

Forging the Faith

Sunday morning session

1. Why was an hourglass found on many 18th century English pulpits?

- A. to keep sermons from lasting for more than an hour
- B. to keep sermons from lasting for less than an hour
- C. to symbolise the sands of life running out
- D. Parliament had passed a law against having clocks in church buildings

2. What argument for the existence of God was advanced by William Paley in 1802?

- A. if there is a watch, there must be a watchmaker
- B. if there is an egg, there must be an eggbeater
- C. if there is an egg, there must be a hen
- D. if there is a digestive system, food must exist

3. Approximately how many sermons did John Wesley preach?

- A. 5,000
- B. 10,000
- C. 20,000
- D. 40,000

4. 18th century evangelist George Whitfield was famous for his fervent sermons. What complaint was made after his 1st sermon?

- A. he had allegedly driven 15 people insane
- B. the congregation, mostly labourers, couldn't get their normal Sunday morning sleep
- C. Whitefield's voice flaked down plaster from the ceiling onto the congregation
- D. 58 people came forward to be saved, but they were all already members of the congregation

Forging the Faith

3. The Modern Church

Presbyterians and Puritans

- Elizabeth was too moderate for many, who thought that reform hadn't gone far enough; they wanted to "purify" the Church, hence the name Puritans. James I followed Elizabeth; Puritans rejoiced.
- The Puritans presented James with their requests. Get rid of: priestly robes, marriage rings, Sunday sport. They also wanted a new Bible. Only this was granted: it became the King James Version of 1611
- Frustrated Puritans had three choices: stay in the Church of England and lobby for change; join dissenting groups; or leave the country. From the 1620s, many went to America

A Puritan family



English Civil Wars

- Charles I succeeded his father James. Firmly believed in divine right of Kings; drawn to Catholicism
- Parliament was becoming increasingly Presbyterian. Civil war broke out in 1640s between King and Parliament (nearly 200,000 people died)
- Parliament won, installing Oliver Cromwell as Protector of a Republic
- Charles was executed: for the first time, people could conceive of a monarch being guilty of treason against the people (esp. inviting the Scots to invade England)

Charles I reigned 1625-1649



A new era

- Monarchs were no longer unchallenged
- Kings could be guilty of treason
- Scripture was a new authority: privately read and interpreted
- Popes and bishops could be defied
- Individuals had much greater power
- Treaty of Westphalia ended the 30 Years' War with a grudging acceptance of religious plurality.
- The Church-State alliance was effectively dead
- Dissenting groups emerged (e.g. Quakers)

The Enlightenment

- Having challenged both governmental & church authorities, other authorities also began to be questioned, including scripture.
- Beginning around 1700, this movement demonstrated abiding confidence in the power of human reason
- Reason was seen as the key to continual progress in all areas and became the measure of all things, including religious; “unreasonable” things were discarded
- Science flourished in this environment, but science is based on the repeatable and the observable. Religious issues were forced into this mould

Deism

- The Age of Reason did not immediately jettison religious faith; many of the leading scientists were Christians
- But the “God of Reason” did gradually morph into something different from the God of the Bible
- Deism saw God as Creator and all-powerful, but remote. A deity who, like a clockmaker, set the universe in order with all its governing principles, and then just observed, interacting little with his creation

A human focus

- If God is remote, then there's not much point bothering about him, or the afterlife. So focus on this life
- Worldly happiness for the majority became more important (Utilitarianism)
- The Church was seen as a source of repression, especially during the French Revolution because the Church was allied with the rich and powerful
- French declaration of the Rights of Man established basic rights we would agree with

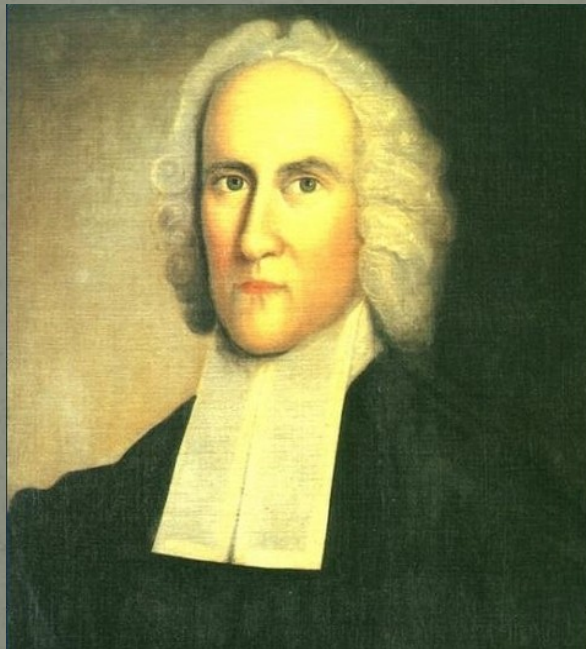
Pietism

- Deism crept into the churches and religion became dry and formal
- Pietism was a reaction against this which wanted a religion of the heart, Biblical and evangelistic
- Conversion began to be emphasised
- Resonated with many themes of Puritanism, but tended to make more place for the laity
- Made a privileged place for the emotions in religion and decidedly distrusted the intellect

