

Dear Partners in the Ministry of Prayer,

February, 2009

The Hand of the Lord is upon us to contend for a new awakening to God!

Only an awakening to God can save America!

There *is* something *we* can do about the crisis gripping America and the world.

How He Made Us to Know This

In a way it started on Sunday, June 29, 2008 at our 3 p.m. corporate prayer meeting on *Prayer Mountain in the Ozarks*. Layer upon layer, year after year, however, of the Lord's workings brought us to that prayer meeting on Prayer Mountain that day.

Without tackling the impossible task of even remembering, let alone relating just His dealings I am aware of, here are a few road marks along the way which stand out to me.

- The 1981, or so, vision in which He made me know it was my task to help the pray-ers unwrap His gifts to the church for her glorious walk just prior to His coming.

- Brother Philip Halverson's last conversation with me June 1, 1985, in which he said, "Don't ever forget that your number one call is to help the pray-ers."

- The 1995 trance-vision of the inside of a prayer cabin and instructions to establish a place of prayer near Branson, Missouri. Its two-fold purpose would be: 1) To pray in the plans of God, and 2) To stop the strategies of the enemy.

On June 29, 2008, forty or more faithful pray-ers were praying about the then up-coming American elections in November...about Israel...and the nations. Especially united, we seemed to pray as one man. And we reached a place that was high and somewhat unfamiliar.

Then, as in Acts 13:2, "*the Holy Spirit said....*" The Spirit of prophecy fell powerfully upon me and in a strong voice the utterance poured past my lips.

One thing will save America.

And it is NOT the election.

It is an awakening to God!

One thing will help Israel and the nations.

It is an awakening to God!

Silenced, in our petitions. Even rebuked. Our hearts listened for more.

More words came. And at the same time, Spirit-inspired thoughts sped through my mind. *The best person in the world could be elected President, and it wouldn't help if America did not awaken to God. America's history. The Great Awakening. Prayer.*

Then these things were emphasized. The importance of prayer in an *Awakening*. The call to help, even to assemble, pray-ers which this ministry has been given. Preparation. Preparation of ourselves. Preparation of the pray-ers coming to Branson.

I sensed, though I did not voice it, that there would be little, if any, anointing to pray about the elections in our *Autumn Assembly* in Branson. Previously when our annual prayer meeting came just before an election, the Holy Spirit took up with us to pray about that election. We had come to expect it. But I sensed from that Sunday afternoon that it would not be the same. Now, the anointing would come to pray about an *awakening*—an awakening to save America. Little did we realize just how much America needed saving. For in June, the soon-to-be revealed economic crisis was not in our thinking.

We gave ourselves two weeks to seek God's will for the October prayer meeting. Two weeks later, Brother Gene Wiseman addressed us with a vision he'd received from the Lord concerning ambers and a wall of prayer. (I now see so much more about how this. Concisely, God has stored up treasures preserved in His people. He is ready to tap His resources.)

Immediately after the *Autumn Assembly of Prayer*, Shelli and I went to Paris where so much happened. From there we went to Northern Ireland to Pastor Paul and Karen Brady's church in Ballymena. Here a surprising revelation met us.

The Brady's had placed a book in my room entitled *Ireland's Lost Heritage*.¹ An account of what is known as "The Ulster Awakening (1859)" was covered in the book. I was completely oblivious to it—though it is reported in a book I have read many times and often offer, *Revival Fire* by Wesley Duewel.² Duewel records how the Ulster (Northern Ireland) *awakening* coincided with "The great *awakening* of 1857-59" in America. Both great moves, known historically as *awakenings*, began with prayer. More about these thrilling awakenings in my next letter.

In *Ireland's Lost Heritage* I found these statements: "A case could be made for saying that... 'a Revival' could be described as 'a visitation of God's Spirit on God's people,' but 'an Awakening' as 'a time of such intense visitation that both the Christian and non-Christian communities are affected... revivals alter the lives of individuals, awakenings alter the world view of a whole people or culture'."

The First Great Awakening

That's exactly what happened in *The Great Awakening* preceding the birth of The United States of America. I have now read many secular accounts from the academic world and it is the consensus that America was born out of *The Great Awakening*. One Harvard professor wrote that one cannot understand the colonial society that brought about the American Revolution without a study of *The Great Awakening*.

The Longmeadow (Mass.) Historical Society website carries an article entitled *The Great Awakening and Its Effect on the Society and Religion of the Connecticut River Valley*, by Meaghan McCormick. The article states:

The Great Awakening was a religious movement during the 1730's and 1740's in which itinerant ministers presented powerful messages of salvation and which provided early Americans with a greater sense of nationality...one of the most notable points of origin was in the Connecticut River Valley under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards...The Great Awakening...brought about a change of values that affected politics and daily life...These attitudes were the beginnings of a sense of independence and equality that would set the stage for the American Revolution. And, as the spirit of independence was proclaimed in the colonies by the Declaration of Independence, it was often the local clergy...who rose to read to their congregations the words of that document which would spark independence in America....

