

Year at a Glance	
Nov 9-Dec 14	Early Church Age
Jan 4-Feb 8	Post-Nicene Age
Feb 15-Mar 22	Medieval Age
Mar 29-May 10	Reformation Age
May 17-May 31	Great Awakening to Today

Great Awakening to Today	
May 17	“The Cult of Reason” (chapters 31, <u>32</u> , 33)
May 24	“The Great Awakening” (chapters <u>34</u> , <u>35</u> , 36)
May 31	“A Christian America” (chapters 37, 38, <u>39</u>)

What happens when a culture begins to **trust** human **reason** and personal **feelings** more than divine **revelation**? That question stood at the center of last week’s church history lesson as we explored the **Enlightenment** and **Romanticism**—two enormously influential movements that continue to shape the modern world today.

We began by examining the **Enlightenment**, often called the “Age of Reason,” where confidence increasingly shifted away from Scripture and toward human reason, science, observation, and philosophy. Thinkers like **Descartes, Locke, Voltaire, Jefferson, and Hume** each contributed to a growing belief that mankind could solve life’s problems **apart from divine revelation**. We discussed the rise of **rationalism, empiricism, deism**, and the growing confidence that science and reason could explain reality without dependence upon God. Yet we also saw how skeptics such as David Hume exposed cracks within the Enlightenment itself, raising questions about whether human reason could actually provide certainty at all.

From there we turned to **Romanticism**, which reacted strongly against the cold rationalism of the Enlightenment by elevating feeling, emotion, nature, authenticity, and the inner self. Figures such as **Rousseau, Goethe, Wordsworth, Schleiermacher, and Emerson** helped shift Western thinking toward subjective experience and personal feeling as the foundation of truth and religion. We discussed how this movement profoundly influenced modern theology and culture, contributing to the mindset of **expressive individualism** that surrounds us today. As we noted in class, “We are all born in the Enlightenment and bred in Romanticism.” **The modern world often lives with an Enlightenment mind and a Romantic heart.**

Finally, we considered how the church responded to these movements and how God, **even in the midst of growing skepticism and secularism, continued to preserve and awaken His people**. While some Christians compromised with rationalism or subjectivism, others responded faithfully, defending the authority of Scripture and the reality of genuine conversion. This period ultimately **set the stage for the Great Awakening**, which we will begin studying today as we look at Wesley, Methodism, and the remarkable revival movements that called people back to the realities of sin, the new birth, and the authority of God’s Word.

Great Awakening to Today "The Great Awakening"

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.—1 Corinthians 1: 30 (John Wesley's favorite text)

Prayer from John Wesley - "Pardon, O gracious Jesus, what we have been; with your holy discipline correct what we are. Order by your providence what we shall be; and in the end, crown your own gifts. Amen."

I. The Social and Religious Situation in England at the Beginning of the 18th Century¹

A. Social _____

1. William Hogarth (1679-1764)
(painter)
2. Probability of a "French Revolution"

B. Religious decline: The vanishing Gospel

French philosopher Montesquieu (about 1730): "There is no religion in England. If anyone mentions religion people begin to laugh."

1. Church of England

"This 'Latitudinarian' party had learned at least one lesson from the Civil War [of the 1640s], and that was to **ask no questions and to rock no boats**. With but few exceptions, the church wallowed in weary indifference for almost a century, until the appearance of the Evangelical Revival" (Allen C. Guelzo, *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom: The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians*, 6). "Don't talk about religion or politics."

2. The Dissenters

What happened to the Puritans after the religious settlement of 1688? "In [ecclesiastical conflict] there is now a period of necessary, unsparing, strong resistance against what aims to desecrate God's covenant. But afterwards, when victory has been gained, there is a time of **rest and peace**, and of **quiet** work for



¹ Much of the content for the lecture is derived from David Calhoun.

God's kingdom amid the struggle against sin and distress and misery. And how often it is seen that men who in this first period nobly persevered and were full of the Holy Ghost, **in a succeeding period of rest and peace lost spirit, visibly weakened, and abandoned their former spiritual viewpoint**" (Abraham Kuyper, *To Be Near Unto God*, 545).

