

The Testimony of Jesus (Part 10)

Lord, we are thankful as we remembered You this morning, there is that abundant redemption, and every way that You touch us there seems to be an abundance and overflow. And we are thankful for the abundance of Your Spirit as we come to this time. We come looking to You, Lord, to be the fulness of this time to really open the eyes of our heart to see the beautiful way that You met ones in living ways throughout history. And we want to have that ear to hear, to learn and to be encouraged for the days that we are living in. Lord, we recognize Your return is near, and we recognize the intensity of things as they become greater and greater against Your testimony. And we want to be those who are strengthened by Your great grace and abundant grace to be standing for the testimony of Jesus in the hour in which we are living. In Thy name we pray. Amen.

We are continuing our fellowship on this matter of the testimony of Jesus throughout church history. I am going to read a few Scriptures first, and you will see how they relate as we go through this time.

Proverbs 4:18—"But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn that shines brighter and brighter until the full day."

This Proverb has always spoken to me about the revelation of Jesus Christ. As we go through this life we see more and more of Him, and it is like the sun coming up, and we see that light of dawn and how beautiful it is. But as we see more and more of Christ He gets brighter and brighter until one day there will be that full day, and we will see that fulness; that is what we are looking for. So it is good to remember that as we are going through life, it is continuous and it is progressive. We have not reached that full day yet, but we see in part.

I Corinthians 13:12—"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known."

It is good for us to keep in perspective that even though we have been blessed to see so much of the Lord, we still just see in part. There is a fulness coming. As we look back through history we see that they saw in part. And as the Lord continued to reveal more and more of Himself and recover more and more of Himself, it keeps us balanced in a right way. Once we begin to think that "we see it, we know it" then we have a tendency to stop and settle down and be content. But if we can always have that hunger to know there is so much more of the riches of Christ that He has desired to show us, then we can continue to grow. We have been seeing this throughout this time on church history, and we want to continue to see it more today. One of the things that comes forth today also is a verse out of Matthew 23:13: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering in to go in."

So often religious leaders can hinder others from entering in. Religious leaders can have a concept: "This is the way it is." And when the Lord touches others' hearts who want to go on to see more and more of Him, quite often the resistance, the persecution, the hindrance comes not

from the world but from those so-called religious leaders that are hindering many from coming in, and we will see this today also.

Peter's Experience at the House of Cornelius

Also our own knowledge and concepts of who the Lord is and what He is doing can hinder us from going on. We are reminded of this in Peter's experience which eventually leads him into the house of Cornelius. The first set of verses is in Acts 10 where he is in Simon's house and Peter is on the roof. A sheet comes down with all kinds of animals and crawling creatures and birds, and the Lord said, "Rise and eat." Acts 10:13: "And a voice came to him, 'Arise, Peter, kill and eat.' But Peter, being so righteous, tells the Lord, 'No! By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean.' Again a voice came to him a second time, 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.'"

Praise God! Peter learned this lesson. On the roof he said, "No!" But as he went on and saw God moving, he opened his eyes to see God's heart for the Gentiles. It was a great way of how the Lord was showing Peter more and more of the fulness of His heart. It was like the light of the dawn, the light was shining brighter and brighter, and praise God Peter was teachable.

Then he went back to Jerusalem after that time in Cornelius' house when the Holy Spirit came upon those Gentiles, and they were so wonderfully saved and blessed. At first the religious leaders in Jerusalem were very hesitant in questioning him: "How could you eat with those uncircumcised ones? How could you go into their house?"

Peter shared his testimony in a very orderly way in Acts 11:17. He said, "Therefore if God gave to them the gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way? When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.'"

That little phrase has always touched my heart about Peter: "Who was I that I could stand in God's way?" And sadly we see it oftentimes that it is the religious leaders of this world and of Christendom, who stand in God's way of moving on. But we want to be those who have open hearts to receive from the Lord, who are led by the Spirit to know when He is moving on and showing us more and more of Christ. May we be those who can be receiving that in the fulness of what He has.

The Age of Enlightenment

Now we are picking up again in the 18th century. The last time we looked at Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians, and this was the awakening within Europe. Today, we want to look at the English Evangelical Awakening and the Great awakening in North America. That is the official titles that they go by. We see Wesley and Whitefield in England, and then there is Edwards and Whitefield who were the two main ones in North America. It was not the United States at that point; it was still North America. Even though we are using prominent names, they are really representative of many. There were many dear brothers and sisters whom the Lord used throughout this time to revive the testimony of Jesus and continue it on. I want to give us a

picture of what they were up against that occurred during the 18th century, which was the age of enlightenment.

