

TWENTY CENTURIES

A Survey of Church History



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THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

A Century of Upheaval



A Century of Upheaval

“Who would have imagined that by the close of the century, in the birthing process of the American Revolution, a Scottish minister and theologian would have signed the Declaration of Independence, while on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, during the French Revolution, an actress dressed as the goddess Reason would be exalted on the high altar of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris?” (Sinclair Ferguson, *In the Year of Our Lord*, 186.)

- **The Enlightenment**

- Reason enthroned: “Man is the measure of all things.”

- Under the influence of Hume and Kant, divine revelation and the supernatural were considered impossible. Man could not know God (by reason) but only religious experience.

“Know then thyself, presume no God to scan; The proper study of Mankind is man. . . . And all our Knowledge is, Ourselves to know.” (Alexander Pope).

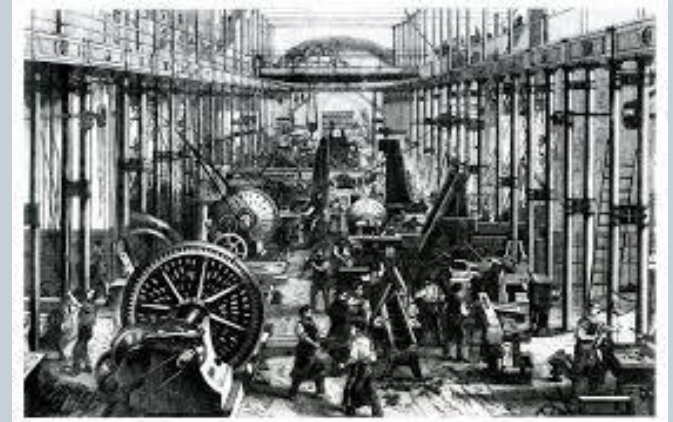
- Under the Enlightenment, Unitarian Deism increasingly replaced biblical Christianity

- ✦ Rationalism progressing from Arminianism to Arianism to Deism to Atheism

A Century of Upheaval



- **The Industrial Revolution**
 - Transferred the center of societies from rural communities to cities; transformed economies from agrarian to industrial.
 - ✦ Manchester, England: 10,000 people in 1717; 2.3 million people in 1911.
 - Led to a money based system focusing on consumer goods.
 - Harsh working conditions led to a rapid rise in entertainment.



The Age of Revival



- **The Need for Revival**

- The Reformation brought vitality, which in turn caused material blessings, but “the spiritual life of the people had largely been smothered by the dense air of materialism” (S. Wood).
- Unlike Roman Catholicism, however, the lethargic Protestant churches still taught the Bible and emphasized the gospel
- Revival took place through the preaching of the Word in Britain, America, and on the Continent

- **The Early Revivals**

- **Wales: A series of preachers were blessed with special power by the Holy Spirit:**
 - ✦ Griffith Jones (1683-1762), was an Anglican priest who emphasized a spiritually devoted clergy. His circuit preaching was used by God to increase interest in the gospel and motivate followers. “Morning Star” of the revival.
 - ✦ Howell Harris (1714-73), was the son of a Welsh farmer and a lay preacher who spread the gospel throughout Wales. Instrumental in training new preachers.
 - ✦ Daniel Rowland (1713-90) was converted while a minister and draw large crowds preaching on wrath and grace.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Age of Revival



- The Early Revivals, cont.

- England

- ✦ George Whitefield (1714-70)

- Converted at Oxford and was an early Methodist open-air preacher. Preached widely in England and the American colonies.



- ✦ John and Charles Wesley (1703-91; 1707-88)

- Sons of an Anglican minister and a deeply spiritual mother.
- Started the “Holy Club” in Oxford (1734) and went to America as missionaries. Realized they were not converted, until hearing a reading of Luther back in England (1738).
- John Wesley founded and led the Methodists, travelling over 250,000 miles in preaching over 50 years.
- Strongly antagonistic to Calvinism, seeing predestination as direct opposed to evangelism.