Some exceptions: Isaac Watts (*Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 1707); Philip Dodridge (*Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*)

II. The American Scene

- A. Spiritual _____ – “When Edwards arrived in **Northampton, Massachusetts** in 1727 to assist his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, as pastor of a church, he was affected by what he saw happening, particularly with the **young people** in that congregation. They were not at all committed to the Lord and to His service, but were given, as Edwards put it, rather quaintly, to ‘**night-walking and tavern haunting**’ [*Cruising and bar-hopping*]. Something had gone wrong in the church and in American Christianity” (Calhoun).
- B. **The Half-Way Covenant** (1662). Revealed growing spiritual decline in New England, as churches increasingly admitted **morally respectable but unconverted people into membership, baptism, and the Lord's Supper**, treating communion more as a converting ordinance than a fellowship meal for true believers.
- C. The threat of **liberalism** - Began spreading through influential centers like Boston, Cambridge, Harvard, and eventually Yale, weakening historic Calvinism and replacing it with an optimistic view of human nature, morality, and God that closely resembled English Deism.

III. The Overlapping Circles of Revival

A. The Moravians

1. **January 1, 1739 — “Pentecost at New Year”**
 - On New Year's Day 1739, a powerful prayer meeting among the Moravians and early Methodists led to an intense experience of spiritual joy, prayer, and assurance that participants later described as a kind of “Pentecost.”
 - John Wesley, George Whitefield, and others were present at this meeting in Fetter Lane, London.
 - The gathering became an important moment in the Evangelical Revival and strengthened the spread of revival preaching and missionary zeal.
2. **“The consequence of their exceptional evangelistic effort...”** (*The Inextinguishable Blaze*, 161)
 - The Moravians became one of the most missionary-minded groups in church history, sending ordinary believers across the world to preach Christ.

- Their emphasis on heartfelt religion, assurance of salvation, prayer, missions, and small-group fellowship deeply influenced Methodism and later evangelicalism.
- Though small in number, their spiritual influence extended into nearly every major Protestant tradition.
- They especially impacted John Wesley, whose contact with the Moravians shaped his understanding of conversion and faith.

B. John Wesley and the Methodists

1. Wesley's life and work

a. Samuel and Susanna Wesley (parents)

“Mr. Wesley’s habits of order, perseverance, and determination, came to him as his mother’s dowry” (Charles Spurgeon).

b. “A brand plucked from the burning” (6 years old). John Wesley used this phrase to describe his childhood rescue from a house fire at age six, viewing it as God’s providential deliverance and a sign that his life was being spared for a special purpose in ministry.

c. “The Holy Club” was the nickname given to John and Charles Wesley and their Oxford friends because of their disciplined pursuit of prayer, Bible study, fasting, and holy living, influenced in part by William Law’s call to wholehearted devotion and obedience to God in every area of life.

William Law’s *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*—“He...is devout who lives no longer according to his own will or the way and spirit of the world, but to the sole will of God; he considers God in everything, serves God in everything, makes all the parts of his common life aspects of his worship by doing everything in the name of God and according to such principles as are conformable to His glory.”

d. Wesley in Georgia

“He had preached morality; he had preached against drunkenness; but no drunkards had become sober; he had preached with all his might about leading a religious life and being much in prayer, but nobody had prayed the more; he had earnestly exhorted men to flee from the wrath to come, but he had not told them where to flee to” (Charles Spurgeon).

e. “My Heart Strangely Warmed”

May 24, 1738—“In the evening, I went very unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the

Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and had saved me from the law of sin and death.”

f. “The World is My Parish”

John Wesley’s diary entry on June 28, 1774 (his 72nd birthday): “This being my birthday...I was considering, How is this, that I find just the same strength as I did 30 years ago? That my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer than they were then? That I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is the good pleasure of God, who doth whatsoever pleaseth Him. The chief means are: (1) My constantly rising at 4 a. m. for about 50 years; (2) My generally preaching at 5 in the morning, one of the most healthy exercises in the world; and (3) My never travelling less, by sea or land, than 4,500 miles a year.”

