

# History of Revival (1740-1851), 2

by Ian Murray

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*The speaker, Ian Murray, explores the history of revivals in America between 1740 and 1860, emphasizing the role of the Christian faith and the sovereignty of God in shaping the nation's development.*

**Duration:** 52:36

**Scripture:** Acts 16:30

**Topics:** "Revival History", "Spiritual Renewal"

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## Description

The sermon transcript describes a great revival that took place in Logan County, Kentucky in the year 1800. The preacher speaks of the overflowing floods of salvation that God poured out upon the people, describing a powerful service where the whole assembly was shaken by the power of God. The preacher emphasizes that his focus is on preaching repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ, rather than criticizing the established church or clergy. He expresses his concern for the salvation of his fellow mortals and the importance of addressing their spiritual condition. The transcript also includes a story of a student who is confronted about reading a book on these matters and confesses his concern for the truth.

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## Transcript

I want us to proceed this morning to something of the history of revivals in the Church of Christ. And I was at once confronted of course by a very considerable problem in regard to selection and what to attempt to lay before you. My decision was to pass over the revivals prior to the 18th century and to begin this morning with the revivals that took place here in America between the year 1740 and the year 1860.

So that what I want to do, attempt to do, and I do not suppose for a moment I'll be able to complete it, is to give you a broad survey of some of the great outpourings of the Spirit in the 120 years between 1740 and 1860 here in America. I need not stop to detain you with reasons why I passed over some of the earlier great revivals. The Reformation was a great spiritual revival.

The Puritan period both in Britain and in New England was similarly marked by revivals. But I pass over these and begin then with this period. I take the period partly because it was the most creative period in your history.

You will recall I think the immense transformation that took place between 1740 and 1860. In 1740 there were just 13 colonies scattered down the eastern seaboard. The population from New England right down to the south amounting to little more than a million people.

The vast majority of people earned their living in agriculture. Philadelphia and New York were just in their infancy as far as being great cities was concerned. That was 1740.

By 1860 there was this stupendous transformation. The Union was independent of Europe. Independent not only politically but independent in terms of her manufacturing power.

The population had risen more than 31 million. The northern states in 1861 could put an army in the field that was larger than the whole population of the year 1740. And the states of course spread right across to the Pacific.

There was this great creative era. And all the influences which raised your nation to world leadership are to be found within those 120 years. And those influences of course were manifold.

But I believe it can be demonstrated that it was the Christian faith and the power of the gospel that provided the supreme influence that molded the direction of the national life within those years. The ideas of liberty and equality and fraternity and the other ideas which are embedded in the constitution. These ideas could no more have built the nation than they could in France.

It was the power of the gospel accompanying the events of that period that built the nation as she was then built. Let me give you a quotation from Henry Fish who ministered in Newark, New Jersey. And writes these words in the year 1873.

Revivals he says, what blessings have they brought to families, to neighborhoods and communities. They have made good citizens, good neighbors, faithful friends, useful laborers, wise parents, dutiful children. Bless out what God has done by revivals and our sky would be shrouded in gloom.

Our sanctuaries would be vacant, our missionary agencies would be things unknown. And languor and death would be about us on every side. So if the Christian and evangelical faith was the influence that was so pervasive in this period of history.

That influence was so strong for one reason only and that is that there were genuine, frequent and powerful revivals of religion. Now in that 120 year period there are three revival periods which can be distinguished. That is three periods of general revival.

There are of course local revivals and we shall mention one or two of them. There were three great general revivals. The first obviously from the year 1740 to the year 1744 or 45.

The Great Awakening. Then quite a long period through to the end of the 1780s. And then at the end of the 1780s there was the beginning of another era of extensive revival.

And that era went on right the way through to the beginning of the 1840s. 50 years. Possibly the most extraordinary period of revival documented in the history of the church.

The third period beginning in the 1850s and ending somewhere before the Civil War of 1861. The Great Revival of 1857 in New York and at the same time scattered across the land in the south as well as in the north. There were mighty outpourings of the spirit.

You have read some of you I know of the revivals that took place in the Army of Virginia. In the years 1861 and 1862 in the Brigade of Stonewall Jackson. These revivals were but the continuation of outpourings of the spirit that had been seen across Virginia and North Carolina in the years preceding the Civil War.