When we went on line to look for a definition of the word *awakening*, we were surprised to see that www.answers.com credited Jonathan Edwards with the word's origin:

Word Origin: 1736

In the winter of 1734-35, the mild-mannered Reverend Jonathan Edwards, minister of the church in Northampton, Massachusetts, was astounded. People actually were listening to his sermons and following his advice...Their talk turned to nothing but religion, and they began living godly lives. Even "the vainest and loosest"! Even young people! And this behavior was spreading from Northampton to other towns up and down the Connecticut River Valley. In a famous letter published in 1736, Edwards called this a "general awakening."

Jonathan Edwards

I had read about Jonathan Edwards. But I have now come to admire a dedicated saint God could work through to begin *The First Great Awakening*. Some particularly enlightening insight into his character came to me unexpectedly—supernaturally, I believe. At our family New Year's gathering, I asked each one to voice a resolution. My grandson, Cody Oaks and his bride, Aubrey Pearsons Oaks were with us. The next morning Aubrey came to my place from the prayer cabin where they stayed. She had in her hand a very old book we had used for décor.

The *Harper's Fifth Reader* was published in 1889. Its Publisher's Note read: "To cultivate a spirit of patriotism and to inculcate a commendable pride in the achievements of our countrymen is one of the first duties of the schools." The reader's lessons were by authors such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ward Beecher, Julia Ward Howe, etc. And it included "*Resolutions by Jonathan Edwards.*" Written when he was young, they show the bent of his resolve to live life—the life God anointed for great purpose. (We will send you a copy of his resolutions free. Just call or write. Or go on line to billyebirim.org; we have them posted.)

In *Lecture Four, The Great Awakening*, Wake Forest University (www.wfu.edu) reports:

...Edwards has received a bad press for his "*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.*"...But if you read his sermons, you will find that he spoke quietly, reasonably, and logically. Indeed he was dry and even a bit boring. But he began to experience a harvest of conversions that were accompanied by exaggerated behavior. People would...shout, and run when they were converted.

Edwards kept accurate records of what happened:

And then it was, in the latter part of December, that the Spirit of God began extraordinarily to...work amongst us. There were, very suddenly, one after another, 5 or 6 persons who were, to all appearance, savingly converted, and some of them wrought upon in a very remarkable manner.

Particularly I was surprised with...a young woman, who had been one of the greatest company-keepers in the whole town. When she came to me, I had never heard that she was become in any ways serious, but by the conversation I then had with her, it appeared to me that what she gave an account of was a glorious work of God's infinite power and sovereign grace, and that God had given her a new heart, truly broken and sanctified...

God made it, I suppose, the greatest occasion of awakening to others of anything that ever came to pass in the town...The news of it seemed to be almost like a flash of lightning upon the hearts of young people all over the town, and upon many others....

Presently upon this, a great and earnest concern about the great things of religion and the eternal world became universal in all parts of the town and among persons of all degrees and all ages...Those that were wont to be the vainest and loosest...And the work of conversion was carried on in a most astonishing manner and increased...souls did, as it were come by flocks to Jesus Christ...This work of God...soon made a glorious alteration in the town, so that in the spring and summer following, Anno 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God.³

Historian, Eddie L. Hyatt, writes:

People from other communities often scoffed when they heard of the events in Northampton. Simply upon entering the community, however, their skepticism inevitably dissipated because of the overwhelming presence of God. As converts returned home, they carried the spirit of revival with them, and so the awakening spread.

During this time, Edwards preached his famous sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. So powerfully did conviction of sin grip the people...that the penitent cries for mercy drowned [out] Edwards' voice. Hell became so real to the congregation that some clutched the backs of pews while others wrapped their arms around the pillars to keep, as it were, from being consumed by its eternal flames....

The power that accompanied Edward's preaching was not the result of his topic alone. Preaching on the terrors of hell did not monopolize his messages. He was, in fact, a very sensitive individual who could be melted to tears while contemplating the love and mercy of God. Neither was the power the fruit of oratorical skill, for Edwards normally read his sermons. His preaching derived its power from his prayer life. He would spend whole days and weeks in prayer, and it was not unusual for him to spend 18 hours in prayer prior to preaching a single sermon. The result was a revival that not only transformed the moral and spiritual character of his own community, but also that of the entire nation.⁴

George Whitefield

For many reasons, the sense of Divine purpose for the new world and for themselves as individuals, which the Pilgrims and Puritans dedicated their lives to, had waned in the intervening years until God stirred it up again in *The Great Awakening*. The expanding Colonies were divided by distance and lack of good roads and good communication. Time was consumed in surviving. One source said, "the majority of the people were unchurched," when the awakening began.

Though many had their parts, the one person all historians, secular and religious, point to as the most influential was George Whitefield. *The Restoring America project* states, "By the time of his death in 1770, evangelist Reverend George Whitefield was the best known American in the 13 Colonies."