John Wesley’s marriage to Mary “**Molly**” Vazeille was difficult and often strained, largely because Wesley’s relentless commitment to preaching, travel, and the Methodist revival left little time for a settled home life. His disciplined schedule and constant ministry—rising early, preaching frequently, and traveling thousands of miles each year—contributed to deep tensions in the marriage, and over time the relationship deteriorated into conflict and eventual separation. While Wesley was remarkably effective as an evangelist and leader, his marriage reminds us that even greatly used servants of God could struggle in important areas of personal and family life.

2. Wesley’s doctrine

“**Peace to his ashes, death to his errors,** life to all the truth he preached, and may the blessing of God make any one of us but a tenth as earnest as he was, and a tenth as useful” (Charles Spurgeon).

- a. Arminian theology
- b. _____ sanctification

1 John 3:8 – “He that is born of God does not sin.”

According to Wesley entire sanctification is an instantaneous change that eradicates all sin.

For Wesley, entire sanctification does not eradicate errors; it does not eradicate shortcomings; it does not eradicate infirmities; it does not eradicate backslidings.

So, Wesley's definition of sin has to change in order for him to say that entire sanctification eradicates all sin. It eradicates, in his view, *a conscious violation of a known command of God*. Methodist scholars have called it "relative perfectionism."

Martyn Lloyd-Jones: "The trouble with John Wesley was that he was too logical...he took certain statements and pressed them to their logical conclusions irrespective of other statements in the same Scriptures" (*Puritans*, 310).

3. John and Charles Wesley's Hymns

Charles Wesley wrote over 6000 hymns

Verse four of Charles Wesley's "And Can It Be That I Should Gain"—

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

On the anniversary of his conversion Charles wrote a hymn under the title "For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion," which we now know as the hymn that begins "O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise."

4. The Methodists

- a. At first the word "Methodist" was used for all supporters of the revival and not for people who were members of a separate church. Anglicans and Presbyterians and anybody else who supported the Evangelical Revival were called Methodists, a word that went back to the days of the Holy Club in Oxford.
- b. Society gathered at the Foundery in Moorfields, London, in 1739
- c. Ordination of Thomas Coke by John Wesley in 1784

C. George Whitefield and His Associates

1. George Whitefield

- a. "The first real American hero, a celebrity figure, was not a movie star, nor was he a basketball player. But the first real hero was a preacher. When George Whitefield died in the year 1770, there were people who knew about Whitefield

who had never heard of George Washington or Benjamin Franklin” (David Calhoun).

- b. Whitefield was converted because Charles Wesley gave him a book by Henry Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*. When Whitefield read that book, he wrote, “It was the means by which God showed me that I must be born again or be damned.”
- c. In February 1739 he began to preach in the open fields near Bristol to coal miners who seldom entered a church.
- d. George Whitefield was often **mocked** because of his severely **crossed eyes**. Critics gave him the nickname “**Dr. Squintum**,” and many people made fun of both his appearance and his passionate preaching style. Yet despite the ridicule, Whitefield became one of the most powerful evangelists of the Great Awakening.

One well-known story involves a man named **Thorpe**, who was associated with a group of mockers called the “**Hell-Fire Club**” in Bristol. The group despised Whitefield and regularly ridiculed evangelical preaching and religion. Thorpe was especially gifted at impersonations, so after attending Whitefield’s meetings, he decided to entertain his friends by mocking him publicly.

One evening, standing before the club in a tavern, Thorpe began imitating Whitefield. He crossed his eyes, copied Whitefield’s voice and dramatic gestures, and began repeating one of Whitefield’s sermons word for word to make the crowd laugh. But as he continued speaking the sermon and quoting Scripture, the truth of the gospel began to grip his own heart. The words he intended as mockery suddenly convicted him of his sin.