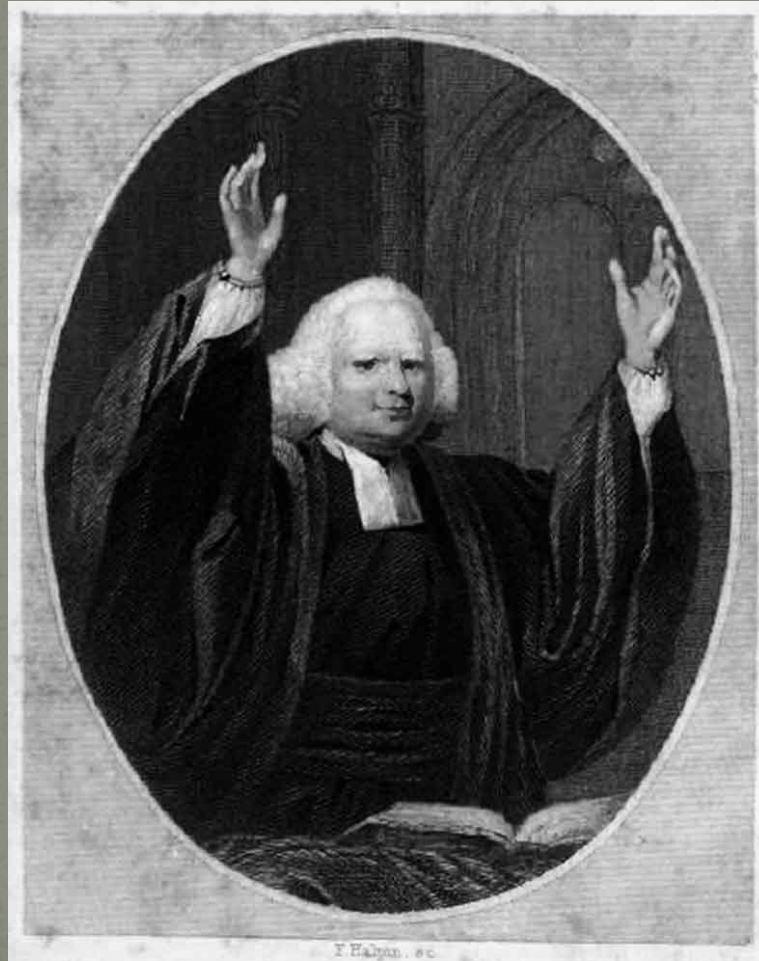
Evangelical Awakenings

- Early 18th century was a spiritually dry time in both America and England, except for Pietist and Puritan circles
- Revival began on both sides of Atlantic from 1730s with Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield and John Wesley.
- Modern preaching was invented and the goal was conversion/transformation
- Wesley's Methodism had an innovative structure for spiritual growth/accountability
- Evangelicalism is seen as beginning here