So in north and south there was this third period of general extensive revival. Now of the first of these periods the Great Awakening I want to say very little. It of course could take several addresses on its own.

But there are a number of books in print on the Great Awakening. Several by secular writers and although they are not evangelical Christians even what they tell you is impressive enough. There are also the Lives of Whitfield, Dallimore's Life of Whitfield that many of you have seen.

These books will introduce you to many of the facts of the Great Awakening. And therefore I do not wish to stay on it this morning except one or two brief comments. This title the Great Awakening is of course a beautiful description of the spiritual transformation that came at that time.

There was a minister of some years ago who when he was dying said to a ministerial friend. Brother brother he said we are none of us more than half awake. Well before the Great Awakening it seemed as though men slept, the world slept, the church slept.

Ministers seemed to be asleep in their duties and Christians slept in the pew. Before the Great Awakening for many years there had been complaints of the absence of powerful conversions and of general decline. Let me just give you one quotation from Dr. Increase Mather who in the year 1721 was 82 years old.

He remembered the first days of New England. He could remember the preaching of Thomas Shepherd and John Cotton and these other men. And as an old man of 82 this is what he wrote in 1721.

Conversions he said have become rare in this age of the world. They that have their thoughts exercised in discerning things of this nature have sad apprehensions that the work of conversion has come to a stand. During the last age scarcely a sermon was preached without someone being apparently converted.

And sometimes hundreds were converted by one sermon. Who of us now can say that we have seen anything such as this? Clear sound conversions are not frequent in our congregations. The great bulk of the present generation are apparently poor, perishing and if the Lord prevents not undone.

Having been for 65 years a preacher of the gospel I feel as did the ancient men who had seen the former temple and wept aloud when they saw the latter. Well that was 1721. And for another 20 years these conditions continued.

Samuel Blair writing in Pennsylvania in the year 1739 said that religion lay as it were a dying and ready to expire its last breath in this part of the visible church. And then suddenly just as a mighty rushing wind the spirit of God disturbed the churches. And the sleep was ended.

Men awoke, awoke to the law of God, awoke to eternity, awoke to the wonder of salvation. And within a space of months there was this enormous movement of men and women pressing into the kingdom of God. Both in the middle states, in New England and moving southward right down into Georgia.

I remind you again of that great book by Archibald Alexander, The Log College. He tells the story how William Tennant crossed over from Ireland in the year 1718. How he founded a little log college in Pennsylvania, trained his sons, four of them for the ministry and trained several others.

And these men became the leaders of the awakening in the middle states. And there were of course others, Jonathan Edwards in 1740 was 37 years of age. George Whitfield was 24, he was here on his second visit from England.

And these men and others were used in this great spiritual harvest. Before I pass on let me just make this one comment. I think one sees in the great awakening the care that God took to reserve the glory to his own sovereign grace.

If you read some of the books on the great awakening you would get the impression that that awakening was due to the extraordinary influence of one or two great leaders. But that is not the case. When George Whitfield was preaching here in New Jersey in 1739 in November, preaching sermons which had been greatly used elsewhere, there were no influences apparently accompanying his preaching.

None of these men were uniformly able to influence men, not so. Jonathan Edwards in the month of May in 1741 preached in his own church at Northampton. He preached a sermon entitled Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.

I expect many of you have heard of that sermon. But not because he preached it in Northampton. When he preached it in Northampton there were no visible consequences of his preaching.

One month later in Enfield Connecticut he preached the same sermon. And that day in Enfield was a day similar to the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. Men and women cried aloud to God and it was the beginning of a great revival in that part of Connecticut.

Again, possibly the most extraordinary blessing in the whole Great Awakening occurred in Boston in the late 1740s and it occurred under the preaching of Gilbert Tennant. Now the extraordinary thing is that Gilbert Tennant was never in Boston in 1740. He belonged to the Middle States.

He knew no ministers in Boston. He had no acquaintances there. He had recently in his own home been bereaved by the death of his wife.

And yet through a combination of circumstances he was led to go to Boston. And an unknown, unexpected stranger, though he was, the preaching of Gilbert Tennant in Boston in 1740 was as it were a high watermark of the great work of the Spirit of God. And when that work of the Spirit was over, these same men, more mature, these same men were not able to see again the great harvest which had come in those years.