Before he finished the performance, Thorpe stopped. Instead of laughing, he became deeply troubled in conscience. God used the very sermon he was mocking to bring him to repentance and faith in Christ. The man who had come to ridicule Whitefield ended up becoming a Christian himself.

2. **Lady Huntingdon** (Lady Selina Shirley) (1707-1791) and “the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion”

Big supporter of Whitefield. 93 letters from Whitefield to Lady Huntingdon.

“She devoted herself, her name, her means, her time, her thoughts to the cause of Christ. She did not spend her money on herself; she did not allow the homage paid to her rank to remain with herself; she passed these on and offered them up to Him from whom her gifts came. She acted as one ought to act who considered this life a pilgrimage, not a home...” (John Henry Newman).

3. Whitefield and Scotland

e. Ralph Erskine and the Associate Presbytery

George Whitefield: “If the pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim the righteousness of Jesus Christ therein.”

f. **William McCulloch and the Cambuslang Work (1742):** William McCulloch was a Scottish pastor whose faithful preaching and prayers helped spark the powerful Cambuslang revival of 1742, where thousands gathered under deep conviction of sin during the Great Awakening.

g. **Lady Glenorchy (1741–1786):** Lady Glenorchy was a wealthy Scottish evangelical who used her influence and resources to support gospel preaching, build chapels, and promote evangelical Calvinism during a time of growing spiritual decline.

4. Whitefield and America

a. **Bethesda in Georgia:** Bethesda was George Whitefield’s orphan house near Savannah, Georgia, founded to care for orphaned children and supported largely through Whitefield’s preaching tours.

b. **“Gospel-Ranging”:** “Gospel-ranging” described the itinerant preaching of revivalists like Whitefield who traveled widely proclaiming the gospel outside traditional parish boundaries during the Great Awakening.

c. **Nathan Cole’s narrative:** a Connecticut farmer who eagerly rode twelve miles with his wife just to hear Whitefield preach, later testifying that the sermon shattered his trust in his own righteousness and led him toward true conversion.

d. Whitefield had remarkable preaching ability and dramatic delivery. Even skeptics like philosopher **David Hume** were captivated by his powerful voice, emotional appeals, and deep personal conviction.

When someone expressed surprise that the skeptical philosopher David Hume was hurrying to hear George Whitefield preach and asked, “Surely you do not believe what he says, do you?” Hume reportedly replied: “No, but he does.”

e. **Benjamin Franklin** and George Whitefield developed an unlikely but genuine friendship during the Great Awakening, even though Franklin was far more skeptical of orthodox Christianity than Whitefield. Fascinated by Whitefield’s powerful voice, Franklin once walked backward through the streets of Philadelphia, measuring the distance at which he could still hear him preach, and estimated that over 30,000 people could hear Whitefield in the open air. Franklin

also famously wrote that while listening to Whitefield preach for his orphanage in Georgia, he had determined to give nothing, but Whitefield's appeal so moved him that he first reached for copper, then silver, and finally emptied his pockets entirely. Though Franklin did not share Whitefield's theology, he deeply admired him personally and later said simply, "I loved him."

f. Whitefield's last sermon:

"I go, I go to a rest prepared; my sun has arisen, and by aid from heaven has given light to many. It is now about to set—no, it is about to rise to the zenith of immortal glory. Many may outlive me on earth, but they cannot outlive me in heaven."

D. The Welsh

1. The Leaders

- g. Griffith Jones (1683-1761)—"the morning star of the revival"
- h. Daniel Rowland (1713-90)—the great preacher

George Whitefield was "the greatest English preacher who has ever lived. You notice my emphasis! I say the greatest 'English' preacher.... There was a contemporary of his 200 years ago who, I am glad to note, even Bishop Ryle...has to grant and to admit was the equal of Whitefield.... Daniel Rowland" (Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Puritans*, 104).

