

XXI. The Church in the XVIII Century

A. The British Churches

1. Philanthropic enterprises

a. Robert Raikes (fl. 1780) of Gloucester: Father of the Sunday School

b. Foundling Hospital for abandoned infants, Magdalen Hospital for reclaiming prostitutes, orphanages, and attempts at prison reform

2. growing interest in missions

a. early attempts

- 1) Calvin & Coligny send missionaries to Brazil
- 2) Synod of Dort calls for missionaries to Dutch colonies
- 3) English support of Christian outreach in America
 - a) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge - 1698
 - b) Society for the Propagation to the Gospel - 1701

* b. William Carey - Father of Modern Missions (1761-1834)

- 1) self-taught, natural linguist
- 2) zeal led to founding of Baptist Missionary Society, 1792
 - a) had preached on Isaiah 54:2 (“enlarge the place of thy tent...lengthen thy cords”)
 - b) motto: “Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God.”
- 3) labored in India from 1793 till his death

c. other societies soon follow

3. The Evangelical Revival

* a. early life of George Whitefield (1714-1770)

1) childhood

2) Oxford

a) “servitor”

b) “Holy Club”

-pious Christian students meeting for fellowship

-spiritual exercises followed Anglican liturgy

-organized by Charles Wesley, later led by John: = beginning of Methodism

3) study of drama

4) conversion

a) read *Life of God in the Soul of Man* by Henry Scougal, martyr from the “Killing Times”

-“a ray of light pierced my soul”

b) while sick, converted during 2nd reading of Scougal

- 5) after Oxford, appointed at age 21 as a deacon in Anglican Church; “testimony of conversion from being a bartender gets him more speaking invitations
- 6) voyage to Georgia (first of seven trans-Atlantic trips)
 - a) at invitation of the Wesleys
 - b) to evangelize Indians; John Wesley later said, “I went to evangelize the Indians, but who would convert me?”
 - c) preached during ocean passage
 - d) impressed with Moravian orphanages
 - traveled along eastern seaboard raising orphanage monies
 - published his Journal in England to gain support
- 7) new developments in England
 - a) conversion of Wesley brothers
 - (1) calm piety of Moravians in a storm had some influence
 - (2) Charles read Luther’s *Commentary on Galatians*
 - “I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in the hope of loving Christ.”
 - (3) John heard a few days later the Preface to Luther’s *Commentary on Romans*
 - “I felt my heart strangely warmed, and then it pleased God to kindle a fire which, I trust, shall never be extinguished.”
 - b) open air preaching
 - (1) George becomes CoE priest upon short return to England
 - (2) preaches outside at Bristol, altho illegal
 - (3) persisted to preach in remote coal mining areas
 - (4) Wesley’s carry on outdoors at return of George to Georgia

* b. The Great Awakening in America (1725-60)

- 1) fanned by Whitefield as he travelled throughout the middle colonies and New England, being entertained by the Tennants and J. Edwards (and Ben Franklin)
- 2) results of the Great Awakening
 - a) church splits
 - (1) in New England Congregationalism, New Lights vs. Old Lights
 - (2) in Middle colony Presbyterianism, New Side vs. Old Side
 - b) increased church membership; Baptists begin to grow
 - c) higher moral consciousness and social reforms
 - d) renewed interest in Indian missions
 - e) more schools, basically for training of more ministers: Univ. of Penn. started by Whitefield; College of NJ
 - f) colonies drawn closer together by new spiritual bond and recognized intercolonial leaders, e.g., Whitefield

c. Whitefield’s continuing work in England

- 1) large-scale preaching throughout the homeland; as many as 200,000 at a time
- 2) often, the Wesleys would move in afterwards and organize the converts
- 3) Selina Hastings = aristocratic Lady Huntingdon
 - a) patron of Whitefield’s work
 - (1) sent \$ for Princeton and Dartmouth Colleges
 - (2) financed orphanages

- (3) built 40 chapels for Calvinist, non-conformist preachers
- b) gathered aristocrats in her parlor for preaching sessions

d. summary of Whitefield's accomplishments

- 1) not an organizer, yet direct influence on scores of 1000s
- 2) great fund raiser for schools and orphanages
- 3) got Wesleys involved in outdoor preaching and evangelism
- 4) established Welsh Methodists (Calvinistic) with the help of Selina Hastings

* e. early work of John (1703-91) and Charles Wesley (1707-88)