God reserved the glory to his own sovereign power. Now I mustn't stop on that but there are a number of very striking stories that could illustrate it. There were men who had preached the gospel, the Orthodox faith, preached it for 20, 30, 40 years before the Great Awakening and who had seen very little fruit and bearing testimony in the Great Awakening that they saw more conversions in one week than they had seen in 30 years.

There are many quotations to that effect. Let me just give you one illustration. There was a minister by the name of Peter Thatcher who was pastor of Middleborough in Connecticut.

He was ordained to the ministry in 1699 when he was 21 years of age. 40 years later he was still the pastor of Middleborough but he was deeply discouraged and he had come to the conclusion that his work was done, he had seen no fruit for some while and he was in the course of seeking out a text from which to preach his farewell sermon. It was when he was going through these exercises that Gilbert Tennant returned from Boston on his way back to Pennsylvania and he came through Middleborough.

He stayed the night with Thatcher and Thatcher, old man as he then was, recounted to Tennant the trials and the difficulties and the decision that he had come to about severing his pastoral tie with his church. But Gilbert Tennant told him the news of what was happening elsewhere in New England and he exhorted him to pray and to look for the outpouring of the spirit to change these conditions and then Tennant preached for Thatcher. Well, there were no apparent results from Tennant's preaching except that in the course of the months that followed members of the church revealed their dislike at the manner of Tennant's preaching, searching and pungent and to the conscience.

Six months later, Thatcher, who was still there and now praying, arranged with a ministerial friend a special day of prayer and this was held early in October. This, he says, was our errand to the throne of grace to ask for the outpouring of the spirit on this dry fleece. At the end of that week, there was a marked increase of seriousness in his congregation and the following Monday, a visiting preacher came and preached from, I believe it was Romans chapter 1 and the 18th verse.

And this is what Thatcher says about that day. When the sermon was over, he gave an exhortation to the people and then dismissed them with the benediction but the people refused to leave the church, the majority being under profound conviction of sin. He says, I have written accounts of 76 that day struck and brought first to inquire what they should do to be saved.

This inquiry awakened many. There were many professors of religion whose lamps went out. They discovered there was no oil of true grace in them.

They tell us how they see now what they never saw before, their original guilt and actual sins and fear of the dreadful wrath of God. This filled them with unutterable anguish. They seemed to be stepping into hell and this drew trembling fear and cries from them.

They complained of hard hearts and blind eyes. They complained that they had never seen before, that they cannot believe, that they find their hearts full of enmity to God, to Christ, to His holiness, to His word and to His saints. And scores this day told me of their hatred to me above anyone.

This state of conviction continued for many weeks and about the end of November of the same year, 1741, some 200 persons appeared to be awakened. Most of them, says Thatcher, carried on in the birth. In the next year, 170 were added to the membership of the church.

Now that figure, I believe, is representative of what was happening in many churches in the colonies at that time. It is estimated that something like 50,000 were added to the church membership of the churches of New England. That, of course, is not including those who were already members and unconverted before the revival.

In all the colonies, something like 300,000 or more were brought in. And when you think of the total population of that time, it means that a vast number, a vast percentage of the total population was brought into the kingdom of God. Or certainly brought under the power of the gospel.

Now I pass then from the Great Awakening and bid you to read more of it, 1740 to 1744. And I think the fact that these revivals can be dated so underlines the sovereignty of them. Whatever men did after that year, they could not reproduce those conversions, the evident power of the Spirit of God.

God then gave the increase and the dates we know to this time. There then commenced this rather long period to the 1780s where there was no general revival. But there were some particular local revivals and I

want now to refer you to one of them.

In Hanover County, Virginia, there were a small group of settlers in the early 1740s who belonged to the established church, the Church of England, which of course was the only authorized church in Virginia, the Old Dominion. These people, through books, came to know the gospel. Some of them read Luther's Galatians and others, one man in particular, was awakened by reading Thomas Boston's Fourth World's Day.

Finding that the truths that they had read were not preached in the churches, they began to meet themselves on the Lord's Day. Not one of them had the gift of preaching. So they read.

A certain man by the name of Samuel Morris was appointed the reader and he would get hold of a sermon, perhaps by Whitefield or perhaps by another. And through the reading of these sermons in Hanover County, there was the beginning of a true revival. People heard of conversions.

