



The Church Grows Up

Part 4

The Great Awakening
1700's to Present

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Introduction

- Those who set out to reform the Roman Catholic Church as well as the Anglican Church (The Church of England) spawned a later movement that is often referred to as “The Great Awakening” or “The Great Revival”.
- These reformers of the 16th century (1500’s) helped to lay the foundation for the “revivals” and “missionary outreach” that occurred in the 17th through 21st centuries (1600’s-2000’s)
- This allowed the Gospel (The Good News) to spread to large unreached regions and people groups and produced Bibles written in their own language – something unheard of and unaccomplished until recent time!

Introduction

- During the 17th through the 21st centuries a significant shift occurs where several organized religious groups (denominations) will rise to the forefront
 - The leaders of these denominations, large congregations and religious organizations will often be referred to as evangelists and preachers
 - During this period, the “Tent Revivals”, open air meetings and large organized crusades will be a new venue in which the gospel will be declared
 - This period will also produce some of the largest Christian missionary activity that the world has ever known

Introduction

The Roman Catholic Church will cease to be the sole voice of Christianity as these organized religious groups (denominations) and those who lead them will continue to promote the Bible as the source of Christian discipline

Introduction

The general position of the Roman Catholic Church is that they are the “**true church**” and those groups that have left either in “**protest**” or in **principle** are welcome to submit and return to the practices of the Catholic Church. As such their participation in this “Great Awakening” was pretty much nonexistent

George Whitefield (1714 - 1770)

- Background Information

- He came from a poor family
- His entry into Oxford was via a “servitor” status in which he was provided free tuition in return for his service to other high-ranking students
- In his early years he had a passion and talent for acting in the theater. This would benefit him later in life as during his sermons he had the ability to re-enact Bible stories for the benefit of the audience
- He, along with John & Charles Wesley, were a part of a “Holy Club” on the campus of Oxford University

George Whitefield (1714 - 1770)

- Background Information

- He played a significant role in what has been labeled the Great Awakening
- Some of the more modern or contemporary accounts consider him the founder of Methodism as opposed to John Wesley
- His initial beginning in the pulpit took place in his hometown of Gloucester England
- In 1738 he went to Savannah Georgia to minister and then returned home to England the following year and began to preach out in an open field in what were called “open air meetings”

George Whitefield (1714 - 1770)

- His evangelistic efforts
 - He conducted these open-air meetings in response to the Anglican Church refusing to assign him a pulpit
 - These “open air meetings” gained popularity as men like George Whitefield were able to reach those people who normally did not attend church
 - In many ways his “open air meetings” established a new style of getting the Gospel out to the masses also.....and it worked! Others who came after him would use this method to an even greater means!
 - ❖ He visited America seven times, preached in excess of 18,000 sermons in a formal setting and over 30,000 in a less than formal setting
 - ❖ He would often speak to large crowds of several thousand

George Whitefield (1714 - 1770)

- His revolutionary “preaching style” appealed to the American audience and shaped the way sermons were delivered from this point on. They were more energized and less stuffy
- He may well have been the best known preachers in America in the 18th century, and some consider him one of the fathers of Evangelicalism
- He also ministered in Scotland (approx. 15 trips there) and Ireland (2 trips)
- He and John Wesley had a falling out over the matter of predestination:
 - ❖ John Wesley believed in free will and followed the Arminian position
 - ❖ George Whitefield believed in election and followed the teachings of Calvin

George Whitefield (1714 - 1770)

- Here are a few noteworthy quotes of this great preacher:

❖ “Among the many reasons assignable for the sad decay of true Christianity, perhaps the neglecting to assemble ourselves together, in religious societies, may not be one of the least” George Whitefield

❖ “Nothing is more generally known than our duties which belong to Christianity; and yet, how amazing is it, nothing is less practiced” George Whitefield

Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758)

- He was a contemporary of George Whitefield
- He was a Congregational preacher and theologian and a defender of Calvinistic theology as well as the Puritan heritage
- He was outspoken against the position of Arminianism (Free Will) in which he claims; “God is absolutely sovereign in the work of redemption. While it behooved God to create man holy, it was of His good pleasure and mere arbitrary grace that any man was now made holy, and that God might deny this grace without any disparagement to any of His perfections”. This position of predestination has become the mantra of the “Reformed movement” from his day and continues into the 21st century

Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758)

He too was a part of what has been called **The Great Awakening** (1739-1740) which initially began as the Northampton revival, then spread throughout Connecticut, the colonies and ultimately to Europe (specifically England and Scotland)

Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758)

- The Great Awakening began under his leadership
- It was during this time that he became acquainted with George Whitefield and went on to preach his most famous sermon titled; “Sinners in the hands of an angry God”
- It was this sermon that marked the beginning of what would be labeled “fire and brimstone” type preaching and it became one of the more effective preaching styles in converting sinners for years to come
- He was a strong proponent of the missionary movement

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- His parents (Samuel Wesley and Susanna Annesley) were raised in a “Dissenting home” which meant they probably followed those separatists or dissenters who considered the Catholic Church or “established church” to be in error
 - Samuel Wesley will graduate from Oxford and become a minister in the Church of England shortly after John is born
 - Susanna will have 19 children and John Wesley is number 15
 - There is probably a mixture of both the established, ritualistic teachings of the Catholic Church as well as the Anglican Church mixed with some of the dissenting positions held by his grandparents that led John Wesley to pursue this life of devotion or holiness and an eventual shift from the doctrines of the Church of England

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- John Wesley entered Christ Church College in Oxford and received his Master of Arts in 1727
- It is believed that his pursuit of a rigid, methodical and devoted life based on Scriptural principles and godliness, along with reading about the Great Revivals of the 18th century, led to his “official conversion” and turning point in his life
- From there the rest is history.....the “holy clubs” (originally formed by his brother Charles) that met on the College campus began to take shape and Methodism was born!

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- John will spend time (about 2 years) in Savannah, Georgia for the purposes of reaching and converting Indians and helping to establish his new found “Methodism” among the colonists
- During his time in Savanna Georgia, charges were brought against him (he was just too serious about his faith), and he was basically run out of town, and he subsequently returned to England
- The “real” Revivals for Wesley began when he returned to London, England in 1738 and began a travelling type ministry but it will be his teachings on “holy living” that will place him at odds with the Church of England

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- Wesley observed the success of his friend George Whitefield in relation to his “open air meetings” and although was reluctant at first to do the same, he does eventually preach his first sermon in the open (sometimes called “field preaching”) near Bristol in April of 1739
- It is a good thing that he didn’t remain reluctant for these services became very successful in saving souls!
- He continued to preach in the open fields, meeting halls, cottages, chapels and any church that would have him for nearly 50 years

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- The Methodist Society of England begins:
 - The Church of England did not formally recognize this group and it brought severe persecution upon them by the Anglican Church
 - The Church of England considered their teachings on “Holy living” to be strange and fanatical and deemed it to be leading people astray
 - There was even a charge that they were reintroducing or reestablishing Catholicism in England

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- Wesley believed there was a need of revival in England, and he set out to do just that...even if it meant doing it alone and without the Church of England's support!
 - He organized various societies and conferences which lead to the establishment of houses of worship...originally called chapels
 - Due to the various conflicts with Church of England there was a serious lack of trained ministers to fill the pulpits of these new churches within England and America so Wesley will go on to ordain their own ministers
 - Wesley himself never formally broke away from the Church of England although his teachings on “right living” were a source of continued conflict

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- Wesley's doctrinal beliefs:
 - He supported Luther's claim that salvation was by grace through faith alone
 - He was an advocate of Arminianism (universal redemption, free grace) which put him at odds with his friend George Whitefield who supported Calvinism
 - He emphasized grace, personal salvation, and the present ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer – which I would also embrace

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- It was his doctrinal positions and support of Arminianism (the idea of universal redemption in which all people are capable of being saved) that put him at odds with others who followed the stricter teachings of Calvinism which taught only those chosen by God (“the elect”) could be saved:
 - This pretty much created the formal division between the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church
 - The division between these two schools of thought (Arminianism and Calvinism) continues to fuel debate even in our current day

John Wesley (1703 – 1791)

- Summing up the life of John Wesley.....probably one of the more significant contributors to the Great Awakening and modern revival movement:
 - He traveled constantly often on horseback and preached 2 to 3 times a day!
 - He commissioned and ordained hundreds of preachers, formed various societies of Christians, and established numerous chapels where the Gospel continued to be preached
 - He helped in the establishment of aid to the poor, and superintended a number of schools and orphanages
 - The membership in the Methodist movement was 135,000 strong when he died
 - He was never idle....rising at 4:00 in the morning and lived a simple and methodical life in which he followed until the end

What is Methodism?