Okay, I have a question here. What is another name for the age of enlightenment? The age of reason. And it is dominated by the very thought of reason being the primary source of authority and the rationality of men. There are two things that are the spirits of that age. One is Deism which says that God is a mighty God. There is a recognition of God but not a personal God. There was also Rationalism. One came by Voltaire, and one came by Thomas Paine. During the time that they were living in the spirit of the age was an antichristian spirit. The opposition was changing from so-called outward persecution to intellectual rationalization, that type of persecution, the resistance that was coming against the Lord and His work. Actually, all of the world was getting rearranged through a lot of wars. There was a lot of geographical rearranging through the Spanish secession, the Austrian secession, the French-Indian War, and our American Revolutionary War. Europe and the world were getting realigned during this 18th century. Also, there was a lot of inventions being created. So we see a kind of scientific intellectualism that occurred and many things were discovered.

I learned one thing that I thought was kind of neat. The mercury thermometer was invented during this time. Who invented the mercury thermometer? Daniel Fahrenheit. I thought that was kind of neat. That has nothing to do with what we are sharing today.

Also, there were a lot of disasters. One was the great frost when all of Europe literally froze. If you have ever been to Venice or seen pictures of Venice, all the canals and rivers froze in Europe. It was the coldest time in the history of Europe. There was definitely a climate change back then. There were also natural disasters. 100,00 were killed in the Plague of Marseille. There was also the Irish famine in which over two million died. There were a lot of things going on in the world.

This was when England and Scotland united to form Great Britain, and Saudi Arabia was established. We also have the political influence of Adam Smith's writing, "The Wealth of Nations." There was so much going on that was impacting the world.

I am just sharing this briefly because sometimes if you are just looking at church history in a vacuum, you can lose the picture and the pressures of everything that is going on around them. So they are having to go against the tide of Rationalism, Deism, and everything else that was going on because back then of the very fact, Reason. There was nothing by faith in the world nor by experience; it was all reason and logical that was dictating it. So the Lord moved in a marvelous way to bring about great awakenings which were very emotional, very dramatic and certainly not reasonable. I thought it was neat to see how the Lord works against the counter of man.

The Evangelical Awakening in England

This brings us up to date to John Wesley. In the past, we studied and looked at the Waldensians, the Abiogenies, John Huss, Comenius, the Bohemians Brethren, Philip Spener, August Franc, and the Pietests with the University of Halle. Last time we looked at the Moravians, and now we are coming to John Wesley. All of this is showing that God has a plan and a purpose,

and there is a continual thread of His life and testimony throughout history. And it is beautiful that they are not disconnected, unrelated joints, but there is a continuous work that He is doing.

In the Evangelical Awakening in England, we mentioned that there were two main men who were used—John Wesley and George Whitefield. The beautiful thing about these two brothers is that they were two totally opposite people. Wesley was brought up in a very religious world. Whitefield's father owned a tavern, and he served beer in the tavern growing up, and His family was poor. Wesley's preaching style was very methodical, very clear, and very logical. Whitefield was very dramatic, and he was very emotional. He was a great actor and he was very dramatic. Nevertheless, they had the same results, and thousands got saved. It is neat the different ways that God can use different ones. Wesley was saved through the Moravians, and Whitefield was saved at Oxford through Wesley's Holy Club.

Even their general theology was different. Wesley leaned more toward Arminianism and the free will of man. And Whitefield was more of a Calvinism, which was related more on predestination. At one time they got into a dispute over this, but they were able to reconcile. We see the contrast of these two totally different vessels, but God is still able to do one work through two different vessels all towards His end, and that is really encouraging.

John Wesley

As we come to Wesley, you mothers can appreciate this. Most have probably heard of Susanna Wesley. John was the fifteenth of nineteen children. His father was the rector or the pastor of the Anglican Church in Epworth, and Susannah handled most of the children's childhood education. There are some wonderful biographies on Susannah Wesley that you might like to read. One of the events that impacted Wesley's life was when he was six years old. He was rescued from a house that was on fire. The rest of his life he said that he felt like he was "a brand plucked from the fire." Everybody else in the family was awakened by the smoke and the commotion, but Wesley was still asleep in one of the back rooms. When they all got outside, they realized that he was still inside. So some of the neighbors came, and they were literally standing on one another's shoulders to reach him. That impacted him for the rest of his life, and he saw that God had a call and a purpose on his life.

He went away to school in 1714 to Charterhouse, and during this time he lived a very regimented life. The family had prayers every day; they read the Scriptures, and he had to memorize Scriptures. But this was the first time he was on his own. He did not know the Lord at this point, but he continued to go through those religious rituals. However, they became colder and colder and were not meaning as much, but he felt he needed to do it.

In 1720 he began at Oxford, and both he and his brother Charles were seeking the Lord. They knew they were not saved, but they wanted to be saved, and so they continued to seek the Lord. They decided that one of the ways they could be saved was to form the Holy Club. Now this Holy Club fasted twice a week, they had the Lord's table weekly, they had fellowship with each other in their room every night, they visited prisoners, and they visited the sick. What they were trying to do through the Holy Club was to work out their salvation. They were trying to gain salvation through works, and there was a lot of self-discipline, a lot of depriving each other, a lot of serving

in different ways. There were a lot of works, but they were not able to enter into the joy of salvation at this point. This is where they were first called Methodists while they were in the Holy Club, and all the other students at Oxford ridiculed them for all their methods. They were very stringent; they had their order and their methods. This is where they were first called Methodists because of all their methods and discipline. This originated at a very early age even when they were not saved. One of the things the Holy Club did was to put John in leadership in 1729, and then George Whitefield came and was invited to join the Holy Club.