They asked Morris to come and would he read his sermons to them. And within a few years, there were four meeting houses established in that area. Now these Christians, as they were, did not know any denominational name.

They at first called themselves Lutherans, simply because they thought so much of Luther on Galatians. But when they heard a little more about 18th century Lutherans, they dropped the name Lutheran. I expect some of you know the story how they actually got their denominational name in the end.

The governor of Virginia summoned the leaders to Williamsburg. They were to give an account of their separation from the church established by law. And on the way to Williamsburg, they were detained by a violent storm.

So that they put into a house and they stayed there, I'm not sure if it was the whole night, certainly for many hours. At any rate, while they were in this house, one of them picked down from a shelf an old dusty volume and was astonished to find in it the very truth which they believed but set out in a way that was apparently so clear and beautiful that they felt there was no better confession of their faith in the world. The owner of the house didn't want the book so they took it with them to Williamsburg.

And when the governor demanded of what persuasion they were of and what their denomination was, they handed the book as their confession of faith. Well, it was a good book. It was the Westminster Confession of Faith.

And the governor had some knowledge of Presbyterian Scotland and at once he dubbed them Presbyterians. And so from that year, they were Presbyterians. Well, the first pastor that they had settled amongst them was Samuel Davies who came to Hanover County as a young man in the year 1748.

We sang last night that beautiful hymn which Davies wrote. I think we have in Britain a version which is possibly more original than your version, I'm sorry to tell you. But we sing Great God of Wonders, all thy ways are matchless, godlike and divine but the fair glories of thy grace more godlike and unrivaled shine.

Well, if you compare those words with the words in the hymnal, I would suspect that they are probably nearer to Davies but they both tell, of course, the same glorious truth. Great God of Wonders, all thy ways are matchless, godlike and divine. Well, Davies' preaching in Hanover County was accompanied by the outpouring of the Spirit of God.

Within a few months, for example, there were a hundred Negroes that were added to the congregation as hearers and within three years forty of these were baptized and brought into the church and others followed later. Davies ministered in Hanover County. It was his only ministry until 1759 and he died just two years later at the age of 37 in 1761.

He was a burning, eloquent preacher. I just want to give you a few of his words so that you can catch a glimpse of the man. He is writing a letter to the Bishop of London and he is writing it to justify their separation in Virginia and to answer certain criticisms which the Bishop of London had circulated and had written to Philip Doddridge.

Now I can only give you a few words. For my further vindication, my Lord, I beg leave to declare that in all the sermons I have preached in Virginia I have not wasted one minute in exclaiming or reasoning against the peculiarities of the established church. I have not exhausted my zeal in railing against the established clergy in exposing their imperfections or in depreciating their characters.

No, my Lord. I have matters of infinitely greater importance to exert my zeal and spend my time and strength upon to preach repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ to alarm secure in penitence to reform the profligate to undeceive the hypocrite to raise up the hands that hang down. These are the ends I pursue and if ever I divert from these to ceremonial trifles let my tongue cleave to the root of my mouth.

He then goes on to declare that he made no effort to win over any true Christian from the Church of England and he would rather that men were made members of the church triumphant in the regions of bliss by the preaching of a minister of the Church of England in a Presbyterian church. But it was his distress that the clergy of Virginia did nothing to prepare men for eternity. I find that the generality of them as far as can be discovered by their common conduct and public ministrations are stupidly serene and unconcerned as though their hearers were crowding to heaven and there was little or no danger that they address themselves to perishing multitudes in cold blood and do not represent their miserable condition in all its horrors.

Do not alarm them with solemn, pathetic, affectionate warnings and expostulate with them with all the authority, tenderness and pungency of the ambassadors of Christ to a dying world. I find that their common conversation has little or no saving favor of living religion. That instead of intense application to study or teaching their parishioners from house to house, they waste their time in idle visits, trifling conversation, slothful ease.

The plain truth is a general reformation must be promoted in this colony by some means or other or multitudes are eternally undone. And I see alas but little ground to hope for it from the generality of the clergy here till they be happily changed themselves. This is not owing to their being of the Church of England as I observed before for were they in the Presbyterian Church or any other, I should have no more hopes of their success but it is owing to their manner of preaching and behavior.