The Light and the Glory calls him, "...the greatest evangelist of the 18th century, one of the handful of men in the history of Christendom to be used by God to change the course of nations through the power of His Spirit."⁵

Thousands gathered wherever George Whitefield preached. Benjamin Franklin, who became his friend, observed:

It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

The persuasion and power of Whitefield's anointed voice were remarkable. *The Light and the Glory* states:

Franklin, the first truly scientific observer of lightning, listened to Christ's 25-year-old lightning rod [Whitefield] preaching from the courthouse steps, and was amazed at the carrying power of his voice. Retracing his steps backwards down Market Street until he could at last no longer hear him, the amazed Franklin computed that in an open space, Whitefield's words could be heard by 30,000 people...And on more than one occasion, they were.

He traversed the colonies, preaching the unifying message of equality for all at the foot of the cross. A Wake Forest site (www.wfu.edu) states that "...the Great Awakening was to unify 4/5 of Americans in a common understanding of the Christian faith and life...." George Whitfield literally gave his life to bring that about. *The Light and the Glory* records his ministry:

...year after year, up and down the East Coast, and as far inland by canoe and horseback as civilization extended. In the summer of 1754 he wrote to Charles Wesley.

My wonted vomitings have left me, and though I ride whole nights and have frequently been exposed to great thunders, violent lightnings, and heavy rains, yet I am rather better than usual... O that I might at length begin to live! I am ashamed of my sloth and lukewarmness, and long to be on the stretch for God.

...in [that] same year...he preached 100 times in 6 weeks, riding the main roads and throughout the backwoods of New England, covering nearly 2000 miles in 5 months. ...Some might say that this was not good stewardship of God's gift of health. But the power of the Holy Spirit fell practically every time he preached, and one wonders if...he had driven himself any less hard...would the tremendous work which God purposed through him have been accomplished?

The Lord was uniting the thirteen colonies....

...Whitefield preached more than 18,000 sermons between 1736 and 1770!

...In 1770, his health broken and his breathing tormented...He reached Boston on his last visit...

5 months after British troops fired on a mob of civilians, killing 5, in...the Boston Massacre.

Gloria Copeland and I recently did two weeks of television on *Why America Needs to be Saved* and *The Awakening to God That Will Save Her*. The BVOV programs will be broadcast March 9-13 and March 16-20. When we came to George Whitefield's dedication even to the point of death, the Spirit of God fell upon everyone on the set. We all wept as we read this account in *The Light and the Glory*.

The next month found him up in New Hampshire, where the ministers of Exeter begged him for a sermon. But when the time came, he could barely breathe...glancing heavenward he [said], "Lord Jesus, I am weary *in* Thy work, but not *of* it. If I have not finished my course, let me go and speak for Thee once more in the fields, and seal Thy truth, and come home and die!"

And the Lord granted his request. The entire district seemed to have converged on the Exeter Green...At first, Whitefield could hardly be heard, and his words were rambling...He stopped and stood silent. Minutes passed. Then he said, "I will wait for the gracious assistance of God. For He will, I am certain, assist me once more to speak in His name."

Then, according to Jonathan Parsons, the minister of Newburyport, he seemed to be rekindled by an inner fire. His voice now strong and clear...On and on he went, into the second hour...when he cried out: "I go! I go to rest prepared My sun has arisen and by the aid of heaven has given light to many. It is now about to set...*No!* It is about to rise to the zenith of immortal glory...O thought divine!...How willingly I would ever live to preach Christ! But I die to be *with* Him!" [After a night of fitful sleep] in the early morning, he...pulled himself out of bed and...over to the window, to see the dawn's early light. George Whitefield died, just as the first rays of the sun caught the waters of the bay below. The new day would soon break across the nation. His dream had come true: America was a nation now—one nation under God.

Unto a Good Land, by David Edwin Harrell, Jr and a team of historians concludes, "To be sure, Whitefield did not do it alone, though it is worth noting that the first individual to bring some degree of unity to the colonies was not a politician but a preacher."

United Noon-Time Prayer for *A Great Awakening*

In my next letter, I will write of the simultaneous awakenings in Northern Ireland and in America in 1859. Both were the result of specific prayer. America's awakening resulted from noon-time prayer meetings that spread like fire across the continent.

Right now, the Holy Spirit has stirred us to initiate noon-time prayers (CST) every Wednesday to be streamed from *Prayer Mountain*. Northern Ireland, Australia, South Africa, Ft Worth, Minneapolis, New York and others are uniting with us. Please join us. If you connect by internet at www.billyebrim.org, fine! But for sure, we can connect by the Spirit of God wherever you are and whenever you pray. We look forward to meeting you at the Throne of Grace where we shall mix and mingle our voices asking Him for an *Awakening to God!*

In Him,



Billye Brim

¹ David Carnduff, M.Th., *Ireland's Lost Heritage* (IPCB Publications, printed by Antrim Printers Steeple Industrial Estate, Antrim, BT41 1 AB, 2003)

² Wesley L. Duewel, *Revival Fire*, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995), pp125-160.

³ Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of President Edwards* (Isaiah Thomas, editor). Vol III, pp.14-19

⁴ Eddie L. Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity*, Strang Publications, Lake Mary, FL, pp. 114-115.

⁵ Peter Marshall & David Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, Fleming H. Revell, Grand Rapids, MI