- i. Howel Harris (1714-73)—the superintendent of Trevecca College

Harris was converted in an unusual way. On Palm Sunday, March 30, 1735, he attended the parish church near the town where he was living in Wales. The vicar (an evangelical) announced that there would be a communion service the following Sunday (which happened to Easter). In the announcement he said, "If you are not fit to take communion, you are not fit to pray. And if you are not fit to pray, you are not fit to live. And if you are not fit to live, you are not fit to die." This led to Harris's conviction, repentance and conversion. In response to this story Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, "You can bring people to conviction of sin even through an announcement. You never know what God is going to use."

- j. William Williams (1717-91)—the hymn writer

2. The role of George Whitefield in trans-denominationalism (evangelism)

3. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church

Howel Harris in 1743: “Blessed be God, we move daily nearer towards an Evangelical order. As we are not turned out of communion in the National Church yet, and as we meet the Lord there, we think it would be running before the Lord now to separate ourselves. But such as labour among the lambs, and such as join themselves to us, are now brought under discipline and better order than we have been. Many thousands, I believe, will at the Last Day bless God for this outpouring of the Spirit among us.”

E. The Anglican Evangelicals

1. Samuel Walker of Truro—“Prophet of Evangelicalism in the West”

2. William Romaine (1714-95)—Leader in London

3. William Grimshaw (1708-63)—“Apostle of the North” (Haworth in Yorkshire)

“When I die, I shall then have my greatest grief and my greatest joy: my greatest grief that I have done so little for Jesus, and my greatest joy that Jesus has done so much for me.”

4. John Berridge (1716-93)—“Apostle of the Cam and Fen” (East Anglia)

To Lady Huntingdon: “A robe I must have, of one whole piece, broad as the law, spotless as the light, and richer than an angel ever wore—the robe of Jesus.”

Part of his epitaph reads “Reader, art thou born again?”

5. Henry Venn (1724-97)—Clapham (London), Huddersfield (Yorkshire), and Yelling (East Anglia)

To his son a year before he died: “I have to tell you, and would if it were with my last breath, that I can wish for nothing more than I now find Christ is to me.”

6. John Newton (1725-1807)—Olney and St. Mary Woolnoth

a. The Olney Hymns (“Amazing Grace”)

b. Second generation Anglican evangelicals—John Venn, Daniel Wilson, Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce

7. Hannah More (1745-1833)

“While we would with deep humility confess that we cannot purchase heaven by any works or qualifications of our own, and gratefully acknowledge that it must be purchased for us by ‘Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood,’ yet let us remember that we have no reason to expect we could be capable of enjoying the

pleasures of a heaven thus purchased without first being heavenly-minded....A Christian's piety [does not] consist in living in retreat and railing at the practices of the world while perhaps her heart is full of the spirit of that world at which she is railing. It consists in subduing the spirit of the world and opposing its practices even while her duty obliges her to live in it" (Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*).

J. C. Ryle summed up the theological principles of the Evangelical Revival in England under five points—

1. The "absolute supremacy" of the Bible "as the only rule of faith and practice, the only test of truth, the only judge of controversy"
2. The corruption of human nature by sin
3. The centrality of the atonement of Christ as the theological remedy for this condition
4. The necessity of an "experimental knowledge of Christ crucified and interceding," to be applied by "the inward work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of men"
5. The requirement of a serious, holy life as "the only certain evidence of a man's spiritual condition"

IV. Jonathan Edwards²

Where is this quote from?

"And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south; many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are now in a happy state, **with their hearts filled with love to him who has loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.**"

A. His birth, his parents, and his childhood

- Jonathan Edwards born October 5, 1703, in East Windsor, Connecticut.
- Fifth of eleven children and the only son of Timothy and Esther Edwards. His sisters were all very tall. People used to speak of the **60 feet of the Edwards sisters**.
- **T**imothy Edwards pastored in East Windsor for about sixty years.
- **E**sther was the daughter of influential pastor Solomon Stoddard.
- His parents constantly prayed that he would:
 - be filled with the Holy Spirit,
 - know Scripture from childhood,

² This section is taken from a paper I wrote in 1997.

○ and be great in the sight of the Lord.

