village that met for worship in a rented barn.[17] The pastor of the work was a certain John Eve (d.1782), originally a sieve-maker from Chesterton, near

the town of Cambridge. Eve had been set apart to preach the gospel by St. Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge, in 1749,[18] and three years later he was ordained as the first pastor of the Baptist cause at Soham, where he ministered for nearly twenty years till his resignation in 1771.

Fuller later remarked that Eve was a hyper-Calvinist or, as he put it, one whose teaching was "tinged with false Calvinism."[19] As such, Eve did not believe that it was the duty of the unregenerate to exercise faith in Christ. To be sure, they could be urged to attend to outward duties, such as hearing God's Word preached or being encouraged to read the Scriptures, but nothing of a spiritual nature could be required of them, since they were dead in sin and only the Spirit could make them alive to spiritual things.[20] Eve's sermons, Fuller thus noted, were "not adapted to awaken [the] conscience" and "had little or nothing to say to the unconverted."[21]

When he was fourteen, though, Fuller began to entertain thoughts about the meaning and purpose of life. He was much affected by passages that he read from the biography of John Bunyan (1628–1688), his *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, as well as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and some of the works of Ralph Erskine (1685–1752), the Scottish evangelical and Presbyterian minister. These affections were often accompanied by weeping and tears, but they ultimately proved to be transient, there being no radical change of heart.

Now, one popular expression of eighteenth-century Particular Baptist spirituality was the notion that if a scriptural text forcefully impressed itself upon one's mind, it was to be regarded as a promise from God. One particular day in 1767 Fuller had such an experience. Romans 6:14 ("sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace") came with such suddenness and force that Fuller naïvely believed that God was telling him that he was in a state of salvation and no longer under the tyranny of sin. But that evening, he later recalled, "I returned to my former vices with as eager a gust as ever."[22]

For the next six months, he utterly neglected prayer and was as wedded to his sins as he had been before this experience. When, in the course of 1768, he once again seriously reflected upon his lifestyle, he was conscious that he was still held fast in thralldom to sin. What then of his experience with Romans 6:14? Fuller refused to doubt that it was given to him as an indication of his standing with God. He was, he therefore concluded, a

converted person, but backslidden. He still lived, though, with never a victory over sin and its temptations, and with a total neglect of prayer. "The great deep of my heart's depravity had not yet been broken up," he later commented about these experiences of his mid-teens.[23]

In the autumn of 1769, he once again came under the conviction that his life was displeasing to God. He could no longer pretend that he was only backslidden. "The fire and brimstone of the bottomless pit seemed to burn within my bosom," he later declared. "I saw that God would be perfectly just in sending me to hell, and that to hell I must go, unless I were saved of mere grace." Fuller now recognized the way that he had sorely abused God's mercy. He had presumed that he was a converted individual, but all the time he had had no love for God and no desire for his presence, no hunger to be like Christ and no love for his people. On the other hand, he could not bear, he said, "the thought of plunging myself into endless ruin." It was at this point that Job's resolution—"though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15)—came to mind, and Fuller grew determined to cast himself upon the mercy of the Lord Jesus "to be both pardoned and purified."[24]

Yet, the hyper-Calvinism that formed the air that he had breathed since his earliest years proved to be a real barrier to his coming to Christ. It maintained, as we have seen, that in order to flee to Christ for salvation, the "warrant" that a person needed to believe that he or she would be accepted by Christ was a subjective one. Conviction of one's sinfulness and deep mental anguish as a result of that conviction were popularly regarded by hyper-Calvinists as such a warrant. From this point of view, these experiences were signs that God was in the process of converting the individual that was going through them. The net effect of this teaching was to place the essence of conversion and faith not in believing the gospel, "but in a persuasion of our being interested in its benefits." Instead of attention being directed away from oneself towards Christ, the convicted sinner was turned inwards upon himself or herself to search for evidence that he or she was being converted. Against this perspective Fuller would later argue that the gospel exhortation to believe in Christ was a sufficient enough warrant to come to the Lord Jesus.

Fuller was in the throes of a genuine conversion and quite aware of his status as a sinner, but, under the influence of the hyper-Calvinist spirituality of conversion, he was convinced he had neither the qualifications nor

the proper warrant to flee to Christ in order to escape the righteous judgment of God. Upon later reflection, he saw his situation as akin to that of Queen Esther. She went into the presence of her husband, the Persian King Ahasuerus, at the risk of her life, since it was contrary to Persian law to enter the monarch's presence uninvited. Similarly, Fuller decided: "I will trust my soul, my sinful, lost soul in his [i.e. Christ's] hands—if I perish, I perish!" So it was in November, 1769 that Fuller found peace with God and rest for his troubled soul in the cross of Christ.[25]

His personal experience prior to and during his conversion ultimately taught him three things in particular. First, there was the error of maintaining that only those sinners aware of and distressed about their state have a warrant or right to come to Christ. Second, genuine faith is Christ-centered, not a curving inwards upon oneself to see if there was any desire to know Christ and embrace his salvation. Third, he recognized that true conversion is rooted in a radical change of the affections of the heart and manifest in a lifestyle that seeks to honor God.[26]

The following spring, 1770, Fuller was baptized and joined the church at Soham. Within six years the church had called Fuller to be their pastor. Now, though he had personally known the deadening effect of hyper-Calvinistic preaching, Fuller knew no other way of dealing with non-Christians from the pulpit and initially, he said, he "durst not…address an invitation to the unconverted to come to Jesus."[27] But as he studied the style of preaching exhibited in the Acts of the Apostles and especially in Christ's ministry, he began to see that "the Scriptures abounded with exhortations and invitations to sinners." But how was this style of preaching to be reconciled with the biblical emphasis on salvation being a sovereign work of grace?[28]

By 1780 Fuller had come to see clearly that his own way of preaching was unduly hampered by a concern not to urge spiritual duties upon non-believers. As he wrote in his diary for August 30 of that year:

> Surely Peter and Paul never felt such scruples in their addresses as we do. They addressed their hearers as *men*—fallen men; as we should warn and admonish persons who were blind and on the brink of some dreadful precipice. Their work seemed plain before them. Oh that mine might be so before me![29]

The "pulpit," Fuller commented a few months later,

> seems an awful place!—An opportunity for addressing a company of immortals on their eternal interests—Oh how important! We preach for eternity. We in a sense are set for the rising and falling of many in Israel. …Oh would the Lord the Spirit lead me into the nature and importance of the work of the ministry![30]

And by the time that Fuller left Soham to take up the pastorate of the Baptist work in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he was convinced, as he told the Kettering congregation at his induction on October 7, 1783, that

> it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it. And, as I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore of the criminal kind—and that it is their duty to love the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in him for salvation, though they do not—I, therefore, believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them, to be not only consistent, but directly adapted, as means in the hands of the Spirit of God to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty, which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls.[31]

This theological revolution in Fuller's sentiments about the duty of sinners to believe the gospel and how that gospel should be preached were later encapsulated in a book, *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation* (1785), and in his lifetime his views came to be known as Fullerism. As Geoffrey F. Nuttall once observed, Fuller is thus one of the few Englishmen to have a theological perspective named after him and it "points to a remarkable achievement."[32]

Two editions of *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation* were issued in Fuller's lifetime. A first draft had been written by 1778, the manuscript of which was purchased by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary a couple of years ago. It begins thus:

> What a narrow Path is Truth! How many Extremes are there into who we are liable to run! Some deny Truth; others hold it, but in Unrighteousness. O Lord, impress thy Truth upon my Heart with thine own Seal, then shall I receive it as in itself it is, "A Doctrine according to Godliness."

This draft was eventually re-written and published as the first edition in Northampton in early 1785. It bore a lengthy subtitle—*The Obligations of Men Fully to Credit, and Cordially to Approve, Whatever God Makes Known, Wherein is Considered the Nature of Faith in Christ, and the Duty of Those where the Gospel Comes in that Matter.* A second edition appeared in 1801 with a shortened title—*The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*—and simpler subtitle, *The Duty of Sinners to Believe in Jesus Christ,* which well expressed the overall theme of both editions of the book.[33] There were a number of substantial differences between the two editions, which Fuller freely admitted and which primarily related to the doctrine of particular redemption, but the major theme remained unaltered: "faith in Christ is the duty of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the gospel."[34] Or as he put it in his preface to the first edition:

> true faith is nothing more nor less than an hearty or cordial belief of what God says, surely it must be every one's duty where the gospel is published, to do that. Surely no man ought to question or treat with indifference any thing which Jehovah hath said.[35]

What is quickly evident in both of the editions is the large amount of space given to closely reasoned exegesis.

In the first edition, for example, Fuller devotes the second major part of the work to showing that "faith in Christ is commanded in the Scriptures to unconverted sinners."[36] It had been reflection on Psalm 2, for instance, that had first led Fuller to doubt the hyper-Calvinist refusal to countenance faith as the duty of the unconverted.[37] He now undertook an interpretation of this text in light of his subject, reading it, as the New Testament reads it in Acts 4, as a Messianic psalm. The command to "the heathen" and "the people" of Israel (verse 1) as well as to "the kings of the earth" and "the rulers" (verse 2)—interpreted in Acts 4:27 as "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles, and the people of Israel"—to "kiss the Son" (verse 12) is a command given to those "who were most certainly enemies to Christ, unregenerate sinners." And "kissing the Son" Fuller understood to be "a spiritual act," which meant, from the perspective of the New Testament, nothing less than "being reconciled to, and embracing the Son of God, which doubtless is of the very essence of true saving faith."[38] Clearly, Fuller reasoned, here was both Old and New Testament support for his position.

Several Johannine texts, however, plainly revealed that "true saving faith" is "enjoined [by the New Testament] upon unregenerate sinners."[39] John 12:36, for instance, contains an exhortation of the Lord Jesus to a crowd of men and women to "believe in the light" that they might be the children of light. Working from the context, Fuller argued that Jesus was urging his hearers to put their faith in him. He is the "light" in whom faith is to be placed, that faith which issues in salvation (John 12:46). Those whom Christ commanded to exercise such faith, however, were rank unbelievers, of whom it is said earlier "they believed not on him" (John 12:37), and, in fact, Fuller pointed out on the basis of the quote of Isaiah 6:10 in John 12:40, "it seems" that these very same people whom Christ called to faith in him "were given over to judicial blindness, and were finally lost."[40]

Then there is John 6:29, where Jesus declares to sinners that "this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Fuller pointed out that this statement is made to men who in the context are described as following Christ simply because he gave them food to eat (verse 26) and who are considered by Christ to be unbelievers (verse 36). Christ rebukes them for their mercenary motives and urges them to "labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (verse 27). Their response as recorded in John 6:28 is to ask Christ "what shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" His answer is to urge them to put their faith in him (verse 29). It is as if, Fuller said, Christ had told them, faith in him is "the first duty incumbent" upon them "without which it will be impossible… to please God."[41]

Again, in John 5:23 Fuller read that all men and women are to "honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Giving honour to the Son entails, Fuller reasoned, "holy hearty love to him" and adoration of every aspect of his person. It necessarily "includes faith in him." Christ has made himself known as a supreme monarch, an advocate who pleads the cause of his people, a physician who offers health to the spiritually sick, and an infallible teacher. Therefore, honouring him in these various aspects of his ministry requires faith and trust.[42]

Among the practical conclusions that followed from such Scriptural argumentation was that preachers of the gospel must passionately exhort their hearers to repent and commit themselves to Christ.[43] In the second edition, Fuller sharpened this emphasis, for he was more than

ever convinced that there was "scarcely a minister amongst us"—that is, amongst the Particular Baptist denomination—"whose preaching has not been more or less influenced by the lethargic systems of the age."[44] Far too many of Fuller's fellow Baptist ministers failed to imitate the preaching of Christ and the apostles who used to exhort the unconverted to immediate repentance and faith. For a variety of reasons, they regarded the unconverted in their congregations as "poor, impotent … creatures." Faith was beyond such men and women, and could not be pressed upon them as an immediate, present duty. Fuller was convinced that this way of conducting a pulpit ministry was unbiblical and simply helped the unconverted to remain in their sin.[45] Without a doubt Fuller's conclusion that ministers needed to press home repentance and faith as immediate duties upon all of their hearers was foundational to William Carey's (1761–1834) later argument that this needed to take place not only in England but throughout the world.[46]

There is a direct line from the publication of the *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation* to Fuller's whole-hearted involvement in the formation of the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen in 1792—later known as the Baptist Missionary Society and which sent Carey to India in 1793—and Fuller's subsequent service as secretary of that society until his death in 1815. The work of the mission consumed an enormous amount of Fuller's time as he regularly toured the country, representing the mission and raising funds. On average he was away from home three months of the year. Between 1798 and 1813, for instance, he made five lengthy trips to Scotland for the mission as well as undertaking journeys to Wales and Ireland. Consider one of these trips, that made to Scotland in 1805. In less than sixty days, Fuller travelled thirteen hundred miles and preached fifty sermons for the cause of the Baptist mission. He also carried on an extensive correspondence both to the missionaries on the field and to supporters at home. Finally, he supervised the selection of missionary appointees and sought to deal with troubles as they emerged on the field. In short, he acted as the pastor of the missionaries sent out.[47]

As he poured himself into the work of the Baptist Missionary Society, Fuller continued to refine his thinking about missions. Along with his re-thinking of the responsibility of both preachers and hearers of the gospel discussed above, there emerged a fresh perspective on the nature of the church. There is little doubt that Fuller wholly affirmed traditional Particular Baptist thinking

about the church. In that tradition the church is a body of people who have personally repented and exercised faith in Christ, and borne witness to this inner transformation by baptism.[48] But Fuller was also concerned to emphasize something else about the church.

When Fuller spoke of the local church after he had assumed the role of secretary of the mission his emphasis often fell on the church's responsibility to evangelize and indeed participate in taking the gospel to the ends of the earth. As he wrote, for example, in 1806:

> The primitive churches were not mere assemblies of men who agreed to meet together once or twice a week, and to subscribe for the support of an accomplished man who should on those occasions deliver lectures on religion. They were men gathered out of the world by the preaching of the cross, and formed into society for the promotion of Christ's kingdom in their own souls and in the world around them. It was not the concern of the ministers or elders only; the body of the people were interested in all that was done, and, according to their several abilities and stations, took part in it. Neither were they assemblies of heady, high-minded, contentious people, meeting together to argue on points of doctrine or discipline, and converting the worship of God into scenes of strife. They spoke the truth; but it was in love: they observed discipline; but, like an army of chosen men, it was that they might attack the kingdom of Satan to greater advantage. Happy were it for our churches if we could come to a closer imitation of this model![49]

Fuller certainly had no wish to abandon either the stress on doctrinal preaching for the edification of God's people or that on proper discipline, but he had rightly noted that the pursuit of these concerns to the exclusion of evangelism had produced in all too many eighteenth-century Particular Baptist churches contention, bitter strife and endless disputes. These inward-looking concerns had to be balanced with an outward focus on the extension of Christ's kingdom.

Moreover, evangelism was not simply to be regarded as the work of only "the ministers or elders." The entire body of God's people were to be involved. This conception of the church is well summed up in another text, which, like the one cited above, compares the church of Christ to an army. "The true churches of Jesus Christ," he wrote five years before his death, "travail in

birth for the salvation of men. They are the armies of the Lamb, the grand object of whose existence is to extend the Redeemer's kingdom."[50] Retaining the basic structure of earlier Baptist thinking about the church, Fuller added one critical ingredient drawn from his reading about the life of the Church in the New Testament: the vital need for local Baptist churches to be centers of vigorous evangelism.

John Sutcliff and Praying for Revival

Among the Particular Baptist figures of the late eighteenth century one of the most important is also one of the least known—John Sutcliff (1752–1814), the pastor of the Baptist church in Olney, Buckinghamshire, for thirty-nine years. An extremely close friend of both Fuller and Carey as well being one of the founders of the Baptist Missionary Society, Sutcliff played a central part in bringing revival to the English Particular Baptists.

Sutcliff's early nurture in the Christian faith came through his parents, Daniel and Hannah Sutcliff, both of whom attended Rodhill End Baptist Church, not far from Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire.[51] But it was not until Sutcliff was 17 that he was converted during a local revival in Wainsgate Baptist Church, where his parents worshiped on alternate weeks, since there was a service at Rodhill End only every other week. The pastor of the church, John Fawcett (1740–1817), had himself been converted through the preaching of George Whitefield and, personally convinced of many of the emphases of the Evangelical Revival, he would in time become a powerful force for revival in the north of England. After a couple of years under Fawcett's watchful care, Sutcliff devoted two and half years, from 1772 to May of 1774, to theological study at Bristol Baptist College. He then briefly served in two Baptist churches, one in Shrewsbury and one in Birmingham, before he entered upon what would be his life's ministry at Olney, Buckinghamshire in July 1775.

John Sutcliff began to study in earnest the writings of Jonathan Edwards not long after he came to Olney. First introduced to the writings of Edwards by Fawcett, the works of this New England divine exercised a great influence in shaping Sutcliff's theology. It was Edwards's evangelical Calvinism that especially led him to the conviction—that we have seen Fuller enunciate in his *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*—that certain

aspects of the Hyper-Calvinism then regnant in far too many Particular Baptist churches were unscriptural. Edwards' writings particularly helped Sutcliff to be convinced of "the harmony ... between the duty of ministers to call on sinners to repent and believe in Christ for salvation, and the necessity of omnipotent grace to render the call effectual."[52] Sutcliff soon began to incorporate into his preaching these fresh insights regarding the relationship between human responsibility and divine grace. Some of his congregation, however, were deeply disturbed by what they considered to be a departure from the canons of "orthodoxy," and they began to absent themselves from the church's celebration of the Lord's Supper. But Sutcliff was not to be deterred from preaching biblical truth, and "by patience, calmness, and prudent perseverance" he eventually won over all those in this congregation who stood opposed to his theological position.

Sutcliff's commitment to Edwardsean Calvinism was shared by a number of other pastors in the geographical vicinity of Olney. In particular this included John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825) at College Street Baptist Church in Northampton, whom Sutcliff had met in the early 1770s, and Fuller at Kettering Baptist Church, whom Sutcliff first met in 1776 at the annual meeting of the Northamptonshire Association, to which the churches of all three pastors belonged. "An aversion to the same errors, a predilection for the same authors, with a concern for the cause of Christ at home and abroad"[53] bound these three men together in a friendship which soon began to make its presence felt in the affairs of the Northamptonshire Association.

In the spring of 1784, Ryland shared with Sutcliff and fuller a treatise of Edwards which had been sent to him by the Scottish Presbyterian minister John Erskine (1721–1803). When Erskine was in his mid-twenties he had entered into correspondence with Edwards, and long after Edwards's death in 1758 he had continued to uphold Edwards's theological perspectives and to heartily recommend his books. Well described as "the paradigm of Scottish evangelical missionary interest through the last half of the eighteenth century,"[54] Erskine regularly corresponded with Ryland from 1780 until his death in 1803, sending him not only letters, but also, on occasion, bundles of interesting books and tracts which he sought to promote. Thus, it was in April 1784 that Erskine mailed to Ryland a copy of Edwards's *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement*

of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, Pursuant to Scripture-Promises and Prophecies Concerning the Last Time (henceforth referred to as the *Humble Attempt*). As we have seen, the *Humble Attempt* was not widely heeded during the life of its author. Its greatest impact would come after Edwards' death. As Iain H. Murray has noted, it is arguable that no such tract on the hidden source of all true evangelistic success, namely, prayer for the Spirit of God, has ever been so widely used as this one.[55]

Reading Edwards's *Humble Attempt* in the spring of 1784 evidently had a profound impact on Ryland, Fuller, and Sutcliff. Fuller preached that June at the annual meeting of the Northamptonshire Association. He spoke on 2 Corinthians 5:7: "We walk by faith, not by sight." During the course of this sermon, which Fuller entitled, "The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith," Fuller clearly revealed the impression Edwards's *Humble Attempt* had made upon his thinking when he appealed thus to his hearers:

> Let us take encouragement, in the present day of small things, by looking forward, and hoping for better days. Let this be attended with earnest and united prayer to Him by whom Jacob must arise. A life of faith will ever be a life of prayer. O brethren, let us pray much for an outpouring of God's spirit upon our ministers and churches, and not upon those only of our own connection and denomination, but upon "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2).[56]

At the same meeting, Sutcliff proposed that the churches of the association establish monthly prayer meetings for the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit and the consequent revival of the churches of Great Britain. This proposal was adopted by the representatives of the 16 churches at the meeting, and on the last page of the circular letter sent out that year to the churches of the Association there was a call for them "to wrestle with God for the effusion of His Holy Spirit."[57] The entire text ran thus:

> Upon a motion being made to the ministers and messengers of the associate Baptist churches assembled at Nottingham, respecting meetings for prayer, to bewail the low estate of religion, and earnestly implore a revival of our churches, and of the general cause of our Redeemer, and for that end to wrestle with God for the effusion of his Holy Spirit, which alone can produce the blessed effect, it

was unanimously resolved, to recommend to all our churches and congregations, the spending of one hour in this important exercise, on the first Monday in every calendar month.

We hereby solemnly exhort all the churches in our connection, to engage heartily and perseveringly in the prosecution of this plan. And as it may be well to endeavour to keep the same hour, as a token of our unity herein, it is supposed the following scheme may suit many congregations, viz. to meet on the first Monday evening in May, June, and July, from 8 to 9. In Aug. from 7 to 8. Sept. and Oct. from 6 to 7. Nov. Dec. Jan. and Feb. from 5 to 6. March, from 6 to 7; and April, from 7 to 8. Nevertheless if this hour, or even the particular evening, should not suit in particular places, we wish our brethren to fix on one more convenient to themselves.

We hope also, that as many of our brethren who live at a distance from our places of worship may not be able to attend there, that as many as are conveniently situated in a village or neighbourhood, will unite in small societies at the same time. And if any single individual should be so situated as not to be able to attend to this duty in society with others, let him retire at the appointed hour, to unite the breath of prayer in private with those who are thus engaged in a more public manner.

The grand object of prayer is to be that the Holy Spirit may be poured down on our ministers and churches, that sinners may be converted, the saints edified, the interest of religion revived, and the name of God glorified. At the same time, remember, we trust you will not confine your requests to your own societies [i.e. churches]; or to your own immediate connection [i.e. denomination]; let the whole interest of the Redeemer be affectionately remembered, and the spread of the gospel to the most distant parts of the habitable globe be the object of your most fervent requests. We shall rejoice if *any other Christian societies* of our own or other denominations will unite with us, and do now *invite them* most cordially to join heart and hand in the attempt.

Who can tell what the consequences of such an united effort in prayer may be! Let us plead with God the many gracious promises of His Word, which relate to the future success of His gospel. He has said, "I will yet for this be enquired of by the House of Israel to do it for them, I will increase them with men like a flock." Ezek. xxxvi.37. Surely we have love enough for Zion to set apart *one hour* at a time, twelve times in a year, to seek her welfare.[58]

There are at least four noteworthy points about this Prayer Call. First, very much in evidence in this statement, as well as in the extract from Fuller's sermon, is the conviction that any reversal of the decline of the Particular Baptists could not be accomplished by mere human zeal, but must be effected by the Spirit of God. As Sutcliff noted later in strongly Edwardsean language:

> The outpouring of the divine Spirit…is the grand promise of the New Testament. …His influences are the soul, the great animating soul of all religion. These withheld, divine ordinances are empty cisterns, and spiritual graces are withering flowers. These suspended, the greatest human abilities labour in vain, and noblest efforts fall success.[59]

Then there is the catholicity that is recommended with regard to the subjects of prayer. As the Particular Baptists of the Northamptonshire Association gathered together to pray, they were encouraged not to think simply of their own churches and their own denomination, but they were to embrace in prayer believers of other denominational bodies. The kingdom of God consists of more than Particular Baptists! In fact, churches of other associations, were encouraged to join with them in praying for revival

Third, there is the distinct missionary emphasis of the Prayer Call. The members of the Association churches were urged to pray that the gospel be spread "to the most distant parts of the habitable globe." Little did these Baptists realize how God would begin to fulfill these very prayers within the space of less than a decade.

Finally, the sole foundation for praying for revival is located in the Scriptures. Only one text, Ezekiel 36:37, is actually cited, but those issuing this call to prayer are aware of "many gracious promises" in God's Word which speak of the successful advance of His kingdom. At first glance this passage from Ezekiel hardly seems the best text to support the Prayer Call. Yet, Edwards had cited this very verse in his *Humble Attempt* and it also reflects a biblical principle: when God intends to do a great work he stirs up his people to pray for the very thing he intends to do. Preceding times of revival and striking extensions of Christ's kingdom there invariably occur the concerted and constant prayers of Christians. It is clearly this principle

that those who issued the Prayer Call of 1784 wanted to stress, although most of them probably concurred with Edwards's postmillennial vision.

The Association meetings at which this Prayer Call was issued were held on June 2–3, 1784. At the end of that month, on June 29, the church that Sutcliff pastored in Olney resolved to establish a "monthly meeting for prayer ... to seek for a revival of religion."[60] Two years later, Sutcliff gave the following progress report and exhortation regarding the prayer meetings that had been established in his own church and others in the Association.

> The monthly meetings of prayer, for the general spread of the gospel, appear to be kept up with some degree of spirit. This, we hope, will yet be the case. Brethren, be not weary in well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not. We learn that many other churches, in different, and some in distant parts of the land, and some of different denominations, have voluntarily acceded to the plan. We communicate the above information for your encouragement. Once more we would invite all who love truth and holiness, into whose hands our letter may fall, to unite their help. Let societies, let families, let individuals, who are friends to the cause of Christ unite with us, not only daily, but in a particular manner, at the appointed season. [61]

As this text shows, Sutcliff, like his mentor Edwards, was convinced that not simply the individual prayers of God's people presaged revival, but the prayers of God's people when they gathered together to pray in unison.[62] And, as Sutcliff went on to indicate, God was already answering their prayers by providing "an open door in many places, for the preaching of the gospel."[63]

The passing years did not diminish Sutcliff's zeal in praying for revival and stirring up such prayer. For instance, Ryland wrote in his diary for January 21, 1788:

> Brethren Fuller, Sutcliff, Carey, and I kept this day as a private fast, in my study: read the Epistles to Timothy and Titus; [Abraham] Booth's charge to [Thomas] Hopkins; [Richard] Blackerby's Life, in [John] Gillies; and [John] Rogers of Dedham's sixty Memorials for a Godly Life: and each prayed twice—Carey with singular enlargement and pungency. Our chief design was to implore a revival of godliness in our own souls, in our churches, and in the church at large.[64]

And in 1789, the number of prayer meetings for revival having grown considerably, Sutcliff decided to bring out an edition of Edwards's *Humble Attempt* to further encourage those meeting for prayer. Measuring only six and one quarter inches long, and three and three-quarter inches wide, and containing 168 pages, this edition was clearly designed to be a handy pocket-size edition. In his "Preface" to this edition, Sutcliff reemphasized that the Prayer Call issued by the Northamptonshire Association five years earlier was not intended for simply Particular Baptists. Rather, they ardently wished it might become general among the real friends of truth and holiness.

> The advocates of error are indefatigable in their endeavors to overthrow the distinguishing and interesting doctrines of Christianity; those doctrines which are the grounds of our hope, and sources of our joy. Surely, it becomes the followers of Christ, to use every effort, in order to strengthen the things which remain... In the present imperfect state, we may reasonably expect a diversity of sentiments upon religious matters. Each ought to think for himself; and every one has a right, on proper occasions, to shew his opinion. Yet all should remember, that there are but two parties in the world, each engaged in opposite causes; the cause of God and Satan; of holiness and sin; of heaven and hell. The advancement of the one, and the downfall of the other, must appear exceedingly desirable to every real friend of God and man. …O for thousands upon thousands, divided into small bands in their united prayers, like so many ascending clouds of incense before the Most High!—May He shower down blessings on all the scattered tribes of Zion![65]

In this text Sutcliff positions the Prayer Call of 1784 on the broad canvas of history, in which God and Satan are waging war for the souls of men women. Prayer, because it is a weapon common to all who are "friends of truth and holiness," is one sphere in which Christians can present a fully united front against Satan. Sutcliff is well aware that evangelicals in his day held differing theological positions and worshiped in different ways. He himself was a convinced Baptist — convinced, for instance, that the Scriptures fully supported congregational polity and believer's baptism — yet, as he rightly emphasizes in the above "Preface," such convictions should not prevent believers, committed to the foundational truths of Christianity, uniting together to pray for revival.

Hard on the heels of the republication of Edwards's treatise came the events leading to the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, as noted above. Included among the items recommended for prayer in the Prayer Call of 1784 had been "the spread of the gospel to the most distant parts of the habitable globe." God began to answer in the early 1790s—first, by providing a man, namely, William Carey, with the desire to go and evangelize peoples to whom the name of Christ was completely unknown. Carey had been converted in the late 1770s, baptized in 1783 by John Ryland, and had become a member of the church that John Sutcliff pastored in Olney. Not long after his conversion Carey was gripped by the responsibility that the church had been given by the risen Christ in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20) to spread the good news to the ends of the earth. It needs to be recalled that part of the Prayer Call of 1784 had urged prayer for "the spread of the gospel to the most distant parts of the habitable globe." The formation of this society was a direct result of prayer for revival. Carey would labour in India until his death in 1834. The impact of his missionary labours can be well seen in the following extract from a letter by an Anglican evangelical named Thomas Scott (1747–1821), who had known Carey in his early years. Writing on December 3, 1814, to John Ryland, Jr., Scott stated:

> I do most heartily rejoice in what your missionaries are doing in India. Their's is the most regular and best conducted plan against the kingdom of darkness that modern times have shewn; and I augur the most extensive success. More genuine Christian wisdom, fortitude, and disinterested assiduity, perseverance, and patience appear, than I elsewhere read of. May God protect and prosper! May all India be peopled with true Christians!—even though they be all Baptists … The Lord is doing great things, and answering prayer everywhere.[66]

In the two decades after Carey went to India, a good number of the missionary candidates sent out by these Baptists would be sent to Sutcliff to be tutored by him in a parsonage seminary that he opened at the close of the 1790s.

A Coda

In 1794, two years after the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, John Rippon (1750–1836), pastor of Carter Lane Baptist Church in Southwark, London, published a list of Particular Baptist congregations and ministers in his *Baptist Annual Register*. Rippon estimated that there were at that time 326 churches in England and 56 in Wales, more than double the number which had existed in 1750.[67] He printed another list of churches four years later, according to which the numbers had grown to 361 churches in England and 84 in Wales.[68] Reflecting on these numbers, Rippon wrote, "It is said, that more of our meeting houses have been enlarged, within the last five years, and built within the last fifteen, than had been built and enlarged for thirty years before."[69]

Rippon was not exaggerating. There was indeed steady growth among the Particular Baptists during the last four decades of the eighteenth century, but it was not until the final decade of the century that there was a truly rapid influx of converts.[70] It is surely no coincidence that preceding and accompanying this growth were the concerts of prayer that many churches had established in response to the Prayer Call of 1784.