Even though these ones did not know the Lord, they were seeking and striving, and it shows us something of the condition of people's concepts of getting saved back then. They were not fully entering into this justification by faith, but they knew they had to do something. They were still striving for works.

Wesley Meets the Moravians

After Wesley finished Oxford he went to Georgia for a time of preaching and service. On the way over to Georgia he met some Moravians in the middle of the ocean in the midst of a horrific storm. The waves were literally coming up over the ship, and the water was coming into the ship. Everybody was petrified. Then he heard some singing in a room underneath. He went down because he wanted to see what was going on. He found some Moravians cramped together in this little room. When he went in, he saw all of these Moravians singing, and there was such peace. And he said, "Aren't you afraid?" And they said, "No." "Aren't your family, your children afraid?" And they said, "No, we have peace with the Lord. If we die, we will be with Him, but He is with us now." It really impacted his life in a wonderful way.

When he got to Georgia and got off the boat, he found one of the men he had spoken with. His name was Spangenberg. Wesley was really impressed with these Moravians, so he went to them and said, "What is this relationship you have with God? How do you enter into this?" And Spangenberg posed two questions to him. Now at this time Wesley was an ordained Anglican priest, and he was preaching and actually people were getting saved. So outwardly, he was doing all of this service.

Spangenberg posed two questions to him: "Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" The proper man, Wesley with all of his Oxford education was quite surprised by such direct and probing questions. He did not know quite how to answer. So Spangenberg continued: "Do you know Jesus Christ?" Wesley paused and said, "I know He is Savior of the world." "True," Spangenberg replied, "but do you know that He has saved you?" And Wesley's reply was again weak and indecisive. "I hope He has died to save me." And then the kindly Moravian brought matters to a head in a very pastoral way and said, "Do you know, yourself?" What a penetrating question this was! And that is a question for all of us. Wesley replied, "I do." But later he fessed up and said, "Those were vain words." He was doing it to save face, and I am sure you can appreciate that.

Then he went to the U. S., and the time in America was pretty difficult for him. He was not received well. There were false accusations and many charges brought against him. So he returned to England.

Praise God, in 1738 when he returned to England, he had a wonderful conversion experience. While he was in London he went reluctantly to visit a Moravian meeting one night. It was a place which is a famous street now because of Wesley, called Alder's Gate Street in London. The Moravians were reading Luther's introduction to Romans because it could only be read. The only preaching that was allowed was by Anglican preachers. So Wesley was sitting there listening to Luther's introduction to Romans, and the Holy Spirit came upon him in a powerful way. That is so wonderful! Sometimes we think you have to have a grand glorious sermon or this or that, but they were reading the introduction to Romans, and the Holy Spirit moved. One of the things we will see several times is how the power of the Holy Spirit is not limited or constrained by the vessels that are there. It is wonderful how He moves. But Wesley went into that meeting after seeking the Lord all those years and he said, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death. Praise God, for that! He came to that full saving knowledge, the security and the assurance he had found in Him.

After that he began preaching. Whitefield invited him to come down, and he went to his first outdoor meeting in Bristol with Whitefield. As he is preaching he finds out all of a sudden that they are being persecuted and were being called another name, Enthusiasts. They were persecuted for enthusiasm by the Anglicans. Anglicans and the Church of England are the same thing. The origin of the word 'Anglican' is simply the Latin word for England.

The Anglican Church was really made up for the most part of the proper people of England. They were a little more elite, and when Wesley and Whitefield were preaching, the people were responding by the Holy Spirit in such a way that we would call them Charismatics today. They were falling down, slain in the Spirit, they were leaping around, and they were rejoicing. There was an exuberance that was coming forth because these were the common people of the day. They were not the elite; these were the common ones, and they were being set free from the bondage and power of sin and they were experiencing the joy of the Lord. So the Anglican Church, which were the more elite people, condemned this enthusiasm because they thought they were the proper ones. The people of the Anglican Church were very religious, but when you think you are 'it,' you become very content in what you are, and you do not want anyone to rock the boat. Everybody is to just keep the way things are, and nobody was to rock the boat. Wesley and Whitefield were rocking the boat pretty loudly because the Anglican Church was a well-oiled machine; it just kept going, and it did not need the Holy Spirit. It could just continue on, and that is the way it was going. There was very little life of the Lord. I am not saying there was not any, but there was very little life.

