THE AFTERMATH OF THE GREAT AWAKENING

Prayer
Scripture: John 3:22-24
Hymn: 162 "O Happy Day"

The Great Awakening was one of the most spectacular and revolutionary movements of American church history. It made revivals and revival preaching at home in American religion. It left a deep and lasting imprint on the style of preaching. It presented a continuing challenge to staid, routine formalism in religion. It brought religion to a vast multitude of the unchurched. It awakened a great interest in religious literature, especially literature dealing with religious experience. The old jeremiads of the Puritans were replaced by a new evangelical air of hope and expectancy. Strong millennial hopes were kindled. Where ever the revivals spread there was great improvement in the moral tone of the community. Almost all American churches experienced a growth in membership.

THE AFTERMATH IN NEW ENGLAND

When the Great Awakening is mentioned, New England tends to take the center of the stage. New England experienced a great and general awakening in religion. Some one hundred-fifty New England churches were deeply touched by the revival. Over one hundred new churches were established during and as a result of the revivals. Almost all churches experienced a noticeable growth in membership—even the congregations that were not actively engaged in the revivals. The revivals brought a great host of unchurched into church circles. Church membership was increased by between 20 and 50 thousand. After the revivals were over about twelve new churches were established every year as the population grew.

The revivals resulted in a great increase in the number of young men interested in going into the ministry. Among young people in general there was a great increase in interest in religion and in participation in revival and church activities. Among the people in general there was increased interest in religious literature, in sermons, in devotional reading, prayer and prayer meetings, and individual exhorting. The emphasis on individual conversion experiences on one hand tended to make the people less dependent on the clergy and on the other hand raised up new heroes among the revival clergy that tended to lift the clergy in the minds of the devout. There was a great increase in Christian commitment and discipline. The revivals resulted in greatly increased seriousness among the clergy. Where ever the revivals flourished there was a great improvement in public morals. Church attendance became more regular and faithful.

One result of the Great Awakening was a renewed interest in missionary work—especially missionary work among the Indians. Whitefield remained the model missionary. David Brainerd, Eleazar Wheelock, Samuel Kirkland and Jonathan Edwards stood out in the minds of the people as great missionary heroes who inspired others to become missionaries.

A very important part of the Awakening was its influence on higher education. Harvard and Yale had been the seminaries of Puritan learning and centers for the training of ministers. In reaction against the revivals
Harvard became the bastion of liberal thought which in that time meant Arminian and Enlightenment thought. Harvard graduates were suspect wherever the Awakening was welcomed. The churches on the eastern seaboard of Massachusetts tended to call Harvard trained men to fill the churches.

Yale gradually overcame its official hostility to the Great Awakening. The expulsion of David Brainerd and others for pious excesses and attending churches not in official favor made a profound impression and stimulated greater interest in the revivals. Renewed interest among the students in the revivals put great pressure on the administration. In 1753 President Thomas Clap was converted to the revivals. In 1757 President Clap appointed a new professor of divinity who also was installed as pastor in the Newly formed Church of Christ at Yale. The new preacher was soon rewarded with a great revival. In 1764 on Whitefield's fourth visit to America he was given a warm welcome at Yale. After Whitefield had entered the coach to depart from New Haven the students persuaded President Clap to urge Whitefield to give them another quarter-hour of exhortation. For over a century Yale would take a leading role in the American evangelical movement.

The Awakening greatly stimulated interest in higher education. With the growing number of ministerial recruits there was a deep felt need for schools to train the recruits. Dartmouth grew out of the new interest in missionary work among the Indians and the need for a place to train ministers. Eleazar Wheelock (1711-79) was a Yale graduate of 1733. He became one of the most active promoters of revival in eastern Connecticut. He served as minister of the north parish in Leganob (now Columbia), Connecticut. He worked as a missionary among the Indians. He conceived a plan for educating Indian boys who would spread the gospel more effectively among their own people. He persuaded Joshua Moor of Mansfield, Connecticut, to support the opening of Moor's Indian Charity School in Lebanon in 1774 with 2 pupils at the opening. By 1762 the number had grown to twenty boys. Wheelock solicited contributions from various parts of America and in England and Scotland. In 1769 the province of New Hampshire invited Wheelock to transfer his school to Dresden (now Hanover), New Hampshire, and to open a college there. The college was chartered in 1769. It was opened to both whites and Indians. It supplied the New Light churches with New Light ministers. Before 1800 Dartmouth had turned out over forty ministers.