This thought my Lord is so far from being agreeable to me that at times it wracks me with agonies of compassion and zeal intermingled. And could I entertain that unlimited charity which lulls so many of my neighbors to their serene stupidity. It would secure me from many a melancholy hour and make my life below a kind of anticipation of heaven.

I can boast of no high attainments my Lord. I am as mean and insignificant a creature as your Lordship can well conceive me to be. But I dare profess that I cannot be an unconcerned spectator of the ruin of my dear fellow mortals.

I dare avow my heart at times is set upon nothing more than to snatch the brands out of the burning before they catch fire and burn unquenchably. And hence my Lord it is that I consume my strength and life in such great fatigues in this jangling ungrateful colony. There is one thing that Davies did which I must mention.

In the year 1753 he crossed over to Britain with his spiritual father who was Gilbert Tennant. Tennant and Davies went together. And you may read the full account of their visit in Samuel Davies journal.

And if you want to know where to find his journal let me tell you and I hope you will get it. A man by the name of William Henry Foote F-O-O-T-E wrote a book called Sketches of Virginia. It's a great big book of about 700 pages written 150 years ago perhaps but reprinted just a few years ago by the John Knox Press of Richmond, Virginia.

Sketches of Virginia by W.H. Foote and that has in it a great deal of detail on these revivals and a great deal on Samuel Davies and others. I recommend it to you and especially to ministers but to all who enjoy reading of these great events. I think it may still be in printed but certainly printed within the last five or six years.

Now Davies then went with Tennant to Britain and the purpose of their visit was to raise funds to establish a college in New Jersey. Towards the end of the 1740s a college was indeed inaugurated. It was called the College of New Jersey but it was very small and struggling.

It desperately lacked funds so these two great preachers were sent over to Britain to raise support and Davies writes in his journal how he was doing this not simply for the present but with the prayer to God that in years to come it might bear fruit and it did. The college of course was established. It was Princeton College built in 1756 and was for many years the largest college structure in America.

The College of New Jersey became Princeton College. Ten years after Samuel Davies' death dying in 1761 ten years later at the beginning of the 1770s there was a remarkable effusion of the Spirit of God in Princeton College. It seemed to be confined as it were almost to the college.

The result of that revival was that of the graduating class of the year 1773 there were 29 men in the graduating class. Three of these men became governors of states. 23 of them became ministers of the gospel.

23 out of 29 and of the 23 four became presidents of colleges. One became president of Dickinson College at Carlisle. Another about whom I must now speak became president of the College of Hampden-Sydney.

But through that revival as Foote says in the book that I've just mentioned to you through that revival the fruits of the power of the gospel were scattered across the states. Now let me turn then to one of these graduating men of 1773 in Princeton John Blair Smith. John Blair Smith.

I wonder how many of you even know his name. And yet he was a great spiritual leader as I hope we'll see. His father was Robert Smith and his father had been converted under the preaching of George

Whitefield.

And there were three sons and the three sons went into the ministry of the gospel. One was to become president of Princeton College later and this one John Blair Smith went south into Virginia. He was licensed and ordained to the ministry in Virginia in 1779 and he became pastor of the churches at Brewery and Cub Creek.

I like those names and I hope perhaps one day I should be able to see them. Perhaps some of you people know them. But Brewery and Cub Creek I hope to mention them again later this week.

But as well as becoming pastor there he was made the president of the college of Hamden, Sydney. That was a Presbyterian college nearby on the borders of Charlotte County and Prince Edward County and so he accompanied he combined these two duties. Pastor and president in the college.

Now evidently from the beginning of his preaching John Blair Smith was a powerful preacher. Somebody who knew him said there was more fervor and animation in his preaching than was common in those days. But still same writer for some years his preaching seemed to take no effect.

There was no awakening of sinners a rousing of cold professors nor reclaiming of backsliders. Well when he had been in Virginia for just a few years the War of Independence began and everyone who writes on this period bears witness to the fact that spiritually the War of Independence set back the work of the gospel. The Lord's Day of course was almost forgotten in the battlefields and the military operations which took place in Virginia.