From a more personal angle, one can observe the revival that was taking place in the following extracts from the letters of Andrew Fuller.[71] In the year 1810 Fuller noted in a letter to William Carey: "I preached a sermon to the youth last Lord's Day from 1 Thess 2:19. I think we must have had nearly one thousand. They came from all quarters. My heart's desire and prayer for them is that they may be saved." Fuller was still rejoicing when he wrote to his fellow Baptist pastor, John Ryland, on December 28: "I hope the Lord is at work among our young people. Our Monday and Friday night meetings are much thronged." A couple of months later he told Ryland: "The Friday evening discourses are now, and have been for nearly a year, much thronged, because they have been mostly addressed to persons under some concern about their salvation." And what was happening in Fuller's church was happening in Baptist causes throughout the length and breadth of England and Wales.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society, F.A. Cox, reflecting on the origins of the Society, stated that:

> The primary cause of the missionary excitement in Carey's mind, and its diffusion among the Northamptonshire ministers [was]… the meeting of the Association in 1784, at Nottingham, [when] it was resolved to set apart an hour on the first Monday evening of every month, "for extraordinary prayer for revival of religion, and for the extending of Christ's kingdom in the world." This suggestion proceeded from the venerable Sutcliff. Its simplicity and appropriateness have since recommended it to universal adoption; and copious showers of blessing from on high have been poured forth upon the churches.[72]

From the vantage point of the early 1840s, Cox saw the Prayer Call of 1784 as pivotal in that it focused the prayers of Particular Baptist churches in the Northamptonshire Association on the nations of the world, and thus prepared the way for the emergence of the Baptist Missionary Society and the sending of Carey to India. Yet he also notes that the "universal adoption" of the concert of prayer by churches beyond the ranks of the Particular Baptist denomination had led to rich times of revival, when God poured forth upon these churches "copious showers of blessing." Later historians would describe this period of blessing as the Second Evangelical Awakening (1790s–1830s). Some of them, like J. Edwin Orr and Paul E. G. Cook, would concur with Cox and rightly trace the human origins of this time of revival and spiritual awakening to the adoption of the concert of prayer by the Particular Baptists in 1784.[73]

However, in one area Cox's statement in somewhat misleading. In describing Sutcliff as "the venerable Sutcliff" he leaves the reader with an idyllic impression of the Baptist pastor. How sobering to find that this man, who was at the heart of a prayer movement that God used to bring so much spiritual blessing to His church, also struggled when it came to prayer. When Sutcliff lay dying in 1814, he said to Fuller: "I wish I had prayed more."[74] For some time Fuller ruminated on this statement by his dying friend. Eventually he came to the conviction that Sutcliff did not mean that he "wished he had prayed more frequently, more *spiritually*." Then Fuller elaborated on this interpretation by applying Sutcliff's statement to his own life:

> I wish I had prayer more for the influence of the Holy Spirit; I might have enjoyed more of the power of vital godliness. I wish I had prayed more for the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in studying and preaching my sermons; I might

have seen more of the blessing of God attending my ministry. I wish I had prayed more for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to attend the labours of our friends in India; I might have witnessed more of the effects of their efforts in the conversion of the heathen.[75]

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1 This essay appeared in a much longer form in the author's "'The Lord Is Doing Great Things, and Answering Prayer Everywhere': The Revival of the Particular Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century" in Robert Davis Smart, Michael A. G. Haykin, and Ian Hugh Clary, ed., *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 65–99. Used by permission.

2 For these figures, see W. T. Whitley, "The Baptist Interest under George I," *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, 2 (1910–1911): 95–109; Arthur S. Langley, "Baptist Ministers in England about 1750 A.D.," *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, 6 (1918–1919): 138–157; Alan D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England. Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740–1914* (London/New York, NY: Longman Group Ltd., 1976), 35, 37; Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 267–271, 491–510.

3 Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–1783* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 257.

4 W. T. Whitley, *A History of British Baptists*, 2nd ed. (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1932), 215–216.

5 Cited John Ryland, *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope, illustrated; in the Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, 2nd ed. (London: Button & Son, 1818), 12.

6 Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller,* revised Joseph Belcher, 3rd London ed., 3 vols. (1845, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988), 2:329. Further references to Fuller's three volumes will cite them simply as *Works*.

7 Cited Eifion Evans, *Daniel Rowland and the Great Evangelical Awakening in Wales* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), 243.

8 Cited John R. Tyson, ed., *Charles Wesley: A Reader* (New York, NY/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 418.

9 Benjamin Keach, *Gospel Mysteries Unveiled* (1701, London: L. I. Higham, 1815), II, 383.

10 Cited Dafydd Densil James Morgan, "The Development of the Baptist Movement in Wales between 1714 and 1815 with particular reference to the Evangelical Revival" (DPhil thesis, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, 1986), 39.

11 Morgan, "Development of the Baptist Movement in Wales," 39–40.

12 R. Philip Roberts, *Continuity and Change: London Particular Baptists and The Evangelical Revival 1760–1820* (Wheaton, IL: Richard Owen Roberts Publishers, 1989), 81.

13 Cited James M. Renihan, "The Puritan Roots of Reformed Baptists" (Unpublished paper, March 12, 1998), 24.

14 As quoted in Gilbert Laws, *Andrew Fuller, Pastor, Theologian, Ropeholder* (London: Carey Press, 1942), 127.

15 Phil Roberts, "Andrew Fuller" in Timothy George and David S. Dockery, ed., *Baptist Theologians* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1990), 132–133.

16 Andrew Gunton Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:1).

17 [Ted Wilson], *Soham Baptist Church 250th Anniversary 1752–2002* ([Soham]: [Soham Baptist Church], 2002), [1]. This is an eight-page stapled pamphlet without pagination.

18 L. G. Champion, L. E. Addicott, and K. A. C. Parsons, *Church Book: St Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge 1720–1832* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1991), 17.

19 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:2, 12). Also see Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb: The spirituality of Andrew Fuller* (Dundas, ON: Joshua Press, 2001), 59.

20 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:12).

21 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:2).

22 Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb*, 62–63.

23 Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb*, 63–64.

24 Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb*, 69–71.
25 Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb*, 71–72.
26 Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism," 106–107.
27 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:12).
28 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:15).
29 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:23).
30 Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works*, 1:25), Diary entries for February 5 and 8, 1781.
31 *Confession of Faith* XV (Haykin, ed., *The Armies of the Lamb*, 279).
32 Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "Northamptonshire and *The Modern Question*: A Turning-point in Eighteenth-Century Dissent" in his *Studies in English Dissent* (Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire: Quinta Press, 2002), 205.
33 For the second edition, see *Works*, 2:328–416.
34 Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (*Works*, 2:343). Extremely helpful in tracing the differences between the two editions is Robert W. Oliver, *History of the English Particular Baptists 1771-1892: From John Gill to C.H. Spurgeon* (Edinburgh/Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2006), 156–72.
35 "Preface" to *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 1st ed. (Northampton, [1785]), iv. Subsequent references to this work are to the first edition unless otherwise noted.
36 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 37.
37 "Preface" to *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, iii.
38 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 37–39.
39 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 40.
40 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 40.
41 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 40–43.
42 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 43–44.
43 *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation*, 163–172.
44 *Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (*Works*, 2:387).
45 *Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (*Works*, 2:387–393).
46 In Harry Boer's words: "Fuller's insistence on the duty of all men everywhere to believe the gospel…played a determinative role in the crystallization of Carey's missionary vision" (*Pentecost and Missions*, 24).
47 Doyle L. Young, "Andrew Fuller and the Modern Mission Movement," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 17 (1982): 17–27.
48 See in this regard, Michael A. G. Haykin, "'Hazarding all for God at a clap': The Spirituality of Baptism among British Particular Baptists," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 38 (1999–2000): 185–195.
49 Andrew Fuller, *The Pastor's Address to his Christian Hearers, Entreating their Assistance in Promoting the Interest of Christ* (*Works*, 3:346).
50 Andrew Fuller, *Promise of the Spirit* (*Works*, 3:359).
51 Comparatively little research has been done on the life or theology of John Sutcliff. There is a biographical sketch by Andrew Fuller attached to his funeral sermon for Sutcliff: *The Principles and Prospects of a Servant of Christ* (*Works*, 1:342–356). Kenneth W. H. Howard, who was pastor of Sutcliff Baptist Church in Olney from 1949–1954, has written a fine biographical piece: "John Sutcliff of Olney," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 14 (1951–1952): 304–309. The author of this chapter has written *One heart and one soul: John Sutcliff of Olney, his friends, and his times* (Darlington, Co. Durham: Evangelical Press, 1994).
52 Fuller, *Principles and Prospects* (*Works*, 1:350).
53 John Ryland, Jr., *The Indwelling and Righteousness of Christ No Security against Corporal Death, but the Source of Spiritual and Eternal Life* (London: W. Button, 1815), , 35–36. Ryland actually uses these words about his friendship with Fuller, but they can also be applied to the friendship between Sutcliff, Fuller, and Ryland. In the "Postscript" to this sermon, Ryland describes Sutcliff and Fuller as "my dearest brethren" (p.47). In his *Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, Ryland states that he always regarded Fuller and "Brother Sutcliff, and myself, as more closely united to each other, than either of us were to any one else" (p. ix).
54 J. A. De Jong, *As the Waters Cover the Sea: Millennial Expectations in the Reformation today Rise of Anglo-America missions, 1640-1810* (Kampen, The Netherlands: J. H. Kok N.V., 1970), 166.
55 Iain H. Murray, *Jonathan Edwards* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 299.
56 Andrew Fuller, "The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith" (*Works* 1:131).
57 John Ryland, Jr., *The Nature, Evidences, and Advantages, of Humility* (Circular Letter of the Northamptonshire Association, 1784), 12.

58 Attached to Ryland, Jr., *Nature, Evidences, and Advantages, of Humility*, 12.

59 John Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts Illustrated* (London: W. Button, 1791), 12.

60 "Baptist Meeting at Olney Minutes," June 29, 1784 (Sutcliff Baptist Church, Olney, Minute Book).

61 John Sutcliff, *Authority and Sanctification of the Lord's Day, Explained and Enforced* (N.p.: Northamptonshire Baptist Association, 1791), 1–2.

62 Michael J. Crawford, *Seasons of Grace: Colonial New England's Revival Tradition in Its British Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 229.

63 Sutcliff, *Authority and Sanctification of the Lord's Day*, 2.

64 Jonathan Edwards Ryland, "Memoir of Dr. Ryland" in *Pastoral Memorials: Selected from the Manuscripts of the Late Revd. John Ryland, D.D. of Bristol* (London: B.J. Holdsworth, 1826), 1:17. Abraham Booth (1734–1806) was a well-known Baptist minister in London, His charge to Thomas Hopkins, when the latter was ordained pastor of Eagle Street Baptist Church, London, contains the following admonition, which would not have been lost to Sutcliff and his friends: "With humility, with prayer, and with expectation, the assistance of the holy Spirit should be daily regarded." See Abraham Booth, "Pastoral Cautions: An Address to the Late Mr. Thomas Hopkins," *The Works of Abraham Booth* [Springfield, MO: particular Baptist Press, 2006], 3:178). Richard Blackerby (1574–1648) and John Rogers (d.1636) were both Puritan authors. The book of John Gillies (1712–1796), the son-in-law of John McLaurin, one of the initiators of the concert of prayer in Scotland, is his *Historical Collections Relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel, and Eminent Instruments Employed in Promoting It*. This book is reputedly the earliest history of revivals.

65 John Sutcliff, "Preface" to Jonathan Edwards, *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer, For the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture-Promises and Prophecies concerning the Last Time* (1748, Northampton: T. Dicey and Co., 1789), iv–vi.

66 John Scott, *Letters and Papers of the Rev. Thomas Scott* (London: L. B. Seeley and Son, 1824), 254.

67 *The Baptist Annual Register* (London, 1797), 2:16, 23.

68 *The Baptist Annual Register* (London, 1801), 3:40, 42.

69 *Baptist Annual Register*, 3:40.

70 Deryck W. Lovegrove, *Established Church, Sectarian People. Itinerancy and the Transformation of English Dissent, 1780–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 38.

71 The following extracts from the letters of Andrew Fuller are all cited by Doyle L. Young, "The Place of Andrew Fuller in the Developing Modern Missions Movement" (PhD thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981), 232.

72 F. A. Cox, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society, From 1792 to 1842* (London: T. Ward & Co./G. & J. Dyer, 1842), 1:10–11.

73 J. Edwin Orr, *The Eager Feet: Evangelical Awakenings 1790–1830* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 95, 191–192, 199; Paul E. G. Cook, "The Forgotten Revival" in *Preaching and Revival* (London: The Westminster Conference, 1984), 92.

74 Fuller, *Principles and Prospects* (*Works*, 1:344).

75 J. W. Morris, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (London, 1816), 443.

A Quickening Light: A Puritan Vision of Revival

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"There may be life where there is no vigor," declares Thomas Manton.[1] That is to say, it is possible to be born again, implanted into Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and yet pass through seasons of spiritual listlessness. The reason for this lies in the instability of the heart, which never remains in the same condition but is up one moment and down the next. The desires of the flesh and the concerns of the world, coupled with our carelessness and fickleness, conspire to bring "deadness upon the heart."[2] At times like these, says Manton, there is but one remedy—revival, whereby God lifts us out of a "cold, sad, and heavy" condition and makes us "lively."[3]

To appreciate fully what Manton is saying, it is necessary to divest the word *revival* of much of what is usually associated with it and listen to him on his own terms. Upon doing so it becomes apparent that his concept of revival presupposes well-defined convictions concerning the work of regeneration and the nature of knowledge. The purpose of the present article is to analyze these convictions.

This inquiry into Manton's thinking on revival is of historical interest for two reasons. First, it reveals an important element of Puritan spirituality. Manton is not an innovator but reflects a tradition that permeates the writings of his fellow seventeenth-century Puritans—John Flavel,

Thomas Watson, George Swinnock, et al. Second, it provides a lens through which to understand the so-called revivals of the eighteenth century. Multiple factors converged to produce these movements, yet none as important as the theological convictions and experiential emphases inherited from the Puritans.

The Puritans

During the reign of Bloody Mary (1553–1558), many Protestants suffered a grisly death at the stake. Many more escaped the queen's ferocity by fleeing to the Continent. In 1554, many of these exiles settled in Frankfurt, where they quickly summoned John Knox from Geneva to serve as their pastor. Under Knox's oversight, they adopted a modified version of the Prayer Book, which had been produced during the reign of Edward VI (1547–1553). Of note, it abolished any practice that was deemed contrary to the Reformed faith. The following year, in 1555, a new wave of exiles from England arrived at Frankfurt. They were led by Richard Cox, vice-chancellor of Oxford. Soon after their arrival, they made it known to their fellow countrymen that they desired "the face of an English church."[4] They favored the Prayer Book in its original form, and they desired to work within the established church as it was. From that moment, the congregation was divided between the supporters of Knox and Cox. While united in their opposition to Mary and Roman Catholicism, these two factions did not share a common view on the nature or extent of the Reformation in England, nor did they agree as to the final authority in the ordering of public worship; Cox supporters appealed to the Prayer Book, whereas Knox supporters appealed to Scripture. Before long, the Cox faction gained control of the church, forcing Knox (and many of his followers) to depart for Geneva.

This sharp disagreement was a harbinger of things to come within the Church of England. When Mary died in 1558, Elizabeth became the new monarch, and the Frankfurt division soon took center stage. Given England's precarious political condition, Elizabeth's ministers called for moderation. She heeded their advice, as she was well aware of the various factions within the established church. She implemented what is known as the Elizabethan Settlement, which rested on two acts of parliament in 1559. The first, the Act of Supremacy, restored the preeminence of the Church of

England to the monarch, while the second, the Act of Uniformity, enforced a new Prayer Book—a slight revision of Edward VI's edition. These acts were designed to find a *via media* (middle way) between the splintered groups. The form of church worship and government remained intact, and the clergy continued to dress in their traditional clothing; however, the Elizabethan Settlement called for the abolishment of prayers to the saints and the removal of relics and images from churches. Most significantly, it orchestrated the dismissal of the fourteen bishops remaining from Mary's reign. Four years later in 1563, the Church of England established the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion.[5] These articles clearly placed it within the framework of ancient councils and historic creeds. They also espoused the teaching of the Reformation on Scripture, freewill, justification, and good works. At the same time, they openly opposed Roman Catholic dogmas such as purgatory and transubstantiation, and Roman Catholic practices such as entreating the saints and adoring the Eucharist.

But not everyone was thrilled with the Elizabethan Settlement. Expectedly, Roman Catholics lamented the reversal of Mary's policies, while Protestants were deeply divided over the implemented changes. This split among Protestants mirrored the old Frankfurt debate. Some were satisfied with the Elizabeth Settlement, whereas others longed for greater reform. Among this latter group were many who wanted to remove all perceived remnants of Roman Catholicism. Some of them also desired to alter the church's government on the basis of Presbyterianism. These men encompassed a broad spectrum of opinion, yet all shared one common denominator—dissatisfaction with the extent of the English Reformation. As one historian notes:

> The term 'Puritan' became current during the 1560s as a nickname for Protestants who, dissatisfied with the Elizabethan Settlement of the church… would have subscribed to the contention of the Admonition to Parliament of 1572 that 'we in England are so far off, from having a church rightly reformed, according to the prescript of God's Word, that as yet we are not come to the outward face of the same.'[6]

While varied in their aim and intensity, the Puritans' struggle for ecclesiastical change continued through the reigns of the Stuart kings, until

the Great Ejection of 1662 when Charles II (1660–1685) introduced an Act of Uniformity, effectively forcing close to two thousand ministers out of the established church into dissent.

During this one-hundred-year period (1558–1662), the term *Puritan* assumed a meaning in addition to the one described above. At the end of the sixteenth century, William Perkins lamented, "Who are so much branded with vile terms of Puritans and Precisians, as those who most endeavor to get and keep the purity of heart in a good conscience?"[7] Writing in 1611, Robert Bolton commented, "The world is come to that wretched pass, and height of profaneness, that even honesty and sanctification is many times odiously branded by the nick-name Puritanism."[8] In 1641, Thomas Wilson noted that "fervency in religion" is called "indiscretion, rashness, puritanism, or headiness."[9] From these citations it is evident that, in addition to its ecclesiastical usage, the term *Puritan* became a derogatory moniker for those who practiced a certain style of piety—what we might call "experimental Calvinism."[10] This style of piety transcended the deep divisions between those of differing political and ecclesiastical views: Independents and Presbyterians, Parliamentarians and Royalists, Conformists and Nonconformists, Credobaptists and Paedobaptists. At its center stood the conviction that believers must experience an affective appropriation of God's sovereign grace, moving beyond intellectual assent to heartfelt dedication to Christ. These Puritans preached with great enthusiasm about God's sovereign grace from eternity, but they were particularly concerned about how this grace breaks through in time into the believer's experience. They wanted to explain how believers respond to God's sovereign acts; that is, how the covenant of grace impacts them and moves them from initial faith to full assurance.

Thomas Manton

Among these Puritans stands Thomas Manton. He was born at Lydeard St. Lawrence, Somerset, on March 31, 1620.[11] After completing grammar school, he enrolled at Wadham College, Oxford, and graduated four years later with a Bachelor of Arts. Since advanced degrees did not require his presence at Oxford, he would go on to complete the Bachelor of Divinity in 1654 and the Doctor of Divinity in 1660 while engaged in ministry.

Upon his ordination to the diaconate in 1639, Manton embarked on his first lectureship at the parish church of Culliton (Colyton), Devon. In order to avoid the growing political unrest in the region, he moved a short time later with his new bride, Mary Morgan, to London. In 1644, St. Mary's Stoke Newington was sequestered, and the pastorate was offered to Manton. He held this position until becoming pastor of St. Paul's Covent Garden a few years later.

These were eventful years for the nation, and Manton found himself in the midst of significant social and political upheaval. In 1641, Parliament passed the Grand Remonstrance, which eventually led to the Civil War between Parliamentarians and Royalists. After the former's victory in 1646, Charles I attempted to persuade Scotland to invade England under the promise that he would establish Presbyterianism. Disappointed by the Long Parliament's unwillingness to confront the king, General Pride (commander of the new model army) purged it of close to two hundred members in 1648. The remaining members constituted the new Rump Parliament, which eventually tried and executed the king for treason. Manton played no role in this. While it is true that he served as one of the three clerks at the Westminster Assembly, penned the introduction to the documents of the Westminster Assembly, preached occasionally before Parliament, and prayed at various ceremonies related to Oliver Cromwell's Protectorship, Manton remained a committed royalist. He was one of fifty-seven divines who signed a protest against the Rump Parliament's plan to execute the king.

Despite his outspoken opposition to the regicide, Manton was a prominent figure during Oliver Cromwell's Protectorship. He quickly became a leading voice in political and theological matters, serving on numerous commissions. After Richard Cromwell's Protectorship failed in 1660, General Monck restored the Long Parliament by re-instating those members who had been excluded twelve years earlier. It immediately dissolved itself and convened the new Convention Parliament, composed mostly of Presbyterians favorable to the return of Charles II. Manton was very active in this endeavor. According to J. C. Ryle, "If there was one name which more than another was incessantly before the public for several years about the period of the Restoration, that name was Manton's."[12] He was even one of the delegates who met with Charles II at Breda, in order to negotiate the terms of his return.

Upon his restoration, the king convened the new Cavalier Parliament, thereby extinguishing any hopes for compromise between Presbyterians and Episcopalians. It passed the Act of Uniformity in 1662, requiring all who had not received Episcopal ordination to be re-ordained by bishops; moreover, it required ministers to declare their consent to the entire Book of Prayer and their rejection of the Solemn League and Covenant. As a result, approximately two thousand ministers (including Manton) left the Church of England. While actively seeking accommodation for Presbyterians within the national church, Manton continued to preach privately. Because of his violation of the Five Mile Act, he was imprisoned for six months in 1670;[13] however, the political indulgence two years later allowed him to preach openly at his home in Covent Garden. Soon after, he became a lecturer at Pinner's Hall, and remained in this capacity until his death on October 18, 1677.

At Manton's funeral, William Bates preached on 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."[14] In the course of his sermon, he praised his close friend for "the holiness of his person," extoling in particular his "constancy," "loyalty," "charity," and "humility."[15] Bates also praised Manton for "the quality of his office," affirming that he possessed "a clear judgment, rich fancy, strong memory, and happy elocution."[16] These "parts," coupled with his extraordinary knowledge of Scripture, made him an excellent minister of the gospel. By all accounts, Bates's high estimation of Manton's preaching was fully warranted. According to Edmund Calamy, Manton "left behind him the general reputation of as excellent a preacher as this city or nation has produced."[17]

As stated in the introduction, Manton was convinced that "life" without "vigor" is a common condition among believers. The only remedy for such spiritual lethargy is revival, whereby God lifts us out of a "cold, sad, and heavy" condition and makes us "lively." What Manton means by that rests on well-defined convictions concerning the work of regeneration and the nature of knowledge. We review each in turn.

The Work of Regeneration

The framework for Manton's understanding of God's work of regeneration arises from his belief that the human soul consists of three main faculties:

mind, affections, and will. These faculties, characterized by knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, constituted the image of God in our first parents Adam and Eve (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).[18] When Adam sinned, the image of God was defaced, meaning he lost knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and this deprivation had a negative impact upon his faculties in that his will was no longer directed by a mind that knew God or affections that loved God.[19] For Manton, this has been the predicament of Adam's posterity ever since the fall, and "hence it is that all our faculties are perverted." In short, our mind is "blind and vain," our affections are "pre-occupied and entangled," and our will is "stubborn and perverse."[20]

In terms of the soul's faculties, Manton believes the affections are of utmost importance because they are "the forcible and vigorous motions of the will."[21] He inherits this view from Augustine who identified four primary "motions": desire, delight, fear, and sorrow.[22] Desire and delight are the "volition of consent" to a "loved" object. Desire occurs when consent takes the form of seeking the object, and delight occurs when consent takes the form of enjoying it. On the other hand, fear and sorrow are the "volition of aversion" from a "hated" object. Fear occurs when aversion takes the form of turning from the object, and sorrow occurs when aversion takes the form of experiencing it.[23]

In this paradigm, love and hate determine the response of the other affections. Desire is yearning for what is loved, delight is experiencing what is loved, fear is fleeing from what is hated, and sorrow is experiencing what is hated. On that basis, Augustine argued that as long as the object of our love is "well-directed," the affections are good. But that changes if the object of our love is "ill-directed."[24] Prior to his fall, the object of Adam's love was God and, as a result, the affections were "good." However, that condition was terminated at the time of the fall when love for God was lost and, consequently, the affections became "evil."

Manton adopts Augustine's paradigm, affirming that the affections are the inclination or disinclination of the soul to an object in accordance with the soul's perception of that object as either desirous or odious. "Love is the great wheel of the soul, that sets all a-going," says he.[25] It is "a complacency in" and "a propensity toward" whatever the soul perceives to be good, and it expresses itself in "desire" in the absence of the good and "delight" in the presence of the good.[26] Prior to Adam's fall, these affections

were well-directed because his love was set on God. In our fallen condition, however, the affections are ill-directed because love is set on self. As Manton explains, "We have the same affections, but they are misplaced. We love where we should hate, and we hate where we should love." Our affections, therefore, are like "a member out of joint."[27]

Given the disordered condition of the soul's faculties, we stand in need of regeneration, which Manton describes as "the first infusion of the life of grace."[28] "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18). Based on this verse, Manton concludes that the "efficient" cause of regeneration is God's "own will," meaning it excludes compulsion on His part and merit on our part. The "instrumental" cause of regeneration is "the word of truth." It alone is the means by which the Holy Spirit causes us to be born again. The "final" cause of regeneration is "that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." In the Old Testament, the firstfruits of the harvest were set apart to God. Similarly, God quickened us to set us apart to Himself.[29]

When God regenerates us, He renews His image by restoring knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, whereby the darkened mind is illumined, the hardened affections are softened, and the enslaved will is liberated. As a result of these renewed faculties, we now possess a new spiritual sense, whereby we take God as our "chief good" and "utmost end." Because our love is again "well-directed," the affections respond accordingly, meaning we love what we formally hated (God), and we hate what we formerly loved (sin). In sum, we turn "from the creature to God," "from self to Christ," and "from sin to holiness."[30]

The Nature of Knowledge

As stated above, Manton believes regeneration is "the first infusion of the life of grace." The final infusion awaits glorification. For Manton, the implication is obvious: regeneration only produces a partial renewal. We now possess two semi-intact motivational systems, meaning love of God (the spirit) and love of self (the flesh) are inter-mingled in the three faculties of mind, affections, and will. Owing to that reality, the "life of grace" can easily wane and weaken, unless God breathes "upon His own work."[31] We are in constant need of His "quickening, actuating, assisting grace" to improve

"infused principles" so that their "operations" are "carried forth with more success."[32] For Manton, the defining feature of such revival (or quickening) is the warming of the affections, whereby what is known in the head seeps down into the heart. When that happens, God's truth "comes upon us with more conviction," meaning it does not merely "float in the brain but affects the heart."[33]

This persuasion leads Manton to distinguish between "theoretical" (or speculative) knowledge and "practical" (or affective) knowledge.[34] In short, theoretical knowledge is confined to the mind, whereas practical knowledge includes an "enlightened" mind, "awakened" conscience, "rightly disposed" will, and "quickened" affections.[35] Moreover, practical knowledge is "operative," meaning it produces "a change in the inward and outward man," whereby our practice is brought into greater conformity with God's Word.[36]

According to Manton, there are three chief impediments to such knowledge. The first is "blindness" or "weakness." Paul declares, "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor 2:14). The term "natural" refers to what belongs to fallen human nature. The inference, for Manton, is clear: we might be learned, educated, scientific, intellectual, and refined, yet unable to discern spiritual truth. "Divine things cannot be seen but by a divine light," says he, "and spiritual things by a spiritual light, else they will have no savor and relish."[37]

The second impediment is "forgetfulness." We are "apt to forsake" what we know concerning the things of God.[38] By that, Manton does not mean we forget "notionally"—no longer remembering what we once knew. He means we forget "affectively," that is, we are no longer "answerably affected" by what we know.[39] In other words, the truth does not impact us the way it once did.

The third impediment is "stubbornness." In the Garden, Adam's chief good and last end was God, but Adam rebelled, yielding to Satan's temptation, "You will be like God" (Gen 3:5). As a result, he fell from his original condition, and now our fallen human nature is oriented towards self-love, self-autonomy, self-sufficiency, and self-gratification. "When man fell from God," writes Manton, "he fell to himself."[40] Ever since then, the flesh has alienated us from God. As a result, "the whole business of Christianity seems to be a foolish thing to a carnal heart."[41] The flesh is at war with God and, therefore, unable to obey God and unable to please God.

Each of these impediments means we are entirely dependent upon God to produce practical knowledge in us. Because we are ignorant in mind and impotent in will, we need "a double assistance from God."[42] For starters, God must cure "the blindness of our minds."[43] The psalmist prays, "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law" (Ps 119:18). For Manton, there is no lack of light in Scripture. The problem is the "veil of darkness upon our hearts." But God removes this veil so that we can discern "the mysteries" that are revealed in His Word.[44] This removal is an involved process, owing to the multiplicity of veils.[45] First, there is "the veil of ignorance." We might understand God's truth "literally" and "grammatically" while remaining "spiritually" ignorant of it. This is akin to a child who reads the words in a story book without grasping their meaning. Second, there is "the veil of carnal knowledge and wisdom." We possess a "conceited" opinion of ourselves—namely, our ability to understand and our assessment of how much we think we know—and this arrogance keeps us from "profiting" from God's Word. Third, there is "the veil of prejudice and corrupt affections." Our attachment to this world inhibits us from discerning "practical truths" and from judging "the controversies of the age." Fourth, there is "the veil of carnal sense." We are "short-sighted" because we are so "inured to present things." The result is that we possess little appreciation for "things to come." But when God opens our eyes, He removes each of these veils. He infuses light so that we clearly discern "divine mysteries."[46] As a result, our knowledge becomes "lively."

Not only must God cure "the blindness of our minds," He must incline "our hearts towards spiritual and heavenly things."[47] That is why the psalmist prays, "Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness" (Ps 119:36). The verb "incline" literally means to bend. God inclines the heart when He bends it to that which is good. We know this has happened "when the habitual bent of our affections is more to holiness than to worldly things; for the power of sin stands in the love of it, and so does our aptness for grace in the love of it, or in the bent of the will, the strength of desire and affections by which we are carried out after it."[48] An inclined heart, therefore, is not a "simple approbation" of God's ways, nor is it a "bare wish." Instead, it is a determination to obey God because we are "swayed" with love for His commands.[49] Manton is adamant that apart from "the practice of holy obedience," knowing is but a "speculative" exercise.[50] When God revives the soul, His Word exercises "real dominion over and influence upon

our practice."[51] Our obedience becomes "universal" in that we do not content ourselves with a "partial reformation in outward things." It also becomes "serious" and "settled," meaning we pursue it "with the greatest care."[52] In sum, when God revives the soul, "faith begets love, and love begets obedience," and these are the "true principles of all Christian actions."[53]

Conclusion

According to Manton, we enjoy a "state of nearness" to God because He has established His covenant with us; moreover, Christ has united us to Himself, and the Holy Spirit dwells within us.[54] We were formerly "strangers and enemies," but we have been admitted into a "state of favor and reconciliation with God."[55] While wonderful, this "state of nearness" is not to be confused with final salvation. We are still susceptible to "weariness" and "uncomfortableness,"[56] and we still struggle with "negligence" and "slothfulness."[57] We possess a "strong bias of corruption" that draws us away from God to "present things."[58] We easily succumb to "carnal liberty" and spend too much time and effort on the "vanities of the world" and the "pleasures of the flesh."[59] All these things work together to cause us to "hang off from God."[60] When that happens, "deadness of spirit" soon creeps upon us.[61]

At times like these, there is but one remedy: revival. We need God to quicken us by exciting the "operative graces" of faith and love.[62] "These are the graces wherein life consists," says Manton, "and as these are acted and excited to God, so we are lively."[63] God quickens our faith by giving us a sense of His greatness, and He quickens our love by giving us a sense of His goodness.[64] This sense of God's greatness and goodness comes by means of His Word. As Manton explains, the Holy Spirit is "associated" with the Word, and when He "goes along with it," He blesses it to our souls, thereby producing "serious and ponderous thoughts" which work directly upon our affections.[65] He stirs up thoughts of God's "high and glorious" authority to "awe" us, His "wonderful love in Christ" to "constrain" us, the "reasonableness" of His commands to "invite" us, the "joys" of heaven to "allure" us, and the "horrors of everlasting darkness" to keep us in "a lively sense of our duty."[66] God reveals these great truths in His Word, and impresses them upon us by His Spirit, thereby making us "lively."