The Great Awakening in New England resulted in a greatly changed theological climate, that included bitter and long lasting theological controversies. Revivalists tended to take the great Reformed Confessions for granted but opponents of the revivals who tended toward Arminian and Deist outlooks had become very critical of the older Calvinism. Jonathan Edwards sought to build a mighty defense of Calvinism. His close followers and admirers. Joseph Bellamy and Samuel Hopkins sought to continue his efforts and to buttress the revivals by a bold and intellectually rigorous restatement of the Reformed Doctrines that they considered had been verified by the revivals. At the heart of these doctrines was the idea that man's redemption was effected by God's sovereign grace which left no room for human pride. Their opponents sought to substitute man's moral attainments for the righteousness that the Edwardseans insisted came only as a gift of God's grace.

The Boston men who were impressed with the powers of reason considered the New England Theology of the Edwardseans an affront to common sense and
tending to undermine morality. They denounced the idea of original sin and the idea that infants were in hell as inhuman, unreasonable, and indefensible. They declared that predestination was destructive of moral effort.

The "Old Calvinists" considered Edwards' changes in the older Calvinism as unacceptable as the teachings of the Arminians and Deists of the Enlightenment. They gradually dwindled or changed into a kind of middle-of-the-road position between the traditionalists and rationalists who branded all the controversy a fuzzy concern over theological niceties that amounted to little more than a quarrel over words. They called for charity and a recognition that both head and heart, reason and faith, should be devoted to the service of God. Ezra Stiles (1729-95) of Yale considered the raging debate a mere verbal dispute; Arminians claimed to believe in the redemptive grace of Christ while Calvinists insisted they did not deny the importance of good works. He found no real difference between them on the fundamental principles of religion. The Edwardsesans sought a solid foundation in a theology that would keep religion from becoming an evaporating sentiment. From the controversy would arise the "New Haven Theology."

At the height of the revivals the revivalist ministers outnumbered their opponents three to one. In the aftermath of the Awakening there was continual shifting as the theological controversy raged. In a few years about one third of the New England ministers were Old Lights who looked to the Congregationalist Charles Chauncy and to the Anglican Timothy Cutler as the symbols of their position. About one third of the ministers continued New Lights but most of them denounced the excesses of the revivalists that had provoked such opposition. Only a few were willing to insist on emotional manifestations as evidence of conversion, to defend itinerancy, and to defend lay preaching. About one third of the ministers tended to be uncommitted.

Early in the nineteenth century the Unitarians and Universalists would separate from the Congregationalists. Old Lights and New Lights would unite against Unitarians and Universalists.

The revivalist New Lights in the aftermath of the Awakening were torn over whether to receive and keep the unconverted. Ministers who wanted to tighten church discipline and abandon Stoddardism and the Half-Way Covenant found their congregations unwilling to accept the more rigorous standards. Those who had experienced a dramatic conversion and who wanted rigorous standards began withdrawing from the old congregations to form "Separate" Churches. The stronghold of the Separate or Strict Congregationalists was eastern Connecticut. Ninety-eight Separate Churches were formed. There were thirty-two temporary separations. Fierce persecution of Separate Churches led to a tendency on the part of the Separatists to become Baptists. Baptists kept up a constant attack on Congregational infant baptism. The emphasis of Strict Congregationalists on a conversion experience opened the way for the question of baptism. At least nineteen Separate Congregational churches became Baptist. Some one hundred-thirty Baptist Churches were formed by disaffected Congregationalists.

The Baptists who had not participated in the revivals and who openly opposed them in the end reaped the largest harvest from the Great Awakening. The Separate Congregational Churches dwindled and died. Congregationalists were more tolerant toward Baptists and Quakers than they were toward Separatist Congregationalists.
The Anglicans who had also been bitter critics of the Awakening profited from the revivals by opening their doors to Congregationalists who were disgusted with the controversies and who sought peace in ritual and tradition.

THE AFTERMATH IN THE MIDDLE COLONIES

The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies split the Presbyterians into the "New Side" and the "Old Side." At the Synod of Philadelphia in May, 1741, the Old Side ejected the New Side and declared the Synod composed of the Old Side—those who opposed the revivals. The New Side formed the Synod of New York in 1745. There were close ties between the New Side Presbyterians of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey and the New Light Congregationalists of Connecticut who had strong Presbyterian leanings in church organization. In 1746 the New Side Presbyterians secured a charger for the College of New Jersey as the successor to Tennent's Log College. The New Side Presbyterians were especially active in founding academies which were the equivalent of the Log College. In the aftermath of the Awakening many of the academies developed into colleges. Among the early Presbyterian institutions that developed into leaders in higher education and the training of ministers were Lee, Washington and Jefferson, and Dickinson. The College of New Jersey which developed into Princeton became the great center of higher education among the Presbyterians.

