

The Revival of the English Particular Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century¹

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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 is 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

- 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.