- It began as a formation of “religious societies” in which believers banded or gathered themselves together for the purposes of intensive accountability and religious instruction
- Its formal beginning took place in Oxford, England with the establishment of the “Holy Club” which was a gathering of devoted Christians who banded together under the purposes of living a holy life
- Often these believers would attend one of the “open air” meetings held by Wesley, and then resulted in them coming under conviction and subsequently committing themselves to God and this movement
- It is probably best understood to mean; living a disciplined life. In today’s vernacular it might be defined as a “fully devoted follower of Christ”.
- The name “Methodist” was given because they were very methodical, rigid, and disciplined in their pursuit of holiness

What is Methodism?

- Many of the “Brethren” churches subscribe to this “disciplined life” teaching
- The largest organization/denomination that developed from Wesley’s teachings would be the United Methodist Church
- Another movement that has direct link to Methodism and Wesleyan teaching is known as the “Holiness movement”. These churches are often referred to as Pentecostal or charismatic
- Another organized denomination that supports Wesleyan teaching is the Christian and Missionary Alliance

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

- Background Information

- He was a British Baptist preacher
- He converted to Christianity at the age of 15 in what he claims to be a divine appointment where he ended up (unintentionally) at a Primitive Methodist chapel in Colchester and claims; “God opened my heart to the salvation message”.
- He preached his first sermon just one year later and the very next year (1852) he became Pastor of a small Baptist church in Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

- Spurgeon's Beliefs

- Although he was a Baptist, he allied himself with those who followed Calvin and the other reformers
- He also held to the traditional views of the Puritans and was held in high regard among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists
- Where he differed from many of the reformers was in the matter of infant baptism. He preached against infant baptism in spite of his Calvinist beliefs

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

- Spurgeon's accomplishments:

- He is most noted for his sermons and many to this day still quote or preach from some of his 3600 +/- sermons
- He also published over 49 volumes of commentaries, sayings, illustrations and devotions
- The opening of the Pastors College (1857) which was later named Spurgeon's College in 1923
- The establishment of the Stockwell Orphanage for boys (1867) and then for girls (1879). It continued in London but did not survive the bombings of WWII

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

- Several notable quotes worth mentioning:

“I think we have greater reason to ask the Lord to impress more deeply upon us the truth we have received than to ask Him to give us more truth; for what we already know might suffice us if we did but know it better; and if we kept in mind the things which we have already heard, we might almost be satisfied even if we heard no more.” C.H. Spurgeon

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

- Several notable quotes worth mentioning:

“There is nothing in the law of God that will rob you of happiness; it only denies you that which would cost you sorrow” C.H. Spurgeon

“I believe that the most unreasonable things in the world are doubt and unbelief, in fact atheists and infidels are the most gullible persons living” C.H. Spurgeon

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

Spurgeon is highly respected as one of the great fiery preachers of the 19th Century whose sermon impacted the lives of countless souls!

Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899)

- He is most commonly called D.L. Moody and was an American evangelist and publisher
 - His dad was an alcoholic and died at the age of 41 when Dwight was just 4
 - Dwight moved to Boston and went to work for his uncle in his shoe store. One of the requirements was that Dwight would attend church on a regular basis. Shortly thereafter due to the efforts of a teacher who talked with him about God's love for him, Dwight gave his heart to Jesus and his conversion began a long and productive career as an evangelist
 - He founded the Moody Church, Northfield School and Mount Hermon School
 - He also founded the Moody Bible Institute and Moody Press

Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899)