The Old Side Presbyterians and the New Side reunited in 1758. The revivalists or New Side had increased from 22 ministers in 1741 to seventy-three in 1758. The Old Side had decreased from twenty-nine to twenty-three. The revivalists had triumphed. The Great Awakening insured that this Presbyterianism would become the dominant form in America and other types were imported from England, Scotland, and Ireland. One of the smaller bodies of Presbyterians who came to America were the Reformed Presbyterians or Covenanters who withdrew from the National Scottish Church out of hostility to the supremacy of the king over the Scottish Church and the episcopal polity. In 1751 John Cuthbertson arrived in Pennsylvania to minister to the Reformed Presbyterians. In 1773 he was joined by Matthew Lind and Alexander Dobbin. In 1774 they organized a Reformed Presbyterian Presbytery. Another Presbyterian body that was imported was the Associate Church that opposed lay patronage. The Associated Church formed a Presbytery in 1753. The Reformed Presbyterians and the Associate Church united in 1782 to form the Associate Reformed Synod.

The smaller bodies were never able to seriously challenge the Presbyterian church that resulted from the union of the Old Side and the New Side. It proved equal to the challenge of the Scotch-Irish immigration. By 1788 there were 220 congregations, 16 presbyteries, four synods, and 177 ministers. The Presbyterians outdistanced all other movements found in the Middle Colonies before the Great Awakening, such as Dutch Reformed, German Reformed, Lutheran, Catholics, Baptists, and Quakers.

Indirectly the Great Awakening influenced the Anglicans to found King's College (Columbia University) in 1754 and also the founding of the University of Pennsylvania (1755) in the tabernacle built for Whitefield in 1740. The Dutch Reformed were moved to found Queen's College (Rutgers University) in 1776.
THE AFTERMATH OF THE GREAT AWAKENING IN THE SOUTH

The Great Awakening in the South was largely an immense missionary enterprise. The revivals were the chief method of church extension. The future belonged to the revivalistic groups. By the time of the Great Awakening settlers had begun to pour into the Piedmont and the valley between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghenies from Pennsylvania to Georgia and west into Kentucky and Tennessee. The great expansion of population was made up mostly of Germans and Scotch-Irish. By 1775 there were over 200 Scotch-Irish communities.

The Church of England was the established church in the Southern Colonies. It was disengaging itself from its Puritan past and adjusting its message to the Enlightenment. With no American bishop it was trying to organize parish life with an inadequate ministry. It made little effort to evangelize the masses.

Old Side Presbyterians, Lutherans, Mennonites and the earlier Baptists who moved into the South opposed the revivals and hence made very little headway in reaching the people.

Whitefield on his tours of the South spoke to large crowds. There was little preparation for his visits and little follow-up. The area lacked the churches to continue his work. He was blazing the way for the later awakening that would come to the South. Whitefield met strong opposition from the Anglicans in Charlestown, South Carolina.

In 1766 the Presbyterians called on every congregation to take a collection for "propagation and support of the gospel in such parts as cannot otherwise enjoy it." Old Side Presbyterians before 1742 sent for Old Side anti-revival preachers into Hanover County in Virginia. They formed the Donegal Presbytery but produced little results.

The New Brunswick Presbytery of the New Side Presbyterians ordained William Robinson, a graduate of Tennent's Log College, and in 1742 sent him to Western Virginia and North Carolina as a missionary. In 1742-43 his itinerant ministry in the Piedmont and in the Valley brought great results. Before Robinson's coming the earliest indication of revival in Virginia was the work of a layman—a work that came to be called the Hanover Revival. In a section of Hanover County untouched by Anglicanism a layman named Samuel Morris led an undenominational revival. He gathered neighbors into his home to read Whitefield's sermons, devotional works, and Luther's Commentary on Galatians. Other "Reading Houses" were formed. Morris and others were summoned before the Governor's Council in Williamsburg when Anglicans heard of the "Reading Houses." The people who attended the Reading Houses considered themselves Lutheran until Robinson came and persuaded them to become Presbyterian.

Other Log College men joined Robinson. Among them were John Samuel Blair, John Roan, Samuel Finley, Gilbert and William Tennent and others. The work was slow because of the opposition of the Anglican establishment.

In 1747 Samuel Davies of the New Castle Presbytery succeeded Robinson. He worked eleven years and brought a great revival. In 1755 a presbytery was
organized. When Davies was called to the presidency of Princeton in 1759 the Presbyterians were left without a leader. Baptists came into the region and captured much of the fruit of the Presbyterian labors. In all of Virginia there were about a dozen Presbyterian ministers and less than a dozen in the Carolinas. Presbyterian growth was slow. The Scotch-Irish in the early days were not enthusiastic about revivals. Great Presbyterian growth in the South had to wait for the Second Great Awakening following the American Revolution.

