

# EXPONENTIAL

## *Spiritual Awakenings*

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### The Age of Reason and Revival

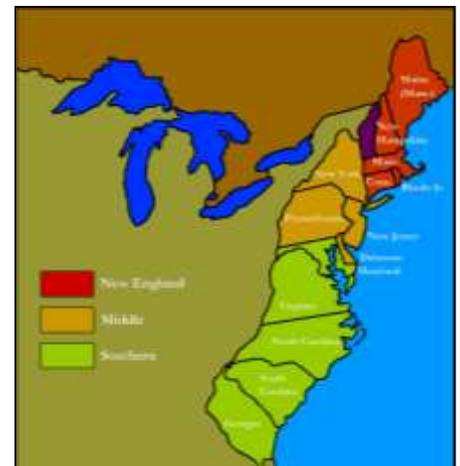
- The Protestant Reformation of the 1500s had been somewhat of a revival itself. By the mid-1660s, however, over a century had passed and many things had become commonplace.
- Bruce Shelley: “Any religion that becomes the religion of the majority and slowly turns into a social habit tends to grow humdrum and flat, regardless of its original glow of enthusiasm.”<sup>i</sup>
- In the mid-1660s, society was awakened to the Age of Reason and “The Enlightenment” was born. Respect for science and human reason replaced the Christian faith as the cornerstone of Western culture.
- Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727)
- The faith of many thinking people was restored since the rational order of the universe seemed to prove God’s existence. However, this belief in God did not always lead to salvation. Most thinking people became \_\_\_\_\_.
- The result was \_\_\_\_\_ reason and darkened \_\_\_\_\_.
- The established ministry consisted of educated moralists. Knowledge became a more important prerequisite for ordination than piety; sometimes the *only* prerequisite.
- Congregations came to view their ministers with indifference or even hostility. People lost enthusiasm for spiritual matters. Piety declined.

### Pietism: The Equal and Opposite Reaction

- Phillipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705), founder of pietism. Made six proposals for Lutheran reform:
  - 1) Return to scriptures. Intensive Bible study should happen in the Church.
  - 2) Priesthood of all Christians
  - 3) Practice Christianity – Christians must practice what they know
  - 4) End destructive theological controversies
  - 5) Universities were key to bring reform to the clergy
  - 6) Enrich preaching
- August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), became leader of the pietist movement. The University of Halle, where Francke taught, became the hub of Pietism.
- Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), influenced by the Moravian Brethren and later a key leader. Missions minded.

### The First Sparks of the First Great Awakening

- **The Colonial Situation** - The Great awakening was a strange confluence of regional diversity and a growing American unity.
- **Dating the Awakening**
  - **Middle Colonies** - Begins with the ministry of Theodorus J. Freylinghuysen in 1720 in New Brunswick, NJ. Primarily encouraged by Gilbert Tennent.
  - **New England Colonies** - Begins in 1733-34 among the youth group at Northampton Church. Jonathan Edwards was pastor.



- **Southern Colonies** - Begins with George Whitefield's preaching ministry in Georgia in 1739. Encouraged and fanned into flame by Samuel Davies.
- **Factors influencing the Beginning of the Awakening**
  - Deplorable \_\_\_\_\_ condition.
  - Multi-faceted \_\_\_\_\_ scene.

#### **Awakening in the Middle Colonies**

- Dutch Reformed: Frelinghuysen (1691-1747)
- Presbyterian: Gilbert Tennent (1703-1764)
- "Log College" (1726-1746) – founded by Gilbert's father, William, as a seminary for poor students. The Log College was a pivotal instrument in the spread of the Great Awakening in the American colonies, especially in the middle colonies. The Log College is often cited as a predecessor of Princeton University. There were only 20 alumni of the Log College.

#### **Awakening Sparks in New England**

- Localized revivals had been occurring for some time.
  - 1721 – Windham, Connecticut: 80 people in a town of 200 were admitted to church membership in a period of about 6 months.
  - October, 1727 – earthquake
  - Northampton, Massachusetts – "harvests in 1679, 1683, 1712, 1718"

**Scripture:** Revelation 3:1-3 - the state of many churches just before the revival.

**Statement:** People will never change until the pain of staying the same becomes greater than the pain of change.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1982), 344.