As stated at the outset, this inquiry into Manton's thinking on revival is of historical interest for two reasons. First, it reveals an important element of Puritan spirituality. Manton is not unique in his understanding of God's quickening work in the believer. On the contrary, his entire paradigm is assumed within the Puritan tradition. While stressing the impact of God's work of regeneration upon the mind, affections, and will, the Puritans insist that its measure in this life is but in part. That is to say, we are partly spirit and partly flesh, partly holy and partly unholy. Therefore, we stand in constant need for God to breathe upon His own work. For the Puritans, there is no such thing as a higher life or victorious life. There is no crisis of faith (e.g., complete filling, total breaking, or second blessing) that will provide an experiential basis for a second stage of surrender or victory. On the contrary, the Christian life is a race, contest, and fight. Therefore, we run, wrestle, watch, resist, and stand, living in dependence upon God's quickening grace.

Second, this inquiry provides a helpful lens through which to understand the revivals that took place in the century following the Puritans. Multiple factors converged to produce these movements, yet none as important as the theological convictions and experiential emphases inherited from the Puritans. Their understanding of God's work of regeneration as the renewal of the faculties, their insistence that the Christian life is an ongoing struggle between the flesh and the Spirit, their pursuit of a practical knowledge rooted in the affections, their emphasis on spiritual dynamics such as faith and repentance, plus their focus on motifs such as the severity of sin and sufficiency of Christ, will set the stage for the phenomena known as eighteenth-century revivals.

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1 Thomas Manton, *Sermons Upon Psalm 119*, in *The Works of Thomas Manton*, 22 vols. (Homewood, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2008), 6:239.

2 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:86–88.

3 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:429.

4 As quoted by William M'Gavin, "Life of John Knox," in John Knox, *The History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland* (Glasgow: Blackie, Fullarton, & Co., 1831), xxxvii.

5 Parliament officially authorized these eight years later.

6 Neil Keeble, "Puritan Spirituality," in *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. G. S. Wakefield (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 323.

7 William Perkins, *A Godly and Learned Exposition upon Christ's Sermon in the Mount*, in *The Works of William Perkins* (London, 1631), 3:15.

8 Robert Bolton, *A Discourse about the State of True Happiness: Delivered in Certain Sermons in Oxford, and at Paul's Cross* (London, 1611), 132.

9 Thomas Wilson, *David's Zeal for Zion: A Sermon Preached before the Honorable House of Commons, April 4, 1641* (London, 1641), 14.

10 For more on these definitions, see J. Stephen Yuille, *Puritan Spirituality: The Fear of God in the Affective Theology of George Swinnock* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), 5–17.

11 The standard account of Manton's life is found in William Harris, "Some Memoirs of the Life and Character of the Reverend and Learned Thomas Manton, D. D.," in Thomas Manton, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, 22 vols (London: James Nisbet, 1870–75; rpt., Birmingham: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2008), 1:vii–xxxiii. Harris's biographical sketch is based upon two earlier accounts: (1) William Bates, "A Funeral Sermon Preached upon the Death of the Reverend and Excellent Divine, Dr. Thomas Manton," in Manton, *Works*, 22:123–147; and (2) Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 2 vols (London, 1691), 2:446–48. Additional summaries of Manton's life are found in: (1) Edmund Calamy, *The Nonconformist's Memorial: Being an account of the ministers, who were ejected or silenced after the Restoration, particularly by the Act of Uniformity, which took place on Bartholomew-day, Aug. 24, 1662* (London, 1775), 1:138–41; and (2) Joel R. Beeke & Randall J. Pederson, *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), 407–9. For a more thorough analysis of Manton in his historical context, see (1) Derek Cooper, "The Ecumenical Exegete: Thomas Manton's Commentary on James in Relation to its Protestant Predecessors, Contemporaries and Successors" (PhD thesis, Lutheran Theological Seminary, 2008); and (2) Adam Richardson, "Thomas Manton and the Presbyterians in Interregnum and Restoration England" (PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2014).

12 J. C. Ryle, "An Estimate of Manton," in Manton, *Works*, 2:vii.

13 This Act prohibited ministers from coming within five miles of the parish church from which they had been ejected.

14 Bates, "Funeral Sermon," in Manton, *Works*, 22:123–47.

15 Bates, "Funeral Sermon," in Manton, *Works*, 22:146.

16 Bates, "Funeral Sermon," in Manton, *Works*, 22:143.

17 Edmund Calamy, *An Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's History of His Life and Times* (London, 1702), 210.

18 Manton, *Exposition of James*, 4:295–96.

19 According to the Augustinian principle, the natural gifts (understanding, affections, and will) remain in humanity, but the supernatural gifts (knowledge, righteousness, and holiness) are gone. When Adam was separated from God at the time of the fall, he was inclined to disobedience because this deprivation had a negative impact upon his faculties. His will was no longer directed by an understanding that knew God or affections that desired God. This means that sin has no formal existence.

20 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:273.

21 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:358.

22 Augustine, *The City of God*, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol 2, ed. P. Schaff (New York: Random House, 1948), 14:5.

23 Augustine, *City of God*, 14:6.

24 Augustine, *City of God*, 14:7.

25 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:156.

26 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:20–21.

27 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:155.

28 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:103.

29 Manton, *Exposition of James*, 4:116–27.

30 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:439.

31 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:103.

32 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:363.

33 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:118.

34 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:51–52, 65–67, 256–58, 341–42; 7:271–73; 8:279–80; 9:32–33.

35 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:342–43.

36 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:271.

37 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:116.

38 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:117.

39 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:115.

40 Manton, *Sermon on Galatians 5:16*, 2:287.

41 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:117.

42 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:360–61.
43 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:249.
44 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:164.
45 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:165.
46 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:249.
47 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:249.
48 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:370.
49 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:151.
50 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:13.
51 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:18.
52 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:13–14.
53 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:15.
54 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:106–07.
55 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 9:104.
56 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:272.
57 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:103.
58 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:240.
59 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:103.
60 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:272.
61 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:103.
62 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 8:103.
63 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:240.
64 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 6:436.
65 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:432–33.
66 Manton, *Psalm 119*, 7:432.

Jonathan Edwards and Revivals: Contours, Conflicts, and Consequences

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It will come as no surprise that in the course of biblical history, the people of God have experienced spiritual advances as well as spiritual setbacks. Israel's prayers have been captured in exultant praise as well as despairing lament. Though the Lord was confessed as the keeper of Israel, not allowing his people's feet to stumble (Ps 121), on occasions they also had cause to beseech him to act in power to revive their nation and to restore their fortunes (Ps 85). Formed by promissory hope, the people of God longed for the day when cosmic harmony would be reestablished, as we note for example when the disciples inquired of Jesus in Acts 1 as to when the Kingdom would be restored to Israel. Just as the natural world experiences different seasons in regular sequence, so it was assumed God would honor his covenant to bring abundance again after periods of pruning. Was not such a divine posture central to the experience and expectation of his people when he vowed to be their God by drawing close to them in blessing (Num 6:24–26)?

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), preacher, pastor, and theologian of revival in Northampton, Massachusetts, witnessed, nurtured and supervised several extended periods of revival among God's people. There had previously been five different seasons of revival, known as "harvests," in the town during the sixty-year ministry of his grandfather Solomon Stoddard (1670–1729), but there was something distinctly new about the revivals which Edwards himself cultivated in 1734–35, and 1740–41. Edwards did not intend to overthrow the theological convictions of his Puritan forebears—he was a conservative Protestant in the Reformed tradition after all—but he did want to inflect those same commitments with a renewed and contemporary sense of direct access to the divine, or divine closeness experienced in blessing. In his estimation, the Congregational church of New England needed revival to shed its ossified structures and to refocus its spiritual life. The Puritan errand to the wilderness, a journey navigated originally with distinct spiritual coordinates, needed new maps to recalibrate its course. Edwards's own powerful experience of the Lord in 1720 as he walked in the fields and woods near his family home in East Windsor, recounted in his *Personal Narrative* of 1739, provided a template for renewal which he projected onto the larger historical drama. He had longed for an experience of the "power of godliness" that had not up to now been part of his religious duties or experience, a longing which he lamented was absent in his pastoral circles, and a longing not dissimilar from many in our own day. He wanted to see revival in his church.

Though many Christians throughout history have experienced longings for renewal, the precise contours of Edwards's longing and opportunities for fulfilment in his church in Northampton (or later in Stockbridge on the frontier between 1750–1758) were of course textured by the modern world in which they were located. This was a period in which Enlightenment philosophy had attempted to marginalize divine activity in the world, either cautiously or caustically according to the temperament of the thinker. This was a period in which old forms of commerce were giving way to new global markets in which the cash economy would reign supreme, and in which people consequently developed a new sense of autonomy and authority, economic or political, to make their own way in the world. This was a period when natural philosophy saw advances in medicine, physics, and psychology, reshaping how an individual might make sense of their bodily interactions

and spiritual inclinations within their experience of time and space. Doug Sweeney usefully describes this context as generating "Protestantism with an eighteenth-century twist," and Catherine Brekus speaks of the rise of this kind of revivalist Christianity as a "vector of modernity."[1] To examine Edwards and the revivals is not only to ask theological questions, but to situate possible theological answers within a context which suggests historical contingency. Revivals look different in various social locations. By extension, any longing for revival must acknowledge that God is free to do things differently from the past, and can answer prayers for renewal in any way he sees fit.

For this reason, a comparison with the nature of revival in the Reformation is instructive. Strikingly, renewal of the church in Electoral Saxony in the sixteenth century did not involve mass gatherings in public places, nor did it lead in its wake to extraordinary experiences of physical epiphenomena. Indeed, to gather any such large group in the marketplace of Wittenberg for instance would have been regarded as seditious. Crowds did accumulate to ransack and burn some churches, inspired by von Karlstadt in Luther's absence in 1522, but this was not a posture of revival but of anger, destruction and frustration at the slow pace of reform permitted by Luther's prince, Frederick the Wise. As a consequence, Luther was called back from his involuntary captivity under house arrest in the Wartburg (1521–1522) to restore order. Luther preached in consecrated ecclesiastical spaces, for example in the Black Monastery in Wittenberg or in St Mary's parish church, and not in open fields nor in church cemeteries or private homes. Indeed, the opposite was the case: due to territorial politics, his travelling and appearances were severely constrained by papal edict. Freedom of movement and of expression was not his experience. He could only visit synods or colloquies in those places where there was to be found a sympathetic prince. Here was no itinerant who sailed oceans or who gathered an audience in convenient outdoor locations. He offered no easy precedent to the revivalists of the eighteenth century.[2]

The revivals that Edwards supervised are therefore best described as artefacts of modernity, a way that God chose to revive his church under uniquely modern conditions. This article has the goal to present both Edwards's theological reflection on the revivals, and to outline some of the concrete ways that he sought to revive the church of his day. For Edwards,

the revivals were not merely the result of human connivance, nor were they unfocused or random in their outcomes. Their goal was to empower individuals for the sake of the prosperity of the church. He remains an example of a leader for whom both head and heart, truth and light, were to be coordinated in daily experience and exemplified in the revivals themselves.

Edwards Defends Patterns of Divine Agency in the Revivals

The revivalist tradition is now a significant feature of American, and by extension global, evangelicalism. It has shaped and reshaped expressions of conservative Christianity in vastly different contexts and has given to them common genetic material. But before there was revivalism there were revivals, and Edwards's role in the revivals of the eighteenth century is not only load bearing for later expressions of revivals, but distinct from them as well, for Edwards did not come to this mode of evangelism with a particular model in mind. He was not aiming to confect a particular sociological strategy to achieve revival. Indeed, he frequently referred to the events he experienced as this "surprising work of God," acknowledging thereby that divine freedom must be given priority in interpreting experiences of awakening, regeneration, and conversion.[3] Of course, Edwards was aware of the seasons of revival that had visited Northampton under his grandfather's ministry, and no doubt hoped for just another such visitation, but this did not mean that he could anticipate exactly how or when God might pour out his Spirit afresh, nor would any prayer for revival invariably expedite any such outpouring. The Connecticut River Awakening of 1734–35 was in Edwards's mind linked to his preaching on justification through faith in that same season, no doubt with Reformation precedent in mind, but he was not simply trying to replicate the experience of John and Charles Wesley and their confrontation with Luther's preface to the Romans at the Moravian meeting house on Aldersgate Street May 48, 1738, for this happened later![4] In his preaching, Edwards wanted to defend the gratuity of grace against Arminian incursions in New England, but this was not the same as curating an experience of revival. He instead seems to have been caught on the hop when God moved powerfully to bring revival to his town.

Though Edwards was apparently unprepared for revival when it came, a major part of his whole theological project had nonetheless been to

resacralize the world, which in contemporary philosophy was increasingly explained without reference to the divine.[5] It is not that Enlightenment philosophy was necessarily atheistic, but in the English-speaking world it was moving in an inductivist direction with confidence attached to human capacity to use sense perception to investigate and interpret experience. For Edwards, God was close to the creation for it was an emanation of the divine, and his handiwork was visible to those trained to see it, even if this was a minority report among thought leaders of his day.[6] Indeed, it can be argued that the whole evangelical agenda of the eighteenth century could be built around that "one thing needful," the encounter of the individual with God who had made himself accessible to the human soul.[7] In resacralizing the world, or at least in asserting that God had not been evacuated from it, Edwards is doing more than merely describing divine propinquity within the world, but is also thereby asserting divine sovereignty over it. Time and space are creatures which are subject to the God who made them.

Edwards fashioned a historical framework to understand revivals in his treatise *History of the Work of Redemption*, a series of sermons preached in 1739, and published posthumously in 1774. Here he presents an overview of all human history, beginning with the creation and preceding to his own day, showing how God's purposes in time and space both proceed in an orderly sequence and yet are not to be understood mechanically but as an expression of God's freedom to pour out his Spirit and to revive his church at any particular moment in the fashion that he chooses. In reviving his people, God oversaw a series of lockstep advances, a kind of revolution with a ratchet, that advanced the Kingdom of Christ which could not thereafter be annulled or reversed: "It may here by observed that from the fall of man to this day wherein we live the Work of Redemption in its effect has mainly been carried on by remarkable pourings out of the Spirit of God … The Scriptures hold forth as though there should be several successive great and glorious events by which this glorious work shall be accomplished."[8]

Though understanding providential history through such distinct and demarcated stages might appear foreign to us, Edwards was persuaded: "The setting up the Kingdom of Christ is chiefly accomplished by four successive great events."[9] He believed that in the first instance the Kingdom came when Christ ministered on the earth. Secondly, the Kingdom came when the Roman Empire gave a new legal position to Christians under the rule

of Constantine. Thirdly, the Kingdom came when in the Middle Ages Satan sustained a final though not immediately fatal blow that led to the faithful witness of the Reformers. And fourthly, the Kingdom had come with the revivals of his own day, or at least the experience of revival of which the first fruits were evident around him, which heralded the arrival of the millennium in the not-too-distant future. These eighteenth-century birth pangs would last yet some centuries, culminating in the physical return of the Lord Jesus at the end of the age when the millennial Kingdom would be inaugurated. These revivals were according to Harry Stout "simultaneously tangible events, prophetic signs, and portents of coming triumphs."[10] Avihu Zakai has argued that Edwards's understanding of divine visitation by his Spirit is quite simply an assertion of divine agency and divine sovereignty in history, a critique of Enlightenment as well as Arminian assumptions concerning human capacity. He writes:

> In both dimensions [the world of nature and the experience of time] Edwards strove to find an agent—the atom in the physical realm and revival in history—through which to affirm God's absolute sovereignty … Conceived in such terms, history evidently has no particularist center, in the form of a state or a nation, as previous ecclesiastical historians had portrayed it. God's absolute sovereignty and majesty is the locus of history, and the dynamism underlying the historical process is the universal power of the divine agency.[11]

Edwards (with his eighteenth-century compatriots) superimposed millennialism onto earlier understanding of revivals to create something theologically distinct from previous models, as Crawford Gribben has suggested: "These early American evangelicals generated their own eschatological traditions, and, throughout the early and mid-eighteenth centuries, recycled older expectations of the revival or true religion in an overtly eschatological context."[12]

It is significant as well that in justifying the necessity and urgency of revivals to forward God's plans, Edwards does not chiefly appeal to human responsibility. Nor does he especially use the text of Matthew 28:16–20 as today we might have expected of him. Before William Carey's focus on the Great Commission, Edwards's global Gospel vision (which happily for this Antipodean author does include "terra Australis"!) was framed

and promoted by the language of the Kingdom of God acknowledging both its universalizing and personalizing scope.[13] If the revivals do more than awaken and convert individuals, but in addition reform and refresh churches and towns, then the divine public presence that the Kingdom of God betokens is a central explanatory trope in his thinking. The Kingdom of God is not something that we build but is something that the Lord creates. Divine freedom or the priority of the divine will is secured in explanations of the awakening.[14]

God expresses his power in both time and space when he pours out his Spirit to revive his people. Indeed, we note how pneumatology plays such a significant role in Edwards's anatomy of revivals. Though we might imagine that the incorporeal language of "spirit" does not require reflection on spatial reality, quite the contrary is true: for the Spirit is poured out like a fluid, the Spirit fills the human soul like a substance, and the Spirit shapes communities like an artisan at work at the wheel. The Spirit works to achieve the grand harmony, in which all created reality finds its true purpose and rest.[15] In just the same way that the millennium coordinates the horizons of time and space—a period of one thousand years with Christ reigning unopposed on the earth—so the ministry of the Spirit in generating the new birth of individuals and thereby nurturing corporate revival enables insights into the sovereignty of Christ within all of daily experience. Tucker Adkins has well argued that dimensions of time and of space are embedded within Edwards's vision for ministry in general and for the revivals in particular. Engaging in distinctly modern ways with these dimensions was critical to explanation of the revivals:

> Through their manipulation of bodies, buildings, and terrain, revivalists manifested new birth religion and invigorated their critique of established Christianity. Awakened believers' shrill, marathon awakenings in fields, streets, and houses functioned less as byproducts of theological convictions, and more as the means by which evangelicalism became legible in lived experience … it was through the rearrangement of spaces and bodies that early evangelicals dissented from established religious culture and crafted alternative authority structures, beliefs and practices.[16]

The revivals are not random events within the historical record but patterned expressions of God's initiative, power, and ordered design to prosper the people of his covenant.

Edwards Validates Patterns of Human Experience in the Revivals

As we have seen, Edwards defended divine freedom as the foundation of God's "surprising work" to bring revival. But his theological reflection on the revivals worked nonetheless to provide a sense of order and patterned expectation, within which both individuals and local congregations could situate their experience of God's freedom. God had a "grand design" for the world identified ultimately as the Kingdom of Christ, which both incorporated the church in its prospects and validated the vicissitudes of revival.[17] Edwards averred: "If it were not for the church, the world would be destroyed, inasmuch as all things here below are for the church's sake."[18] Edwards believed that the world was to be ordered to the church, which was the primary category of human experience and historical design in the Scriptures, under whose banner all else was to be explained. The revivals provoked many challenging, perhaps confusing, pastoral and personal scenarios, but this did not mean that there would be no providential order as their outcome.

Edwards was committed to expounding this order. Confronted by opposition to the revivals from traditionalists like Charles Chauncy in Boston, and concerned by unhinged promotion of the revivals by radicals like James Davenport from Long Island, Edwards set himself the goal of analyzing spiritual manifestations and commending spiritual empowerment in his teaching and writing. Powerful experience of the Lord was not necessarily at odds with his will and purpose, in contrast with the position of Chauncy who, as Reklis explains, saw enthusiasm as tantamount to rebellion.[19] Essentially, Edwards sought to highlight the difference between true and false Christians drawing on contemporary psychological theories and using nuanced theological reflection. He was a theologian of regenerative experience in the revivalist mode. He wrote *The Faithful Narrative* (1737), not only to give an account of events in Northampton, but also to suggest how previous Puritan thinkers had forced experiences

of conversion onto a Procrustean bed, assuming that all conversions should proceed through the same sequence of steps.[20] In *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival* (1742), he sought to explain how the experiences of those enjoying revivalist power should not be seen as deluded Christians under spiritual attack. First a sermon series of 1742–3 then a treatise published in 1746, his magnum opus, *Religious Affections*, contains a series of philosophically shaped and theologically defined conclusions regarding what experiences are certainly not from the Lord, and which experiences certainly are. Strong impressions, for example, are not a sign that a person has been born again, but growth in godly virtues do represent a sure sign of the new birth. Of course, to categorize experience in these taxonomic ways might be regarded as a modern, perhaps scientific approach to the affairs of the soul, but beyond this methodology Edwards was engaging with a profoundly systematic concern which transcended his historical moment, namely how the doctrine of regeneration should be understood in relation to the doctrine of revelation. Fundamentally, the question was raised whether a person who had experienced the new birth, known pejoratively as an "enthusiast"—an entailment of the "Puritan desire to access God directly"—was equivalent to "one who falsely claimed to be inspired."[21] This was a dangerous accusation, emerging first in the earliest days of settlement in Puritan New England.[22]

Not limited to the abstract issue of the nature of revelation, a further anxiety was provoked in the revivals of the eighteenth-century by the very concrete matter of "dreams, visions, and involuntary bodily movements," and whether they could be explained "in terms of mental illness rather than heresy."[23] Unusual physical manifestations resulting from emotional preaching brought disrepute on the movement generally. For example, during a tag-team preaching weekend in Enfield on a hot July day in 1741, Edwards could not finish his sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* for the meeting house where he was preaching was filled with cries, screams, shouts, and even barking.[24] Convulsions on the floor of the church were not exceptional. Indeed, though this occasion was most unusual—a parish without a minister had convened a showcase of itinerant preachers in the height of the summer—Edwards has frequently been identified with this sermon alone out of the thousands he preached! Despite a myriad of decontextualized quotations or ungenerous assumptions, this

sermon was decidedly not typical of his ministry. On the contrary, when James Davenport and his cohort in 1743 decided to burn books that were counted as dishonoring of the Lord, igniting a bonfire of the vanities in New London, Connecticut, and provocatively parading down the main street without clothes, Edwards was called upon to calm nerves and chastise ringleaders. He may not have been keen to prolong such physical expressions of newfound faith, but he did nevertheless believe that the body was not independent of the affections, or soul, and should in the end be integrated with other experiences of the Spirit. Kathryn Reklis, in her book on the relationship between beauty, physicality, and the project of modernity, writes positively of Edwards's contribution:

> Bodily ecstasy was not just an effervescent effect of a spiritual experience, but was at the heart of a theological system, one marked by consummation in God's overwhelming sovereignty, which Edwards colloquially described as 'being swallowed up in God' … more importantly, he was also the foremost defender during the revivals of bodily ecstasy as an experience of salvation, writing explicitly about the role of the body in theological knowledge, the centrality of affect in spiritual experience, and anchoring all of this in a theological system grounded in beauty as his governing concept of divine reality.[25]

Tucker Adkins has also recently argued that the Great Awakening must be understood not simply as a recovery of doctrine, but more complexly as the affirmation of God's work in time and space: "born-again men and women across the Atlantic world understood early evangelical religion as a corporeal, sonic, and spatial phenomenon. Early awakeners did not see the Holy Spirit's raining down as a theological abstraction."[26] Further, wherever it occurred, such bodily reactions might be understood as a kind of resistance to English models of physical propriety and decorum:

> English evangelicals contributed to a stream of transatlantic Protestant revivalism whose practical and theological trademarks harshly dissented from the … expectations of the well-to-do Britishness their country proudly perfected. The impulse to contradict the physical signs of national identity and social refinement was a persistent theme within early evangelicalism.[27]

New appreciation of the physical and encouragement of the experiential were endemic in validations of quotidian Christian life in early modernity.

And these concerns were not exotic questions for Edwards, for he acknowledged in *Some Thoughts* that a woman unnamed in the text—but known to us as his wife Sarah—experienced rapturous movements of the Spirit, with some suggestion of her experiencing levitation. Within his own home he had to negotiate what appears to be extreme physical ramifications of spiritual experience. The recent discovery of a text written in her own hand describing the event in the first person has reinforced the belief that Sarah was a "new light," someone for whom the indwelling of the Spirit was a powerfully visceral experience.[28] In his account of her experience, however, Edwards first recognized how she was "frequently attended with very great effects on the body," before qualifying them by pointing out that their impact was felt "without [her] being in any trance, or being at all deprived of the exercise of the bodily senses."[29] Though Edwards did not want to "discredit bodily exercises or visions entirely," he understood them as at best incidental accompaniments of authentic conversion."[30] More generally, it had become common for pastors like Edwards to affirm "the central importance of affective response" to preaching.[31]

In all these cases and more, Edwards approached those experiencing the revivals as a physician of the soul, wielding a scalpel rather than a club. His posture of leadership was not to quench the possibility of the Spirit being at work, but to circumscribe how the Spirit's work might be understood, both in the short term and in the long term. His genius was to identify and encourage patterns of experience which were open to fresh movements of the Spirit without condoning any experience for which the Spirit's inspiration was claimed. Edwards was self-consciously taking a mediating position between the "Old Light" and the "New Light" factions. Thomas Kidd has well observed that the revivals in New England in the 1730s and 1740s did not pit two parties against each other, but rather that there was a more complicated relationship between these two parties and a third, of which Edwards was an eloquent spokesman.[32] Weeds were growing among the wheat, as it were, and Edwards's task was to identify the plants that were rooted in good soil, requiring astute observation and patient explanation. He was both permission-giving and experience-denying in the kinds of leadership he exercised. He not only prayed and preached

for revival, he also was called up to explain the revivals in theological terms, a significant combination.[33]

Edwards Nurtures Patterns of Ministry Renewal in the Revivals

The experience of regenerate life encountered by Edwards and others was such a treasured gift that new patterns of ministry were encouraged, even devised, to nurture the "power of godliness" that God had freshly made available. Edwards did not deviate from the traditional Protestant ecclesiological position that made sermon and sacrament the focus of human appropriation of grace, but he did recognize that the church had to rethink its ministry structures to accommodate new contexts and challenges.[34] For Edwards, the center of the church was unchanging, though the perimeter of the church was plastic. The church was like a tree in Edwards's revised ecclesiology: rooted doctrinally, but responsive to its environment in its ministry shape.

Even with such an ecclesiological anchor, Edwards was swept along by a maelstrom of ministry pressures which encouraged his innovations. The local revival in the Connecticut River valley of 1734–35 had been extended in the "Great Awakening" of 1740–41, confronting Edwards with a new set of demographic and spiritual realities, requiring his response. George Whitefield, an Anglican clergyman who was not licensed to a particular parish, exercised an itinerant ministry which took in England, Wales, countries of the Caribbean, as well as all thirteen of the American colonies. Where once there had been a settled relationship between the "parson" and his people, now preaching was detached from that set of relational assumptions concerning authority. Sermons were now in one sense free-floating moments which superimposed a new kind of contingent authority on the preacher and his audience simultaneously. Whitefield, for example, imagined himself as the one from whom the divine presence radiated as he preached in the fields, with the corollary that he saw his auditors structured as encircling gradations of holiness the closer or the further they stood away from him as he declared and embodied the presence of the Lord. The pre-publicity he sponsored before he arrived in a town, sponsored by his travel companion William Seward, was likewise a

foreign way of conceiving how to initiate a pastoral relationship with those who were to place themselves voluntarily under his itinerant authority. In fact, Whitefield was not alone as an itinerant exhorter. A revived sense of agency through the experience of new birth led to many exhorters taking up ministries, either settled or itinerant, to preach regeneration and the power of godliness. A new world of mobility and agency would demand revisions of outdated ministry structures, as Timothy Hall comments of itinerants who placed themselves within a "mobile, dynamic, expansive, and potentially unbounded community."[35] New kinds of authority structures, essentially more democratic, were being born, though it should also be acknowledged that ministry out of doors had found an earlier expression in the "holy fairs" or public, expansive, sacramental occasions in Scotland—a necessary precursor to less settled and more itinerant evangelistic events.[36]

Further, in New England, meetinghouses assumed hierarchically ordered seating arrangements, with—not surprisingly—the wealthier offering their tithe for better seats closer to the preacher, and the poorer members paying for theirs further away, possibly even in the balcony. However, out of doors, this kind of structured auditorium was of course impossible. Family members did not necessarily stand together in the fields. Indeed, men and women who were not from the same family would likely have stood in close proximity to each other, with the old and young, rich and poor, black and white commingling as they gathered. Though John Butler and Frank Lambert have argued against the notion that there was anything that the various experiences of revival might have in common (instead affirming that the revivals were a later literary or theological construct), Stout has made the case that revivals did indeed represent something bigger, both in terms of common experiences and disruptive practices.[37] This was a "Great Awakening" for it profoundly impacted both ministry assumptions as well as ministry activities in many different locations almost simultaneously. As Mark Valeri has argued, a new "social solidarity" and "connections to a wider moral community … that transcended particular congregations, towns and parochial discipline" were features of Edwards's theological vision as a consequence of the revivals.[38] Indeed, despite Puritan congregations focusing on the meetinghouse as a center of discipline and order, their heirs prized the common dislocating experience of being born again as a way of expressing their bonds with other believers.[39] The imperatives of

evangelism and discipleship might render the constraints of traditional ecclesiology redundant, or at least compromised.

A great example of this came in the 1740s when Edwards was approached by clerical colleagues in Scotland to organize a "concert" of prayer, whereby, at predetermined times and days and months, believers would gather in different countries to lift up their voices to pray in concert for the advance of the Gospel and the prosperity of God's kingdom on the earth. Edwards was most amenable to the idea, and he wrote *An Humble Attempt* in 1747 to explain and justify his hopes for this initiative. It caused great consternation, for it would implicitly critique Sunday services as inadequate in their scope and impact. Why would a new event have to be arranged for prayer? Was not the traditional means of praying sufficient? Indeed, the Concert of Prayer was innovative in other ways, for it gave the opportunity for lay people, both men and women, to exercise their gifts of leadership to advance the cause of global missions. While many of Edwards's Puritan peers had focused on the local, drawing distinct boundaries between their ministry and the ministries of those around them, Edwards was more inclined to affirm either porous boundaries or global perspectives. As Janice Knight has noted, Edwards represented the minority opinion in New England, belonging to the Sibbesian school, which praised and prized the integrity of the Spirit's work outside of traditional categories of ministry, so his commitment to revival beyond the local instantiations of church or denomination had both theoretical and practical dimensions:

> Edwards watched and worked for the advent of the Kingdom. He believed that increasing the numbers of the faithful was instrumental in bringing forth those glorious days. Exhortations to the saints, unions in prayer, and efforts at international alliances with other churches were some of the ways Edwards labored to knit the churches and bring forth the Kingdom.[40]

It must however be acknowledged that the revivals did not only lead to renewal or revival. There was also the experience of declension and backsliding in individual churches, which caused great grief to their pastoral leadership, as well as division between churches which had taken a different view of threats to institutional authority, physical manifestations of spiritual experience, and the nature of clerical leadership. Edwards,

for example, applied several different strategies to sustain the fervency of the revivals after the initial flames of the Spirit were no longer in evidence. He preached longer sermon series to catch up bigger theological themes and pastoral ownership: *Charity and its Fruit* was preached in 1738 as an exposition of 1 Corinthians 13 when the "Little Revival" was waning. He introduced covenant renewal ceremonies in 1742 to confront those who had been warmed by the Spirit's visitation to maintain their commitments to spiritual vitality in the context of corporate accountability. When doctrine seemed to fall on deaf ears in his "sermon-proof" congregation, Edwards took up the task of editing the journal of David Brainerd, a young missionary to the Kaunaumeek and Crossweeksung tribes, to promote the personal example of a consecrated regenerate life. Though Brainerd had asked him not to publish his writings after his untimely death aged 29, Edwards ignored the plea in order to offer an alternative strategy for sustaining revivalist energy. It wasn't just that Edwards acknowledged and cultivated new ministry patterns within the revivals, he also recycled or reapplied more traditional ministry patterns to prolong the experience of the revivals when their heat no longer warmed. Not that Edwards obsessed about the dramatic quality of the revivals. He preferred as a consequence of revivalist fervor not to look for shooting stars but planets in the sky, for he believed that a visitation of the Spirit would entail fruit of the Spirit in the longer term.