Devereux Jarrett (1733-1801) made Bath in Dinwiddie County in Virginia the center of a small Anglican revival beginning in 1763. Jarrett had been greatly influenced by Whitefield. He went to England to secure ordination. In England he was greatly influenced not only by Whitefield but also by John Wesley. On his return to Virginia he was installed as rector at Bath. He served three churches. Zealous preaching brought such a revival that he had to preach in the open in groves because the buildings could not accommodate the people. In 1772 Robert Williams, a Wesley lay preacher, came to Dinwiddie County and enlisted Jarrett's participation. He and Jarrett itinerated and formed societies. Their revival spread to adjoining counties and into North Carolina. By 1777 they had 4,379 members in the societies. After the revolution the societies broke with the Anglicans. Jarrett expressed strong disapproval of the separation and stayed in the newly organized Protestant Episcopal Church that Anglicans had formed after the Revolution.

THE BAPTISTS

The Baptist phase of the Southern Awakening was the most remarkable evangelistic success. In 1740 the Baptists were weak and scattered and despised almost everywhere in the colonies. From the first they opposed revivals. In the end they reaped the greatest harvest from the Great Awakening and the revivals continued among the Baptists when they had died down in other churches.

RISE OF BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND

American Baptists have roots and a background that goes back to England. To what extent English Baptists were influenced by continental Anabaptists is not known. English Baptists had probably heard reports of and may have read Anabaptist books. Scattered Anabaptists settled in England and may have been something of a leaven in Puritan England. English Baptists arose as the left wing of the Puritan Movement in the early years of the 17th century. Two strands of Baptists developed in England and both strands were transported to America: (1) an Arminian group called General Baptists because of their belief in a general provision for redemption that included an unlimited atonement--Christ died for all; (2) a Calvinistic group called Particular Baptists who believed in a particular election and a limited atonement--Christ died only for his elect.

GENERAL BAPTISTS

John Smyth, a Cambridge graduate and preacher in Lincoln became a Separatist and assumed leadership of a Separatist congregation in Gainsborough. In 1607/8 because of fierce persecution he led his congregation to Amsterdam. Smyth assumed that if the Church of England was a false church, its baptism
was invalid. He believed that only those who professed belief in Christ were proper subjects of baptism. In 1609 he and his congregation dissolved their previous covenant. Smyth baptized himself by affusion and then baptized his congregation. When Smyth showed inclinations to merge with Dutch Mennonites, Thomas Helwys led the congregation in breaking with Smyth. Helwys believed the congregation had erred in fleeing persecution in England and he led the congregation back to England in 1612. They settled in Spitalfields (outside London) and became the first known Baptist Church on English soil. They kept the Arminian theology they had adopted in Holland. In spite of persecution the movement grew and by 1626 there were five churches in the General Baptist fellowship. By 1644 there were forty-seven. They continued to multiply in Cromwell's Commonwealth and furnished him many able officers and soldiers. They continued to grow and developed denominational life in spite of the repressive measures of the Stuart Restoration. In 1671 they organized a General Assembly. In 1678 they published an elaborate creed. They spread into the western counties of England. Many General Baptists migrated to America settling in Rhode Island, Virginia and North Carolina.

PARTICULAR BAPTISTS

The Particular Baptists were a split from Henry Jacob's non-Separatist Congregational church established in Southwark in 1616. Jacob's church was a part of the Scrooby congregation that William Bradford and John Robinson had led from England to Leyden in 1609. Jacobs led a non-Separatist minority of the Leyden congregation back to England in 1616. In the 1630's a small group in Jacob's church became convinced that only believers' baptism was scriptural. They split off and started a second Baptist line in England. They believed in the Calvinistic doctrine of limited atonement confined to the elect. They became known as Particular Baptists. In 1741 they adopted immersion as the only Scriptural mode of baptism. Gradually immersion spread to all English Baptists. Particular Baptists spread throughout England. In 1644 seven Particular Baptist churches of London published a Confession of Faith. In 1677 it was replaced by a longer confession based on the Westminster Confession. In 1689 a revised edition was subscribed to by 107 churches. Particular Baptists were especially strong around London and in Wales. Many Particular Baptists migrated to America. Particular Baptists became a thorn-in-the-side to non-Separatist Puritans of Massachusetts Bay and that portion of the Separatist majority of Leyden who formed the Plymouth Colony.