- 1) parentage
 - a) grandparents were Puritan leaders under Cromwell
 - b) Samuel and Susannah Wesley both were strict parents; loyal Anglicans; 19 children in all, 10 dying in infancy; Susannah held conventicles for neighbors
 - c) both sons earned scholarships to Oxford
- 2) Holy Club at Oxford; led to origin of derisive name, "Methodist"
- 3) conversions
 - a) after discouragements of Georgia
 - b) influence of Luther
 - (1) Charles by Commentary on Galatians
 - (2) John by Preface to Commentary on Romans

f. active ministry

- 1) preaching
 - a) open air; early opposition
 - b) circuits developed
- 2) organizing
 - a) John's strength not nec. in preaching, but in organizing and administration
 - (1) circuits (societies) divided into classes with a local lay leader over each class
 - (2) designed as a movement to support and revive the CoE, reaching many of the unreached working class in the new industrial revolution; never intended to break from the CoE
 - b) dynamo of directed energy
 - (1) 18 hour days
 - (2) 200,000 miles on horseback
 - (3) Journal in 8 vols.; sermons in 2 vols.
- 3) Charles' gift in expression: 7,270 poems and hymns

g. Arminian/Calvinist controversy

- 1) Whitefield won by Gilbert Tennant while Wesleys steeped in Arminianism holding sway in CoE since Laud
- 2) Whitefield writes a pamphlet in defense of the Sovereignty of God in salvation (1740) after JWesley attacks Calvinism as an obstacle to the sinner's hope
- 3) the battle raged more hotly after Whitefield's death
 - Augustus Toplady ("Rock of Ages") published books showing that the CoE was originally Calvinistic and he edited the "Gospel Magazine" in opposition to Wesley's "The Arminian Quarterly"

h. Wesley's relation to the CoE

- 1) Wesley's attitude: "I will live and die in the CoE."
 - a) conservative, holding to the divine right of Kings
 - b) early Methodist services never competed with CoE services
- 2) attitude of Bishops of CoE
 - a) worldly bsp. opposed Wesley's "enthusiast approach"
 - b) godly bsp. opposed his informal, uneducated approach
- 3) Wesley's struggle over providing ordained leadership
 - a) CoE opposes ordination of class leaders w/o formal theological training
 - b) after studying Scripture and the fathers, Wesley concludes that:
 - (1) the office of elder and bishop are the same; hence ministers do not need to be ordained by a hierarchical bishop
 - (2) necessity can dictate ordination of church leaders, even as the CoE originally began ordaining its own bishops after its break from Rome

i. American Methodism becomes independent of England

- 1) Francis Asbury, Wesley's deputy who remains in America to oversee growth of their church
- 2) rapid growth: in 60 years, Methodist preachers jumped from 200 to 4,000 and membership rose from 18,000 to 1,000,000

j. some visible results of the Evangelical Revival

- 1) establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America
- 2) renewal of many denominations
- 3) Social and moral reforms
 - a) penal reforms
 - b) Clapham Sect of England
 - (1) Basically, aristocratic, evangelical yet conservative movement within the CoE
 - (2) promoted Abolitionist movement, missionary enterprises, and broader educational opportunities; the English slave trade was abolished in 1807, and slavery in 1833
 - (3) leading luminaries:
 - John Newton, William Wilberforce, Charles Simeon, Grenville Sharp

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4. Churches in Scotland after the Glorious Revolution of 1688

- a. small Anglican church retains its own bishop
- b. Presbyterianism reconfirmed as state church while recognizing new Stuart dynasty
 - 1) Scotland joins British Commonwealth in 1707: Parliaments merge
(in 1999, Scotland regained its autonomy with its own Parliament)
 - 2) Queen Anne supports vexatious Lay Patronage policy of Scottish nobles: i.e., nobles had their own private chapels and were choosing their own ministers, contrary to Presbyterianism
- c. Secession Church

- 1) est. in 1730s by renowned preacher Ebenezer Erskine who was suspended from the state church for making a habit of preaching vs. lay patronage

2) split itself in 1747 into the Burghers and Anti-Burghers

- a) “Is it lawful for citizens of certain towns to take an oath acknowledging that the true religion is held and preached by the CoScotland?”
- b) both groups again experienced splits within the next 50 years

B. Jesuit Ultramontanism: (“across the mountains” i.e., across from Rome), = Jesuit imperialism

1. asserted vs. Gallican Jansenism in France
2. 1759 - Jesuits expelled from Portugal because of their political threat
3. Louis XV expels them from France after popular backlash vs. Jesuit innovations:
 - a. dissolution of representative Estates General and,
 - b. denial of last rites to any rejecting the Bull “Unigenitas”
4. 1767, Spain (!) follows suit on charges of treason
5. Pope Clement XIV coerced into dissolving the order in 1773
6. Jesuits stay alive in Prussia & Russia to fight another day
7. Jesuits revived by Pius VII in 1814

C. Spread of Rationalism to Germany

1. applied to sacred writings and church dogma; the Bible studied objectively as an historical and literary document

* 2. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

a. born into a pietistic German home

b. set limits on the ability of human knowledge

1) God cannot be known by rational proofs

2) metaphysical knowledge is impossible, thus making faith necessary to know the unknowable God.

a. To Kant, Faith was a “leap in the dark”

b. God was “the highest good we can conceive”

c. continuing influences

* 1) Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Father of Liberalism

a) God can only be known intuitively through our awareness of self-consciousness; religion arises out of a sense of absolute human dependence, making feeling the essence of faith while aborting the necessity of objective knowledge (e.g., inscripturated truth)

b) hence, theology became anthropology in his system

* 2) Karl Barth (1886-1968)

his “wholly other” transcendent God was shaped by Kant’s “unknowable God,” but was in reaction against the shallow and positive God of liberalism (Schleiermacher) which was accommodating man