The division that the Great Awakening generated is of course a more tragic and perhaps unintended dimension of the revivals. Not only did pamphlet warfare between various factions exacerbate division, it also embodied the pain of separation as churches split, friendships were compromised, and much energy was wasted in creating duplicate structures or tending the wounds of spiritual combatants. Exhaustion ensued, which along with the distractions of the revolutionary era from the 1760s extinguished much of the vitality of the mid-century innovations. Yet despite these challenges, Edwards's own understanding and practice of revival were carried beyond the revolution by many of his mentees into the new century. His commitment to patterns of ministry as enablers of means of grace was transmitted through the likes of Joseph Bellamy, Samuel Hopkins, or even his son Jonathan Edwards Junior, and resurfaced in the nineteenth century in the indigenous school of ministry known as the New Divinity, which in due course was institutionally housed at Andover Seminary. The Second Great

Awakening in New England had much to thank Edwards for. His patterning of divine agency, personal experience, and ministry commitments in a revivalist mode have ultimately had a very long tail.[41]

Edwards Shapes the Nature of Vital Piety in the Modern World

Words perdure even when their essential meaning undergoes dramatic change. The word "evangelical" is one such example. In the period of the Reformation, Protestant leaders would use this word to highlight the biblical character of their convictions, or to replace the pope as the center of the church with the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the foundational glue that holds the body together, combining his promises, presence and purposes as the necessary and sufficient focus of life and ministry. I have no quibble with this approach to the Reformation. However, I do want to affirm a subsequent and now common use of the word "evangelical" to refer to the distinct changes which the revivals of the eighteenth century brought to the experience and agenda of conservative Protestants in the north Atlantic world. No longer were ecumenical creeds or confessions of faith adequate by themselves to promote a close experience of the Lord or to capture an experience of the power of godliness, or vital piety. The revivals introduced a new set of expectations concerning authority, new practices to reach the world for Christ, and new insights into religious psychology, which cannot now be undone. Even engagement with the dimension of space became a strategy for such a defense of vital piety: "Evangelicals formed their movement by fastening their 'new birth' theological emphasis to profound reassessments of when and where Christian experience took place."[42] Modern conditions have shaped, sometimes consciously and sometimes accidentally, the experience of believers and their churches in the Protestant tradition. The revivals of which Edwards was a leader are still powerfully formative of Christian experience, though we must recognize that Christian experience—however it has been formed—is not an endpoint, but rather a means through which we come to praise the God who made and redeemed us in Christ, and who has taken the initiative to draw close to us and consequently to draw us close to himself. Revivals and revivalism as I have presented them here represent artefacts of modernity, merely the "operational vehicle that God

would employ to accomplish his magisterial plan of cosmic redemption," and therefore are contingent and not constitutive of Christian experience. Evangelicals represent a great crowd of witnesses from all ages who have sought to promote vital piety in their own context even while acknowledging the common life of the Kingdom that is their birthright as believers.[43]

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1 Douglas A. Sweeney, *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 23–24; Catherine A. Brekus, *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 8.

2 Further see Rhys S. Bezzant, "Telling the Story from Luther's Break of Dawn to Edwards's Glorious Gospel Light," in Rhys S. Bezzant (ed.), *Edwards, Germany, and Transatlantic Contexts* (New Directions in Jonathan Edwards Studies 3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022), 11–29.

3 Indeed, the full title of the account of the awakening is *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God.* See Jonathan Edwards, "A Faithful Narrative", in C. C. Goen (ed.), *The Great Awakening* (The Works of Jonathan Edwards 4; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 97–211.

4 Edwards identified the doctrine of justification as essential to this earlier revival. See Jonathan Edwards, "Preface to *Discourses on Various Important Subjects*", in Max X. Lesser (ed.), *Sermons and Discourses 1734–1738* (Works of Jonathan Edwards 19; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 793–98, especially 795.

5 See further Avihu Zakai, "Jonathan Edwards and the Language of Nature: The Re-Enchantment of the World in the Age of Scientific Reasoning," *The Journal of Religious History* 26, no. 1 (2002): 15–41.

6 Jonathan Edwards, "Dissertation I: Concerning the End for Which God Created the World", in John E. Smith (ed.), *Ethical Writings* (The Works of Jonathan Edwards 8; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 399–536, especially 531.

7 Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 5, 48.

8 Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption* (The Works of Jonathan Edwards 9; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 143, 459.

9 Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption*, 351. The contours of each of these stages is expounded by Edwards in sermon eighteen of the Work of Redemption series.

10 Harry S. Stout, "Edwards as Revivalist," in Stephen J. Stein (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards* (Cambridge: University Press, 2007), 125–43, especially 136.

11 Avihu Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards's Philosophy of History: The Reenchantment of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (Princeton: University Press, 2003), 154, 247. *Pace* Zakai, it has more recently been argued that Edwards's eschatology did indeed incorporate a particularist center, namely Canaan: Victor Zhu, *America's Theologian Beyond America: Jonathan Edwards, Israel, and China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023).

12 Crawford Gribben, *Evangelical Millennialism in the Trans-Atlantic World, 1500–2000* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 17.

13 See Jonathan Edwards, "'Misc.' 26," in Thomas A. Schafer (ed.), *The "Miscellanies" (Entry Nos. a-z, aa-zz, 1-500)* (The Works of Jonathan Edwards 13; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 212–13.

14 Further on the importance of the Kingdom of God, see Rhys S. Bezzant, "A Providential Plumbline for Pastoral Practice: Edwards's Exposition of the Kingdom of God," *Jonathan Edwards Studies* 10, no. 2 (2020): 129–136.

15 For further on the work of the Spirit in Edwards's systematic thinking, see Michael A. G. Haykin, *Jonathan Edwards: The Holy Spirit in Revival: The Lasting Influence of the Holy Spirit in the Heart of Man* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2005).

16 Tucker Adkins, "New Birth, New World: Evangelical Space in Eighteenth-Century New England", *Fides et Historia* 53, no. 1 (2021): 17.

17 For further exposition of this "grand design," see Jonathan Edwards, "Approaching the End of God's Grand Design," in *Sermons and Discourses, 1743–1758*, ed. Wilson H. Kimnach (The Works of Jonathan Edwards 25; New Haven: Yale University Press 2006), 111–26.

18 With silent corrections, Jonathan Edwards, "151. Mt 5:13," in *Sermons, Series II, 1729–1731* (The Works of Jonathan Edwards Online 45; Edwards Center at Yale, accessed January 31, 2025), L.9r, http://edwards.yale.edu.

19 Kathryn Reklis, *Theology and the Kinesthetic Imagination: Jonathan Edwards and the Making of Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 103.

20 For further outlines of individual pieces of Edwards's writing, consult Nathan A. Finn and Jeremy Kimble eds., *A Reader's Guide to the Major Writings of Jonathan Edwards* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2017).

21 Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 18, 16.

22 Not long after the European settlement of Massachusetts, the colony was divided by this very question, with Anne Hutchinson, a leading protagonist, at the center of the controversy. See the resources provided by David D. Hall, ed., *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636–1638: A Documentary History* (2nd edn.; Durham: Duke University Press, 1990).

23 Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James*, 18.

24 Interestingly, no mention is made of speaking in tongues on this occasion.

25 Reklis, *Theology and the Kinesthetic Imagination: Jonathan Edwards and the Making of Modernity*, 2, 9.

26 Tucker Adkins, *New Birth, New World: Religious Experience in the Awakened Atlantic World* (forthcoming with the University of Georgia Press), 12.

27 Adkins, *New Birth, New World*, 140.

28 This newly discovered text was donated to the Jonathan Edwards Center in 2019 by a descendant of the Edwards's family, and it is now the basis of a developing biography of Sarah Edwards by Harry Stout, Catherine Brekus, and Ken Minkema.

29 Edwards, "Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival," WJE 4:332.

30 Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James*, 45.

31 Richard Godbeer, *The Overflowing of Friendship: Love between Men and the Creation of the American Republic* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 95.

32 See in toto Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

33 Martin Lloyd-Jones, "Jonathan Edwards and the Crucial Importance of Revival," in *The Puritan Experiment in the New World: Westminster Conference 1976* (Rushden, Northamptonshire: Westminster Conference, 1976): 103–21, especially 109, 113.

34 For further analysis of the development of Edwards's ecclesiology, see Rhys S. Bezzant, *Jonathan Edwards and the Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

35 Timothy D. Hall, *Contested Boundaries: Itinerancy and the Reshaping of the Colonial American Religious World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 7. This book in toto provides an excellent introduction to modern pressures reshaping Protestant ministry.

36 See Leigh E. Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scotland and the Making of American Revivalism* (2nd edn.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989). And Kimberly Bracken Long, *The Eucharistic Theology of the American Holy Fairs* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011). It should be noted that itinerancy was not invented in the post-Reformation world, just reimagined, for even in the high medieval period Franciscans and Dominicans had travelled to preach and to evangelize as core to their vocation as friars.

37 See further Jon Butler, "Enthusiasm Described and Decried: The Great Awakening as Interpretative Fiction," *Journal of American History* 69, no. 2 (1982): 305–325, or F. Lambert, "The Great Awakening as Artifact: George Whitefield and the Construction of Intercolonial Revival, 1739–1745," *Church History* 60, no. 2 (1991): 223–246; and Harry S. Stout, "What Made the Great Awakening Great?" in *Turning Points in the History of American Evangelicalism,* Heath W. Carter and Laura Rominger Porter, eds. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 1–18.

38 Mark Valeri, "Forgiveness: From the Puritans to Jonathan Edwards", in *Practicing Protestants: Histories of Christian Life in America, 1630–1965,* Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, Leigh E. Schmidt, and Mark Valeri, eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 35–48, especially 36, 42, 43.

39 Douglas L. Winiarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 18.

40 Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 208.

41 See also chapter four in Rhys S. Bezzant, *Edwards the Mentor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

42 Adkins, *New Birth, New World,* 72.

43 Stout, "Edwards as Revivalist," 126.

The Idea and Practice of Revival Among Southern Baptists[1]

Thomas J. Nettles

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Baptists survive only if they live in the mode of revival. They depend solely on conversion for the origination of church membership and upon a life of consistent holiness for its maintenance. Born out of English dissent in the seventeenth century, early Baptists, often at the peril of personal freedom, founded churches of believers. They frequently disregarded warning, or even legal prohibition, and itinerated preaching the gospel-call for repentance and faith. They were committed to active evangelism and continued church reform.[2] Given this abiding reality of Baptist ecclesiology, still there are times in which an extraordinary work of the Holy Spirit becomes evident. That God clearly has intentions to manifest his glory in conversion and increase of holiness at appointed seasons can hardly be denied by the observer of church history. The Bible records these kinds of events that punctuate its narrative, and leads us to believe that indeed, if we faint not, we shall reap, at times even a hundred-fold.

At the end of the nineteenth century a *Dictionary of United States History* carried a short article on the Baptists, highlighting their major contribution to American culture and pointing to the remarkable growth that they had experienced. In the thirty years first noted in this article, Baptists increased eighteenfold by adding around 944 churches. In the next twenty years they increased about 140% by adding over 1,400 churches. The next twenty years saw 2,889 churches added for a growth of 118%. Another twenty years saw the addition of 4,178 churches a growth of 78%. In 1872 the previous two decades had produced another 8,897 churches, a growth of 94%. By any sober judgment, these bare numbers show growth that indicates a sustained commitment to church planting and gospel preaching for evangelistic purposes. Periods of awakening in America have not bypassed Baptists. Southern Baptists were heirs of and nurtured within this context.[3]

Baptists and the First Great Awakening

The First Great Awakening affected Baptist life by injecting new zeal, increasing the number of churches and converts, and through geographical expansion. In 1700 only fourteen Baptist churches existed in all the colonies, nine in New England, four in the Middle Colonies, and one in the South. Through the labors of Isaac Backus,[4] Valentine Wightman, Shubal Stearns and other Separate Baptists, the Philadelphia Association, and the Charleston Association the growth of Baptist numbers and churches indicated a true operation of the Holy Spirit in multiplying the presence and influence of Baptist among American evangelicals.

Like Backus, other individuals converted under the preaching of the Great Awakening had an expansive and enduring impact on the stability and growth of Baptists in the colonial period. Among these were Benjamin Miller, Oliver Hart, John Gano, Shubal Stearns, and Daniel Marshall. Backus in New England, Miller and Gano in the Philadelphia Association and the South, Hart in Charleston, South Carolina, and Stearns and Marshall in the South joined the company of itinerants produced by the Awakening. They also planted Baptist churches.

The churches of the Philadelphia Association sought full-bodied Christianity among its churches and their members.[5] Order involved truth,

conversion, life, and expansion of the knowledge of Christ. Fundamental to all was doctrinal truth. Spiritual life as well as doctrinal care is evident throughout the minutes. Every year saw the urging of exertion toward spiritual growth and vital knowledge of God. Orthodoxy without godliness had no attraction for them; but any pretension to spirituality aside from orthodoxy rang just as hollow.[6] We find this record in 1748: "Praised, magnified, and for ever adored be the riches of sovereign grace, that the labors of the poor servants of God in their ministerial office are not altogether lost and fruitless. The Lord has been watering his garden with the increase of God, which we pray may abound more and more."[7] In 1766, four Virginia churches requested permission to withdraw from the Philadelphia Association because of the difficulty of distance, and their request was granted.[8]

The Sandy Creek church in North Carolina, established by Stearns and Marshall, demonstrates the exponential growth of Baptists in the South. Robert B. Semple observed that upon their establishing the church, that they "began a work, kindling a fire which soon began to burn brightly indeed, spreading in a few years over Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia."[9] Morgan Edwards commented that the remarkable events of its ministry were "worthy of a place in Gillies's book and inferior to no instance he gives of the modern success of the gospel in different parts of the world." Beginning with sixteen people, it became "the mother of all the Separate-Baptists." In seventeen years its influence was so great that it became the "mother, grand-mother, and great grandmother to forty-two churches, from which sprang 125 ministers." Gospel preaching "went forth from this Zion and great was the company of them that published it, in so much that her converts were as the drops of morning dew." Edwards believed that "a preternatural and invisible hand works in the assemblies of the Separate-baptists bearing down the human mind, as was the case in primitive churches."[10] Robert Semple summarized the fervent spiritual interest that surrounded Separate Baptist ministry for about a five-year period between 1766 and 1770.

> It was not uncommon at their great meetings for many hundreds of men to camp on the ground, in order to be present the next day. The night meetings, through the great work of God, continued very late. The ministers would scarcely have an opportunity to sleep. Sometimes the floor would be covered

> with persons struck down under conviction of sin. It frequently happened that when they would retire to rest at a late hour they would be under the necessity of arising again through the earnest cries of the penitent. There were instances of persons traveling more than one hundred miles to one of these meetings; to go forty or fifty was not uncommon.[11]

The zeal and usefulness of Daniel Marshall also extended into Georgia. In Georgia, Daniel Marshall established the first Baptist church in 1772 in Kiokee. Steady growth plus rapid expansion during the first decade of the nineteenth-century brought the number to 140 churches with 11,000 members.

Baptists and the Second Great Awakening

Isaac Backus saw a great outpouring of revival among the Baptists beginning in 1785, immediately after he had expressed great concern about the spread of universalism among the evangelical churches. In 1800 he recorded this exclamation: "The revivals of religion in different parts of our land have been wonderful." In 1803, he wrote, "In Boston there is the greatest work going on which they have ever known there" and the ripple effect could be observed in many surrounding towns.[12] The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* reported revivals all around New England.[13] In the ministries of Samuel Stillman, Thomas Baldwin, and many others these pockets of infidelity, stupidity, and error were confronted with faithful preaching, itinerant ministry, and prayer with the result that for more than fifteen years, a constant stream of revival reports filled the ages of this magazine.[14]

Along with the amazing movement of the Spirit in New England, Backus made brief mention of a great revival that overtook the Baptists of Kentucky from 1800-03. Revival fires, however, flashed out in certain spots in the decade before the beginning of the nineteenth century. J. H. Spencer, in his *A History of Kentucky Baptists from 1769 to 1885*, paints a picture of destitution in religion in Kentucky up through 1784 where "there has been nothing like a religious revival, of which we have any authentic account, in any one of the settlements."[15] In the latter part of 1784, the first revival in Kentucky began under the ministry of John Taylor with the conversion of Susannah Cash in a meeting in his log home. This led to the founding of the Regular

Baptist church of Clear Creek. They called John Taylor as pastor and an "instantaneous revival" occurred that resulted in Taylor's baptizing sixty of his neighbors in the Clear Creek community.[16] In the great revival at the last of the last decade of the century, after a few years of coldness and decline, the church again received effusions of the Spirit and increased its membership to five hundred.[17]

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Baptists, along with several denominations experienced what they would see as a mighty outpouring of the Spirit in revival. Baptists avoided much of the emotional excess that penetrated the movement among other denominations. The reigning theology of these revivals was Calvinistic in the view of sin and dependence on God. It was thoroughly orthodox in the view of the person of Christ. The experiential importance of these doctrines emerged naturally from the struggle of soul of those in the throes of conversion distress. Even those who had lived upright lives saw themselves as "a lump of moral corruption in the sight of God." They were dripping with sufficient sin "to damn a world if imputed to them.[18] Neither the Arian nor Socinian savior would do in such cases but "only an Almighty Saviour will suit." Jesus came not to give some assistance to "self-helpers" but to save "the lost and helpless."[19]

The number of Baptists in the state trebled in three years. Large parts of Virginia in the early nineteenth century saw great religious stirring interspersed with months of deadness, decline, and unfaithfulness. William Fristoe, writing about the Ketocton Association, gave in 1808 a rousing witness to the work that had been current among them. He noted that "an Almighty and irresistable [sic] arm made bare, and a people called out of the world by rich, free, irresistable [sic] and unfrustrable grace; wonderful indeed, that so barren a desert should become a fruitful field; the minds of many that were blind, made so free, and tongues that were dumb, stimulated to adore and praise the riches of divine grace."[20]

When William B. Sprague compiled his lectures on revival into a book published in 1832, he appended letters from several leading evangelical thinkers on the subject including Francis Wayland, president of Brown University. Wayland gave an excellent synopsis of the content of a Spirit-wrought revival. Such a visitation of grace would cultivate the deepest piety among Christians, involve extraordinary effort for the conversion of sinners, and continue as long as possible without an undue wearying

of men's minds and bodies, inciting neglect of other duties, and provoking mere excitement of the passions. A common error infiltrating revival excitement included reliance on mere means instead of the Spirit of God and the iconization of language, ideas, and means that have no biblical warrant, and a tendency to spiritual pride.[21]

Baptists in the Prayer Revival

Baptists grew along with virtually all other denominations during the great revival of 1857-58. Initial indications of this revival came in connection to the prayer meeting initiated by Jeremiah Calvin Lanphier in the Consistory building on Fulton Street to the rear of the North Reformed Dutch Church in Lower Manhattan, New York.[22] The revival leaped over denominational barriers. Baptists were deeply involved and affected. Across the nation, Baptist congregations increased in baptisms, membership, and subsequent contributions to missionary causes. Numbers of churches and members increased at large percentage rates. By 1860, approximately 18% of Baptist membership had been baptized in the past two years. In Georgia, the *Christian Index* reported, "Never since we entered upon the state of action has there been so general and so glorious a work ... and blessed be His holy name, we have shared in some way in the blessings thus bestowed upon the country." [23]

The phenomenon of revival for a century had caused great Baptist growth in North and South. Particularly in the South the beginning and expansion of Baptist churches both in size and spirituality was so connected with the energy of revival that it was embedded in the consciousness of the churches.

Revival in the Civil War

The Prayer Revival prepared both sections of the country for the fratricidal carnage of the next half decade. During the war, an initial decline in spiritual interest and increase of profanity, gambling and general worldliness was soon succeeded by the success of a large number of means of distributing religious intelligence among the soldiers.[24] Colporteurs, Bible Societies, and camp preachers began to effect results in a great ingathering of converts in both armies. Baptists were particularly active and aggressively sought to

capture the momentous events for eternal purposes. In September of 1863, John A. Broadus wrote in the *Religious Herald*:

> It is impossible to convey any just idea of the wide and effectual door that is now opened for preaching in the Army of Northern Virginia. … In every command that I visit, or hear from a large proportion of the soldiers will attend preaching and listen well; and in many cases the interest is really wonderful … A much larger proportion of the soldiers attend preaching in camp than used to attend at home; and when any interest is awakened the homogeneity and fellow-feeling which exists among them may be a powerful means, as used by the Divine Spirit, of diffusing that interest through the whole mass. Brethren, there is far more religious interest in this army than at home. The Holy Spirit seems everywhere moving among us. These widespread camps are a magnificent collection of camp meetings. Brethren, it is the noblest opportunity for protracted meetings you ever saw. The rich, ripe harvest stands waiting. Come, brother, thrust in your sickle, and, by God's blessing, you shall reap golden sheaves that shall be your rejoicing in time and eternity.[25]

One report by F. S. Petway stated that "it has continued up to the present time, without any abatement of the interest. Each night crowds of penitents throng the altar for prayer."[26]

Broadus's mention of both camp-meetings and protracted meetings and Petway's mention of "the altar" showed that a culture of revivalism was developing. A discussion on these matters was under way concerning both their strengths and weaknesses while the phenomenon was being massaged and shaped into a standard form of evangelism and revival technique.

Controversy Over Revival Method

The capitulation to dependence on forms came slowly in Baptist circles and not without opposition and critical investigation. As early as 1808, William Fristoe had noticed exactly what Wayland described as the use of language, ideas, and means without biblical warrant. Fristoe described carefully the method and brought a clear and stern warning against it.

> In some few instances among us, in addition to preaching the gospel in its simplicity, something of human invention, or contrivance, have been brought forward to aid the good work, such as these—when done preaching, the preachers passing thro' the congregation singing an hymn on some tender and affecting subject, with a tune of mournful sound, or if thought proper, of lively cheerful sound; for when this method is adopted there is no certain rule to go by, and the people are to be taken as they are found. The above is accompanied with shaking of hands and exhortations with a great appearance of affection; by these means soft and tender passions have been wonderfully wrought upon, and some have expressed their desire to be prayed for, and sometimes enquiry is made whether some do not desire to be prayed for; the person or persons affected fall on their knees, at the preacher's feet, while prayer is made for them—all this is done with an air of solemnity, as much as possible, that it may affect all around; why such a mode of conduct has been adopted by any, is not so easy to say; to suppose, for a moment that it has been done to ingratiate themselves into the esteem of the people, and so make their way easier through the world seems too severe and harsh, or that they thought they could effect and bring about the conversion of souls by human exertion, cannot be admitted. We are ready to conclude that as anti-christ has been so successful in making proselytes by this means, that the honest and sincere have been ensnared; and led away by a misguided zeal, and lost sight of the unerring word of truth, and the primitive example of the faithful.[27]

Fristoe recognized that enthusiasm often accompanied the ingathering of the elect but that "at the same time it is no way related to, nor forms any part of religion, and therefore blameworthy, and cannot be justified, and ought to be discountenanced by the wise." After a brief survey of the proper place of human affection, the practice of Christ and the apostles in using the preaching of strong doctrine as the means for the conversion of sinners, Fristoe observed, "we have lived to see that these men-made converts, is but of short duration; their seeming grace or religion pass away as the morning cloud or as the early dew; it becomes the sons and daughters of light to guard against every imposition, and every device of imposters."[28]

Basil Manly, Sr., became suspicious of revivalistic technique when he served in Charleston and came face to face with its oppressive power in Alabama in the 1840's. Manly warned that professions resulting from high

wrought excitement pass away and will damage the person. The lust for great numbers creates carelessness and the tendency to make the church a harlot by allowing unbelievers, unconverted, and graceless persons to crowd into it without a careful and legitimate restraint.[29]

A great trial for Manly came when his brethren sought to persuade him to appeal for physical movement at the close of a sermon. He observed that such response was the criterion of good effects. Ministers and sermons of an inferior quality, but well-sharpened in this art, would have people around them in heaps apparently under conviction of sin. He felt that the modern religious culture had left him behind for he could not comply with the style deemed effective.[30]

Continued growth of the practice brought efforts to employ these formalized revival techniques without embracing their extravagance. In 1852, E. T. Winkler, encouraged by the "unusually large number or conversions of recent occurrence in the South and South-west" wrote about "Revivals of Religion and Protracted Meetings." He gave an extended narrative of the Old Testament, New Testament, and historical material on the subject, contending that engagement in "special and prolonged religious services, and to expect special religious blessings, is repeatedly sanctioned by the word of God." His history included the Reformation, the Puritan movement, and the Great Awakening under Edwards, Whitefield, and the Tennents. Those that object, Winkler reasoned, should not confine their analysis to the "occasional excesses attendant upon them" One cannot deny their power and should see them as "the appropriate means of grace—means which the loudest assertor of divine sovereignty might freely use, as they have always been sublimated by petitions to a throne of grace, and been regarded as efficacious only through the aids of the Holy Spirit." Unhelpful emotion was merely incidental to the depth of transaction that necessarily occurs in conversion and thus the earnest Christian will find in "the principle of these extraordinary means of grace, one of the most admirable of the prescriptions of Grace," We must not be "afraid of revivals and protracted meetings."[31]

In September 1856, *The Christian Index* of Penfield, Georgia, carried an article entitled "How To Have a Revival." Immediately the writer distanced himself from the "spasmodic fit of enthusiasm which subsides by Monday morning." Instead, he was looking for "a real old-fashioned outpouring of grace—Christian rejoicing, sincere mourning, all trembling to

see the 'stately steppings' of the Holy One in the congregation of his saints." This kind of revival is "worth laboring for, worth praying for." In search of a revival, Christians also must be in search of a variety of things that cause a tepid spirituality and pursue an earnest willingness to part with them. Covetousness, love of this present world and its supposed pleasures, unkind feelings that approach the state of malice, an offended spirit that harbors unforgiveness—all this hinders a free operation of the Spirit and seals spiritual midgetity in the soul. Revival cannot be scheduled but awaits a true sowing to the Spirit on the part of Christians.[32]

George Boardman Taylor wrote a series of three articles for the *Religious Herald* in 1861 confessing some hesitations but admitting that he was convinced that "it is highly appropriate to set apart special seasons and use special means for the purpose of ingathering, and that it is perfectly reasonable at such seasons, to expect unusual additions." Outside aid may legitimately be used in such meetings. He sought also to prepare the churches to minimize the well-noted abuses of these meetings, particularly the sad reality that "many false converts are gathered into the church," and the church itself "suffers a reaction and relapse after the meeting is over," and often the pastor is "crippled in his influence" or even "driven from his position." Effectual means may be taken to avoid these problems, Boardman argued. Protracted meetings should be preceded by prayer meetings, "truth should predominate, as distinguished from mere appeals to the feelings," great care should be taken in the use of the anxious seat and the inquiry room, those under apparent motions of the Spirit must be encouraged to express their feelings about the issues of their soul in order to be evaluated by gospel truth, and candidates should be thoroughly known through serious conversation. Any attempt to receive utter strangers who "come forward for prayer, profess conversion, and propose to join, all on the same occasion," Taylor earnestly protested against.[33]

Five years later, just on the other side of the Civil War, J. B. Jeter wrote five articles on "Protracted Meetings" for the *Religious Herald* in 1866. He defended their use biblically and pragmatically and gave much advice concerning their proper execution. He believed that the "benefits of these meetings have greatly overbalanced their evils." Jeter's pragmatism extended to the assertion that, even in the absence of any evidence that Christ or his apostles ever used such methods, divinely sanctioned ends justify,

even require, such methods as can be envisioned to accomplish the end. "If we can best fulfill these requirements by setting apart anxious seats, appointing special meetings for inquirers, and adopting such like measures, we are not only authorized but indirectly required to employ them." In fact, so Jeter contended in the final article, "we have rarely known persons to be converted in meetings, in which anxious seats were used, that refused to occupy them." The same "pride, worldliness, prejudice, indecision and skepticism which prevent them from occupying those seats, ... keeps them away from Christ."[34] Taylor, though a bit more reticent than Jeter, was "far from opposing anxious seats" for "it secures special prayers of God's people in behalf of those so asking, it *commits one* to himself, and to his worldly companions, and to the devil; and tramples upon that pride which opposes any manifestation of interest, and by a law of the soul, increases that interest." Though employing some safeguards, these Baptist patriarchs mounted a defense of revivalism based on the proposition that the end justifies the means.

In that year, August of 1866, the *Religious Herald*, carried a series of resolutions passed by a meeting of Baptist and Methodist ministers and private members. They met to discuss means to promote the interests of Christ and to elevate the standard of piety in the churches. Among the measures was promotion of study of the word of God, particularly the Sabbath school in light of the phenomenon of frequent conversions among its scholars. They also promoted the duty of all Christians by "labor, prayer, and contribution" to send the gospel to the lost abroad and those destitute of the gospel in our own land. The group was alarmed at the number of young professors who frequented "dancing parties and other places of worldly and sinful Amusements." Should they not desist after loving exhortation, they should know that such conduct "merits the censure and discipline of the churches." The sixth resolution concerned protracted meetings. Such means had been instrumental at times for the conversion of sinners and the "prosperity of the churches." Of late, however, the resolution stated, such meetings had become "social and epicurean" and the annual scheduling of such meetings on a regular basis without regard to the "state of religious feeling in the community is of doubtful propriety." In all, the churches should look more to the ongoing regular meetings of the church as a means of conversion and less to protracted meetings.[35]

The hesitation expressed in this article and by Manly and Fristoe was shared by many other Baptists. The subsequent years produced regular debate in Baptist papers of the nineteenth century as full-time evangelism began its long journey to irreducible claim to orthodoxy. Protracted meetings, the use of the anxious bench, traveling evangelists such as Faye Mills, Sam Jones and D. L. Moody in particular all continued to receive critical evaluation. Moody received more positive comments than negative, though one writer vented, "Others may have had a different experience, but so far as *we* have seen, the fruits of Evangel-*ism*, taken as a whole, are like the apples of Sodom."[36] When asked about card-signing as a means of expressing conversion one editor wrote "We most heartily disapprove of this new-fangled piece of machinery for engineering people into the church" and added, "We can scarcely conceive of a more ingenious contrivance of Satan for destroying the churches by filling them with unconverted people."[37]

Cornelius Tyree spoke carefully to what he perceived as "The Defects in Modern Evangelistic Preaching." These defects had led to conversions of short duration, and church members of unholy lives. He noted that "modern revivalists" did not give due prominence to repentance, and they failed to "preach the terrors of the law" or the "certain and endless perdition of the wicked." Better to be too stringent like the Baptist fathers than to adopt the "hurried, easy, half-way conversions of some evangelists." They emphasize the human side asserting the ability as well as the obligation to believe in Christ, but omit "the sinner's deep depravity, his inability to convert himself, and his absolute dependence on the sovereign spirit," thus truncating "the full, God-honoring, soul-saving gospel." The methods used, Tyree implied, arise from "their love of money and over anxiety for numbers and quotable results" and so they have "widened the strait gate, and popularized the gospel, to make it palatable to the carnal mind." It is a devastating fact as well as an observable reality that the "preacher, who takes rising in a congregation, and coming forward for prayers, or coming to an inquiry meeting, or signing a blank card to live a better life, for conversion, will help in deceiving more souls than he will aid in coming to Christ."[38]

Severe misgivings about the modern professional evangelists were registered by prominent thinkers in Baptist circles. W. E. Hatcher and Henry H. Tucker both dedicated extensive articles to warnings about the dangers closely aligned with the pursuit of itinerancy as a full-time calling.