A great revolution came, and the people were really persecuted. Some lost their jobs among other things. It was real persecution that was going on against the ones who had this enthusiasm. Praise God for those who have enthusiasm for the Lord! Do we have enthusiasm today? When we are around the Lord's table, isn't it a great time to enjoy the enthusiasm of the Lord for what He has done? Praise God for that!

The next event that really empowered and encouraged Wesley was that Lady Huntington encouraged him to continue preaching. Lady Huntington was a very influential sister at this time.

She was of the aristocratic background, and she got saved. She used her money, her life and effort to really encourage ones and supported both Wesley and Whitefield. So she encouraged them to continue preaching even though they were rejected by the Anglican Church which would not let him preach there. So he went back to his father's home church which was the church he grew up in. His father had been the pastor there, so Wesley decided to go back. When he went to that church, they would not even allow him to preach there. They said, "No." So he went outside the church, stood on his father's grave and preached. That was their property, and he was free to do whatever he wanted to do there. So he gave words of life in the midst of death. Standing in the mist of this graveyard, he began declaring the glorious gospel and hundreds were saved that day. There was a marvelous transition in his life and the way that he had been working.

One of the challenges Wesley had in life was when he got married in 1751, which was a big challenge for him. Actually, his wife was very much against him. She would rewrite his sermons, putting heresy in them, and then send them out to be printed. She would tell lies about him causing all kinds of trouble. They did not get along at all, so it was a difficult marriage. They separated eventually, but they never divorced. It was the cross in his life. There was nothing ever recorded publicly of him saying anything against his wife, and he bore the misunderstanding. He wrote a couple of things in his diary about it. One of the wonderful things about Wesley is that he kept a diary. If you enjoy reading detailed things, read Wesley's diary because he really shared the honesty of his heart, what he went through at various times, and some of the struggles in his life. They are all compiled and published today.

After this from 1742 to his death in 1791 he continued to preach and establish Methodist Societies. Now what are Methodist societies? In the beginning Wesley and Whitefield were part of the Anglican Church, so when people were first getting saved, he did not want to compete against the Anglican Church or take away from that, so he would still encourage ones to go to the Anglican Church on Sunday morning and then they would have these Methodist Societies for believers at other times. That was the way it started. They were small groups, maybe eighty to a hundred people would be together in a community. They would meet together weekly for prayer, fellowship, study the Word, encouragement of the Word.

Wesley was noted for his organizational skills, so within each society he would form these classes which were called Methodist Classes. They were small groups of 10-15, where ones would learn to be accountable to somebody in life. As they were growing in the Lord they formed relationships. It was spiritual discipleship of discipling one another in the Lord. In one way, it was kind of like our home groups where relationships are built with one another. It is hard to establish close relationships with a hundred plus people, so you have smaller groups. And Wesley established these classes. Also, during that time of ministry, he rode on horseback for over 250,000 miles and preached over 40,000 sermons. He was also called the father of religious paperbacks because he penned 5,000 tracts.

One of the things that amazed me too was that he was only 5'3 and 130 pounds. At times during his sermons when he was outdoors, people did not like it. They would throw rocks at him, they would throw tomatoes at him and all kind of trash. One time they brought a herd of cows through the meeting. It was a different kind of persecution, but they were harassed. One night

somebody broke into Whitefield's house and almost beat him to death. He recovered okay, but it was a very severe beating. They did not have such an easy life. Wesley lived a full life until he died in 1791.

When we were taking the Lord's table today, waiting for the Lord's coming, I was thinking about one of the times in Wesley's diary that he writes about. He was staying with a family, and the lady asked him: "What if you knew that you were going to die tonight, what would you do?" He said, "Well, I would finish this wonderful breakfast, I would give the sermon in the town where I am, I would ride to the next town for the next sermon, I would have lunch, and give that sermon in the afternoon. I would meet with some people that evening for some counseling, I would have a good dinner, then I would share my evening sermon." It was normal for him to do three or four sermons a day. "Then I would go to bed and wake up in glory." He did not change anything. He was ready—talk about being prepared! If we are asked this question, "If you have to die tomorrow, how many of us will have a to do list all of a sudden? I have to take care of this, I have to do this." He was living ready every day. It so impressed my heart.

The wonderful message that he had was, "By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, but by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin." Praise God for that! We are set free from the power of sin. His main doctrines, which included all the rest, was repentance, faith and holiness. Repentance is the porch of religion, faith is the door to religion, and holiness is your life with Christ. As Martin Luther recovered justification by faith not by works, Wesley recovered sanctification by faith not by works.

It reminds me of that verse in I Corinthians 1:30 which says, "By His doings you are in Christ Jesus, and He became to us sanctification." By faith Wesley laid hold of that. For much of his early life he tried to live a holy life. He wanted to get saved, and he wanted to live holy. He lived an outward holy life. It was very holy outwardly-looking, but within there was a void. Then he entered into knowing Christ and being set free from the power of sin, letting that holy life come from within to without.

A couple of quotes from Wesley. He said, "Remember! You will be rewarded according to your labour, not according to your success."