The Age of Revival



- The Early Revivals, cont.
 - England, cont.
 - ✦ John Newton (1725-1807)
 - A slave trader converted by remembering Bible verses taught by his mother.
 - Ordained as an Anglican minister, he joined with fellow evangelicals.
 - Known for his stirring gospel hymns, such as “Amazing Grace.”
 - Pastored William Cowper, with whom he published an evangelical hymnbook.
 - ✦ Charles Simeon (1750-1836), Henry Martyn (1781-1812), William Cary (1761-1834)
 - Men converted under the 18th century revivals who lead the early 19th century missionary movement.
 - Baptist Missionary Society founded 1792: “Expect Great Things from God / Attempt Great Things for God.”
 - ✦ The Great Awakening emphasized practical, holy religion, justification through faith alone, and evangelism. Whitefield, a Calvinist, was bitterly opposed by his friend John Wesley.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Age of Revival



• The Revival Spreading

○ America

- ✦ Within a century after the Mayflower, spiritual fervor had largely died down. The Half-Way Covenant undermined true spirituality in the churches.
- ✦ Jonathan Edwards (1703-58):
 - A son of evangelical Puritanism, wrote his famous “Resolutions” at age 19.
 - Led an awakening in Northampton, MA in 1735. Repeated in 1740, along with George Whitefield.
 - Highlighted the features of true conversion. Wrote important books on the subject, distinguishing between true and false revival.
 - Dismissed from his church in 1750, he served as a missionary to Indians and became the first president of Princeton in 1758.
- ✦ The Great Awakening (1720-50) spread the gospel throughout a declining America and provided an evangelical background for the birth of America.



THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Age of Revival



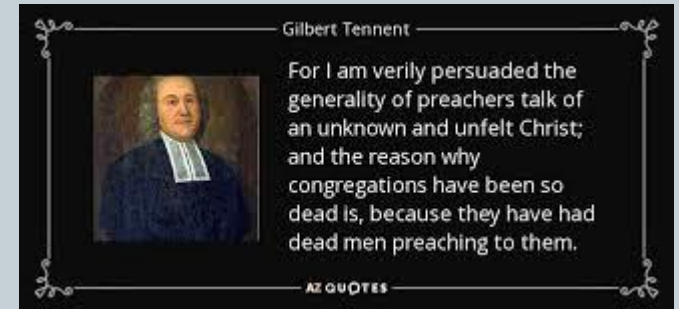
- The Revival Spreading
 - Moravia (now Czechoslovakia)
 - ✦ Count Nicholas Zinzendorf (1700-60) was converted under Lutheran teaching. Financed church building and planting.
 - ✦ Widespread revival struck in 1727, fueling an intense missionary and evangelistic movement. Luther's gospel writing had a strong influence.
 - ✦ The Moravians were used to convert the Wesley, played an important role in the piety of the Great Awakening in America.
 - ✦ The Hundred Year Prayer Meeting: Round the clock prayer vigil in small town of Herrnhut, starting in 1727. Focused primarily on revival and missions (this town of 500 people sent out 2000 missionaries during the century).



Theological Controversies



- **Old Side / New Side and Old Light / New Light Split among Presbyterians**
 - New Side vs. Old Side concerned the validity of itinerant preachers and the need for regeneration (1742-58). Resulted in New Side schools and colleges that espoused experiential Christianity.
 - ✦ Gilbert Tennent started Log Cabin College to train converted men for ministry who were not accepted at established schools.
 - New Light vs. Old Light split over revival. Old Lights emphasized church membership, ecclesial office, and sacraments, whereas New Lights emphasized regeneration, zeal, Bible preaching, and experiential godliness. The Old Light movement ultimately fostered the Unitarian movement in New England.
- **Sandemanianism**
 - Robert Sandeman taught in Scotland that saving faith consists only in assent to truth. No need for personal affections. He was opposed by those who believe that faith includes trust in Jesus and a personal commitment to serve God.



Theological Controversies



- **The Marrow Controversy (1718-23)**

- The Scottish Presbytery of Auchterarder required the following confession:
“I believe that it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God.”
- This “Auchterarder Creed” was intended to safeguard the free offer of the gospel, denying that forsaking sin is a condition that requires to be fulfilled before coming to Christ. Was condemned by General Assembly “It was sinners that Jesus came to save, not sinners who had forsaken their sin” (Iain Campbell).
- Thomas Boston (1676-1732) began promoting Wm. Ames’ *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, which emphasized the gospel and covenant theology.
- The “Marrow Men” became those who espoused a balance between predestination and evangelism, between faith and works in salvation, and between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. They especially defended the free offer of the gospel.
- The direct descendants of the Marrow Controversy are the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP). But the Presbyterians in Scotland generally helped to have a balanced evangelical Calvinism.