- He was well known for his Sunday school efforts and had the largest Sunday school (approx. 650) of its time in the town of Chicago, Illinois. Even President Lincoln visited and spoke there on November 25, 1860
- He also traveled to England where he would often speak to crowds ranging from 2000 to 4000. His largest meeting (Botanic Gardens Palace) was by its smallest estimate about 15,000 and some say exceeded 30,000 in attendance
- Upon his return to the United States, he spoke to crowds ranging from 12,000 to 20,000 throughout New England, New York, Boston and as far west as San Francisco, Vancouver, and San Diego. Even President Grant along with some of his cabinet attended a meeting on January 19, 1876
- Dwight nearly made it into the turn of the century as he died December 22, 1899, and preached nearly up to his death....his last recorded sermon was preached on November 16, 1899

William Ashley Sunday (1862 – 1935)

- He is most commonly known as Billy Sunday and his initial claim to fame was professional baseball
- His father died about 4 months before he was born and he ended up in an orphanage in Iowa at the age of 13
- Through a series of events, Billy was able to attend school where he learned to play baseball and he was known for his “lightning speed”
- Billy was signed by A.G. Spaulding in 1883 to the then defending National League champions, the Chicago White Stockings. He went on to play professional baseball for 8 years and played for Chicago, Pittsburg and Philadelphia

William Ashley Sunday (1862 – 1935)

- A few notes about his conversion to faith in Christ and early ministry years
 - The story is told that while he was drinking one afternoon with his teammates (probably in 1887); he was invited to attend a service at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago
 - He attended these meetings regularly and one day after the service he embraced Christ fully, quit baseball and became a street preacher for the YMCA
 - He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1903 and in the 1920's began to use radio as a means of getting the Gospel to those who needed to hear it

William Ashley Sunday (1862 – 1935)

- Famous quotes from this dynamic preacher:
 - “Listen, I’m against sin. I’ll kick it as long as I’ve got a foot, I’ll fight it as long as I’ve got a fist, I’ll butt it as long as I’ve got a head, I’ll bite it as long as I’ve got a tooth. And when I’m old, fistless, footless, and toothless, I’ll gum it til I go home to glory and it goes home to perdition” Billy Sunday
 - “The Bible will always be full of things you cannot understand, as long as you will not live according to those you can understand” Billy Sunday

William Ashley Sunday (1862 – 1935)

- Billy was also noted for his “Revival Meetings”:
 - His first meeting was held in Garner, Iowa and the subject matter was personal salvation, temperance, and values
 - He was one the first to erect wooden buildings (sort of barn like structures) that he called tabernacles, and this is where he would hold his revival meetings. The floors were often covered with sawdust to help deaden the background noise
 - Billy’s fame grew and in 1914 he preached at Carnegie Hall. He preached in Philadelphia in 1915 and claimed some 42,000 converts, then in Boston where some 65,000 were saved and the largest number of converts (98,000) was during the two-month revivals that he held in New York

William Ashley Sunday (1862 – 1935)

- Billy Sunday's impact on this world for Christ:
 - He preached against sin, liberalism, evolution and alcohol with all the energy and vitality he could muster. The results were phenomenal!
 - He was a staunch fundamentalist in his theological views which put him at odds with some of the “liberal” religious denominations of his day but those views helped to foster other later movements that would battle those who would attempt to water down the Gospel
 - He worked for social reform and was a major influence in the Prohibition Movement of 1919
 - In spite of the ridicule that he faced he continued to preach against alcoholism until his dying day.....he was passionately opposed to it

William Ashley Sunday (1862 – 1935)

Billy woke up Americans during a period (early 1900's) known for decadence and he was noted as one of the most successful evangelists we have ever known!