Sometimes we can measure things by success. I thought this next one was interesting as we pray for generations.

He says, "What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace." What one generation does not really stand up for, they just start tolerating a little bit, but that next generation embraces it.

Then to encourage us all to catch fire, he says, "Catch on fire and people will come for miles to see you burn."

Let the Lord catch you on fire and ones will come for miles to see you burn out. He burned himself out. He also had some quotes on the future of the Methodists. We see his concern, and maybe he sensed something here, and that is where he was quoting.

He said, "My fear is not that our great movement, known as the Methodists, will eventually cease to exist or one day die from the earth." He was not concerned about it on the earthly level. My fear is that our people will become content to live without the fire, the power, the excitement, the supernatural element that makes us great."

They will become content to live without Christ or the Holy Spirit. That is a settling down, and he sensed that. He also sensed that when those class meetings would die, Methodism would die. And in the history of Methodism we find that it was very alive and vibrant at first, but soon it was losing some of that fire and zeal. As a result those daily, weekly class meetings became too much of a burden, and they started falling behind. We see one who had the desire to be saved, and the Lord met him in a wonderful way. It had a great impact upon him, and he led thousands and thousands to the Lord.

George Whitefield

Also in this time was George Whitefield who was born of a tavern owner. He went to the school of St. Mary de Crypt, and that is where he fell in love with playing and acting. He loved plays, and he loved acting. He was not a believer at this point, so that is where he thought his career would be. He actually enrolled in Oxford, but being poor he paid his way by being a servitor. That meant he served the wealthy students, and he would do errands for them to pay his way through.

Charles Wesley, who was John's brother, invited Whitefield to the Holy Club, and he read a book, a wonderful book, "The life of God in the Soul of Man" by Henry Scougal. It showed him that he must be born again or be damned, and he tried for several years by good works to get saved. But praise God, in 1735 Whitefield was the first member of the Holy Club to get saved, but nobody is actually sure how he got saved because it is not recorded. He never elaborated on that. He testified at this point that he had a full assurance of faith that broke upon his disconsolate soul! Thank the Lord for that.

After he finished Oxford he was planning to go to Georgia, but he got delayed, so he began preaching where he was. He was invited to preach in Bristol and London, and many were coming to hear him, and thousands were getting saved. He was ordained in the Anglican Church, but many of the pulpits were closed to him. They were closed because some were jealous of him. They did not like his style, they did not like the enthusiasm, and his message which was reaching the poor. The Anglican Church said, "You cannot preach in our churches anymore." So he started preaching outside. As he preached outside, particularly in Bristol, he began preaching to the miners. These were the first open-air meetings, and a couple hundred miners showed up at first. The second time there were about 2,000, then it went to 5,000 and then up to 20,000 people would come and hear him preach. Now he did not have a microphone, he did not have anything that could amplify his voice, but his voice was so strong by the grace of God that 20,000 people could hear him preach, which is an amazing thing.

While Whitefield was preaching to these miners, he invited Wesley to come down and help him because he knew that he did not have the organizational skills that Wesley had. So when Whitefield saw all these people getting saved, he needed some kind of help in caring for them.

Wesley came and helped him in that way. As these miners were getting saved by hearing the glorious gospel, Wesley and Whitefield would talk to each other saying, "They look like zebras." It was because these miners would come out of the mines covered in black, and the tears would be coming down streaking their faces as the coal dust was being washed away. It was a humbling experience to see these hardened men being saved in such a glorious way.

Different ones have stories also of how God did such a glorious work among sanctifying and saving these miners. They even had trouble with the mules in the mines because the mules were used to the miners cussing at them and telling them in a rough voice to do this and do that. But when their language was cleared up, the mules did not know what they were saying. It had an impact on the economy because a lot of the bars were slowing down because of a lack of business, but it had an impact in life. That is the thing we see.

Whitefield also met Lady Huntington, and later she actually appoints him as her chaplain. That was her way of her helping to support him. We will touch more on Lady Huntington later on.

Then he sailed to America, and began preaching in New York and Philadelphia, and he met Ben Franklin there. They became great friends, spending much time together. Franklin would come to hear his sermons, and would even print them. I want us to be encouraged because here is one of the world's greatest evangelists, and here is one of his closest friends who goes to hear him preach, and he shares with him. They have meals together frequently, and they have fellowship together, but Franklin never got saved.

Do you have someone in your life that you have been praying for and sharing with for many years? It can discourage you. Stella and I have been living in our neighborhood for a good number of years, and we see no response from the neighbors at all, and it can really be discouraging. However, Whitefield was faithful, and he did not hold back from Franklin, and Franklin did not hold back from him. He was more into Rationalism and Deism, but they stayed friends even though he never got saved. It is a tragedy, but it can also encourage us to stay faithful and not go by what we see.