Admitting that, closely guarded and under the scrutiny of a sincere and severe discipline, the revivalist could do much good to the church, still the common experience is widespread fraud. After discussing the lure of fame, numbers, and money and noting the churches' eventual exclusion of large numbers of these supposed converts, Tucker wrote, "The Doctor makes many converts, but most of them are *his* converts—not the Lord's."[39] Hatcher put forth similar observations, noting that the modern evangelist "sometimes reminds one of the street peddler, who has a new nostrum for toothache. He holds up the gospel remedy, and then calls on the sinners to march up and get it." If evangelists really warrant the status of gifts to the church, then a notable sobriety and depth must replace the powerful tendency to the superficial.

> The Baptists need evangelists. They need men who have been trained in the schools, who have real sympathy with pastoral work, who have kindly and courageous denominational convictions, who believe in missions, who believe that religion is a life which is to grow, not by fits and jerks, but by patient faith and honest living, who honor the local church, who will help pastors, who are not ambitious for a great fame, who are not hankering after newspaper notoriety, who trust in the Holy Spirit and not in methods for producing conversion, who are not clamorous for instantaneous results, who are content with a moderate income, who know how to study, who are gentle and courteous in manners, who are sound in faith, and have favor with God and with men.[40]

Several others—J. M. Wood[41] and J. M. Hurst[42]—expressed similar misgivings concerning the defective fruit of the means that were being employed. The revivalists themselves brought an increasing wave of resentment. Henry Holcomb Tucker conceded that in the rare case where one is gifted, sincere, and orthodox, he is a gift to the church. The mass of "revivalists," however, use unwarranted methods, affected zeal, and unbalanced doctrine to swell the church membership. In the process, "a great injury has been inflicted on the church; a still greater injury perhaps on those who have been persuaded on false grounds to unite with it." In short, "the revivalist, so-called, may have had good intentions, but his mission was one of mischief, and he is nothing but a pious fraud."[43]

A Shift in Perception and Practice

Soon, however, the generation that urged sanctified discretion passed. Caution no longer spoke. *The Christian Index*, formerly giving the most ringing words of warning, subsequently gave full endorsement to the professional system. On February 25, 1915, its front page article was entitled "The Secret of Billy Sunday's Power." After mentioning several possible factors of a spiritual and personal nature, the article concluded that his success resulted from the preparation for his meetings. Both in baseball and as agent for Wilbur Chapman, Sunday had learned the value of preparation. More than two months of preparation preceded his Philadelphia meeting with advertisement, a recruited choir, zealous backing of all the evangelical preachers in the city, and cottage prayer meetings. Thus, thousands are converted and large gifts flow into the treasury. If Baptist churches, therefore, did that kind of preparation proportionately, also argued the writer, Baptists would have more famous preachers and more converts.[44]

The professionalism and technique that had been biblically analyzed, criticized, and often subjected to outright rejection began to find a place in Southern Baptist churches through the apparently sensational success of Billy Sunday (1862-1935). Uncritical acceptance of the external appearance of success explained largely, if not totally, in terms of human engineering of massive response contradicted the concerns of Southern Baptists for the seven previous decades. Now with the techniques and methodology of bringing a revival, such efforts reached a pitch of high refinement. The importance of broad doctrinal knowledge and commitment declined, the skill in observation and care of souls in the throes of conviction became much less common, and immediate decision became paramount. Revival was redefined.

The gradual amalgamation of the Billy Sunday's revival technique and Southern Baptist ongoing promotion of spiritual life in the churches came in the ministry of Lee Rutland Scarborough (1870-1945). Immersed after an unfruitful profession at an early age, Scarborough was converted at age seventeen and baptized by B. H. Carroll at the First Baptist Church of Waco. Upon Carroll's recommendation, Scarborough served as a supply preacher for First Baptist Church, Cameron, Texas. He soon was called as pastor. He also served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas, before he joined

Carroll at the seminary in 1908 while it still was in Waco. Carroll's vision of having a distinct chair of evangelism at the seminary was fulfilled when Scarborough occupied what was called "The Chair of Fire." Upon the death of Carroll, L. R. Scarborough was elected president in 1914 and continued there until 1942.[45]

In his book, *With Christ After the Lost,*[46] Scarborough celebrated Charles Finney (1792-1875) as "one of the greatest men of America, who combined the scholarly and evangelistic in a happy and dynamic way." Scarborough observed that "he used the methods of modern evangelists, calling on men everywhere to seek God for salvation, inviting them to the front in his audiences, praying for them and giving an opportunity to confess Christ."[47]

Scarborough discussed the impact of D. L. Moody, C. H. Spurgeon, and Billy Sunday. On each he highlighted their soul-winning success. Sunday, yet to have his most significant impact, Scarborough wrote, was a "great preacher, sound on the fundamentals of the plan of salvation and mighty in his grip on the common heart of man." Scarborough, like the writer in the *Christian Index*, saw Sunday as the consummate organizer and "will likely go down in history as America's greatest single winner of men to Christ."[48]

In a chapter entitled, "Revivals—How To Promote Them," Scarborough wrote that their values include the elevation of the churches and communities from "lethargy and spiritual dearth," they initiate "new movements for God and humanity," they open "fountains of liberality," they induce people to "God's world work in revivals," they are the "richest means of church extension," they are the "breath and life of missions," and they "develop some of the world's greatest leaders." Among these who "found their chance and way to fame through revivals" were "the Wesley brothers, Dwight L. Moody, Sankey, Sunday" along with John the Baptist and the Apostle Peter.[49]

Conjoining the ideas of a true spiritual awakening and an event on a church's calendar, Scarborough contended, "All vital religion languishes in revivalless churches, souls go on in sin and to hell and God's glory fades and His throne is dishonored. Thus, revivals are the most vital to the things we hold dear in the world."[50] Scarborough deals with divine effectuality and human means as both necessary in any attempt of a church to foster a revival. He asserted clearly, "The presence of God is an absolute necessity.

His divine Spirit is the primal factor. He is the true and only source of revival power." Human means, however, are not inconsistent with dependence on God alone. "Yet even God needs and must have men in promoting a revival," Scarborough continued. God's power makes his people willing to labor and is "God's way of showing His revival cooperancy."[51]

Then there are certain essential factors expressing the working cooperation of these two forces. After words about the importance of prayer and the content of preaching, Scarborough gives advice about advertisement and organization including this observation: "Revivals do not go off by spontaneous combustion. If they are properly conducted and their results conserved, they will be organized. Half of Billy Sunday's and Dwight L. Moody's success was due to their organization. The revivals of smaller proportions should be organized to get larger results."[52]

Scarborough then gave pragmatic advice on church cooperation, the song service, personal work, and the after meeting. Especially important for the song service is the type of accompanist used: "Its instrumental side should be in the hands of a Gospel accompanist. She should know Gospel music and have enthusiasm and fire in her touch. All sorts of instruments can be used to great effect in revivals."[53] Messages about the person and offices of Christ, focusing on his redemptive work should be preached "with soul-breaking passion in the power of the Spirit of God to the hearts of men if revivals do what they ought."[54]

The developing revival format, scheduled normally twice a year in many Southern Baptist churches, was used to promote a variety of Convention programs. For example, during the 75 Million Campaign (1919-1924), the nomenclature of "revival" was used for enlistment of pledges and the suggestion of a "stewardship revival" for increasing faithfulness in paying pledges and including other denominational ministries as an element of true devotion. J. F. Love warned Southern Baptists that at the White Throne many will have to give answer on the issue of "paying our campaign pledge, of giving or not giving to Christ in this great world-hour to help Him minister to the needs of a distressed world and save the lost for whom He died."[55] These efforts to co-opt the term revival for money-giving produced among many a negative response. A culture of denominational giving briefly supplanted the event that was deemed the chief means of evangelism among the churches. Scarborough, the chairman of the campaign, regretted that

brief intermission of revival emphasis confessing, "We let up on evangelism. We pressed enlistment, campaigns for money, paying pledges, and took the emphasis off missions and soul-winning."[56]

In 1956, Convention Press published *the Southern Baptist Program of Evangelism* by C. E. Matthews. This book promoted a convention-wide, state by state program of evangelistic outreach that solidified the nomenclature of "revival" for scheduled meetings on the church calendar. The plans suggested in this book, even the very language of the publicity, the announcements, the high-attendance day, the cards to be signed, the language of the invitation were used tens of thousands of times in Southern Baptist churches. The idea of "revival" carried a culturally designated meaning quite distinct from its meaning in the nineteenth century. For example, the "Associational Chair of Evangelism" should "urge each church to have at least two revivals every year: one as part of a simultaneous crusade, and the other as an individual church revival."[57] Concerning the planning of a simultaneous crusade, the author wrote, "The simultaneous revival produces greater results in every way than any other method." Later he wrote, still advocating the simultaneous crusade because of its need for organization, committees, coordinated planning, and focused energetic work—"not everyone likes to work"—"It does not require much effort on the part of a pastor and a church just to 'jump-up' the average eight-day meeting. About all that is done in the matter of preparation for the average single church revival is to secure an evangelist, put an ad in the paper, make some announcements, and offer some prayers."[58] Again, the vulgarization of the vocabulary is obvious in the statement, "The steering committee should be created as soon as the date is set for the simultaneous crusade, and it is automatically dissolved when the revival is concluded."[59] Matthews suggested several letters to be written to the membership prior to these preaching services. One written to the "Junior" department says, "Your Sunday school record shows that you have not confessed Jesus as your Lord and Saviour." After listing several Scriptures that emphasize the need for salvation, the letter exhorts, "Come to our revival every night through Sunday."[60]

Of vital importance in the plans and organization for such scheduled revivals is the post-sermonic invitation to the congregation as an opportunity for salvation. In discussing the invitation,[61] Matthews likens it to a farmer's success defined in terms of how much corn actually is put in the granary.

"The same principle applies in the work and the objective in a revival and other preaching services."[62]

The intensity of Matthews' attention to the invitation truly is remarkable and defined the popular contours of Southern Baptist worship and evangelism for decades. In that context we find "revival" used as designating the series of meetings finally concentrated in the invitation: "Cooperate gladly and follow fully the evangelist's plans for this great occasion. If you are not able to trust him here, do not invite him for a revival. You probably will see more people responding in this hour than in all other services of the revival combined."[63] The idea of revival became virtually synonymous with the pressurized skill and persistence used in this invitation. Matthews used Paul's emphases on persuasion (e.g., "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" [2 Cor 5:11 KJV]), as related most intensely to this post-sermonic time of appeal. In a service particularly focused on this strategy, "The message by the evangelist should not be longer than twenty-five to thirty minutes, followed by the invitation."[64]

If any one—ushers, deacons, committee members, choir, music director, pastor, guest evangelist—fails in following these instructions they show they do not "understand the full meaning of an invitation to the lost to make that decision which will settle his eternal destiny."[65] The help of the choir is vital for "there is no telling how many millions of lost souls throughout the centuries have been influenced to accept Christ by consecrated choirs singing the invitation hymns."[66] The ushers, in context of receiving instruction about distribution of hymn books, sufficient seating for possible overflow, temperature in the building, must recognize "the gravity of this hour" to avoid "bungling their part." Should they seat people at the wrong time or be late to Sunday School, "They may hinder people and be responsible for someone's going to hell."[67] In the context of the details and an ingenious extension of manipulative tactics, Matthews advises, as a second series of invitation opportunities in a section entitled "Seasoning the Green Wood," "The seasoned wood has responded to the revival fires. You will have numbers of lost and unchurched present who have not attended the revival before; and if they are not saved now, they may never attend another religious service."[68] Repeated devices are used to provoke more responses.

When he recognized that not fifty percent of the membership of Southern Baptist churches are "active Christians," he rejected the idea that most of

the rest were not regenerated, but said that it was due to a lack of method in conservation of results.[69] Part of conservation is the planning of more revivals. "The associations that do not participate in annual association-wide revival crusades are the associations that need reviving most. … The pastors that do not participate in association-wide revival crusades are the pastors that need reviving most."[70]

This programmatic—and judgmental—approach to revival gained virtually dominant acceptance in Southern Baptist churches. The planning for such revival increased in detail and became so streamlined that by 1979 the Mass Evangelism Department of the Home Mission Board [now NAMB] published a book entitled *Revival Planbook for the Local Church.*[71] Spiritual emphases, the necessity of Bible-centered gospel preaching, and a fundamental God-centered approach pepper the *Planbook* throughout. "Revivals never just happen. They are the work of God. God works in God's people when they pray. Pray for compassion for the lost. Pray until the revival is totally in God's hands. Pray expecting results."[72] The main emphasis, however, is organizational and programmatic. The presupposition statedly borrows from Charles Finney's idea of revival as the predictable product of the proper use of mean. "Charles Finney once said, 'It is useless to expect a revival simply by asking for it, without bothering to fulfill the laws which govern spiritual blessings."[73]

The first substantial section, entitled, "Revival: Why?" begins, "A proven method of evangelism is what Southern Baptists have come to know as 'revival.'"[74] The section gives six results of a revival "when properly administered." Revival is a "reminder to keep our priorities in proper order, …is a retreat with God from the ordinary, …is the unified force of the church declaring Christ's concern for the lost to a community, …is a focus on the spiritual needs of a church, ..intensifies and develops prayer life, …[and] sets a spiritual atmosphere that ripens the harvest." This final emphasis went on to say, "The intensified atmosphere of concern and proclamation makes it easier to achieve a harvest of souls. Adequate planting and watering guarantees [sic] such a harvest. Without proper planning, praying and preparation, that revival would not produce any harvest."[75]

That one can conceive of a "revival" without a harvest shows the radical shift in concept concerning the word. In a section encouraging "Follow-up" for a new Christian, the *Planbook* asserts, "Leading a person to Christ

is easy compared to following up that same person." Part of the instruction on that topic states, "Don't be discouraged if someone does not respond to your efforts to help him grow. In the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1-8) Jesus said that many people would not grow after they received the Word. But the emphasis in that parable is that there will be some who will grow in leaps and bounds. Our task is to follow up people in the power of the Holy Spirit and let God take care of their response (1 Cor. 3:6-7)."[76] These remarks show that the concept of regeneration as an effectual unilateral act of divine grace had been smothered under evangelistic method. Also, the care with which Baptists protected regenerate church membership was dismissed with doctrinal flippancy.

Richard Lee, pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Church, Atlanta, and President of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference declared, "I am tired of the doomsayers who claim we cannot have revival."[77] His book is an extrapolation of the prayer, "Lord, send a revival," based on the 1927 B. B. McKinney hymn by that name. Lee focuses the prayer into four spheres that constitute his chapters; "In Our Hearts, … In our Homes, … In our Churches, … In Our nation." Lee writes of the need for desperation in personal revival citing several biblical passages about hungering, thirsting, panting, contrition and instructs, "The fact is evident that God is always willing to do His part, if we're willing to do ours."[78] After descriptions of the necessity of confession, prayer, attention to the Word of God, and total obedience, Lee asked, "Do you want personal revival?" His answer, "If you do its available to you."[79] Lee deals with the issue of the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit, carnality and spirituality, and dominant desire for fellowship with God. Throughout he focuses on the necessity of believing the Bible and its doctrines, believing in the saving purpose and power of Christ, and the necessity of cultivating a desire to know God and walk with him. A revived church will see people coming down the aisles, baptisms stirring the waters, and evangelistic activity always moving.[80] His last section and last two chapters focused on America as a Christian nation. After setting forth seven principles of a Judeo-Christian ethic operative in the founding of America, Lee identifies four reasons that God has blessed America: America was founded by godly people, America has blessed Israel, the majority of Americans claim to be Christians, and America is a key in the prophetic future.[81] For America to prosper under God's blessing, we must maintain a healthy remnant of

Christians in the nation and Christian conviction in offices of state. To do this we must pray (blessings and influence for righteous leaders and removal for those who are evil), participate (vote for the right people and be active for just causes politically), persist (don't lag in working for righteousness), and "proclaim the truth of the glorious gospel."[82] Lee closes the book with this focus on revival for the sake of America's well-being.

> The only way a nation can be changed is if the people are changed. All that will affect a permanent change in the people of America is the gospel of Jesus Christ. If the people of America hear the gospel, and come to repentance, God promises today, "I'm going to hear from heaven. I'm going to forgive their sin and heal their land." When an Almighty creator God, who gave us this nation and has watched over it, sees us returning to those principles of righteousness upon which our land was founded, then he is going to be able to bless America. May God bless America![83]

Throughout, Lee looks at revival as God's response to human obedience. God is put in a position to grant revival when Christians achieve a determined and energetic effort to manifest biblically described and mandated traits of obedience and spirituality.

In 1993, Chuck Kelley, Jr., published *How Did They Do It?*[84] After pointing to the local church as the "real story of Southern Baptist evangelism," he enlarged the focus to concentrate on "what Southern Baptists have done through their department of evangelism.[85] He divided the history of Southern Baptist evangelism into four sections from 1845 through 1990. The first deals with initial to put into practice the guiding determination for propagation of the gospel. Through uncertainty, contention, compromise, committees, and B. H Carroll, the convention adopted an evangelism department as an element of the Home Mission Board. Kelly summarized, "The evangelism department was designed for one purpose—to plan, promote, and lead revival meetings."[86] The second historical division, 1906-1942, saw the 75 Million Campaign, deep indebtedness of the HMB, and the defunding of the department of evangelism. In 1936, the department was resumed with Roland Q. Leavell at its helm. Revivals, personal witness, and evangelistic literature composed a three-pronged approach to his view of church effectiveness in this Great Commission endeavor. Kelly summarized the revival emphasis in this way.

> As secretary of evangelism, Leavell emphasized three aspects of evangelism. He remained deeply involved in planning, promoting, and participating in simultaneous and other forms of revival campaigns in cities, associations and states. Although Leavell did not lead a staff of evangelists and singers, he still recognized the effectiveness of revivalism in Southern Baptist life. When he was asked to develop a soul-winning campaign for Southern Baptists in 1938 and the Baptists of America in 1940, revival meetings were a major part of the strategy.[87]

In the third stage of development (1942-1955), Southern Baptists, under the leadership of M. E. Dodd sought to combine a centennial celebration with a simultaneous revival, called the Centennial Revival Crusade. A goal of one million baptisms was set. A bit over 256,000 was numbered, a great defeat in the mind of those who had set the goal. This initiated the C. E. Matthews era in which, according to Kelley, "the harvest was enormous, and the momentum Matthews created for evangelism within the denomination remained for years."[88] Perhaps his lasting legacy was the structure of organization for evangelism in the national convention and in the state conventions and the evangelism conferences at each level. Kelley noted, "He stressed continually the importance of thorough preparation. In this regard, he stands in the line of Charles Finney, Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, and Bily Graham."[89] All the details of preparation he suggested, however, and thus the immediate successes in the Matthews era resided within revivalism. Kelley summarized, "Through building his program around revivalism, Matthews did not have to convince Southern Baptists that his basic method was sound nor train them to do something unfamiliar. Instead he was able to focus on motivating them and training them to implement his approach to revivalism."[90]

After discussing the diversification of evangelistic outreach during the era of 1955-1990, Kelley discussed four distinct methods of evangelism used by Southern Baptists; decisional preaching, personal evangelism, Sunday School, and Revivalism. More so than in other denominations, revivalism fit the ethos of Baptist life because of the voluntary nature of conversion and church membership. A key observation in this chapter again highlights the influence of Charles Finney. "Whereas Calvinists of his day would emphasize revival as the act of a sovereign God working at the

discretion of His will, Finney referred to revival as the result of the right use of the means God described in the Bible. When we do what God requires, God sends revival." Kelley spends the remainder of the chapter describing how to implement "what God requires," for "This perspective opened up the potential for revivalism as a tool for evangelism." [91] After describing several ways in which a church might do what God requires, Kelley cautions that "Techniques of planning and promotion can obscure the necessity of the Holy Spirit's ministry for a truly impactful revival."[92] The word "revival" took on such an irreducibly programmatic meaning that one can conceive of a "revival" that is not "truly impactful."

In 1994, Jimmy Draper wrote *Bridges to the Future: A Challenge to Southern Baptists*.[93] After chapters about the contemporary cultural challenge, Baptist history, Baptist ecclesiology, Baptist cooperation, Baptist missions, internal dynamics of growth and decline in Baptist churches, and internal evidence of a new surge of life, Draper wrote about prelude to revival. The increase of crime, moral decline, apathy, cruelty, domestic collapse, and multifaceted secularism show the urgent need for a true spiritual awakening. Also, discouragement in the churches, the apparent ineffectiveness of perennial methods seeking infusion of spiritual life, and stagnation in the number of baptisms signal the need for revival. Having prefaced this discussion with the proposition, "God always makes his people responsible for spiritual awakening," based on 2 Chronicles 7:14, and encapsulated the proposition with the statement, "God expects action from his people"[94] Draper comes to the close of the chapter with the assertion, "Will a great awakening occur in this generation? That is up to you and me."[95]

Draper does not describe revival as an event on the church calendar. He wants genuine spiritual renewal that results in desperate and energetic discipleship. He considered the issue of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. A century earlier, God's work was proclaimed as initiatory and the only effectual operation of revival. Human response as evidence of a gracious operation of the Spirit followed. The author, however, saw the opening aperture of revival as the human preparation and limits the divine to the role of responsive and secondary. He closed the chapter with this challenge: "The response we make to Him will determine whether He can and will use us for His glory as we move into the 21st century."[96]

Lewis Drummond sought to focus on revival as a human response to the

sovereignty and revealed attributes of God. He isolated eight of these and how they can operate to effect revival. In writing of God as Father in the context of the revival that defined the reign of Josiah, Drummond taught, "Only the *sovereign grace of* God can explain it. It must be said again that revival always finds its final answer in God's sovereignty."[97] As he illustrated with historical accounts of revival and in the kingship of Josiah, "the Word of God becomes central in all great awakenings."[98]

The second attribute inciting revival Drummond isolated as divine sovereignty. Avoiding what he called a "humanistic approach" to 2 Chronicles 7:14, he saw divine sovereignty as bringing his people to exert the actions of humbling, praying, seeking, and turning. Again using both biblical examples and historical revivals, Drummond said "the initial act in revival begins with God moving and enabling His people to do so."[99] He illustrated divine sovereignty in several discreet salvific and preserving actions of the Exodus rounding the discussion off with, "God's absolute sovereignty in revival certainly does not nullify the responsibility of God's people to pray and seek revival."[100]

As God reveals himself as a God of hope, Drummond crocheted the stories of Ahaz and Hezekiah with historical examples of revival, including personal revival, he asserted, "Revived, cleansed people are a happy people." Emerging from the integration of confession and covenantal renewal and the variety of responses to these reviving provocations, Drummond reached this doctrinal and experiential principle of "the Spirit's effectual call" manifesting the "elective sovereignty of God."[101]

Spiritual awakening also may come as God reveals himself as holy. Using God's manifestation of his glory to Moses, Drummond discussed the ingratitude and irreverence of iniquity God's holiness uncovers. Also, this revelation moved Moses to pray vigorously for God's covenantal promises to be sustained. Holiness drives to repentance; repentance drives to contrite supplication for moving and transforming manifestations of mercy.[102]

"In a spiritual awakening God reveals Himself as grace."[103] Using the examples of the Shantung Revival and the reluctant mission of Jonah, Drummond called on the reader to marvel in the powerful manifestation of grace in revival. He surmised, "We need a fresh grasp of what our evangelical forefathers called 'the doctrines of grace.' God's mercy is utterly fathomless. It reaches the depths and forgives you and me."[104] God's granting of revival

is a "revelation of grace," and such grace produces deep repentance and supplication for mercy.

Drummond discussed God's revelation of power by looking at Pentecost—its purpose, the prayer that preceded, its preaching, and the integration of evangelism—this is the ultimate priority[105]—with social ministry. He also incorporated analyses of the prayers of David Brainerd and that of Jacob's wrestling with God. The continuous revival in east Africa provided rich illustrations of the principle of power in a multi-faceted way. Again, as virtually in each chapter, he finds Charles Finney as a positive encouragement in the governing ideas of the chapter. Nothing—nothing—that constitutes revival can be experienced or done apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. In revival, man conforms to the power of God as manifest in his covenantal purpose. Drummond defined revival in this way: "In the final analysis, revival is really no more than an ongoing, vibrant, Spirit-filled fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1-9)."[106]

Chapter seven illustrates how God's love prompts revival from a state of destitution and rebellion, Ichabod (the glory has departed), to a state of Ebenezer, (God is our rock of help). Again he emphasized the issues of repentance, prayer, and forgiveness. Chapter eight shows that God is "available" for revival. The promises connected with prayer demonstrate that "God is far more ready to give than we are to receive." The author used this final chapter to argue that "god honors intercessors and makes himself readily available for a spiritual awakening today."[107]

He closed with a renewed call for a concert of prayer. Taking encouragement from the revival in South Korea and the prayer that permeated that billowing movement, as well as from John Sutcliff's reissuing of Jonathan Edwards's call for a concert of prayer, Drummond urged his readers to "start a Concert of Prayer in your circle."[108]

In 2011, the professors of evangelism in Southern Baptist institutions contributed to *Mobilizing a Great Commission Church for Harvest.*[109] One article, "Keys to Benefiting from a Revival Meeting," shows in that title the idea of scheduling a "revival" became orthodox diction in Southern Baptist nomenclature. The definition given, however, hearkens back to the nineteenth-century and partook of some of the concerns of Drummond: "In this chapter, the term *revival* is defined as the sovereign movement of God, through the work of the Holy Spirit, to revitalize believers in Jesus

Christ to pursue a more vital spiritual life, work, and witness." Then the author further clarifies, "*Revival meetings* refer to a period of time set aside by a church for the purpose of spiritualization and/or evangelism."[110]

The author demonstrated that such a scheduled event still is high on the list of evangelistic and revitalization methods among churches of the Convention. He noted, "When revival meetings in SBC experienced their golden era, the revival meeting was the prevalent methodology for evangelism."[111] After a brief history of the development of the "revival" as a programmatic event, he isolated five factors that have created the perception that such revivals are decreasing in effectiveness. Four of these highlight pragmatic issues, but the first sets forth a biblically and spiritually relevant reason with a twist toward human initiation: "Western Christianity is in need of spiritual awakening. The church must pray for an awakening and cleanse herself from sin and live the life of holiness. Then we could reach others for Christ."[112]

The author relies largely on C. E. Matthews ideas and the *Revival Planbook*, updated to *Revival Preparation Manual,* to advise how to organize the event. He expressed confidence that such preparation can yield effective results. "It is my conviction," he wrote, "that the effectiveness of revival meetings will depend on the stewardship of that methodology by the local church."[113]

Conclusion

Southern Baptists came into being with a vibrant memory of and in the recent experience of powerful reviving movements of the Holy Spirit. Their initial purpose based on a deep sense of obedience to the mandate of missionary and evangelistic faithfulness prompted energetic involvement for outreach while maintaining the vital principal of regenerate church membership. While Southern Baptists tested some of the methods commenced by itinerating evangelists and revival preachers, they harbored deep suspicions of the developing methodology as manipulative and dangerous for true spiritual experience. They wanted no manipulated pseudo-conversions. That would increase infidelity, secularize church life, and challenge the practice of church discipline. Professional decision-getters were resisted, and their methods were deemed unscriptural. Their deep ecclesiological commitments and their confessional awareness made them

press against these burgeoning methods while still desiring strong evidence of the awakening operations of the Holy Spirit.

Soon after the emergence of Dwight L. Moody and then Billy Sunday, Southern Baptists began to follow suit in both their method and theology of revival. Convention literature on the subject became dominantly methodological and the concept of revival became identified with a date on the church calendar. Desire for revival, prayer for revival, preaching for revival, and even expectation of revival still flourished. So did greater dependence on the energy and determination of man. The scheduled meetings, dominant for sixty years, began to share place with other emphases that were seen as opportunities to elicit more deeply spiritual personal commitment to Christian discipleship and evangelism.

The last four and a half decades have seen a doctrinal revitalization on biblical inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy. That was experienced in the context of a contested accompanying recovery of confessional emphases on divine sovereignty in the entire spectrum of soteriological issues. In this writer's observation, this constitutes revival in itself, and may well serve as a necessary prelude to deeper work of God's Spirit that will result in distinct and increasing purity in the churches and powerful manifestations of effectual gospel power in evangelism and missions.

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1 Parts of this article have been previously Published in Robert Davis Smart and Michael A. G. Haykin with Ian Hugh Clary, *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 218ff.

2 See my discussion of Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffin in *The Baptists*, 3 vols (Ross-Shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2005) 1:155-58. See also the discussion of Benjamin Keach, 181-88.

3 John Franklin Jameson, *Dictionary of United States History: 1492-1895. Four Centuries of History* (Boston: Puritan Publishing Company, 1894), 51. Jameson was a professor of history at Brown University, had been at Johns Hopkins University, and wrote a work entitled *History of Historical Writing in America.* Cathcart's *Baptist Encyclopedia* contains statistics for slightly different years, but seems, by trajectory to be roughly consistent with these numbers. For example, in 1770 it gives the total for churches as 77. In 1792, it gives the number as 891, 109 less than Jameson's number. In 1812, it reports 2,164 as opposed to 2,433. In 1832, however, the number in Cathcart is 5,320, only 2 different from the 5,322 of Jameson. In 1875 Cathcart reported 21,423 churches compared to Jameson's 1,872 number or 18,397, an increase of about 3,000 churches in three years. Cathcart reported for 1880 the total number of Baptists as 2,296,327 compared to the 1890 number of Jameson at 3,594,093. See William Cathcart, *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, 2 vols (Philadelphia: Louis Everts, 1881) 2:1324. The numbering between the two volumes is consecutive.