- Edwards' parents modeled genuine godliness in both life and doctrine.
- As a boy, Edwards showed strong religious interests and **helped build a prayer booth in a swamp with friends.**
- Though he later viewed these early experiences as not true conversion, they reflected early spiritual seriousness.
- **Exceptionally intelligent from childhood.**
 - Studied Latin by age six under his father's instruction.
 - Wrote a paper on the immaterial nature of the soul at age ten.
 - By eleven, he was writing scientific essays and wrestling with deep philosophical questions about identity, causation, the mind-body relationship, and knowledge.

B. His preparation and early ministry

- **Entered Yale College just before turning thirteen.**
- Graduated first in his class four years later.
- Completed two additional years of theological study and was licensed to preach.
- Briefly pastored a small Presbyterian church in New York City for about eight months.
- Returned home afterward to devote himself to deeper study.
- Received his Master of Arts degree from Yale a year later.
- In 1726 (23 years old) became assistant pastor in Northampton, Massachusetts, under his grandfather Solomon Stoddard.
- Took full leadership of the influential Northampton church after Stoddard's death in 1729.
- Ministered there for more than twenty years.

C. His marriage and family

- Edwards became fond of Sarah Pierpont, granddaughter of Thomas Hooker, when she was about thirteen years old.
- In a private note, he described her as...

“one who hardly cares for anything, except to meditate on Him... She is of wonderful sweetness, calmness and universal benevolence of mind... She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her.”

- He portrayed her as someone who loved solitude, prayer, and meditation on Christ.
- Edwards and Sarah married four years later in 1727.
- Sarah faithfully managed the home, allowing Edwards to devote himself fully to ministry and study.
- **Their marriage was marked by deep unity in mind and purpose.**

- They made it a practice to **pray together daily** unless extraordinary circumstances prevented it.
- Their shared spiritual life had a profound influence on their family and children.
- Sarah Edwards at times faced criticism from some in Northampton for dressing **too fashionably** and **for giving birth to several of her children on the Sabbath**, which some overly scrupulous people strangely viewed as spiritually questionable. Yet despite such criticisms, she was **widely admired for her beauty, intelligence, wit, warmth, and deep piety. She was a gracious and capable helpmeet whose wisdom, hospitality, and management of the home greatly strengthened Jonathan Edwards and his ministry.**

D. Significant highlights of his ministry

- Edwards played a major role in the Great Awakening revival movement.
- More than 300 people were reportedly converted during the **Northampton revival** of 1734–35.
- Another wave of revival came in 1740 during George Whitefield's visit.
- Edwards defended the revivals against critics like Charles Chauncy, who dismissed them as emotionalism.
- Edwards responded by emphasizing that true religion consists in "holy love."
- His relationship with the Northampton church began deteriorating after the "**bad book case**" of 1744 involving immoral material circulated among youth.
- The final conflict centered on who should be admitted to the Lord's Supper.
- Unlike Solomon Stoddard, Edwards taught that only those professing genuine faith in Christ should take communion.
- In 1750 the church voted 230–23 to dismiss Edwards as pastor.
- After his farewell sermon, Edwards moved to **Stockbridge** to minister among the **Housatonic and Mohawk Indians.**
- **His ministry there was difficult because of conflicts among settlers and mistreatment of Native Americans.**
- Despite hardship, Edwards wrote many of his greatest works in Stockbridge, including *Freedom of the Will*, *Original Sin Defended*, *The Nature of True Virtue*, *The End for Which God Created the World*, and *History of the Work of Redemption*.

E. His short-lived presidency and unexpected death

In 1757 Edwards was elected president of the College of New Jersey (later called Princeton); however, he died of complications due to a small pox inoculation March 22, 1758 at the age of 54. His daughter, Esther, inoculated at the same time as Edwards, died two weeks later. Sarah Edwards died in the autumn of the same year. They all lie in the Princeton cemetery.³ Reportedly, his last words, spoken to some friends at his bedside, were: "Trust in God, and you need not fear."⁴

³ Simonson, 23.

⁴ Coleman, 13.