Also, while he was in the States, he ended up establishing an orphanage in Bethesda, Georgia which was a real outreach program for the gospel at that point. Lady Huntington actually took it up after Whitefield's death and supported it. In 1741 he returned to England and at this point he and Wesley had some doctrinal differences. They had a fight basically over Arminianism and Calvinism, but praise God they reconciled; the two of them personally reconciled. But what happens so often is that Wesley had his followers and Whitefield had his followers, and the two guys at the top reconciled. They go on in Christ and there is enough of Christ in them that they can disagree on certain areas, but Christ was their unity and oneness. However, the followers got more influenced by the man, and they are offended for their leader. There was actually a lot of friction between those who followed Wesley and those who followed Whitefield even though there was no friction between them.

Whitefield stayed very active. It is amazing to me he made five more trips to America, sailing on a little ship. It was not like hopping on a plane and flying over there. It was a rickety old ship that he had to endure. None of these things were great when he went over there.

On September 29th he preached his final sermon. He was quite weak, and he knew he was going to die soon. But when they said, “Do you want to rest tonight?” He said, “No, I am going to be burned out.” He preached his sermon that night in Massachusetts, and he died there the next morning peacefully where he was buried. John Wesley preached his sermon at his funeral in London, and that was at Whitefield’s request. He said, “I want Wesley to preach my sermon at the funeral.” That was a testimony of their oneness.

Here are a few of the quotes we have from Whitefield, and I like this one.

He said, “If you are to walk with Jesus Christ, you are going to be opposed. In our days, to be a true Christian is really to become a scandal.”

This was 200 years ago and it is still true today. This is much of his secret life. “Be much in secret prayer, converse less with man and more with God.” That would be good for all of us.

This is one that is so encouraging to me. He said, “Other men may preach the gospel better than I, but no man can preach a better gospel.” You know, sometimes we feel that we cannot preach the gospel. I cannot share the gospel well. It is not about your preaching. None of us can preach a better gospel, but each of us has that better gospel. That is what we can preach; that is what we can share. That is the key. It is not our eloquence or any of that. Praise God for that encouragement.

We are all full of pride. Everybody has pride. If you do not think you have pride, you just do not know yourself. In Proverbs there is one related to pride that says, “A man is tested by the praise accorded him.” How are you going to handle it? Think of the temptation of pride. When you have 20,000 or 30,00 people coming to hear you, I sense that Whitefield wrestled with this. He knew he had to say ‘no’ to that, so he had this wonderful answer: “Commendations or even the hinting at them, are poison to a mind addicted to pride.” Are we looking for the praises of man? We do something, maybe an opening, or we share at a prayer meeting, are we looking for people to say, “Oh, that was good?” It just takes a little hint of reassurance that can lead to pride. That is so precious.

In the same spirit, he said, “Lord, give me a deep humility, a well-guided Zeal, a burning love, and a single eye. If you make me like that, then let men and the devil do their worst. You prepare me, Lord. Get me in the right place, and then whatever men or the devil do, it cannot impact me at all. I am going on.”

It is wonderful how these two men worked together even though they had their differences. Actually one time a sister came to Wesley and said, “Do you think we shall see Mr. Whitefield in heaven? And he said, “No, I do not,” and she smiled. Today, she would have gone, “Yes!” or maybe given him a high-five or something. He paused for a minute, and then he said, “I think he will be so near the throne, and you and I so far away, that we shall not get within sight of him.” Praise God! That is the spirit of humility. Keep our eyes on Him; that is precious.

Lady Huntington

I want to spend some time on Lady Huntington, the Selina, the countess of Huntingdon. Often in history, sadly the sisters are overlooked. Much of it honestly is due to the prejudice against sisters in times past. More things are written now, but in the past sisters were considered secondary citizens, so there were not a lot of things written about them. But it is a great testimony of God when the brothers and sisters can work together to show forth the effort.

As we look through Scriptures we see how sisters cared for our Lord. They were there with Him, caring for Him, hidden, but caring for Him. The sisters were there at the grave. In the early church there were ones like Priscilla, Phoebe, Dorcas. Throughout history we have looked at a martyr named Perpetua, Madame Guyon, Zinzendorf's grandmother, Margaret Fox with the Quakers. There was a great impact by these sisters. Thankfully, there are more and more things that are being written now. Even as we are in this 18th century, we actually have more facts to deal with in history because more things are recorded. In the past there was no records being kept, but as we come up to more modern times, there are lots more things that are open to us to discover and read about.

Lady Huntington was a widow, and she gave her life and her wealth for the Lord's service. She really had a very aristocratic background and standing in the community, and this opened the door for other elite ones to hear the gospel. Others of the aristocracy who were invited would come in, and they would hear the gospel.

We will actually see others as we move into the Brethren Movement which included Lady Powerscourt. We have heard Brother Kaung and Brother Lance speak of Lady Ogle. These were dear servants who gave their lives and their resources to care for the Lord.