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The Impact of Revivals on Irish Baptist Life from the Rise of Evangelicalism to the Twentieth Century

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By the eighteenth-century Ireland was enjoying a period of comparative political stability and economic prosperity under the Hanoverians that stood in stark contrast to the social and political upheaval of the previous century. Even the religious conflict that stood behind much of the turmoil in the seventeenth century had receded as "each of the major religious denominations ministered to pre-assigned communities and only occasionally attempted any kind of controversial proselytism."[1] Around eighty percent of the population of Ireland was Roman Catholic, with the rest made up of the established Church of Ireland and the dissenting churches, of which the Presbyterians, who were largely located in the northern province of Ulster, were by far the most numerically significant. In Dublin, the nation's capital, "a lively religious subculture developed during the first half of the eighteenth century with at least twenty-five Dissenting places of worship, some of which had only a fleeting existence."[2] This vibrant scene did not mean, however, that it was marked by spiritual vitality. Instead,

"liberalizing theology, along with widespread interest in property and propriety, seemed more powerful in the churches as a whole."[3] The small, struggling Irish Baptist community succumbed to the temptations of this "gay and flattering world."[4] As a result "By the late eighteenth century their piety and perception was so introspective that they were easily dismissed, marginalised and ill-defined by those outside their community."[5]

Irish Baptists and the Evangelical Revival

In 1744 two young men from Dublin, Antisel Taylor and John Hynd, were impressed when they heard John Cennick preach in London. Cennick, who was a gifted preacher and evangelist, had been associated with John Wesley but was later expelled by him because of his Calvinistic views. He then became a Calvinistic Methodist before joining the Moravians. After meeting with Cennick the two wrote to some Baptist friends in Dublin suggesting they ask him to come to Ireland. Having received the invitation Cennick was initially reluctant to come to Ireland because he had "a strong prejudice against the whole Irish nation and people."[6] It is unclear why he held these reservations, although such anti-Irish prejudice was typical of many English people at the time.[7] He eventually overcame his concerns concluding, "I am confirm'd in believing our Saviour would have me carry his bloody death into that country... Indeed I feel a flame in my heart for the souls in that city."[8]

Cennick arrived in Dublin in 1746. Here he was offered the use of a Baptist meeting house in Swifts Alley. He turned down the offer "as I knew there were parties there who adher'd to Arianism or New-Light and others of Orthodox schemes" and he feared that his preaching would incense those who opposed orthodoxy.[9] Instead, he began preaching in a disused meeting house in Swifts Alley which had previously been used by a breakaway group from the original Dublin Baptist congregation.[10] Here, assisted by Benjamin La Trobe, a young Baptist student preparing for ministry,[11] he quickly began to gather large congregations from among the various Protestant groups in the city, as well as facing great hostility from the Catholic population. As Hutton states "It was John Cennick, and not John Wesley, who began the Evangelical Revival in Ireland."[12] In 1747 John Wesley arrived in Dublin where he bought the Skinners Alley meeting house, had Cennick and his congregation evicted and began a Methodist work. Despite this spat

both men went on to have significant roles in the spread of the Evangelical revival in Ireland. Over a forty year period it is estimated that Wesley spent the equivalent of about five and a half years in Ireland building a Methodist network. Having been ousted from Dublin Cennick carried on his ministry in the north where he preached to such powerful effect he became known quite simply as "the Preacher." Other notable figures of the day such as George Whitefield and Selina, Countess of Huntingdon also played their part in the growth of Evangelicalism in Ireland in this era.

Despite the impact of the revival in Ireland it had negligible effect outside the Protestant community. Although there were Catholic conversions they were "more notable for the fuss made of them than for their quantity."[13] The historic divisions and suspicions among Catholics and Protestants in Ireland remained profound and the strident denunciations of Catholicism by preachers like Wesley and Whitefield did nothing to overcome these. Nor did the revival have much of an effect among Irish Baptists, despite the enthusiasm that had brought Cennick to Ireland. Andrew Holmes notes that by 1800 there were around 500 Baptists in Ireland which was a reduction from around 2,000 at the beginning of the century.[14] As Kevin Herlihy has written "they were a 'remnant' people on the margin of the Irish Protestant community."[15] Overall, the arrival of Evangelicalism seems to have upset the Irish Baptists' sense of decorum by its enthusiasm, even if seemed to accomplish something which they were incapable doing in their current state.[16]

Furthermore, as Cennick observed, they were in theological confusion. By the time the English Baptist minister Samuel Pearce visited Dublin half a century later in 1796, little had changed. He reported to William Carey that the Baptists there were "dead to piety."[17] This impression was reinforced when Andrew Fuller visited the city in 1804 where "He was grieved to find the principal Baptist community in Dublin under the influence of the most pernicious errors in doctrine and practice. Many of the members had imbibed principles which, to say the least, verged on Socinianism, while the amusements of the theatre and the card-table were tolerated, and even defended."[18] While the eighteenth century revival may have had little direct influence on Irish Baptists, the revitalization of English Baptists did have a significant impact upon them in the nineteenth century.

The shock of the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland, the atrocities carried out

and the great bloodshed that it caused, "focused the attention of the rest of Britain on Ireland as a vulnerable and unstable corner of the empire."[19] Politically it "reminded England that the wider security of the British empire depended on keeping Ireland under control."[20] The thoughts of British Evangelicals also turned increasingly to their neighboring island and its evangelization "became a major evangelical priority in the first quarter of the nineteenth century."[21] Many Evangelicals thought that Ireland's problems were rooted in the ignorance and superstition of Irish Catholics who, it was believed, were held in spiritual thraldom by the priesthood, some of whom had played leading roles in the rebellion. They were convinced that the answer to this problem lay in creating sound, biblical literacy in Ireland. In 1806 the Dublin Bible Society (later called the Hibernian Bible Society) was formed to address this need.

In December 1813, the Baptist Irish Society was established in London.[22] By this time there were only five Baptist churches in Ireland and, it was reported, that among them "there is much to deplore, yet there are those, in their communion, who are desiring and praying for better days."[23] The work of the BIS was largely educational and focused on the Irish speaking region of the west, which was the poorest in country. Over the next thirty years several Baptist schools were established and at their peak they had 10,000 pupils.[24] Several churches were founded most of which were small, sometimes consisting of a single family. Whatever gains were made during this period were destroyed by the famine which decimated Ireland between 1847 and 1852. E. A. Payne estimated that "the Baptist churches in the South and West of Ireland lost by death and emigration more than 3,000 adherents."[25] As a result by 1861 there were only three BIS supported churches left.[26] The Baptist work in this region never recovered.

As the work in the west declined the focus of the BIS now shifted to the north of Ireland and the province of Ulster. In this province, the most Protestant part of the island, Baptist witness had developed independently of the BIS and was largely associated with Alexander Carson, David Cooke and the Haldane brothers from Scotland. By 1845 there may have been about 1,000 Baptists in Ulster, around half of whom were members of Carson's Tobermore congregation.[27] The work of the BIS and the Ulster churches was significantly impacted by the events of the spring and summer of 1859.

The 1859 Revival

Around 1857 a woman from the north of England, Mrs. Colville, came to work as an evangelist in Ulster in the area around the market town of Ballymena, County Antrim. She was affiliated with the BIS but the exact nature of her relationship to the society has now been lost. She spent about six months in the district but there was little response to her endeavors. Yet, the one convert we know of, James McQuilkin, proved to be a significant figure in the events which followed.[28] Once converted McQuilkin, who lived in the village of Connor, near Ballymena, began to seek ways to serve God and in 1857 he established a local Sunday school, which grew and saw a Bible study and prayer meeting added. In September 1858 to further seek God's help in the work McQuilkin, along with other recent converts Jeremiah Meneely, Robert Carlisle and John Wallace, began to meet regularly for prayer, in a schoolhouse in the adjoining village of Kells. Gradually the number of people converted grew until by the end of 1858 there were fifty men meeting for prayer.

By early 1859 word about what was happening in Kells spread to another local village, Ahoghill. Here, as news of revival in the United States had spread across the Atlantic, many people had been praying for a similar movement of the Holy Spirit.[29] In March 1859 a Presbyterian minister in the village, Rev. David Adams, who had been praying for revival since his ordination in 1841, invited some of the Kells converts to come and speak in his church. On a Monday evening about 3,000 people crammed into a church designed to hold 1,200. Such was the crush that the building had to be evacuated, and the meeting continued outside in the pouring rain. The gathering continued for hours with many people convicted of sin, some of whom were prostrated. Such prostration became one of the most common and controversial features of the coming months. Adams, estimated that around 700 people were awakened.[30]

Over the coming months the scenes in Ahoghill were repeated throughout the province of Ulster as crowds of thousands met inside and outside, in all kinds of weather, to hear the gospel preached and to unite in prayer. People fell prostrate in the streets. Some schools closed as large numbers of children were convicted of sin and prostrated. Factories came to a standstill for the same reason. Public houses closed through lack of business. The

sectarianism that blighted Belfast ceased. Many of those who were more cautious about the revival were forced to admit that the general moral tone of society had improved. The events surrounding the revival reached a peak in June when 35-40,000 people, from all over the province, attended a prayer meeting in Belfast's Botanic Gardens. A prayer meeting the following month brought 20,000 people together.[31]

Many at the time were skeptical about the events surrounding the revivals. Some ministers dismissed it, with one prominent Evangelical minister, Isaac Nelson, publishing a work on the events of the time called, *The Year of Delusion*.[32] This minority of Protestant ministers "charged the revival variously with spreading hysteria, increasing vice and illegitimacy and promoting insanity."[33] Sections of the press such as the *Northern Whig* (Belfast), *Dublin Evening Mail* and *The Times* (London) were also vocal in their skepticism. They usually offered a psychological explanation for what had occurred. There were examples they could point to of false conversions, sensationalism and the behavior of charlatans. Countless others, however, expressed their sense of the reality of what they had experienced. As one convert stated quaintly, "certainly it was not Satan who took me away from whisky drinking."[34]

An often-repeated figure is that 100,000 people were converted during the revival. No-one is completely sure of the source of the figure and it seems difficult to sustain.[35] Conversion, however, was not the only metric of the effects of the revival and many were "revived" in their faith and began to live lives of thoroughgoing Christian dedication. One outcome of this was that some moved to smaller denominations "who demanded a more obvious commitment from their members."[36] One of the smaller denominations to benefit were the Baptists.

Given the small number of Baptists in Ulster at this time they seldom feature in accounts of the revival, yet they too were swept up these momentous events. One Belfast newspaper reported,

> Since last report, twenty cases have occurred of persons prostrated in the Baptist Church, Academy Street [Belfast], almost all of whom have found peace. Last night Monday ten were affected; some of them at the Sabbath-school prayer-meeting. The under part of the church was crowded with the children, and the gallery was filled with parents and friends. At the

> conclusion of the prayer-meeting, the Rev. R. M. Henry preached to a large and most attentive congregation in the open air outside the church. During the service two persons were prostrated. Three Roman Catholics have been brought, it is believed, to the knowledge of the truth in connection with these services.[37]

Henry later recalled that "on two occasions during the Revival, I had an opportunity of addressing audiences numbering from15,000 to 20,000 persons."[38] One such occasion was in Armagh when many people travelled to the meeting by train, with some even lying on the top of carriages to make their way there.[39]

Baptist ministers outside Belfast also found themselves dealing with large crowds of hearers. William Eccles, who had recently left the Belfast church to look after the BIS station in Banbridge, County Down, gives a flavor of the times writing,

> On Monday evening about two hundred people assembled in a great room of a ruinous building. After a service of two hours and a-half only a few would leave. I had accordingly, afresh to address the anxious and commend them in prayer to God. Outside the house, in the open air, another company was waiting for a few 'last words.' When I reached the road, about a hundred perches distant, I found a goodly number waiting to give me a 'heart warm, fond adieu,' and who, seeing my fatigue, declared (I believe in all sincerity) '*It would do them good if they could just bear me home upon their arms.*'[40]

He continued that this was typical of his experiences throughout the district as he worked himself to the point of exhaustion. His concluded, "I do not know a godly man in the north of Ireland who doubts that *within the last few months more souls have been converted to God than have been converted in the previous fifty years*."[41]

The BIS committee recognized that the scale of what was occurring in Ulster meant their workers were "unable to meet the demands of the people for the Ministry of the Gospel." They agreed, therefore, to send some British ministers to offer temporary support.[42] An appeal for funds to finance this was "cheerfully and liberally responded to by many of the friends of Evangelical truth."[43] One of those who visited Ulster was Francis Wills, minister of Kingsgate Baptist Chapel, London. On his arrival towards the

end of 1859 in Coleraine, County Londonderry, he discovered that the fire of revival had mostly subsided, although its influence continued to be felt. There was still a daily united prayer meeting in the town, where he worked alongside the ministers of other denominations. He spent much of his time in house-to-house visitation counselling those who had been affected by the revival. A great hunger remained to hear the word of God preached. Wills reported that on one Sunday he preached at a series of meetings which in total lasted around seven hours.[44]

Wills' work alongside ministers from other denominations marked one of the features of the revival. Often regarded with suspicion by other denominations, for first time Baptist ministers gained recognition as co-laborers. This was one of the outcomes of the revival, that for a time many of the old denominational enmities faded into the background. John Brown, pastor of the small Baptist church at Conlig on the outskirts of Newtownards, County Down, recorded, "One happy fruit of the revival is, that ministers of all denominations have laid aside their animosities, and harmoniously co-operate in the common cause."[45] This irenic spirit tended to disappear in aftermath of the revival, with Baptists accused of being more interested in proselytism than conversion. Nonetheless, the fact that Baptist ministers helped to labor in the revival contributed to the establishment of the denomination in the province.

The foundation of several new Baptist churches in the aftermath of the revival also helped to cement their place. After their conversion some began to question the validity of their baptism as infants and were then baptized by immersion. As Thompson remarks in such cases there "was no need for the Baptist churches and ministers to do more than offer instruction to the converts who sought it, and to baptise those who requested it."[46] One of the most notable cases was that of J. G. McVicker. McVicker was a minister in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, which was regarded as one of the strictest Calvinistic denominations. In the summer of 1859, seven years into his ministry, he underwent conversion. As a result, he stepped down from his ministry and three months later was baptized in a local river by Jeremiah Meneely.[47] Encouraged by Mrs. Colville he began to preach in Ballymena to a congregation that gathered first in a stable yard and later in a loft. He then joined the BIS and set about building a Baptist chapel in the town. To obtain financial support for this he visited C. H.

Spurgeon in London, who introduced him to several benefactors.[48] The new building was opened in August 1861. The church grew rapidly and soon had 120 members, with between 400 and 600 in attendance at services.[49] The following year McVicker left the church along with a sizeable part of the congregation to form a Plymouth Brethren assembly. The path to Plymouth Brethrenism was one taken by many who had initially joined Baptist churches.[50] Crawford Gribben has noted at this time "Baptist and Brethren congregations could not always be easily distinguished."[51] There followed a good deal of friction between the two groups in the coming decades. In 1862, for example, Dr. James C. L. Carson, son of Alexander Carson, published a widely circulated work called *The Heresies of the Plymouth Brethren*. The doctor's niece, however, after initial opposition to Brethrenism later joined the movement.[52]

Londonderry, with a population of about 25,000 people, was one of only two cities in Ulster at that time.[53] In early 1859 a small number of Baptists sought to establish a church with the support of the BIS and the Baptist church in neighboring Letterkenny, County Donegal. The church was constituted with nineteen members and began meeting in the city's masonic hall. In July 1860 the local newspaper, the *Londonderry Journal*, published an account of eleven baptisms carried out in the nearby River Faughan. It noted there were three to four hundred people in attendance. The report stated that "Such a scene had never been witnessed in Derry before, and it was profitable to many persons of different character."[54] Despite the novelty of what was occurring the newspaper was at pains to point out the solemnity and dignity of the baptismal service. This sympathetic reception did not last and the following year T. W. Medhurst, reported "I preached the other evening for our friends in Londonderry. I found them struggling hard against much opposition and misrepresentation."[55] As was the case in Ballymena, the church in Londonderry split as some wished to pursue a Plymouth Brethren model of ecclesiology. In 1862 the BIS took the decision to withdraw its support from the church as the divisions among the congregation appeared irreparable.[56]

In the aftermath of the revival Baptist churches faced many challenges. Some, like Ballymena, weathered the storms, while others, like Londonderry disappeared.[57] Even well-established churches like Tobermore struggled in the years that followed. R. H. Carson, who saw his congregation

swell and then fall, noted in 1869 "out of some 80 or 90 individuals received at that time, scarcely one remains to us at this moment. And what is worse than their exclusion or withdrawal, their evil conduct, or their spiritual apathy, did not fail to leave its mark behind."[58] Remarkably, churches in the rest of Ireland remained largely untouched by the revival, even though some, like the new Baptist work in Rathmines, Dublin met "for special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Dublin and its suburbs."[59] While Dublin remained the administrative center for Irish Baptists the story of the southern churches was mostly one of decline while northern churches grew more numerous.

The revival led to the foundation of at least six new churches and many outstations in Ulster over the next few years. The number of Baptists in Ulster also more than doubled, representing about seventy-five percent of the total number on the island. As Thompson states "the Baptist community was strengthened and enlarged by the revival movement. The evangelistic spirit of the churches was boosted, many young men offered for the ministry, and a base secured in the north from which later advances were made."[60] The growth among the Baptist churches during this period led to the reconstitution of the Irish Baptist Association which had fallen into abeyance in 1824.[61] The new IBA recommenced in Dublin in July 1862 with ten churches. By 1868 the number had reached twenty-five.[62] Irish Baptists were on the way to becoming numerous enough to obtain their independence from the BIS and the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland. The Baptist Union of Ireland was formed in 1895 with thirty-one member churches.

The 1920s Revival

By the 1920s Ireland had changed beyond recognition since the summer of 1859. Like other nations it had participated in the gruesome spectacle of the Great War but it had also undergone the 1916 Easter Rising, the War of Independence and the Irish Civil War. In 1921 the country was partitioned with most counties forming the Irish Free State,[63] while the state of Northern Ireland, consisting of six of the historic counties of Ulster, remained part of the United Kingdom. With partition Northern Ireland was consumed by sectarian violence in the early years of its existence. Across the new state, but mostly in Belfast, 500 people were killed, more than 3,000 injured, 10,000

people became refugees and hundreds of businesses were destroyed.[64] It appeared to be an unlikely backdrop for revival. Although as Holmes writes, "There can be no doubt that this background gave the [evangelistic] campaign a sense of urgency as individual Protestants sought to make sense of their situation."[65]

In October 1920 W. P. Nicholson began a much anticipated evangelistic mission in his hometown of Bangor, County Down. Following his conversion in 1899 and a period of training at Bible Training Institute, Glasgow, Nicholson had worked as an evangelist in Belfast, Scotland, Australia and the United States, where he was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania. He later joined the faculty of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Nicholson's mission in Bangor was a great success and, according to one witness, "the whole religious life of the town was revived."[66] Invitations to conduct missions in other towns soon flooded in and interdenominational (Nicholson United Mission) committees were formed to co-ordinate these missions which began in the spring of 1921.

Nicholson's style was blunt, uncompromising and earthy. It did not sit well with those who believed that a preacher's demeanor should be dignified and refined. One Church of Ireland minister said he was "compelled to make an indignant protest, and to state that this kind of thing is an almost incredibly offensive caricature of religion as I understand the religion of Jesus Christ."[67] Nicholson's plain style of speaking, however, was hugely popular, not least among working class Protestants and thousands flocked to hear him preach in towns all over the north. Not only did they come to hear him but countless numbers professed faith at his meetings. After his mission in Portadown, County Armagh, it was recorded that "over 900 names were registered as of those accepting Christ and whole families became one in him."[68] In Lisburn, County Antrim, "well over 2000 souls definitely pledged themselves to Jesus Christ. 1,950 were dealt with in the enquiry room: over 700 names were transferred to the minister of one church."[69]

Having conducted missions throughout the provincial towns, Nicholson commenced a mission in Belfast in February 1922. The mission was held on the Shankill Road, which was one of the most troubled parts of the city. On the first evening "many of those present later recalled hearing the sound of rifle and machine-gun fire during the course of the meeting. Some who came on tram cars had been ordered to lie flat when passing

certain crossings. Even as he preached it was often to the accompaniment of gunfire and bombing outside."[70] It turned out to be one of the most violent days in the conflict that engulfed the city with eleven people killed and forty wounded. Despite the ongoing disturbances the mission was attended in the coming weeks by almost 3,000 people each evening and 2,260 people were counselled in the enquiry rooms.[71] In March a three week mission was held in the north of the city, again there were thousands in attendance each evening and over 1,000 people passed through the enquiry room.[72] Following the Belfast campaigns Nicholson moved to Londonderry to conduct a six week mission. Once more there were large attendances and upwards of 1,300 people came to the enquiry rooms.[73] By the end of 1922 it was recorded that in total more than 12,000 people had passed through the enquiry rooms of the various missions.[74]

In the autumn Nicholson came back to Belfast and conducted missions in various venues across the city. Again, there were large attendances and a great number of converts. Then in 1923 Nicholson moved to the east of the city. This was the industrial heartland of Belfast with the shipyard where the Titanic had been built employing tens of thousands. It was also an area where there had been much sectarian violence, although this had eased by the end of 1922. The east of the city had numerous churches and a thriving mission hall culture. With Nicholson's arrival there followed, what one newspaper described as, "the flame of revival burning so brightly… with consuming power."[75] A Presbyterian minister reported that by the end of March 1923 they had seen 5,000 professions of faith.[76]

In the coming years the events in the east of the city reached almost mythical proportions. One often repeated story was that converted shipyard workers returned so many stolen tools it was necessary to build a new shed to store them. Certainly "on two occasions shipyard workers marched en masse to meetings, and at one of these 200 men decided for Christ and publicly destroyed their betting paraphernalia."[77] It was one of the notable features of Nicholson's ministry that his message appealed especially to men, many of whom were working class and often caught up in the violence of the time. There were even reports of loyalist gunmen being converted.[78]

By the time Nicholson returned to the United States in June 1923 "it was claimed that 23,000 individuals had made a profession of faith, church membership had increased, religious zeal was rekindled, and the Irish

Alliance of Christian Workers' Unions received a substantial boost."[79] Supporters would later claim that Nicholson had saved Ulster from Civil War. While he undoubtedly had a profound impact across the province, much of the heat had gone out of the sectarian tensions as the Irish Civil War had broken out in the Irish Free State in 1922 which directed violence away from Ulster.

Nicholson returned to Northern Ireland in July 1924. Once more he conducted numerous missions across the province and a mission in Dublin. While he still gathered large crowds and saw many professions of faith these did not reach the heights of the earlier campaigns. In the following years he conducted missions in the USA, Australia, and South Africa. While he continued to return to Northern Ireland, the visits became less frequent and, as his health declined, his campaigns grew shorter. In 1959 he left the USA intending to spend his final years at home in Bangor. He suffered a heart attack on board ship and, although he was transferred to hospital in Cork, he died.

In November 1922, at the height of Nicholson's campaign another evangelist, Archibald Irwin presented a paper to the General Secretaries Christian Union called "Is there a Revival in Ulster?"[80] As in 1859 many were skeptical that this was a genuine work of God. Not least this was because of the revivalist techniques employed by Nicholson. Although, many doubters admitted that having visited Nicholson's meetings and heard him preach they became convinced that God was at work. One newspaper reporter acknowledged, "Mr. Nicholson gained the ear of the people in a marked degree and although uncompromising in his condemnation of smoking and dancing and the picture show, and presenting the bold alternative of 'Christ or Hell,' even those who disagreed with him came under his spell and were converted."[81] By the metrics Irwin used, including increased prayer, unity among the churches, professions of faith, growing church membership, increased evangelistic endeavor and the numbers attending Bible studies, he concluded "there are many signs of a general revival of religion… I am driven to the conclusion that a deep and genuine work of grace has been, and is now going on in many parts of Ulster."[82] One reporter remarked Nicholson "has stirred Ulster for God as has not been done since the memorable days of 1859."[83] Some who had lived through the events of that year were still alive and concurred with such sentiments.

Yet, while Nicholson was a key figure in this period, he was not the only one whose ministry was having a great impact. As Irwin suggested, what was occurring went beyond the conversions taking place under Nicholson and impacted the whole of the religious tenor of society. *The Irish Baptist Magazine* of March-April 1923 posed the same question as Irwin, *Is it Revival?* It answered the question by recording that they were "passing through unprecedented times."[84]

Baptists saw much fruit as the result of Nicholson's ministry. In several towns Baptists joined with other churches in supporting his missions. In 1921 the church in Lurgan, County Armagh participated in the joint mission and subsequently saw twenty-four people baptized.[85] Several other Baptist churches including Tandragee, Omagh, Armagh and Coleraine saw significant increases in the number of baptismal candidates.[86] Pastor J. S. Fraser commenting on the effect of Nicholson's mission on the Shankill Road Baptist Church said that in March 1922 the Sunday School superintendent asked all who had accepted the Savior during his mission to stand. He noted that "immediately something like a score of the elder scholars rose to their feet." When the superintendent then asked if any others would like to trust in Jesus "the number was augmented by almost a dozen."[87]

While Nicholson's campaigns saw large numbers of professions of faith there were numerous other evangelistic campaigns being carried on throughout the province. In 1921 the Scottish evangelist James McKendrick, who visited Ulster frequently, conducted a mission in Londonderry which drew large crowds and saw many conversions. This was several months before Nicholson's arrival.[88] Mountpottinger Baptist Tabernacle, in east Belfast, recorded sixty-seven conversions in 1921[89] which, again, was before Nicholson began his campaigns in the area. Local Baptist pastors and evangelists saw considerable fruit for their labor in this period. A mission conducted by J. K. Paisley in Armagh in 1922 saw thirty converts.[90] After Nicholson visited Newtownards James McKendrick visited the town.[91] Again, there were many conversions and this helped to lay the ground for the formation of a Baptist church in 1923. After Nicholson's campaign in Portadown a mission conducted in 1924 by two Baptist pastors, R. Clendinning and G. H. Weir led to the formation of a Baptist church.[92] Nicholson may have captured the headlines but there was a large supporting cast throughout the province, including visiting evangelists, local

Baptist pastors and evangelists and even church members who held impromptu open-air meetings which saw numerous conversions.

As with the events of 1859, church leaders recognized the need for spiritual discernment amid the excitement of the time. T. R. Warner, editor of *The Irish Baptist*, offered some words of caution. He wrote, "During the revival many hold up their hands to show their acceptance of Christ's message to a lost world and we are glad of it. But how many of these are prepared to render obedience to His command and publicly confess Him by being immersed into the likeness of His death and resurrection?"[93] Warner touched on an issue Baptist churches faced, that despite widespread numbers of people being converted, this did not necessarily translate into baptisms and church membership. The church secretary of East End Baptist Church, which was in the heart of the shipbuilding district in Belfast, wrote, "in February [1923] a remarkable tide of revival swept in and in the four months following 700 persons professed faith in Christ." It was an extraordinary figure for a church of fewer than eighty members. The considerable number of conversions, however, did not correspond to an equally large surge in membership. As he went on to add "forty-five followed our Lord in Baptism, and twenty-nine were received into membership. The attendance at the morning service is not good, but the attendance at the Evening Service shows a considerable increase."[94] As his comment suggested, even baptisms did not necessarily indicate willingness to join the church. In the years following the membership of the church settled at just over 100 members, despite the large number of professions of faith. There were similar patterns in other Baptist churches where large numbers of conversions did not result in corresponding numbers of baptisms and additions to the church.

The small number of people who became church members, considering the large number who had professed faith raises the question in the minds of some about whether this truly was a revival or was this phenomenon merely the result of revivalism which caught the public attention at a turbulent time? Some historians have suggested that this populist style of religion resonated with the Protestant population when they were in search of certainty amid socio-economic issues, sectarian violence and political instability. Historians have sought similar social explanations for the events of 1859. There can be little doubt that revivalism played its part as it was a feature of the evangelical sub-culture at this time. It was also reflected

in Nicholson's ministry as he combined plain speech, decision making and sentimental music. Furthermore, this was often allied to his dispensational theology that made much of the theme of the imminent return of Christ as people came to terms with the fallout from the Great War and their own political uncertainty. Yet, does such revivalism explain the event of the 1920s? Was all that occurred simply the result of a socio-cultural phenomenon embedded in a set of unique historical circumstances?

Andrew Holmes has pointed out that those who study revival, from a range of scholarly disciplines, now recognize that there are often multiple factors involved in times of revival.[95] Yet, even at the time Christians recognized the interplay of different factors and therefore sought to answer the question, *Is it Revival*? They also saw a need to try to distinguish the true signs of the Holy Spirit's work from apparent conversions based on other factors. What churches longed for was genuine fruit of the Spirit's work, not mere numbers. For Baptists this meant looking for converts to profess their faith by being baptized. They also continued with regular roll revisions, removing those who no longer fulfilled the requirements of membership. In other words, there was no sense of simply being carried along by events on a superficial level and seeing numerical growth. Whatever social factors might have been involved in the events, or whatever techniques Nicholson and others may have employed, many who lived through these times believed that they witnessed the work of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, they thought that while Nicholson was God's instrument, many other unheralded figures were also involved reaping a rich harvest. Among Baptists, for example, much more attention was given to the work of local pastors and evangelists across the province than was given to role played by Nicholson.

There can be no doubt, as with the events of 1859, Baptists in Ulster benefited from the general revival of the period. In 1920 there were forty-one Baptist churches in Ireland with a little over 2,700 members. A decade later there were almost 3,600 members in fifty-seven churches. The revival also strengthened Baptists at a time when the church in Ulster was about to enter a period of ecclesiastical conflict as its own version of the Modernist versus Fundamentalist debate unfolded. While other denominations, especially the Presbyterians, were embroiled in this, Baptists emerged from the events of the1920s firmly rooted in the historic Evangelical faith.

Conclusion

Over recent decades historians of Ireland have increasingly recognized that the island's story must be understood in the context of its relationship to the Atlantic world. This has shaped its history economically, socially, educationally, politically, culturally and militarily. It has also shaped its history religiously, as the island has been impacted by the great Evangelical revivals. While these affected the state of all churches, they greatly benefited Irish Baptists, both indirectly and directly. As these historic events occurred Baptists were renewed and their witness on the island given new impetus. As a result, they helped to establish a significant Baptist witness in Ireland. Although there has been no period of revival in Ireland since the 1920s there have been important periods of growth for Irish Baptists. The most recent of these has been in the Republic of Ireland, where there was little direct impact from the revivals. Since 1990 the number of Baptist churches in the Republic has more than trebled.

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Captured by the Word: Hermeneutics and the Agonizing Struggle[1]

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Before I begin, I want to express my sincere thanks to President Mohler, to the Provost, Dr. Paul Akin, and my Dean, Dr. Hershael York, for the invitation and honor of presenting this address to the faculty. I also want to extend my thanks and gratitude to my esteemed and beloved colleagues. It is a privilege beyond description to be numbered among you. And of course, to my students—the reason I and my colleagues are here. Above all, I am grateful to my wife Denise. To say that I would not be standing here today without her is an understatement. Of all people, she most embodies what it is to put the interests of others ahead of her own. And my daughter Jamie, the apple of my eye, I'm so proud of you and glad that you're here today.

Introduction

I read the Bible because it is "the book that reads me."[2] This is how a woman who, through the work of missionaries confessed faith in Christ, responded to a question from her friends and neighbors who noticed that the Bible was

her constant companion. They asked her, "Why do you read the Bible?" She replied, "It is the book that reads me." What she understood intuitively, just by reading, is that the Bible is not simply an inspired object of study. I think it's fair to say that what she discovered is that 2 Timothy 3:16 is more than a propositional statement about the Bible. It is also a statement about what the Bible itself does. The Bible exposes the reader, it reproves, corrects, and trains the reader in righteousness. In short, the woman was captured by the Word. This sort of capture cannot be coaxed from the Bible simply through applying proper critical tools and methods, putting together big pictures, retrieving pre-critical models of interpretation, or through pursuing an elevated, contemplative reading. Calling the Bible, "the book that reads me," likely sounds nice, even quaint. The kind of thing that gets a knowing nod, maybe elicits a low murmur, but ultimately filed away as a devotional comment, but not something that has a place in the work of interpretation, exegesis, and/or sermon preparation. I would, however, argue that our hermeneutics must flow from this simple thought: faithful interpretation, begins with the capture of the reader by the text.

Listen to the following quote from Mark Seifrid:

> Without in any way calling into question the need for careful, methodical study of the text, we may ask if the model to which we generally are accustomed properly acknowledges the way in which the Scriptures *interpret us* before we interpret them. To imagine that we can sit down with a text of Scripture, employing certain rules of study and using the linguistic tools at our disposal, determine the meaning of a text, and then go on to apply it prayerfully is to deceive ourselves. We imagine that we master the text, when in fact it discloses its meaning only as it masters us.[3]

Seifrid concerns himself there with the correct application of Luther's Law-Gospel distinction. What I will consider today is another of Luther's principles, and one that indeed goes hand-in-hand with the proper application of Law and Gospel as a hermeneutic. Luther identified three "rules" that make a theologian. Since interpreters ought to be theologians, I apply these rules to interpretation. The three rules are simple. The first two are *prayer* and *meditation*. I will address those briefly later. It is the third to which I want to give special attention. I want to focus today on the third

rule because not only is it the most challenging to understand but is also the most neglected of Luther's three rules. The third rule, in English anyway, is the *Agonizing Struggle.*[4] The struggle that will arise when a reader comes to the text in prayer and meditation (properly understood). It is only through this agonizing struggle in the interpretation of the Bible, that the reader will be captured by the word, and in this capture becomes subject to the Word not merely a user of the Word.