BAPTISTS IN NEW ENGLAND

The first Baptist church in America was the one organized by Roger Williams in Providence, Rhode Island in 1639. Roger Williams was a graduate of Pembroke College in Cambridge, England, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1627. He was ordained in the Church of England. He developed Separatist sympathies and in 1630 he and his wife came to America seeking religious liberty. In Boston he was offered the post of minister in the place of John Wilson. He refused the offer because the Boston church still fellowshipped the Church of England. He settled in Salem where he became a teacher. When the Boston authorities protested to the Salem church he was rejected by the congregation and moved to Plymouth where he worked among the Narragansett Indians. In 1633 he was called back to Salem to assist the pastor, Samuel
Skelton. When Skelton died he became pastor. Williams denounced the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, denying the right of the crown to grant Indian land to the colonists. The General Court in July, 1635, charged Williams with "divers dangerous opinions" but gave him time to submit. Williams wrote to the churches of Massachusetts protesting the unjust action of the court. In October, 1635, the court banished Williams from Massachusetts, but because of his poor health and the coming of winter he was to be allowed to wait for spring. When he learned that the court planned to ship him back to England he fled to Rhode Island where he founded Providence, gathering about him other exiles. Williams had come in contact with some of the early Baptist settlers and had become convinced that only believer's baptism was Scriptural. Williams had begun holding religious meetings in Providence. In March, 1639, Williams had one of his group Ezekiel Holliman, baptize him—apparently by immersion. Then Williams baptized Holliman and ten others. They organized themselves into the first Baptist Church in America.

Williams soon deserted the church. He questioned the validity of the baptism insisting on the necessity of apostolic succession. When Williams withdrew the leadership fell to Thomas Olney who had been censured at Salem in 1639 for "great error." Olney was one of the original freeholders of Providence and a convinced Calvinist. A number of the other members of the Providence church were Arminian General Baptists. The Arminians insisted that the Scriptures taught the laying on of hands after baptism as a symbol of the receiving of the Holy Ghost. The Providence church split in 1652 over the question of the laying on of hands. The Arminians or General Baptists emphasized the laying on of hands and the six principles of Hebrews 6:1-2 (repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment). They became known as "Six Principle Baptists." They were the majority of the Providence church. Olney led the Calvinistic minority who stressed the five pillars of Calvinism and hence became known as the "Five Principle Baptists." Olney ministered to them until his death in 1682. Gradually the "Five Principle Baptists" in Providence dwindled. They failed to make new converts and they were not increased by immigration. By 1720 they had ceased to exist. The Six Principle Arminian Baptists continued as the original church but accomplished little. They did not erect a building until 1700.

The Six Principle Providence Church did send itinerants on preaching missions into Connecticut. In 1705 Valentine Wightman planted a church in Groton, Connecticut. He served as its pastor until his death in 1741. He was succeeded by his son. His grandson served the church till 1841.

A second church was formed in New London by Stephen Gorton also from Rhode Island. From Groton and New London Baptists spread slowly to other areas of Connecticut.

Roger Williams helped other exiles settle in Rhode Island. Anne Hutchinson and her party arrived in March, 1637. In February, 1638 John Coggeshall and William Aspinwall arrived with their company. Roger Williams helped them obtain land from the Indians. In the spring they founded Portsmouth. A little later John Clarke and William Coddington founded Newport. Samuel Gorton arrived in 1640 and founded Warwick.

The Newport church was filled with controversy and troubles. William Coddington, John Coggeshall, and Nicholas Easton joined the Quakers. John
Clarke established a Baptist church. He was holding services as early as 1641 but it was not until 1644 that a Baptist church was fully organized. The church prospered and built a meeting house. The majority were Calvinist. In 1656 a small group split off to form a Six Principle Arminian Baptist church. In 1671 another group formed a Seventh Day Baptist Church.

In 1651 Roger Williams and John Clarke returned to England to secure a charter for the Rhode Island Colony. In spite of the opposition from the Massachusetts Bay Colony they were able to secure a charter after long waiting. Williams had returned to Rhode Island to continue the fight for religious liberty. Clarke stayed on in England for eleven years. He finally secured the charter in 1663. He returned to Rhode Island in 1664. Three times he served as Deputy Governor and continued as pastor of the Newport Church until his death.

Before going to England, Clarke, with John Crandall and Obadiah Holmes went to Lynn, Massachusetts at the request of aged William Witter to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper to a group Witter had gathered in his home. During the worship they were arrested by two constables. They were heavily fined. Friends paid the fine for Clarke and Crandall but Holmes refused to allow payment of his fine and he was publicly whipped. In England Clarke published his Ill Newes from New England (1652).

When revivals came Arminian Baptists had little sympathy for a Calvinistic revival.