Lady Huntington was called the "Queen/Matriarch of the Methodists." I am not sure she liked that or not. One of the wonderful things she did was to fund the construction of over a hundred chapels in England and Wales because these ones who were outside of the Anglican Church did not have places to meet. So she actually provided places for them to meet. One of the first chapels that she built was in Bath, and it was a pretty elegant building. These are still in England if you want to go see them. In other places they were more simple. She was trying to provide meeting places for brothers and sisters to gather in the simplicity of gathering in the Lord's name.

Now the only way you could get trained to serve the Lord was through the universities, but you had to basically sign up to be an Anglican Pastor or Priest. If you did not want to do that, there was no way of getting trained. So she founded Trevecca College to train the Lord's servants. It is wonderful how she provided opportunities of basic lessons and basic Bible studies and learning so that ones would be equipped to take care of these different societies and learn to care for one another.

She also supported foreign missions in North America, and she died almost broke. She just gave completely. There are many quotes about her life, but one quote I liked in particular because it came from somebody who was not a close friend of hers. This was somebody who you could say would be on the opposite side. He was a Roman Catholic Cardinal, John Henry Newman. We

will actually hear of his brother when we get to the Brethren, Francis Newman. He was one of the original few who met to begin the Brethren Movement.

This is Cardinal Newman's testimony of Lady Huntington: "She devoted herself, her means, her life, 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." Praise God for that! She was really able to use her whole life.

I have a quote from her. She was sold out for the Lord and because of her relationship with the Lord and her life that she had with the Lord this was her perspective on life. You have to remember that she is sharing this as a believer, not just not sharing it as a worldly person. If you take it out of context it can sound kind of weird.

She said, "Middle age has its compensations. You feel no need to do what you like to do, (because she just wanted to do what the Lord liked). You are no longer ashamed of yourself (because she was accepted in Christ). You are reconciled to being what you are, and you do not much mind what people think of you."

On her death bed after she had served many years, she knew that she was dying, and her last words were, "My work is done; I have nothing left to do now but to go to my Father." A few hours later she passed away.

The Impact of Wesley and Whitefield Upon the World

We see based on what Wesley and Whitefield did, they had a great impact upon the world. They began in the Church of England, but eventually they were barred. But praise God, regardless of their styles and their methods thousands were saved. They introduced outdoor preachings in which you had the large evangelical meetings. They probably had what we would call the first tent meetings. They recovered the truth of sanctification by faith, and the focus of it was on the reality of practical holiness in daily life, that life within making you holy. And they revived the concern as the Moravians did, for the poor and the underprivileged, including the slaves.

This was in England but also in the United States there was the Great Awakening that was occurring. Now when you look back, the Great Awakening we normally call the First Awakening, the Second Awakening, the Third Awakening. But when you are in a first something, you do not know it is first. It is a Great Awakening. It is kind of like World War I. It was called the Great War. All the monuments were not monuments on World War I like you are planning to have others. This was just called the Great Awakening.

However, many of the Puritans who had come to North America, much of their fervent faith and vision and ardor had begun to cool down. They were making money, they were having a good life, and things were settling down. Then Rationalism and Deism were coming in, and they were becoming very content, so God moved in a wonderful way. It mainly started in New Jersey with some tenant brothers and went up through New England. One of the famous names we know is Jonathan Edwards, and he was called the Father of the Great Awakening. His most famous sermon is "Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God." He actually read his sermon but not in an emotional way. As he was reading his sermon the Holy Spirit came upon that group in such a way

that many were actually clinging to the pews hoping they would not fall into hell. They were very emotional about it, and Edwards asked them to be quiet. He said, "Would everybody please quiet down so I can finish my sermon." He kept on reading, and they would cry more. He said again, "Just let me finish my sermon." It is a beautiful picture of how the Holy Spirit works regardless of the vessel. He was just reading this sermon that he had prepared, the Holy Spirit was moving, and he said, "Now let me finish my sermon." The Lord interrupted Peter's sermon at the house of Cornelius, but he never got to finish it. Thank God for faithful servants like that!

Again the most popular and prolific preacher was George Whitefield. I appreciated an excerpt from one of his sermons as he was sharing because you see the breadth of his ministry as he united a lot of the independent movements in the Great Awakening, breaking through a lot of the denominational barriers. In one of his sermons he says:

"Father Abraham, who have You in heaven? Any Episcopalians? Any Presbyterians? No! Any Independents or Methodists? No, no, no! Whom have you there, Father Abraham?" "We don't know those names here." Abraham said, "All who are here are Christians—believers in Christ, men who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony." Whitefield responds: "Oh, is that the case? Then God help me, God help us all to forget having names and to become Christians in deed and in truth!"