Using the Scripture

I frequently warn my students of the danger of coming to the Bible merely for what use we want to get out of it, a means to some other end. When Scripture is primarily a means to an end, then we will treat it essentially as raw material to be refined for some greater use. Of course, there are many proper "uses" of Scripture. It is necessary to use Scripture for academic and popular writing, for lecture preparation, for sermon and bible study preparation, for devotional reading, and perhaps even in the completion of a seminary assignment. I don't want to create yet another way for us to be more introspective and spiritually paranoid. I well recall a student, who after hearing me speak about this tendency only to use the Bible for some other end, came to me in something of a panic because he couldn't tell if he was "using" the Bible. The point is this: the Bible is not simply an instrument or tool for accomplishing a task, whether that task is devotional, pastoral, or academic.

I am not suggesting that there is no difference between say, reading the Bible alone in communion with God in Word and prayer and the hard work of interpreting texts of Scripture with the skills, tools, and proper methods required for that task. What I am saying is that, regardless of how and for what purpose we read the Bible, the Bible remains the same. If we approach the Bible only for what we're going to do with it, how we are going to leverage it for a sermon, a lecture, an article, or a book; in order to learn what we must *avoid* and what we must *do* (and then of course do more of) then we may effectively place ourselves over Scripture. It is a necessary tool for the job. The work, however, is ours. We excavate, properly arrange, then add application to the Scripture.

In what follows, I will suggest that faithful interpreters, teachers, and students of the Bible—whether our professional pursuit is grammatical-

historical, historical-redemptive, or biblical-theological, then we should incorporate and follow Luther's three rules: prayer, meditation, and the agonizing struggle that will arise when we learn that the Bible must first read us.

A Retrospective

Before proceeding further, allow me to share a short retrospective with you. A reflection on what I've seen over the past twenty years of teaching and in the roughly ten years of study leading up to it. I do so because I've concluded based on personal experience, study, teaching, and observation that Luther's rules are, as he intended, essential for faithful interpretation.

Part 1: Objectivity is King

When I was first introduced to formal hermeneutics it was quite common to assert that step one is to recognize our presuppositions. In the twentieth century, Rudolf Bultmann (for one) observed that exegesis without presuppositions is impossible. Bible scholars therefore concluded that since we all have presuppositions it is our duty to identify them and, having identified them, set them aside. In other words, essentially become functional skeptics and cynics. For evangelicals, behind the eightball by a couple decades, this did not mean—in theory—dispensing with precommitments (confessional or personal), but rather identifying them and putting them on the table. Nevertheless, "presuppositionless" exegesis made an impact on evangelicals. In my days as a doctoral student, I distinctly remember hearing a student colleague say, "I have to remove my (dramatically taking off his glasses) 'evangelical rose-colored spectacles' and read the word of God as purely as possible." Hearing this quip, one seminar member (name withheld) responded: "Spectacles? You know, I wear 'spectacles' because I can't see without them, but maybe that's just me." This sort of presupposition-neutral perspective was typically linked with a rather unshakable confidence in proper methods. The idea went something like this: "All things being equal, and given the same background, knowledge and skill in applying the same method(s), an unbeliever and a believer can come to the same interpretation of meaning in a given text." Practically speaking, it was as though the purpose of a text, how an author expects a reader to respond, is detached from the meaning of a text. This, by the way, had nothing at all to do with defending

the perspicuity or clarity of Scripture, but an exultation of the reliability and apparent infallibility of proper methodology. In other words, biblical interpretation could be tested impartially and judged on the repeatability of results.

Let me be clear: Obviously, proper methodology is essential, but reliance on methodology alone is more akin to the work in a laboratory than interpretation of the Bible—if we believe the things we say about the Bible. I was not far from the kingdom of modern sensitivities myself, once declaring to one of my professors, "I can interpret most any text in Paul with only the conjunctions, participles, and particles—with the rest of the text hidden." I shared a similarly misguided (and embarrassing), idea with a fellow doctoral student studying systematic theology. He looked at me blankly for moment and replied: "But what about the theology in the text?" I knowingly replied, "grammar and syntax *is* theology!" Proving beyond doubt that Calvinism isn't the only thing with a "cage stage." Such approaches to the text of course didn't remain in the classroom but were reflected in various homiletics textbooks and in some pulpits where preaching, justified of course with the shibboleth, "expository," became more lecturing than proclaiming.

There can be no mistake—learning and applying rigorous interpretive and exegetical methodology, rooted in the original languages, is essential. And, contrary to what some in the retrieval camp(s) would have you believe, the modern era has made positive contributions beyond hospitals, anti-biotics, and hygiene. When I teach hermeneutics the pervasive influence of those from whom I learned hermeneutics is more than evident. All I'm suggesting is that merely identifying meaning apart from an author's intended purpose, or calls for exegesis alone, or reliance on methods to render the verified meaning of a text, is insufficient for biblical hermeneutics. It is also out of step with the Reformers, the magisterial Reformers in particular, and those Protestants who remain faithful to confessional traditions.

Part 2: Proliferation of Big Pictures

The late twentieth century saw the rise of a new interest in the study of the whole Bible as a coherent story of Redemption. This of course was not new. It was simply the popularizing of decades of Biblical Theology. On the Evangelical side of things, scholars built on the work of Geerhardus Vos' *Biblical Theology*. Jumping ahead, books like Graeme Goldsworthy's

According to Plan, were included in hermeneutics syllabi in evangelical institutions—including this one. In the scholarly guild, Oscar Cullmann's *Christ and Time,* and Leonhard Goppelt's *Theology of the New Testament* provided much of the impetus, not to mention the vocabulary of twentieth century history of redemption approaches to the Bible. Think, for instance, of the term "already and not yet." Evangelical biblical theologians, like George Ladd, published works explicitly founded on redemptive history. That trend continues to this day.

Over time, the redemptive-historical approach increasingly caught on in more popular publications. While not hermeneutics proper, the rise of "big picture" perspectives on Scripture quickly became all the rage in publishing and in pulpits. In fact, if you listen closely, you can hear another "big picture" book hitting the shelf as I speak. The rise in popularity of such a perspective on the Bible as a coherent story of redemption had and continues to have a positive effect among evangelicals. From scholars, to students, to congregants, the Bible came to life, as it were, in new ways. Old Testament (OT) narrative, for example, was no longer just stories that taught principles for living, working, running a business, or leading a family. The proliferation of redemptive-historical perspectives, or "big-picture" approaches, however, has not been entirely positive and, I might argue, reached a point of diminishing marginal utility. The benefits gained have decreased, maybe dramatically, with the increase of big-pictures. The reason is simple, an exclusive focus on big picture reading is an abstraction of Scripture. The emphasis of the abstraction is a matter of a scholar's, or reader's, or preacher's choice. Big picture approaches reconstruct a timeline or arc that, while intersecting with the text of Scripture, is suspended over the text. The real danger, if redemptive-historical readings become exclusive, is that a reconstructed, abstracted timeline, or theological paradigm, can become the main referent in interpretation. Difficult texts, texts that convict the reader and condemn sin, that teach uncomfortable truths, that challenge cultural and social trends—these things, not to mention the historicity of Scripture, can be bypassed for the "drama" of the story. Even when the intentions and results aren't as pernicious as all that, readers could spend a lifetime fascinated by the "story" (parts of it anyway) and never be confronted or engaged by the Word of God. Readers may, and do, pursue new and exciting connections in the Bible that grow ever more tenuous and

rely less on textual warrant. This is not a rejection, but a simple observation that by itself, a redemptive-historical approach, and its popular "big picture" second cousin is insufficient as a hermeneutic.

Part 3: Rediscovered Readers

In the last twenty years, attention to the role, place, and responsibility of the reader in evangelical hermeneutics has increased dramatically. Though I am well aware that the origins of the newfound interest in the reader go back much further than two decades. The rediscovery of the reader, however, does not signal a victory of reader-response hermeneutics. These "new" readers are, to use Jeannine Brown's term, "chastened" readers who (at least theoretically or ideally) do not place themselves over the text as the community sanctioned arbiters of meaning.[5]

Today there are many books (I mean primarily textbooks) on or in the vicinity of hermeneutics that put quite a bit of focus on the place of the reader in interpretation. Not the reader's control of the text, but an increased emphasis on the reader's role as object of the text of Scripture. This emphasis does not mean endangering authorial intent, or the historicity and veracity of scripture. The authors of these books are not, just to be clear, proponents of any sort of reader-response hermeneutics—that is, interpretation where the reader, not the text, controls and determines meaning. I will briefly mention a few such books with which I have some degree of familiarity.

David Starling, committed to the Reformation principle that Scripture interprets Scripture, adopts the metaphor of the reader as an apprentice of the biblical writers.[6] In *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship* (2016) he shares a quote from Luther emphasizing that the self-interpretation of Scripture does not mean that we have little or no work to do. To the contrary, "we must soak with our sweat the Holy Scriptures alone." Reflecting on Luther, Starling adds, "Good interpretation requires not just sweat but skill, and not just skill but character."[7] Such skill and character is developed in and through the reading of Scripture itself—I will mention Romans chapter 5 later. The interpreter becomes the apprentice of the Biblical authors particularly in their reading of one another—for instance the way the NT authors read the OT, and also how later OT authors read the earlier OT books. For my purposes, I simply draw attention to the emphasis on the reader as a conscious student, apprentice, of the biblical authors themselves. Learning

to read their book *from* them, not simply applying the proper methods *to* their books. We cannot interpret the authors in their appropriate historical and grammatical contexts alone, but "we are their apprentices in the art of reading Scripture, learning from them how to understand Christ (and all things) in the light of Scripture and Scripture (and all things) in the light of Christ."[8]

Starling also proposes a legitimate Gospel centered hermeneutic. Taking Luke-Acts as an example, he demonstrates that such an approach doesn't simply describe and show the gospel as a series of redemptive historical events. A Gospel-centered hermeneutic "is also a summon to repentance and a gracious offer of forgiveness … not merely as a repository of background facts and fulfilled promises but as a living voice that promises, urges, summons, and invites in the "today" of their fulfillment in Jesus"[9] (117).

I mentioned Jeannine Brown earlier and her term, "chastened readers."[10] "Chastened" means not allowing readers to turn into authors or allow them to claim absolute objectivity. "It is an interesting observation," she states, "that both these extremes—making readers of texts into authors and claiming full objectivity for readers—assert the reader as all powerful. The reader becomes the god of the text whether through assimilation or mastery."[11] In *Scripture as Communication*, she speaks of a "threefold movement between reader and text in conversation" in "multiple back and forth movements" (49). The reader engages the text in terms of what is said, how it is said, and why it is said. (This is essentially a speech-act theory model focused on the acts of locution [what is said, the expression], illocution [how it is said, the force], and perlocution [why it is said, the purpose]). Second, the reader moves "with a particular focus on background-contextual assumptions."[12] That is, "the probable and necessary assumptions shared by both the author and reader."[13] Third, the reader grapples with what the author is saying to the implied readers: "What is the author communicating that the implied reader is meant to grasp, receive, and embody?" While the language of implied reader may sound opaque, the concept is simple. It distinguishes readers in general from readers who respond properly to the author's intention. An actual reader may or may not grasp an author's intention and may respond in various ways or not at all. As Brown puts it: "the implied reader functions as "the embodiment of the right response at every turn to the author's communicative intention."[14]

J. De Wall Dryden, who, like others, makes the case that biblical wisdom cannot be sufficiently identified or boiled down to a genre, suggests that since the goal of wisdom is to "shape human life, not just reform the intellect," then "the whole person is engaged in the hermeneutical process."[15] In this sense, the Bible as wisdom requires a "hermeneutic of wisdom." Such a hermeneutic is distinguished from both modern and post-modern conceptions of knowing and reading. The reader approaches the text which is the power that determines and shapes his or her existence and character. For Dryden hermeneutics is not simply an exercise in determining the meaning of the text then by extension the current significance, and finally identifying specific implications. The Scripture, in itself, has the power and purpose of transforming the reader. This transformation is not just the end result of employing either objective or subjective methods then coming up with ways to apply the text. "To read for wisdom," says Dryden, "is to be attentive to how the Bible, as a voice from outside our own idolatrous construal's of reality, challenges and retunes our understanding and desires, and to consciously open ourselves to that process."[16]

On the whole, and with caveats, I welcome the emphasis—really a recovered emphasis—in the last twenty years on the place of the reader before and under the authority of Scripture. The interpreter, as one engaged with and by Scripture, is not simply an examiner and reporter of Scripture. In my view, such an emphasis is not only compatible with a hermeneutic founded on the principle of authorial intention, but a more comprehensive expression of authorial intention because it does not separate an author's meaning from his equally intended purpose.

There is, as always, a danger here. Not necessarily an inherent, exclusive, or inevitable danger. The danger is a *hermeneutic of ascent*. That is, following a pattern of coming to the Bible to be trained simply to know, do, and respond in action to the text. In a hermeneutic of ascent, the text is a means of moving upward to glory with the cross as a mere starting point. The emphasis shifts, yet again, to the elevation of the reader. Timothy Wengert, reflecting on interpretation in the era before Luther, simplifies a hermeneutic of ascent as coming to Scripture to learn what "must be done," "what must be believed" and "what must be hoped for."[17] In other words, an unreflective return to the pre-Reformation model of "reading-meditation-prayer-contemplation." An approach corrected by Luther. A reading that uses the text of Scripture as

essentially a springboard to reach greater heights of spiritual experience and/or moral action. As Michael Bird puts it:

> That formula represents a movement inward and upward from praying with the lips to meditating with the heart to pure, wordless contemplation. The theologian steps beyond letter to Spirit, to a place above the words of scripture. Theology by that scheme consists in disembodied speculation, a flight from the Bible into the naked majesty of God on my own inner-spiritual wings.[18]

The danger of developing, or returning to, a hermeneutic of ascent does not arise only when a greater emphasis is placed on the reader. It is wrong to think that an objective approach to the text of Scripture is inherently immune from this danger. A hermeneutic of ascent is just as at home among self-professed objective readers for whom the Christian life is essentially a works-driven progression in which suffering and the cross serve as an entry way to glory, reserved merely for reflection on what happened in the past.

Over against a hermeneutic of ascent, the concept of *the agonizing struggle* takes seriously that Holy Scripture is itself both sanctified and sanctifying.[19] It connects with how the Bible speaks of itself and its purpose for us (2 Tim 3:16-17); how it speaks of our perseverance and sanctification (Rom 5:1-11); finally, it takes seriously that Spiritual Warfare takes place in, and perhaps never more so, the interpretation of the Bible.

The Agonizing Struggle of Interpretation

What I'm going to suggest is that Luther's three rules for becoming a theologian (Interpreter of Holy Scripture) *prayer (oratio), meditation (meditatio), and "the agonizing struggle"* (an English translation of *tentatio* I'm taking from Stephen Preus and others, in German translation is *Anfectung, assault, attack*) is necessary for hermeneutics because it captures the essential nature of the holy book we read, how we are meant to read it, and why we read it. It places proper emphasis on the reader as a justified sinner having Christ himself for righteousness. It rightly aligns the reader with Luther's concept of the theologian of the cross rather than a theologian of glory (*Heidelberg Disputation*). What I'm suggesting is that the neglect of Luther's

three rules, or the relegation of them to wistful thoughts on devotional reading or spiritual formation, has created a lacuna, a void, in evangelical hermeneutics that Luther as well as other magisterial Reformers would likely find astonishing.

Three Rules, Not Three Steps

As I tell my students, Luther is not suggesting a three-step process to interpretation. The three rules are inseparable and thinking of them as a simple linear process will likely lead readers away from what Luther intended and turn them into three things one must "do" to interpret scripture.

While I'm focusing on the third thing—*tentatio* (Anfectung) the "Agonizing Struggle"—I don't want to assume that everyone is familiar with what Luther intends by prayer and meditation. It is especially important that we don't skip over these since they are inseparable, though distinguishable.[20]

Prayer (oratio)

Prayer, in this case, does not mean saying an obligatory prayer before beginning your study, like saying grace before a meal, nor is it prayer to ask God to reveal special meaning. If we conceive of the posture, the comportment of the one who prays, as coming to God with open hands, there to receive rather than to give, then we are getting close to what Luther meant. It is prayer specifically with respect to the Word of God before us. As Luther put it, Scripture is a "book that turns the wisdom of all other books into foolishness." He instructs the interpreter to follow the example of David praying Psalm 119: "Teach me, Lord, instruct me, lead me, show me." Luther comments:

> Although he well knew and daily heard and read the text of Moses and other books besides, still he wants to lay hold of the real teacher of Scriptures himself, so that he may not seize upon them pell-mell with his reason and become his own teacher. For such practice gives rise to factious spirits who allow themselves to nurture the delusion that the Scriptures are subject to them and can be easily grasped with their reason as if they were Markolf (medieval tales) or Aesop's fables, for which no Holy Spirit and no prayers are needed.[21]

Meditation (meditatio)

It can be difficult to explain meditation because of the genuinely confusing ways the word is understood. Meditation is everywhere these days. Social media is full of influencers telling people about the power of meditation and there are a variety of apps that can guide users through meditations, even down to a minute. There are meditation tracks, and brown-noise tracks played at just the right megahertz, with optional chimes, wind, rain, and nighttime sounds. Even if Christians don't buy-in to all the technologically enhanced mediation practices, there is still the question of "how?"—and that question likely remains after asking other Christians.

Luther, happily, spells it out.

> You should meditate not only in your heart, but also externally by actually repeating and comparing oral speech and literal words of the book, reading, and rereading them with diligent attention and reflection so that you may see what the Holy Spirit means by them…. Thus you see in the same psalm how David constantly boasts that he will talk, meditate, speak, sing, hear, read, by day and night and always, about nothing except God's word and commandments[22]

Of course, Luther didn't create the concept—he no doubt learned it as a monk. In Luther's rules, meditation is more like getting a hold of a text and thinking it through, mulling it over, studying it, living with it, wrestling with it—an emphasis found in multiple readers and scholars preceding Luther. It is not, however, as though he adopted part of a known formula wholesale and changed just one thing or made a made some tweaks. The most important distinction Luther makes regarding meditation, as well as prayer, is the inherent connection to his third rule. Rather than rising up from scripture, the reader plunges deeper in scripture. The reader is led deeper into the cross, for it is only by dying to the self at the foot of the cross that a believer may rise with Christ. This is not merely contemplative, but comes by faith in the prayerful, meditative struggle with the Bible.

The Agonizing Struggle (Tentatio; Anfectung)

"This is the touchstone" says Luther, "that teaches you not only to know and understand, but also to experience how right, how true, how sweet, how lovely, how mighty, how comforting God's word is."[23] The Agonizing Struggle

is what the interpreter, engaged in prayer and meditation on Scripture will, even must, encounter. In an often-quoted line Luther says, still reflecting on David in Ps 119: "For as soon as God's word takes root and grows in you, the devil will harry you, and will make a real doctor of you, and by his assaults (*anfectung* is the German word used there) will teach you to seek and love God's word." He is not saying the Devil leads a reader into truth, but that the struggle that must come when engaged and confronted by the Word of God ought to have the opposite result than the devil intends. This is a kind of struggle that comes specifically through reading Scripture. Of course, like all Christian suffering, there are two ways. Reading the bible will leave you at a crossroads. The believer, when suffering—including when agonizing over the meaning of a text that exposes and uncovers sin and which we may be tempted to sweep aside or rationalize—may either be lured away by an ancient voice asking, "Did God really say…?" or turn to God in faith and cling to God's word alone.

Tentatio says Stephen Preus,

> is unique to the Christian, for though unbelievers also have internal struggles due to tension in family, work, government, etc., tentatio is a direct result of one praying (oratio) and meditating upon the Word of God (meditatio). When a Christian prays for the Holy Spirit, when he meditates on God's Word through which the Spirit works, then the spirit of darkness, the devil, will assault him and cause tentatio. The devil hates God and His Word and so attacks the Christian occupied with it…. He makes it seem that God is failing us, is not living up to His Word, and does not care. [24]

It is this third rule that puts Luther out of step with approaches to Scripture that both preceded and followed him. Though it often seems to me that the concept of *tentatio* is perhaps more at home in the centuries before Luther than it is these days. Not that we evangelicals don't talk about evil, or the devil. Our talk about the devil is, however, often vague references to "evil" that help us identify the root cause of events in the news and cultural and moral decline. We do speak fairly often of the reality of spiritual warfare but, simple question: when was the last time you heard about or thought about spiritual warfare with regard to reading the Bible? Oddly, both pre-and post-Reformation authors, not least Luther, spoke of the devil's constant raging

and interfering, tempting and accusing. It was a solid fourteen years or so before such an idea surfaced in my own hermeneutics classes (apart from a beginning devotional).

One more word on the concept of *tentatio* before I suggest how it intersects with a few key biblical concepts and the Christian life. This final word comes from the eminent Luther scholar and theologian Oswalt Bayer:

> Tentatio precludes one from walking away from the issue, though that is characteristic of our present situation: walking away into academic theology, into a professional type of public religion, and into silent private piety. Agonizing struggle and temptation—their meanings cannot be differentiated theologically in a hard and fast sense….[They] both convey in their deepest severity…that there is a horrific possibility that one can face a final destruction, but yet one that will never come to an end, which is even more horrific than the destruction of the whole world and all of humanity: eternal death as existing externally apart from God.[25]

The Agonizing Struggle and Hermeneutics

In closing, I offer the following observations about how Luther's three rules—particularly *tentatio*, intersect with aspects of biblical teaching applied often (and rightly) to the Christian life but which are curiously absent from evangelical hermeneutics. One might, with justification, argue that they are part of the spiritual formation of the interpreter in preparation for the business of interpretation. The problem with that is such an observation separates the Christian life into linear segments or compartmentalizes "spiritual growth" and "devotional life" from the act of interpretation. This is like how we readily acknowledge that loving God and loving neighbor is the heart of everything but rarely apply it any sort of biblical or theological pursuit other than a vague idea of application or aim. Luther's three rules place interpretation squarely in the realm of the Christian life. As Bayer points out, the professional theologian (just hear that as "interpreter") is "really not to be distinguished from any other Christian…. An academically trained theologian (interpreter) is to be differentiated from other Christians… only in the fact that—and this is his professional calling—he is to be asked to give an account of the Christian faith"[26]

1. *Tentatio takes up a well-known verse not just as a result of reading the Bible,*

*but concurrent with reading the Bible: "*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16–17).

Inspired Scripture is not simply good for us to reprove, correct, and train others. The interpreter himself is made complete through the reproof, correction, and training for righteousness that comes in and as a result of the struggle that comes when he engages and is engaged by God in his holy word.

2. *Tentatio, includes the act of interpretation in the formation of perseverance and hope though suffering—a theme we typically reserve for talking about the divinely purposed trials and suffering that come our way in the course of life.* The circle of building perseverance and hope through suffering described by Paul in Romans 5 may also take place in the interpretation of Scripture.

> We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom 5:3-5).

Here Paul makes clear that the very thing we need to persevere in suffering, to gain proven character that ultimately results in the hope of faith, comes through suffering. We grow not by putting suffering behind (neither ours nor Christ's) but through suffering we are shaped and formed and learn endurance. Why would it be that a thing so central to the life of the justified—suffering and perseverance in the present with hope in God's promise of the future based in his declaration that we are justified that Christ is our righteousness—why would that take place in and through our daily lives but not take place in the study of the word of God?

3. *Tentatio recognizes and applies a biblical truth that is associated almost exclusively with discipleship and spiritual warfare to the act of interpretation.* Namely, that the devil is in fact real, and that evil is more than an impersonal force in the world. What I'm suggesting is that in a proper approach to Scripture, even for academic study and teaching (maybe especially), we are ill-advised to leave out these well-known realities of the Christian life. For example, take two well-known texts of Scripture:

> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Eph 6:11–12).
>
> Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. (1 Pet 5:8–9).

Certainly, it is true that the fight against forces of evil is not somehow sidelined during the act of interpretation. Do we think that the devil never comes around intending to do us harm when we read and interpret the Bible?

Concluding Thoughts

I find that Luther's *tentatio* dovetails with his understanding of the true theologian, the theologian of the cross who understands everything, who sees everything, through the cross. Much has been made of Luther's distinction between theologians of the cross and theologians of glory.

Tentatio, along with prayer and meditation of course, provides for a true cross-centered or "cruciform" hermeneutic. Not in the sense of locating a center or providing a way of reading, or redemptive historical landmarks. But in a more profound sense: the reader is sanctified not by progressively moving from the cross but progressing always in and through the cross. Through the agonizing struggle, the cross will become more prominent. *Tentatio* guards against leveraging the Bible as merely a guide for telling us what to do. *Tentatio* will draw us ever back to the cross even as we are tempted to find a way around it, to pursue glory apart from suffering and the cross.

In the coming years, it is not going to be easier to submit in faith to the Scripture. Without proper training and experience in this sort of reading, grounded as it is in the cross and suffering, it will be easier to give in to outside pressure, seductively tempted by culturally defined vague principles of love, peace, justice, and unity. "Did God really say those things about men and women, about love, marriage?" On the other hand, "Did God really

say that about honoring the king? Respecting the authorities?" "Did God really condemn all sorts of slander?" "Did God really say that meekness and suffering and loving your enemies are the true signs of his kingdom?" Only the believer steeped in prayer, meditation, and the agonizing struggle will be ready to answer those questions.

Ultimately, in the agonizing struggle, the believing reader is confronted by God in his word and pointed to the struggle and agony of Christ on the cross without which there is no ascent to glory. The interpreter must approach prayer, meditation, and embrace the agonizing struggle in interpretation. In this way, and only in this way, will we be captured by the Word.

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1 This article was originally given as a Faculty Address on February 7, 2024 at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

2 Hans Ruedi-Weber, *The Book that Reads Me* (Geneva: WCC), 1995. Cited by, Mark A. Seifrid, "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth," in *The Necessary Distinction a Continuing Conversation on Law and Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia), 2017, 33.

3 Mark Seifrid, "Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth: An Introduction to the Distinction between Law and Gospel," in *The Necessary Distinction: A Continuing Conversation on Law & Gospel,* eds. Albert Collver III, James Arne Nestingen, and John T. Pless (St. Louis: Concordia, 2017), 33.

4 I am adopting Stephen Preuss' translation of tentation/anfectung. https://lutheranreformation.org/theology/tentatio/

5 Jeannine K Brown, *Scripture as Communication* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 72

6 David Starling, *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship: How the Bible Shapes Our Interpretive Habits and Practices* (Grand Rapids: Baker), 2016.

7 Starling, *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship,* 17.

8 Starling, *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship,* 19

9 Starling, *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship,* 117.

10 Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 72.

11 Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 74.

12 Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 49

13 Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 49.

14 Brown, *Scripture as Communication,* 40.

15 J. DeWaal Dryden, *A Hermeneutic of Wisdom: Recovering the Formative Agency of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018).

16 Dryden, *A Hermeneutic of Wisdom*, 17.

17 Timothy J Wengert, *Reading the Bible with Martin Luther* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 12.

18 https://mbird.com/theology/this-post-cant-teach-you-theology-learning-with-luther/.

19 Here I am generalizing (I think correctly) the point(s) made by John Webster in, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 17-30. In that work, Webster does not address Luther's rules. I am simply applying Webster's principle(s) to *tentatio.*

20 Since Luther's three rules are discussed in detail in multiple places and all the discussion springs from Luther's preface to his German Works (*WA* 50; *LW* 34), I am not going to reinvent the wheel by presenting the rules in full but will draw primarily from Luther and the works on the topic by other scholars.

21 Though it is more common to reference Luther's collected works, I am taking the passages from *Pastoral Writings,* ed. Mary Jane Haeming, vol. 2, *The Annotated Luther*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016), 483-84.
22 Haeming, *Annotated Luther*, 4:484
23 Haeming, *Annotated Luther*, 4:486.
24 https://lutheranreformation.org/theology/tentatio/
25 Oswalt Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 20.
26 Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 18.

Book Reviews

New Testament Theology. By Eckhard J. Schnabel. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023, xxxviii + 1176 pp., $69.99 hardcover.

In New Testament Theology, Eckhard J. Schnabel, the Mary French Rockefeller Distinguished Professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, presents a substantial contribution to the field of NT theology that seeks to incorporate the historical, literary, and theological nature of the NT, the audiences of both the NT texts and the apostolic preaching, the NT's focus on Jesus, and the NT's relevance for modern readers (sec. 1.2). For Schnabel, NT theology is "the reflection on the proclamation of Jesus and the convictions of his earliest followers" (3). In addition, he seeks to make a unique contribution by taking seriously "the historical context of the ecclesial and missionary realities of the early congregations and their theologians" (xxiii).

The book is divided into six parts that includes a discussion of introductory issues (part 1), an analysis of the NT message (parts 2–5), and a synthesis of NT themes (part 6). The introductory section includes a brief history of the discipline, the characteristics that will mark Schnabel's work, a survey of the NT authors, the historical contexts of the NT, and a chapter highlighting how Jesus is "the foundation and heart of the New Testament texts" (58). In this section, chapter 2 is particularly important for Schnabel's unique contribution because it establishes 4 imaginary believers that would be a part of the early church, and 4 imaginary unbelievers that would represent the early church's missionary audience. These 8 figures are then used in parts 2–4 to illustrate how various people would respond to the issue being discussed.

The book then turns to a detailed analysis of the message of the NT by following a historical framework that moves from the message of John the Baptist and Jesus (part 2), to the message of the Jerusalem apostles—Peter, Stephen, Philip, James, Jude, Matthew, John, and Thomas (part 3), to the message of Paul (part 4), and finally to "the consolidation of the apostolic mission" (part 5). For each figure discussed in parts 2–4, Schnabel surveys (1) the person's life, (2) the person's teaching,

and (3) the person's significance filtered through the eight imaginary first century hearers. In part 5 on the consolidation of the apostolic mission, Schnabel follows a different structure, omitting the typical analysis of the person's life. Instead, he examines the theology of Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, and the author of Hebrews in terms of key themes, Jesus, and the church. Finally, in part 6 Schnabel pulls together the various theological emphases of the apostolic church to present a coherent NT theology, focusing on the unity and diversity of the NT (chap. 21), theology proper (chap. 22), Christology (chap. 23), soteriology (chap. 24), sanctification and ecclesiology (chap. 25), and eschatology (chap. 26). For each of these chapters except the last, Schnabel highlights numerous ways how the theology discussed impacts the contemporary world.

There is much to love about *New Testament Theology*, which satisfactorily incorporates all seven distinctives from section 1.2. First, Schnabel does an excellent job keeping his discussion tethered to Jesus, whether through starting the book with a chapter on the importance of Jesus in the NT or crafting the titles of nearly every section to connect the current topic back to Jesus. Even the book's flow is a reminder that people are pointing forward to Jesus (John the Baptist) or pointing back to Jesus (Jerusalem apostles, Paul, and apostolic church). Second, although there are inevitable strengths and weaknesses to any structure for a NT theology, Schnabel's blending of historical analysis, synthesis, and application to the present guards against reading modern understandings onto the NT while still offering a useful and coherent NT theology. His chronological analysis follows the typical German paradigm but filtered through Schnabel's evangelical perspective. This format offers a unique look at the NT that might benefit someone who has only read a canonical or thematic NT theology. Third, Schnabel succeeded in making the NT accessible to the modern reader. Between creatively elaborating the significance of a section through imaginary first century hearers or providing contemporary relevance in his synthesis section, Schnabel does not leave NT theology as a fossilized remnant of past beliefs but shows its abiding validity.