Infidelity seemed to grow the principles of the French philosophers were introduced at this time very widely and after the War of Independence in the late 1780s there was a general condition of coldness and deadness on every side. A cold and lukewarm indifference was manifest in all the ministrations of the gospel throughout all that region says an eyewitness. Well the college at Hampden-Sydney was a microcosm of this deadness.

There were 80 students in the college and of that 80 there was not one who was known to be in any way serious or thoughtful upon the subject of religion. They were generally says one of them later they were generally very vicious and profane and treated religion and religious persons with great contempt and ridicule. But although there were none who were known to be religious of that 80 there were one or two in whom there was already spiritual concern.

One of these was a young man whose name I do not recall but he had a friend who lived nearby the college and would go home at weekends and this friend had a sister and this young man asked that he would make a request at home that he might borrow some book to help while away his hours and this sister sent back a book it was Alain's Alarm to the Unconverted. Now when the book came back into this boy's hands he immediately locked it in his trunk because he was desperately alarmed that someone would see him reading a book with such a title. But he still was intrigued to read it and one day having shut his door and got alone he got out the little volume and began to read it.

But he hadn't read a great deal before someone burst through the door and he threw the book aside on the bed but the man who had come in had seen that he was reading something and picked it up and at once he asked him whatever are you reading a book like that for? Well this student says he was torn by temptation to laugh it off and to avoid the truth but instead of doing that he confessed to the student who

had broken into the room he confessed that he was somewhat concerned to know the truth of these things and as soon as he said that the reaction of this other student was very unexpected. This is what he said. The other student who was from North Carolina said that before he left home he had been a church member but when I came here among these wicked students I locked up my Bible and abandoned my profession forsook my God and turned my back upon my Savior and so here were two students confessing their need to one another and within a matter of weeks there were three or four more who were added to their number so they arranged that one Saturday afternoon this little group would meet to pray and they did so this one Saturday I think they went somewhere far out in the woods but the next Saturday was threatening rain so they took a room in the college carefully locked the doors and had their time of prayer or at least they were in the midst of their time of prayer when there was a great hammering upon the door.

Some of the other students had heard what was going on but people were actually praying and they cursed and swore and kicked the door and within a short space of time there was quite a riot in the college. Two of the professors were hurriedly called and the students were dismissed to their rooms and the president John Blair Smith who didn't live in the college of course knew nothing of this or the cause of it until the evening when he came to take college prayers and after prayers were over he asked a reason for the tumult and the uproar in the college that afternoon and there was silence and then some of the leaders of this mob came forward and they said that some of the students had shut themselves up in a room and were singing and praying and carrying on like Methodists. And to stop they said to stop this disturbance they had tried to break up the meeting.

Now John Blair Smith was overcome with amazement he knew nothing of any serious students being in the college at all. Someone who was there said the president's eyes filled with tears. It was the first intimation he had that there was such seriousness in the college.

After a short pause he said and has it come to this? Is it possible some of my students are under religious impressions and determined to serve their saviour and is it possible that there are such monsters of iniquity in this college sons of Belial who dare set themselves against such things who will neither serve God themselves nor suffer others to do so? And after other words of exhortation he told these students that they could meet again the following Saturday but that he would be pleased to meet with them and that they would meet in his parlour and that any others who wished might attend. The following Saturday these students very nervous at the idea of praying in the company of the college president they came to his parlour and to their surprise there were others there too. He called upon them each to pray and after they had prayed he gave a word of exhortation.

Within two weeks or thereabouts fully half the students of the college were present at this Saturday prayer meeting apparently deeply impressed and under conviction for their sins. Deep impressions and concern were general throughout the neighbourhood. In the meantime I should have told you that the congregations at Browrie and Cub Creek had been earnestly praying for outpourings of the spirit and by this was in the end of the year 1787 at the beginning of the year 1788 there was evidence of a general outpouring of the spirit not only in the college but in the local congregations and within a matter of months for over an area of about a hundred square miles.

W.H. Foote says there was a general awakening in Prince Edward, Cumberland and Charlotte counties. The professors of religion awaked as from sleep and put on the armour of godliness. Some declared themselves convinced that their former profession had been a lifeless one and professed conversion

anew.

John Blair Smith's father came down a man who had known the great awakening and this is what he wrote after he had seen what was happening. The half had not been told me of the display of God's power and grace among them, no not the tenth part. I have seen nothing equal to it for extensive spread, power and spiritual glory since the years forty and forty one.