Jonathan Edwards 1703-1758



George Whitfield



John Wesley



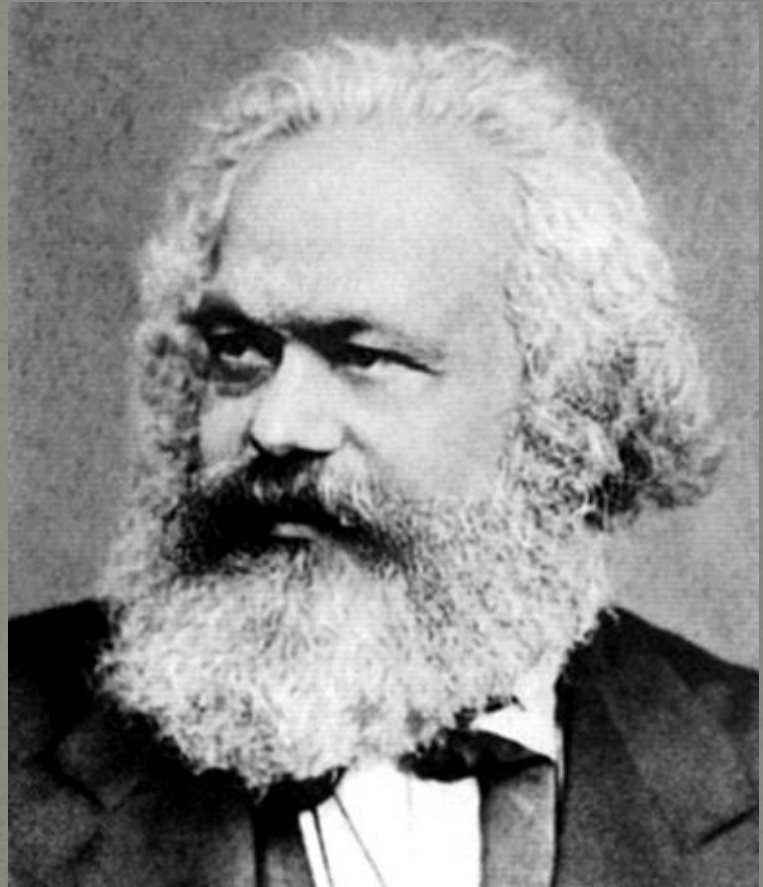
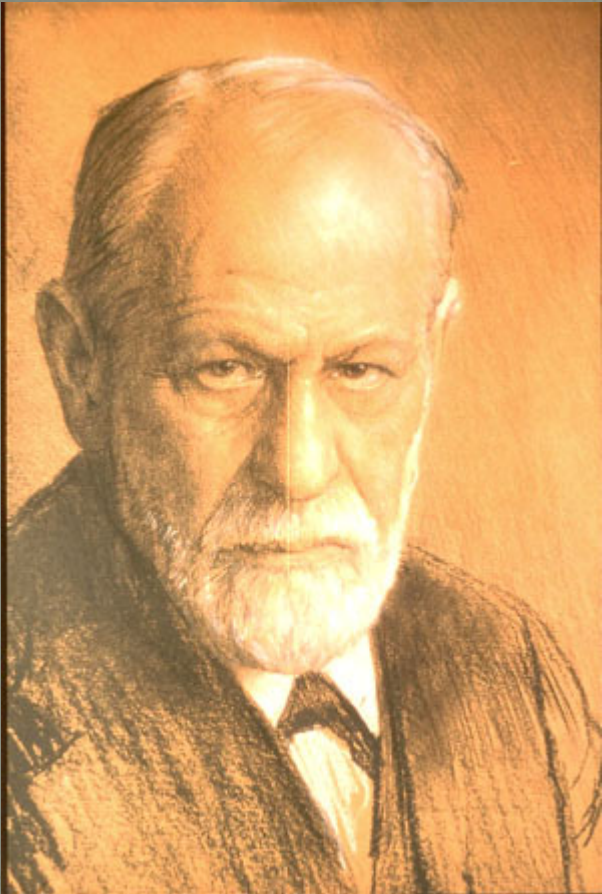
Romanticism 1785-1825

- A movement that has profoundly affected the modern world. Seeing Rationalism as reductionistic, Romanticism emphasised feelings, subjectivity and spontaneity; it was comfortable with mystery
- Affected all aspects of culture and society
- Objectivity was increasingly seen as impossible; the Enlightenment myth of the detached observer was exposed
- Individual perception was valued; diversity was seen as inevitable

A crowded century

- Keats quote: truth & beauty
- Marxist socialism (everything is explained by economics)
- Darwinism (everything is explained by survival of the fittest)
- Freud (everything is explained by the subconscious mind)
- The West encountered a bewildering variety of cultures and religions as empires and trade expanded

Freud & Marx



The Church responds

- Evangelicalism made huge gains during the 19th century: the 2nd Great Awakening in U.S. almost rolled into the 3rd Great Awakening on both sides of the Atlantic
- Evangelicals became very involved in social issues, including slavery
- Liberal theology arose in the wake of Romanticism
- The Catholics had a distinct response, cf. Vatican I

Pentecostalism & charismatic movement

- 1901 Charles Parham, Topeka & Agnes Ozman
- William Seymour & the call to Los Angeles
- 1906 Azusa Street begins
- 1959 Dennis Bennett & the charismatic movement
- Distinctions between Pentecostals & charismatics

312 Azusa Street



The fascinating 1960s & postmodernism

- Huge cultural and sociological changes post World War II in the West meant a new openness to “spirituality” in the widest sense: Jesus people, new age, eastern religions
- This coincided not only with the charismatic movement which tended to have an ecumenical impact, but also with Vatican II and renewal in the Catholic Church
- While religious belief gained renewed respect, the aversion to overarching Truth claims remained (a legacy of existentialism)

Group questions

- Break into groups to discuss questions