It was a powerful uniting word to really be able to see. But sadly he met a lot of resistance also, and where Enthusiasm was the word in England, in the U.S. it was the difference between the old light and the new light. Many were very comfortable with the old light, what they had. They were settled in with what they were doing. But this new light, as it was shining forth, as it would shine brighter and brighter was threatening to some of the ones in the past, and there was a resistance there. The new light was in the U. S. and Enthusiasm was in England. It was very challenging because ones were seeing more and more of Christ. But the impact of the Great Awakening we see a manifestation of Christian holiness and denominational barriers broken down, renewed concerns of missions and particularly to Indians and slaves, and the revived interest in education. They started Princeton, Rutgers, Brown and Dartmouth. Of course, now they would no longer be called Christian at all. But that was the origin. The united believers began developing this slogan, "No king but King Jesus." Various historians related different ways that this was one of the united movements that led to the Revolutionary War because this was in the late 1760's. And they were being united and all of a sudden they were seeing a freedom they have in Christ by being set free. And they were seeing also how they wanted to be free from the King of England. This is not the sole reason for the Revolutionary War, but it was a leading factor to it.

The Local Impact on the Great Awakening

I want to bring it back locally to the Richmond area. In Virginia the legal religion was Anglican. Actually, Virginia did not have any religious freedom until 1786. You know that 1776 was when we were free, but 1786 was when religious freedom was finally granted. But George Whitefield preached at the Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, and Samuel Morris who was a brick layer from Hanover obtained a copy of it and read it to some of his friends. They petitioned the governor based upon "The Act of Toleration" which was in England where dissenters could appeal

to the governor, and they would be granted the right to gather outside the Anglican Church. So they petitioned the governor to see if that could apply here in the U. S. since it was under England's control. And the governor of Virginia at that time Goff granted them that authority. He granted four reading rooms, three in Hanover and one in Henrico. That was the first dissenter gatherings in Virginia independent of the Anglican.

There was one in Polegreen which is Polegreen Road, Page's Warehouse, on the Pinoke River where ships would sail up the Pinoke, and they would load tobacco there. There was the Old Mountain Road that led to the Blue Ridge Mountain, but I am not sure it is Mountain Road today. Then there was Three Chopt Road between here and Charlottesville. Now we still know where Pole Green is because if you ever go out that way, the original Pole Green meeting place has a sketch done by a Union spy. The Confederates were on one side of the church and the Unions were on the other side of the church. So the Union spy was spying out the land, and he made a drawing of the Pole Green meeting place. Sadly the meeting place building was destroyed by a Confederates shell during the war. History tells us that the soldier who fired the Confederate shell that burned down the meeting place was where his father had been baptized.

If you go out on Pole Green Road, they have reconstructed a modern-day memorial. There is actually a visitor's center there, there are some historical plaques on persecution and freedom of religion and it is an interesting place to visit for any other history geeks.

The man who was used there was Samuel Davies, and there were four meeting places to start with and they eventually grew to seven. Remember, we have some Huguenots around here now also. There began to be some history within our little area, and within this group, he was free to preach the gospel, not bound by any denominations. He worked a lot among slaves, both to share the gospel and their education. Between the four meeting places there were about 300 both free blacks and slaves who were meeting with them. There is an old slave spiritual song: "Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart." It originated here. I do not know if you have ever heard it. It goes like this; "Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart. Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart, Lord, I want to be a Christian, Lord, I want to be a Christian, Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart."

The thing that touched me about it was not, "Lord, I want to be a Christian," but "I want to be a Christian in my heart." That is the issue. That is where it is.

Later Davies became the fourth president of Princeton University to carry on. So as we finish for today, just some points we see. Just keep in mind how we see in part, let us not stand in the way of what God is doing. The spirit of this world, the age, is always against the testimony of Jesus. And when ones cool off, we become comfortable and content, and God raises up other vessels. That was what Mordecai shared to Esther. He said, "Esther, if you do not stand up, God is going to raise somebody else." Brothers and sisters, if God is going to raise somebody else, we want it to be us. Our unity is in Christ regardless of different methods, styles, or emphasis. We are saved and sanctified by faith in Jesus, not by works. Praise God, He has become that to us. It is a glorious testimony when brothers and sisters are seen working together. It is a beautiful testimony of the oneness that we have in Him. Also would we appreciate the convicting power of the Holy Spirit who can move through diverse vessels. Sometime we limit the Holy Spirit. We

think, oh it has to have this type of vessel to work in, but no, the only thing He is looking for is a sold-out heart to work through. If the Holy Spirit can have a heart He can use a quiet man, He can use an outgoing man, He can use a humble, quiet little sister, He can use a strong, outgoing sister; whatever. He can use the vessel if He has our heart. So may we be those who are learning these lessons.

Lord, we are very thankful for these ones who have gone before us. Lord, we are thankful how You found ones at a point in time to be used for the thing that You desire to have done—the mission. And Lord, as we are living in this day and this time, as we are studying these things, it is not just learning the history, but it is allowing You to awaken us, allowing You to work in our hearts that we could be prepared. We heard about waiting. There were ones at Your first coming who were ready for You, Lord. We want to be those who at Your second coming are ready. Work in us now, Lord, to do that work. In Thy name we pray. Amen.