The work has spread for over a hundred miles amongst people of every description, high and low, white and black, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, orthodox and heterodox, young and old, especially amongst the youth whom it seems to have seized generally. Two hundred and twenty five hopeful communicants have been added to the Lord's table among John Blair Smith's people, that was in the local congregation, in the space of eighteen months. Such sweet singing I never heard in all my life.

I have seen a hundred wet cheeks, some deeply penetrated with convictions, some fainting with love sickness as it were in the arms of the Saviour, and others rejoicing for the day of God's power and grace, and all under the same sermon. And he goes on at greater length to describe this amazing revival. You can read the full account in the book that I mentioned by W.H. Foot, Sketches of Virginia.

Now, this was the year then, seventeen eighty eight, and it proved to be, not a local revival, but the beginning of a whole era of public powerful spiritual awakenings. In that same year, seventeen eighty eight, there was a student by the name of James McGreevey, who had just completed his studies in Pennsylvania. His home was in North Carolina.

On his way back from Pennsylvania, he passed through Hampden, Sydney, the college here, at the height of the revival. The result was that when he began his ministry in North Carolina, he began it as a man preaching in the same spirit, with the same conviction, as John Blair Smith and these others. Well, he was forced to leave his church.

He was threatened with death, I think, his church. If I remember rightly, it was even burned. At one time, he was written letters in blood, and within a few years, he crossed the mountains, down into Kentucky, and settled in Logan County, in Kentucky, in 1796.

From 1797, James McReady, and the two small charges he had in Logan County, encouraged his people to pray for the outpouring of the Spirit of God. In the year 1799, there were signs of true revival in that congregation. He said, in the summer of 1799, about this time, a remarkable spirit of prayer and supplication was given to Christians, and a sensible, heartfelt burden of the dreadful state of sinners out of Christ, so that it might be said with truth, that Zion travailed in birth to bring forth her spiritual children.

This travail ended in the year 1800 with the beginning of what is rightly called the Great Revival. It began in Logan County, Kentucky. McReady says, the overflowing floods of salvation, which the eternal, gracious Jehovah has poured out upon us like a mighty river.

Let me give you just one description of one service. The power of God seemed to shake the whole assembly. After the congregation was dismissed, the solemnity increased, till a greater part of the multitude seemed engaged in a most solemn manner.

No person wished to go home. Hunger and sleep seemed to affect nobody. Eternal things were the vast concern.

Here, awakening and converting work was to be found in every part of the assembly. I should of course have taken a little time to say something on the state of Kentucky and Tennessee and these parts before the revival. It is probably familiar enough knowledge to many of you.

The people that went there did not go to settle there. For the sake of the gospel, they were money greedy, they were land grabbing, they were speculators. The whole area was occupied by such persons.

And yet it was in the midst of that, that this great awakening began. From Kentucky, the revival was found in Tennessee, then in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and for about five years this work of engathering went on. No one can say the multitudes who entered the church.

There seems to be clear evidence that the numbers were enormous. In the western district of Tennessee for example, 3,000 members were added in the year 1802 only to the Methodist churches. 3,000 in one area of Tennessee.

One man who was visiting Kentucky in 1802 he said, I found Kentucky the most moral place I had ever been in. A religious awe seemed to pervade the whole country. In South Carolina, a minister defended the revival on these grounds.

He said that the principal fruit of this work is a holy, upright life. Now, I think that our time has gone. Let me just say as I close that in preparing these lectures I had to look again at the great revival of 1800, the Kentucky revival as it's sometimes been called.

Some of you will know that that revival was accompanied by extraordinary phenomena. People were seized with fear. Men collapsed.

There was a phenomena known as the jerks when those who were opposers of the gospel coming under the sound of the truth were unable to control themselves and shook and quivered. And sometimes these signs and accompaniments were magnified and fanaticism was thereby encouraged so that they were able to that shook and trembled was supposed to be under the influences of the spirit. But when all that has been said and when all that needs to be said by way of discriminating criticism has been said, there is no doubt of the fact that the revival of 1800 was an enormous movement of the spirit of God that brought thousands upon thousands in the south into the kingdom of Christ.

Well as you see I've only progressed about half way through our 120 years but we have reached a good point at which to break off.

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