Although Schnabel effectively incorporated his seven distinctives, there are a couple of weak points that hinder the book's effectiveness. First, despite being filled with great content, the book is quite long. Due to the emphasis on history, the book ends up incorporating elements that would traditionally be covered in a NT introduction or history, accounting for nearly 200 pages

of the book. The book's length is also a result of Schnabel's chosen structure. While the NT authors all have distinctive elements on any given topic, there is much that they agree on. A chronological order requires discussing similar topics (e.g., salvation) in each section and leads to redundant discussion that a thematic approach could avoid. A second and related weakness is that the length can make it difficult to compare the teachings of various figures when they are separated over hundreds of pages. For example, the discussion of the Jerusalem apostles' teaching on salvation and Paul's teaching is separated by over 200 pages. For major NT themes, the final synthesis section does help draw together the scattered discussions, but even this synthesis can feel isolated from the previous discussions because of all the other material surveyed in-between. A third weakness stems from a lack of clarity on what Schnabel is doing in the apostolic consolidation section. He uses the Gospels to discuss John the Baptist and Jesus (part 2), but then analyzes the writings of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John later (part 5). He seems to be making a distinction between what the authors show us about Jesus and what the author's own theology was. Ultimately, everything we know about Jesus is mediated through these authors, so how much can their theology be distinguished from Jesus' theology? Part 5 seemed somewhat redundant, although it is possible Schnabel simply needed to state more clearly what he was seeking to do with this part of the book.

Despite these critiques, Schnabel wrote an excellent, evangelical NT theology full of insightful analysis and discussion. The book is written for a general audience but would be best for a seminary student or pastor. If the book's size is off-putting, I would recommend at least reading part 6 where Schnabel offers his summary of NT theology. The reader could then go back into the analysis parts if something is unclear or for more in-depth discussion. In addition, this book could be a helpful reference NT theology for those in ministry or scholarship.

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Chaplaincy: A Comprehensive Introduction. By Mark A. Jumper, Steven E. Keith, and Michael W. Langston. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2024. 326 pp., $24.49 paper.

"We believe it is time for chaplaincy to be given its full and rightful place in the panoply of professional ministry" (vii). These words from Chaplaincy: A Comprehensive Introduction set the stage for the overall goal and the intent of its authors, Mark A. Jumper, Steven E. Keith, and Michael W. Langston. Their aim is simple. They write Chaplaincy to provide an introduction, even an encouragement for a distinctly biblical-theological-evangelical consideration of chaplain ministry across ten functional areas of chaplaincy (1-3). Also, they encourage readers to consider chaplain ministry and if, perhaps, the reader too might be called to this multi-layered ministry (3). The authors write from years of experience, each having served as military chaplains (Jumper and Langston served in the US Navy and Keith served in the US Air Force). They also provide a depth of academic engagement as well, with Jumper and Langston both having PhD's, Keith a DMin, and all serve as professors (Jumper at Regent University School of Divinity; Keith at Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University; and Langston at Columbia International University).

Chaplaincy is divided into two parts. The first part examines the ministry of chaplaincy, covering a wide array of emphases from chaplaincy's biblical, theological, and philosophical foundations (chapter two), a history of chaplaincy (chapter three), to the importance of the constitution, religious freedom, evangelical identity, endorsement and employment as a chaplain, and the various qualities and skills important to chaplaincy (chapters four-ten). Part two (chapters eleven-twenty) specifically considers ten functional areas of chaplain ministry, with contributors appropriate to each area. The ten functional areas are corporate chaplaincy (Jeff Brown, Robert Terrell, Rick Higgins, and Donnie Jenkins), healthcare chaplaincy (Juliana Lesher), military chaplaincy (Keith Travis), education chaplaincy (Michael W. Langston), prison chaplaincy (Michael W. Langston), community chaplaincy (Leroy Gilbert), disaster relief chaplaincy (Michael W. Langston), public safety chaplaincy (Chris Wade), recreation chaplaincy (Michael W. Langston), and sports chaplaincy (Michael W. Langston).

From the outset, Jumper, Keith, and Langston aim to give a clear definition of a chaplain and chaplaincy. They explain, "A chaplain is a minister (or priest or holder of another such office) who represents a recognized religion and who joins an institution or organization, usually secular, as one of its

people in order to support and minister to its members from the inside" (3). Chaplaincy, on the other hand, "involves chaplains providing religious ministry and service for all people in the context of their organizations" (3). They distinguish these from an evangelical chaplain who is "a born-again believer and follower of Jesus Christ who is called, prepared, and sent out by the church to bear the biblical presence and message of Christ in sacred and secular settings" (71). Their thesis is that "Chaplaincy is rooted in the nature of God, as it represents and applies God's presence in every possible setting. Chaplaincy, to be effective, must be God based and God centered" (14).

Their emphasis on the "God based and God centered" nature of chaplaincy is one of the book's foremost strengths. Repeatedly, they contend that "evangelical chaplaincy is first about God" (8) and central to an evangelical chaplain's ministry is their own relationship with God in Christ (15, 21). Aiming to root their view of chaplaincy in Scripture, they begin in chapter two with setting forth the biblical, theological, and philosophical foundations for chaplaincy. Also, for those concerned with interfaith tensions and the secular work environment that are inextricably bound to chaplain ministry, their refrain and encouragement is that chaplains are to be a convictional, humble, wise, and gospel-emitting presence amid a lost world (27, 54-55). As chaplains face moral and ethical tensions, they encourage chaplains to embody "GC" or the Great Commandment from Matthew 22:35-40 and the Great Commission from Matthew 28:18-20 (9-12). By embracing "GC" and a "ministry of presence," "Chaplains help people live in life-giving relationships with God and others" (12).

Additionally, Jumper, Keith, and Langston provide helpful counsel for navigating the cultural issues chaplains will face, including a chapter discussing the constitution and religious freedom in chaplaincy (chapter six). They provide a word of warning, writing, "Chaplains must take care not to lose their own identity by slipping into the enculturation of their environment" (32). Moreover, amidst an interfaith environment, they counsel chaplains, "to cooperate by honoring those of other faiths without coercion. However, there is no requirement or expectation that a chaplain or anyone else should compromise his or her own faith to do so" (53).

Although they helpfully address the cultural issues chaplains will face, it is surprising they do not more directly address LGBTQ+ issues, of which a

chaplain will certainly need to navigate convictionally, wisely, and graciously in the 21st century. Also, chapter three, "Chaplains in History," leaves much to be desired. While they do provide a brief overview of the history of chaplaincy (especially highlighting St. Martin of Tours), it would have benefited from greater historical precision, engagement, and further historical examples of chaplains, both for the purpose of education and inspiration toward their thesis of an expressly God centered chaplaincy. However, to their credit, they do provide "Further Reading," for those who might desire to learn more about chaplains, chaplaincy, and the history of chaplaincy (315-18).

Overall, *Chaplaincy* is a helpful introduction and guide for chaplains, pastors, and those considering chaplaincy. Moreover, the chaplain's "ministry of presence" is something all Christians can learn from, even considering how their own presence is a ministry of the presence of Christ also.

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A Concise Guide to Islam: Defining Key Concepts and Terms. By Ayman S. Ibrahim. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023, xxix + 177 pp., $16.79 paper.

Ayman Ibrahim is the Bill and Connie Jenkins Professor of Islamic Studies and the Director of the Jenkins Center for the Christian Understanding of Islam at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Author of numerous publications, Ibrahim has established himself as a renowned scholar of Islam. The book under review is his third published with Baker Academic, offering a concise guide to an Islamic theme. Whereas the previous two books answered thirty key questions about Muhammad and the Qur'an, this encyclopedic book offers entries to over one hundred Islamic concepts and terms.

The purpose of the book is to give those with limited exposure to Islam a better understanding of Islamic terms and concepts cherished by their Muslim neighbors (xxvii, xxix). The concepts and terms defined are sorted under six headings: 1) Islamic Texts, 2) Islamic History, 3)

Islamic Faith and Belief, 4) Islamic Practices and Religious Duties, 5) Islamic Jurisprudence, and 6) Islamic Movements.

Along with offering definitions of concepts and terms, Ibrahim gives information informed by primary and secondary sources. For instance, Ibrahim explains that a *hadith* "generally refers to a saying, statement, or report of any sort; however, for the most part, it is mainly a tradition attributed to Muhammad's words or actions" (4). Having defined the term, Ibrahim notes the irony that Muhammad allegedly forbade the writing of his statements and that these statements are products centuries removed from Muhammad's lifetime.

The discipline of Islamic studies has grown significantly since 9/11, evidenced by the boom in articles. Ibrahim has contributed to the discipline by offering a product digestible for novices. Although he incorporates a critical explanation in his entries, Ibrahim honors Muslims by defining concepts and terms congruent with those laid out in Islamic primary sources.

The first section's entries are devoted to the Islamic texts on which Muslims build their faith. The theological pillars of Islam are the Quran and Muhammad; however, what we know about these comes largely from Islamic texts. Ibrahim's entries on *hadith*, *sira*, *sunna*, and *maghazi* are particularly illuminating for those unfamiliar with Islam. These entries offer explanations for the portrait of Muhammad as believed by many of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims.

The entry *maghazi* illustrates the different emphases Muslims have stressed about Muhammad historically in contrast to contemporary times. *Maghazi* means "military campaigns," and it specifically details the raids led or commissioned by Muhammad. Since 9/11, many Muslims in the West have declared that Muhammad was a prophet of peace despite early Muslim sources emphasizing a different portrait of him as a successful military leader of raids against non-Muslims. Ibrahim explains that early Muslims "viewed Muhammad's life entirely as *maghazi*—a series of successful campaigns against non-Muslims" (9).

The "Islamic History" section highlights important places, people, and events from Islam's past. Muslims, for the most part, revere their past as sacred history. Ibrahim explains that many Muslims lament the state of affairs in Muslim countries and attribute it to the culture's incongruity with early generations. By returning to Islam's origins and basic beliefs,

many Muslims believe their society and culture will thrive (23). A key Islamic term regarding Islam's emergence in history and its implied purpose for all generations is *jahiliyya*. The term refers to the pre-Islamic age of ignorance and connotes the ubiquitous state of spiritual darkness before Muhammad arrived with his reputed illuminative and directive message. Ibrahim explains, "While the term directly describes the pre-Muhammad Arabs as idol worshipers, it extends beyond them to include all humankind, portraying humans as being in a state of disarray, waiting for the light of Islam" (25). The contemporary implication is that all non-Muslims exist in a state of *jahiliyya* and are in need of Islam.

The third section, titled "Islamic Faith and Belief," contains entries to some of Islam's basic terms and concepts. Some concepts are covered in his previous books, such as *nabi, rasul, kafir*, and *mushrik*. These terms and concepts offer insight into how Islam views Muhammad's status and how it views non-Muslims. Along with these, Ibrahim provides entries regarding the Qur'an. The entries for *i'jaz, mushaf, qira'at,* and *naskh* deliver an understanding into the complex nature of Islam's most holy book.

The fourth section, "Islamic Practices and Religious Duties," highlights the obligations required of every Muslim and indicates the different ways they are practiced by Sunnis and Shiites (77). Also, Ibrahim defines phrases used by Muslims in the daily practice of their faith. He stresses the importance of this section's entries as they set Islam apart from most world religions as a works-based faith.

The fifth section, "Islamic Jurisprudence," is concerned with Islamic thought. Muslim clerics, scholars, and jurists attempt to explain and execute what they believe are Allah's legal commands (i.e., *sharia*) as derived from Islamic texts. Ibrahim explains that these commands are enacted differently according to the school (Hanafiyya, Malikiyya, Shafi'iyya, and Hanbaliyya) or sect (Sunni or Shiite) and whether the land is Muslim or non-Muslim. Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) is unfamiliar to many who have not lived in Muslim lands. This section offers insight into the infrastructure and traits of nations governed by *fiqh*. Entries in this section also explain what is legally clean and permissible for Muslims, as well as the Muslim belief in divinely prescribed punishments for various crimes.

In the final section, "Islamic Movements," Ibrahim highlights the differences among Islam's many sects and visions. While Muslims

tend to view themselves as one united body, the entries in this section demonstrate the inaccuracy of this view. Ibrahim delineates the difference in the expression of these sects in Muslim versus non-Muslim countries. Interactions with Sunnis and Shiites are relatively benign in the West, as both are minority groups. However, in the Middle East, Ibrahim states that enmity and hostility often characterize their interactions (154).

The major sects in Islam are Sunnism and Shiism, making up ninety-eight percent of Muslims worldwide. Within these sects, various visions of Islam exist. A key term to understand several contemporary visions of Islam is *Salafi*. Salafism is a revivalist and reformist trend in Sunnism. *Salafi* refers to "a Muslim devoted to following and applying the teachings and traditions claimed about the salaf, the earliest generations of Muslims—the believers close in time to Muhammad who saw him and heard him teach" (154). However, *salaf* is not limited to the eyewitnesses of Muhammad but includes roughly the first three Islamic generations. Ibrahim's entry on Salafism offers the foundational knowledge for the religious vision of groups like the Wahhabis, Boko Haram, al-Qaeda, and al-Shabaab (155). Another vision in Islam is the mystical expression of Sufism. Ibrahim explains that a Sufi may be Sunni or Shiite (156).

Ibrahim accomplishes his goal of providing those with limited exposure to Islam with a better understanding. Yet, the number of entries and the primary and secondary sources consulted also make this a useful resource for those versed in Islam. This book is valuable for anyone who has regular interactions with Muslims. Polls indicate that since 2011, one hundred thousand Muslims have immigrated to the United States annually. Therefore, for Americans, the relevancy of this book increases each year.

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Uncommon Unity: Wisdom for the Church in an Age of Division. By Richard Lints. Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2022, 262 pp., $29.99 paper.

Richard Lints serves as Senior Distinguished Professor of Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and as Consulting Theologian to Redeemer City-to-City Ministry in New York City. He is an ordained

minister in the Presbyterian Church in America with an extensive resume of pastoral experience. The intersection of his scholarly and churchly interests makes him well suited to tackle the seemingly 'hopeless task" of "defending and describing" the unity-in-diversity of the church in these divided times. In Uncommon Unity, Dr. Lints turns historical approaches to exploring and explaining church unity on their head, focusing first on the complex nature of difference and diversity. He aims to help readers appreciate how these factor into the church's experience of unity situated in the gospel narrative's message, enabling the seeking and granting of forgiveness in these fragmented times.

Lints' thesis examines "the ways in which committed and confessionally oriented Christians should think and live in a deeply pluralistic context largely interpreted through the constraints of a late-modern democracy" (xvii). The thesis develops in three parts. Part 1 (chapters 1-4) provides an overview of how to understand and address differences, given the influences of culture and context. Chapter 1 explores the way differences bring together or divide. The diversities of the present context are compared and contrasted with those of the ancient Israelite and the early church contexts, revealing vast differences. The world has moved from "fate to choice" (17), polarizing the experience of life inside and outside the church. This context prompts Christians to live as faithful witnesses by cultivating the "desire to live together in, with, and through our differences" (23). Chapter 2 presents a framework for understanding various types of differences. The history of democracy in America, specifically focusing on inclusion and exclusion, shapes how Americans relate. Though the nation was far more inclusionary than any previous nation, at the same time, far more people were excluded than included. Until the mid-twentieth century, the civil religion of mainline Protestantism was the moral glue holding the nation together. Chapter 3 shows a way forward through late secular modernity when no common moral framework or universal American identity is present to overcome the nation's diversity. The gospel's inclusion narrative, rather than democracy's inclusion narrative, provides the grounds for acting upon "the universal dignity and sacredness of humankind" (79). Chapter 4 examines the culture's fascination with freedom in plurality and diversity and how religion is impacted by and influences the fascination. The author

summons Christians to affirm religion's contribution to current problems while resisting the narrative of full responsibility for these problems.

Part 2 (Chapters 5-8) looks at biblical resources addressing the relationship of difference and unity, providing the reader with tools to think about and navigate this relationship as a faithful Christian. Chapter 5 presents biblical anthropology as a theological imaginary or "the deep structures of the Creator/creature relationship in which all of our lives are embedded" (111). This is contrasted with the social imaginary of current culture that promotes finding identity within oneself. Humans are designed to be persons in relationship who find identity outside ourselves. The opening chapters of Genesis provide the best means of understanding humanity's complex depravity and goodness. Chapter 6 examines three scriptural models of relationships, showing the complex nature of the one and the many. Redemptive history reveals the story, marriage, the relationship, and the Trinity, the mystery of the one and the many. All three illustrate the complexity of unity and difference. Chapter 7 surveys the church's historical understanding and practice of unity in diversity. The relationship between unity and mission is complex within the church. Unity is centered on Christ. Mission expresses the already and not yet tension of the church. Chapter 8 concludes part 2 of the book, representing different kinds of church unity as they relate to the church's unique interest in the mission of God. A church that is culturally flexible and unified in mission provides freedom to be for others and see opportunities for unity-in-diversity.

Part 3 (Chapters 9-10) appeals to wisdom as the key to biblically navigating unity and difference. Chapter 9 investigates the modern context's recent turn of privileging community over the individual as an opportunity for the church to "live with the dialectic between unity and diversity and between communities and individuals" (206) in a growing global context. Chapter 10 concludes the section and book by mining the nature of wisdom. Lints shares five facts about the nature of wisdom, concluding that "wisdom discerns the differences that enrich the unity and the differences that undermine the unity" (253).

A key strength of Lints' work is his development of the potential for the church to strengthen its witness by leaning into differences in biblical ways that can serve to enhance the church's visible unity and thus provide a place within the church for the outcast, the stranger, and the marginalized.

The term unity is often thrown around within churches with a limited understanding of what it means and how it impacts the diversity and mission of the church in the world. This book provides a thorough understanding of the biblical concept of unity and the need for wisdom within the church as it faces the complexity of carrying out God's mission in this fragmented age. Rather than a shallow or flattened view of unity and difference, Lints provides both positive and negative potential and calls for biblical wisdom within the church to discern which is which and pursue what is most reflected in the gospel. The book's approach does not candy-coat the challenge of pursuing unity-in-diversity, nor does it present a scenario in which this unity-in-diversity will be fully realized on this earth. The book's outlook is optimistic without romanticizing the issue.

By way of critique, aside from the practical application of seeking and granting forgiveness presented at the conclusion of the preface, there is little by way of practical application of the concepts and principles presented. Excellent metaphors of difference are provided, displaying unity in the Trinity, marriage, and redemptive history. The case showing the need for the church to pursue unity-in-diversity is convincingly made. Still, the reader is left to himself to discern and determine the practical way forward for the individual believer, the church leader, the local church, and denominational entities.

This book will be a fruitful read for church leaders seeking to biblically engage this polarized culture with the gospel inclusion narrative rather than the inclusion narrative of democracy. The book will provide a clear understanding of what is meant and what is at stake, motivating the reader to take the book's message and find ways to apply it within the context of their church and community.

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Hurt with Fetters: Theological Reflections on Criminal Justice. By Jason S. Karch. Coppell, TX: Crosswired Publications, 2022, 187 pp., $13.95 paper.

In Hurt with Fetters, Jason Karch asserted that Christianity blindly supports misguided criminal punishment policies and practices that dehumanize

prisoners. While following its traditional doctrines of grace and mercy, the Church should reorient itself to pursue just punishment that recognizes the dignity and worth of the incarcerated (vi).

Convicted of armed robbery and serving a 30-year to life sentence in the Texas state correctional system, Karch understood the stigma this cast on his writing. But he is also an in-prison graduate of the Southwestern Theological Seminary, ministering within the Texas maximum security prison system for over fifteen years.

Karch's key assertion was that the penal system devastates a prisoner's humanity. While not wishing "to provoke sympathy through sentimentality," he argued for those incarcerated to be recognized and heard. He hoped that his prisoner perspective would humanize the problem, emulating how Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* brilliantly placed a human face on the issue of slavery (5).

The book is organized into three parts, with chapters containing a reflection. In Part One, "Revealing the Problem," Karch stated that "the problem is not mass incarceration itself," which is just a symptom of a systemic problem. The problem is anthropological—prison devalues the dignity and worth of those incarcerated (7). In Part Two, "Responding to the Problem," Karch asserted the solution rests on remembering and respecting that prisoners still possess the *imago Dei*. Part Three, "Reassessing the Problem," noted that many pastors and their congregations are either unaware or do not care about such "peripheral" issues as prison reform. Perhaps due to such inattention, "a weak doctrine of the image of God in man has affected corporate practices of justice." Additionally, Christians have overlooked abusive practices creeping into the system (8–9). These problems have occurred despite the recent emphasis on equality, equity, and human rights. The resulting dehumanization of the incarcerated is seen in how punishment is rendered (14–17).

Karch reserved his harshest, derisive criticism for the "professionals" within the criminal justice system—those controlling the policies. His primary point: policing and punishment are inconsistent and often arbitrary (26, 29). However, this is unsurprising, given the country's fifty states, thousands of localities, innumerable statutes, and the quality and level of training and education of those employed.

A statistical study Karch referenced was severely dated, and some of his related conclusions are questionable. He cited Robert Perkinson's 2010 *Texas Tough: The Rise of America's Empire,* which included data only from Texas prisons and a decades-old study. While understandably focusing on Texas data, more timely studies were available before Karch's work was published. From *Texas Tough*, Karch concluded that "prison populations grow not because of an increase in crime rates . . . but because policy makers make them so" (27, 33). Such a conclusion seems to be a corollary to the notion that eliminating laws will eliminate crime.

Karch objected to Texas building "the largest prison system in the world ... a "stunning example of political irresponsibility" (33). Yes, prisons may serve as criminal finishing schools, but alternatively, what should be done? Institute immediate universal parole? Karch also objected to the system imposing qualitative and substantive distinctions upon the criminal (the bad) and the righteous (the good), such as categorization (34). With due respect to championing each person's *imago Dei*, and granting that classification should focus on the act rather than the person, categorization must be tolerated. The "act" and the "acted upon" must be recognized and distinguished; categorization is inherent in all conflict and is especially present in Scripture.

Responding to this ethical "act-consequence" paradigm, Karch stated that "characterizing sin as selfishness puts sin beyond mere activity" (66–67). He acknowledged that most convicted criminals earned their condemnation by committing an act that violates another human. His concern was that the criminal justice narrative focuses only on "the bad people [the only ones who] have the potential to act criminally" (69).

Karch characterizes Aristotelian justice as relying on implied merit and equity within social norms (Chapter Six). However, stressing that justice is an ontological relational phenomenon, he seemed to confuse contractual law with criminal law. He maintained that "Contracts ... may be easily amended, voided, or changed in multiple ways whereas [ontological] being cannot" (81–82). Criminal laws cannot be easily changed, particularly those derived from the Decalogue and New Testament principles, which are ontologically derived.

Karch was correct that many forces clamor to impose qualitative sociological dictates on our laws, relentlessly pushing aside the law's theological underpinnings and rejecting God as lawgiver. He asserted that

such conditions have "become standardized norms from which laws are derived" (91–92, 97). As a result, Karch stated that our criminal justice system does not account for divine law, and the Church "embraces ideas concerning justice, love, and law that fall entirely outside of the Christian narrative" (101). That such sociological dictates have become our new law norms is incorrect. A sociological overhaul of our laws has not occurred—at least not yet. Karch's statement about the Church is too sweeping. However, his statement that "For those convicted of crimes ... the debt may be paid, but it is never cancelled" is regrettably true. One related example is that a person's arrest history follows them regardless of conviction (112).

Another concern about Karch's work is that he conflated our debt owed to God and each other. Without question, Jesus paid our debt to the Father. That does not mean our earthly debts have been cancelled. Karch correctly stated that our debt to God falls under restorative justice and that criminal punishment often smacks of utilitarian expediency. Still, I disagree that our system is based on harsh retribution (123, 129) and that crime punishment "is never about the victim." This assertion takes no account of victim impact statements at sentencing. His declaration that "Victims in criminal cases in American jurisprudence are merely a means to an end" (133) demeans the efforts of the officers of the court who work hard to serve justice. While in law enforcement, I never met a prosecutor who viewed a victim as merely a means to an end.

Karch's earnest call for substantial efforts to eliminate the faults of utilitarian expediency and excessive retribution in our prison system is laudable. However, the perennial question remains, "Yes, but how?"

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A Concise Guide to the Life of Muhammad: Answering Thirty Key Questions. By Ayman S. Ibrahim. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022, 240pp., $24.99 paper.

Ayman S. Ibrahim is the director of the Jenkins Center for the Christian Understanding of Islam and a professor of Islam at The Southern Baptist

Theological Seminary. His literature underscores his ability to engage Islam and Muslims from their primary sources. He critically evaluates the historicity of Islam and Muslims from Muslim and non-Muslim sources. The thesis of Ibrahim's work focused on the need for non-Muslims, especially Christians, to examine and understand Muhammad's life, i.e., the impact of his sayings and deeds (xv). His work is historical and informative, containing the introductory history (i.e., events and episodes) and teachings of Muhammad in the form of questions. Ibrahim intends non-Muslims, especially Christians, to find a resource for Christian-Muslim interactions (xvii). His approach is thirty critical questions on Muslims' foundational belief systems and traditions, followed by critical analysis in his responses to each question (3). He reveals the centrality of Muhammad's sayings (Hadiths) and biography (Sira) in Islam and the worldview of Muslims. Ibrahim provides the Muslims' view of Muhammad as a legend, tradition, and historical figure. However, he mentions the negative portrayal of Muhammad by some non-Muslims, though he acknowledges that other non-Muslims have a favorable view of Muhammad as a heroic figure, monotheist, and revivalist (xv).

Ibrahim provided arguments based on Sunni and Shiite sources and revealed the ambiguity of mostly the Sunni sources using secular scholarship (6–7). He wrote his book focusing on non-Muslims, especially Christians, who do not know Muslim sources, but he had Muslims in mind. The purpose of Ibrahim's work is threefold: First, to provide robust information on Muhammad from Muslim sources. Second, to reveal the diverse interpretations among Muslims. And third, to spur significant research about Muhammad's sayings and deeds (xix). His work reflects his knowledge of the *Qur'an*, *Hadith*, *Maghazi*, *Sira*, *Futuh*, and *Tarikh* as foundational sources for Muslims and non-Muslims to understand Muhammad as portrayed by the authoritative Muslim sources. However, scholars doubt various claims in the Muslim primary sources for two reasons: the documents appear late, i.e., about two centuries later, and have tendentious materials (12n15). Non-Muslim scholars like Ignaz Goldziher, John Wansbrough, Patricia Crone, and Andrew Rippins were skeptical of the Muslim sources because of historical inconsistencies that appear in reconstructed narratives of the past (16–17).

A non-skeptic scholar like Fred Donner reports the dubious validity of the Muslim sources because of their invention tendencies (18). Ibrahim concludes that irrespective of the views of non-Muslim skeptics and non-skeptics, Muslims tend to accept the portrayal of Muhammad in their sources, so "we aim to study what the Muslim community believes about Muhammad's life and career and to engage with the picture critically" (19). Ibrahim supports his thesis with a critical analysis of each question. He exposes the reason scholars are skeptical and unconvinced of the history of Muhammad's birth (24), Muhammad's genealogy (27n29), Muhammad's attributes (chap. 6), Muhammad's historical figure (34n41), Muhammad's birthplace (47), Muhammad's religion (64), Muhammad's night journey (chap. 12), Muhammad's fight with Jews (93) and Christians (chap. 17), and Muhammad's death (102–3).

Ibrahim's central focus in Muhammad's history is how Muslims and non-Muslims perceived him. Muslims see Muhammad as the final legitimate prophet, and non-Muslims refute the claim based on Muhammad's deeds and teachings (114). Ibrahim reveals Muslims' perception of Muhammad from three different perspectives. First, Muhammad exists in the minds of Muslims as a legend. Second, Muhammad existed in the time of writing of Muslim sources as a traditional Muhammad, and third, he lived as a historical Muhammad (34n41). Ibrahim suggests that historical Muhammad does not connect with traditional Muhammad because of the lack of connection in the Muslim sources. Muhammad appeared as an Arab warrior. There are Syriac sources that provide information about Muhammad's existence. All these are non-Christians, including early Chinese sources that portray Muhammad as a warlord, trader, Arab leader, etc. Most of the sources that help with information about Muhammad are Christian sources, sources of John of Damascus, and others. John speaks of Muhammad as an anti-Christ with an Arian monk. Ibrahim disagrees with the view that Arabs descended from Ishmael, as others attest. Timothy I and others like George, the monk, defended Christianity and said Muhammad was a man with some truths. Ibrahim believes only the historical Muhammad probably exists against the legendary and traditional Muhammad portrayed by Muslims and their sources (chap. 20).

The second part of the book focuses on Muhammad's message. Ibrahim begins with Muhammad's central message, tawhid, i.e., an Arabic

term that refers to the oneness of Allah. Muhammad called people to "strict monotheism, Unitarianism, or divine unicity" (117). Hence, followers of Islam are "the people of tawhid," contrasting them with polytheists (121). Ibrahim reveals Muhammad's deity as Allah. He explains the skepticism around the ninety-nine names of Allah (chap. 22). He critically analyzed Muslim sources and shows Muhammad's recognition of Jesus as one of the prophets who were honored and respected but denied that Jesus was crucified (chap. 23). Ibrahim rightly says Islamic Jesus differs from the biblical Jesus in a crucial, definitive, and decisive way (131). The claim that Jesus prophesied about Muhammad in the Muslim sources seems to seek the legitimacy of Muhammad's prophethood and attempt to make Christians believe in Muhammad's message (ch. 23). Ibrahim's conclusion exposes the illegitimacy of the claim that Muhammad is in the Bible. He says the reference to Muhammad is not explicit in the Bible and is hardly plausible (136).

Regarding the place to find Muhammad's message (ch. 25), Ibrahim points to the Qur'an and Muhammad's hadith as the authentic collections approved by Muslim scholars (140). The remaining part of Ibrahim's book (chs. 26–30) appears as the application part of Muhammad's message. The message was for Muslims to use Muhammad's example to relate with neighbors (ch. 26), apostates (ch. 27), hadith rejecters (chs. 28–29), and how to apply jihad (ch. 30).

Ibrahim's book appears as an extension of *A Concise Guide to the Qur'an*, though separate works with the same pattern of thirty questions formed each chapter. His writing style of asking questions and responding helps provide straightforward answers. He writes with a particular "focus on episodes, events, and teachings in Muhammad's life" (xvi). I understood his response with a recap of straight answers at the end of the paragraph of each chapter. Ibrahim seems to know his audience's knowledge of Islam, so he targets non-Muslims, especially in the West, as his primary audience. However, he writes with Muslims in mind. As seen in the book's title, Ibrahim provides a concise, thorough, yet inexhaustive work on Muhammad's history and message. He rooted his work in the most trusted Muslim sources, the earliest authoritative sources. The consistency of avoiding speculations about Muhammad reflects Ibrahim's deep knowledge of Muslim sources. He did not only rely on Sunni traditions. Instead, Ibrahim consulted Sunni and

Shiite traditions because of his crucial consideration of the Shiite voice in any serious study of Islam (xvii).

As a Christian with shallow knowledge of Islamic history and Muslim sources, the book appears dismissive, unimportant, and irrelevant to my faith. Ibrahim provides helpful information that creates the understanding of Islam and Muslims, especially the two most essential and foundational: the Qur'an and Muhammad. Hence, the book is informative, educative, and equipping for evangelistic and apologetic purposes. The book broadened my understanding of Muhammad and Muslims' perception of Muhammad as a legend, traditional, and historical figure. The information Ibrahim provides is a *sine qua non* to understanding Christian-Muslim encounters, although Ibrahim did not explicitly point out such encounters.

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