V. Great Awakening Hymnody

Perhaps no period surpassed the Great Awakening in its production of first-rate hymns.

A. Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

1. Born into a Puritan-Huguenot family.
2. At age seven, he wrote an acrostic spelling out the letters of his name.

"I" - I am a vile, polluted lump of earth
 "S" - So I've continued ever since my birth
 "A" - Although Jehovah, grace doth daily give me
 "A" - As sure this monster, Satan, will deceive me
 "C" - Come therefore, Lord, from Satan's claws relieve me.

"W" - Wash me in Thy blood, O Christ
 "A" - And grace divine impart
 "T" - Then search and try the corners of my heart
 "T" - That I in all things may be fit to do
 "S" - Service to Thee, and Thy praise too.

3. As a youth he came under the influence of some of the great Puritans still alive.
4. Watts became a nonconformist minister, serving the church at Mark Lane in London.
5. His sermons were appreciated for their sound and solid content and his educational and philosophical writings were highly popular in his day.
6. He is best remembered today for his hymns which he wrote to reinforce the central message of his sermons.
 - a. "Come We Who Love the Lord"
 - b. "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun"
 - c. "Am I a Soldier of the Cross"
 - d. "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

B. The Wesley's

1. "Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending"
2. "Soldiers of Christ Arise,"
3. "And Can It Be."

C. Augustus Toplady ("Rock of Ages")

VI. Results of the Great Awakening

A. Conversions

- Thousands professed faith in Christ during the revivals throughout Britain and the American colonies.

1. Calvinism

- The Awakening largely spread through Calvinistic preaching emphasizing sin, grace, the new birth, and God's sovereignty in salvation.

2. The new alliance—evangelicalism

- Christians from different denominations increasingly united around conversion, the authority of Scripture, and the need for personal faith in Christ.

B. Debate over the place and nature of revivals

- Some viewed the revivals as genuine works of the Holy Spirit, while others criticized the emotionalism and disorder that sometimes accompanied them.

C. Social effects ("A spiritual democracy")

- The Awakening emphasized that ordinary people—not just the educated or wealthy—could hear the gospel directly and experience conversion.

1. Benjamin Franklin

- Though not an orthodox believer, Franklin admired Whitefield's preaching ability and supported some of his ministry efforts.

2. Stout: "...[Whitefield's] voice of compassion for the slaves continued to ring out and win their enduring adoration" (*The Divine Dramatist*, 108).

- Whitefield preached to enslaved people and treated them with unusual compassion for his day, though his legacy on slavery remains complicated.

D. Schools founded in America

- Revival-minded Christians founded schools to train ministers and promote Christian education.

1. Princeton (College of New Jersey)
2. Dartmouth (Eleazar Wheelock)
3. Rutgers
4. Brown

E. Calvinism Preserved

- The Great Awakening helped preserve evangelical Calvinism in America during a time when rationalism and liberal theology were growing.

F. Religious Freedom (see section on Isaac Backus and Religious Freedom—Shelley, pp. 348-350)

1. All connections between the state and institutionalized religion must be broken in order that America might become a truly Christian country.
 - Many revivalists believed true Christianity could not be produced by government force or state churches.
2. “Truth is great and will prevail.”
 - Revivalists believed the gospel did not need political power to succeed.
3. Voluntaryism – “Religion is a voluntary obedience unto God, which force cannot promote.”
 - Genuine faith must come freely from the heart, not through coercion.
4. The mission of the “elect people” shifted subtly from a Puritan “holy commonwealth” to the American people’s struggle for “liberty.”
 - American identity increasingly became connected with ideas of freedom and individual rights.
5. There became an unusual alliance between the revivalists and the rationalists on the issue of religious freedom.
 - Though they disagreed theologically, both groups opposed government-controlled religion.
6. Birth of the First Amendment of the Constitution – “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”
 - The United States officially rejected a national church and protected religious liberty.
7. The American view of church and state is rooted in “the conception of the church as a spiritual body existing for spiritual purposes...”
 - Many Americans came to believe the church should depend on spiritual power rather than government support or coercion.