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

- Most know him as Billy Graham and he hails as the leading Protestant/Christian evangelist of his time
- His family and early life:
 - His birthplace is Charlotte, North Carolina
 - His parents were originally involved in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
 - Billy left the Presbyterian Church and joined the Southern Baptists in 1934 after attending a revival meeting conducted by Mordecai Ham. Shortly thereafter he was ordained as a Southern Baptist minister in 1939

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

- Billy's formal education and early ministry years:
 - He first attended Bob Jones College but found that it held too much of an extreme fundamentalist position. He transferred to the Florida Bible Institute (now Trinity College) in 1937 and then to Wheaton College
 - He graduated from Wheaton College in 1943 and while attending there he solidified in his mind that the Bible was the infallible Word of God
 - This decision set in motion the pursuit of a ministry that was grounded in the Word of God and established a platform in which he boldly declared the phrase; "God loves you". This forged a path where he preached the Gospel to millions of people throughout the world

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

- His formal ministry spans some 6 decades:
 - After graduating from Wheaton he joined Youth for Christ and traveled as an evangelist where he would conduct what were then referred to as “missions” that lasted anywhere from 3-16 weeks and in cities throughout the U.S. and Europe
 - He is probably most noted for his evangelistic crusades and his first was held in Australia in 1959. The impact of this crusade led to an enormous growth in the churches of Australia as well as the establishment of new churches for some 15 years. In addition to this, home Bible groups were sprouting up all over and there are records that the impact of this one crusade lasted some 35 years in all

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

- Several of his notable accomplishments:
 - President of Northwestern College in Minnesota
 - Founded the Billy Graham Evangelical Association
 - Hour of Decision (weekly radio broadcast to the world for over 50 years)
 - Television specials/Crusades
 - Founded Decision Magazine and Christianity Today
 - Started World Wide Pictures (What I call an alternative to Hollywood!)

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

- Billy was especially noted for holding crusades in places that other evangelists felt were impossible to reach:
 - During the Cold War he spoke to thousands of people across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union even though he was an outspoken critic of Communism
 - He spoke in South Africa at the height of Apartheid and at his Crusade he would not allow the people to sit desegregated
 - He was one of the few preachers to be invited to speak in North Korea

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

- There is no way to accurately report the impact that Billy Graham has had on this world but here are a few things worth noting:
 - He has preached to live audiences in excess of 210 million people
 - Through his radio, television, video, film and now modern webcast venues he has reached many more millions of people with the Gospel
 - He has taken the Gospel to well over 185 countries
 - His official last American Crusade was held in June of 2005 at Flushing Meadows New York, but was able to do one more (along with his son Franklin) in March of 2006 after the Katrina Disaster
 - In addition to the crusades he has prayed with 10 successive U.S. Presidents and served as a “counselor and advisor” to several

William Franklin Graham Jr. (Nov 7, 1918 - Feb 21, 2018)

We are forever indebted to the efforts of William Franklin Graham for he took the simple Gospel message and declared it boldly to a world that desperately needed to hear it.....where would be without those soothing words; “God loves you”. That message has changed lives and continues to this day!

Concluding Remarks

- The Great Awakening brought several changes to the Church
 1. New Denominations such as; Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopal, Church of Christ, Baptists, Brethren, Quakers, Pentecostal/Assemblies of God, Evangelical, Non-Denomination and others became more common
 2. Large gatherings/open air type meetings, and Gospel Crusades, where Evangelists and preachers would declare the Good News and people would respond in faith to the message that Jesus Saves became more common
 3. There was no longer just “one voice”, one council, or even one denomination that spoke for believers. The local church often led by a Pastor/Shepherd who themselves felt led or called by God through the leading of the Holy Spirit will lead/guide their local congregation.

Concluding Remarks

- The Great Awakening brought several changes to the Church
 1. Churches began to participate in and support large missionary outreach ministries to help reach the unreached people groups of the world which saw its largest growth in the last few centuries
 2. The printing of the Bible in the various languages of the world have opened the hearts and minds of people groups who have never read the scriptures or heard the gospel preached in their native tongue.
 3. While many Christian denominations, Christian leaders and other Christian groups find disagreement on many things – the one thing we must agree on is that Jesus is the only way to the Father - “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)

Concluding Remarks

- In the same way that these evangelists, preachers, reformers, theologians, pastors, teachers, apologists, and apostles boldly proclaimed the Good News of the Gospel - we too must carry the torch of faith until the Lord Jesus returns as he promised
- The church never stops growing and the message of the Gospel (The Good New) remains at the core of what the church believes - *“Behold He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes will mourn over Him. So, it is to be Amen. I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty”* (Revelation 1:7-8)