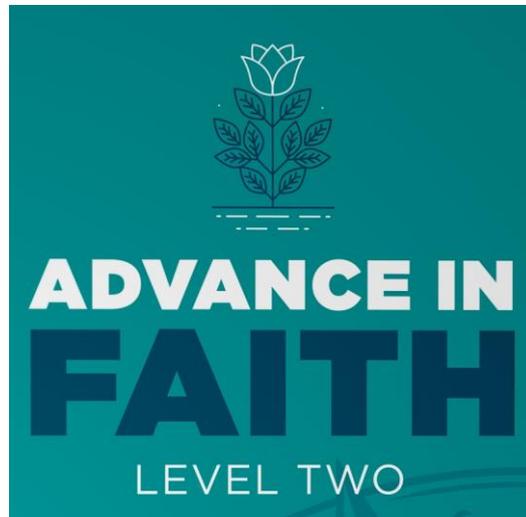


# Missions

Church History Part 2 – Week 4



## Introduction

The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries saw profound changes in both the extent of the Christian church and in its makeup.

## Awakening and Revival

In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century a missionary vision began to emerge in continental and British Protestantism and along with it came a surging wave of renewal that was known variously as Methodism or the Great Awakening.

The clearest missionary vision came from the Anabaptists. This flowed from their understanding of the Gospel, the church and eschatology.

## North America

By the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century almost 200,000 Germans had emigrated to America. These groups had already been touched by pietism and brought its reviving spirit with them. By the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the American churches had been overtaken by a creeping paralysis.

What became known as the Great Awakening began with the preaching of Jonathan Edwards in Northampton Massachusetts in 1735. In 1733 he began a series of sermons on justification and towards the end of December the Spirit of God began to set in on the town.

As the best-known Protestant of the eighteenth century, George Whitefield gave an exceptional degree of unity to the colonial revival.

## The American Revolution

The first new state founded on the principles of the enlightenment was in North America.

July 4, 1776 the Declaration of Independence was signed which, while it acknowledged God, it was the god of deism.

## Britain

The first outbreak of revival occurred in Wales in 1735. The landmark figure in the revival movement was John Wesley. He proclaimed justification by faith, the new birth, and Christian perfection (sanctification). Following the Moravian model, he created the Methodist Society.

## Changing Protestantism

It was changing in 2 ways;

- 1/ Its growing awareness and interest in people and lands outside of Europe and America.
- 2/ Increased practice of Christian holiness.

As the idea of 'nation' developed within Europe and Britain, a significant change in how people saw themselves as 'Christian' also came about.

“What does it mean to be a Christian?” or “How can we tell is a person is a Christian?”

Many Protestant churches began to use baptism as a sign that a person was a Christian. As time passed this 'personal encounter with Jesus' became overwhelmingly THE indicator for who was and who was not a Christian.

## Roots of the Modern Missions Movement

The roots of the modern missions movement reach back to the revivals of the eighteenth century, 1700s. These movements of God's Spirit gave the fervour and energy so necessary for cross-cultural ministry.

William Carey (1761–1834), founder of the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen, who became “the father of modern missions.”

The modern missions movement, however, found its greatest power and influence in the faith missions movement, founded by J. Hudson Taylor (1832–1905)

Taylor devoted himself to founding and then leading the China Inland Mission (CIM).

Strongly interdenominational and dependent on God for support, CIM became the vanguard for spiritual awakening in China. Taylor went back to China where he meticulously led the opening of each province to the Gospel.

## **The Contributions of Modern Missions**

The achievements of the modern missionary enterprise have been staggering.

- First, literally millions of people have found eternal life. Every ethnic, racial, and language group is now represented in the universal church of Jesus Christ.
- Second, national churches, with scores of local churches, now exist in virtually every nation of the world.
- Third, mission agencies planted thousands of educational institutions throughout the world. Fourth, Christianity became a liberating force for women and other underprivileged groups in the native cultures. The social and ethical implications of the Christian faith have often had profound, transforming effects on the native culture.
- Fifth, Christian mission agencies usually built medical facilities, including large hospitals, to care for the medical needs of the native population.
- Finally, the modern missionary movement has made the Bible available in hundreds of languages throughout the world.

## **The Second Awakening**

Although the First Great Awakening dramatically affected the colonies, the Second Awakening had a more lasting effect on American life.

1. Methodists, Baptists, and the newly formed Disciples of Christ spearheaded the revival, leaving the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Anglicans far behind. Methodists, Baptists, and the Disciples went on to dominate American Protestantism for decades.
2. The Awakening produced durable institutions that impacted American culture well into the twentieth century. Institutions such as the American Bible Society (1816), the American Sunday School Union (1824), the American Tract Society (1825), the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance (1826).
3. The Awakening represented a fundamental shift in American theology.