

XVIII.XII. JOHN GILL: A Calvinist Baptist of Unblemished Reputation - The Eighteenth Century (pt.12)

Two questions and answers:

QUESTION 1. What is Church History?

ANSWER. Church history is the story of how Jesus has built his church for his own glory and his peoples' good. **Matthew 16:18** "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

QUESTION 2. Why should we study Church History?

ANSWER. We should learn church history because it is the amazing story of Jesus conquering the nations through his Gospel. **Revelation 6:2** "[Christ] came out conquering, and to conquer."

Q. ARE YOU READY FOR CHURCH HISTORY?!

Today we are going to look at the Eighteenth Century for the 11th time. But before we do that let's remember what we learned last time.

Q. Who can tell me the name of the person I taught you about last time?

– **Everyone say, "Andrew Fuller."**

Q. Who can tell me something about Andrew Fuller?

RECAP

In the Eighteenth Century, God used Andrew Fuller to revive Baptist theology and missions for God's glory.

Who can tell me

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (pt.11) MEMORY VERSE.

– "So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose" (**Isaiah 55:11**).

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (pt.11) MEMORY QUOTE.

– "The gospel is a message from God to sinners, calling them to repent and believe; it is worthy of all acceptance" (**Andrew Fuller**).

Now, today I am going to teach you about the Eighteenth Century PART 12 (1,700-1,800).

What happened in the Eighteenth Century (1,700-1,800) that shows us how Christ built His church as He continued to conquer the nations?

I. JOHN GILL (1697–1771).

Everyone say, "John Gill."

HISTORY

I) John Gill was born in Kettering, Northamptonshire (England) on November 23, 1697 to Edward and Elizabeth Gill.

II) His parents were God-fearing individuals of the Calvinistic Baptist tradition. His father served as a deacon in the Baptist work in Kettering.

III) Gill grew up in a good Christian home. His early years were spent studying in the local grammar school where he excelled in languages.

IV) Unfortunately, he was no longer able to attend by the age of 11 since it was required that students attend morning prayer at the parish church. His parents being dissenters would not allow this. This was the end of Gill's formal education but he spent his time wisely teaching himself and not only excelled in Greek and Latin but was quite adept at Hebrew by the age of nineteen.

V) Gill was converted to Christ at the age of twelve but was not baptized until he was nineteen on November 1, 1716.

VI) He was married to Elizabeth Negus (d. 1764) in 1718 and they had three children that lived beyond infancy: Elizabeth, John, and Mary.

VII) The church at Kettering recognized his gifts as a preacher and in 1719 became pastor of the famous Horselydown congregation in London. Benjamin Keach had previously served as pastor in this church and eventually C. H. Spurgeon would become pastor of this church.

VIII) Gill would become a prolific author and influential theologian of the Particular Baptist cause.

IX) Gill's writings include *The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated* (1731), *The Cause of God and Truth* (1735–1738) which was a return to Daniel Whitby's *Discourse on the Five Points* which was a refutation of Calvinism. His magnum opus was his three volume *An Exposition of the New Testament* (1746–1748) and his six volume *Exposition of the Old Testament* (1748–1763). He also wrote *A Dissertation on the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language* (1767), *A Body of Doctrinal Divinity* (1767) and *A Body of Practical Divinity* (1770).

X) He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of Aberdeen in 1748. He would become one of the most influential Baptist theologians ever.

XI) The major controversy that has erupted over the influence of Gill has been over the issue of Hyper-Calvinism (the belief that unsaved man is not obligated to respond in faith in Christ and therefore preachers should not offer the Gospel to those who are the non-elect). Some have attributed to Gill to be the first systematizer of a Baptist Hyper-Calvinist theology. Others have argued that Gill

was in fact not a Hyper-Calvinist.

XII) Regardless, it was during Gill's time period when the Particular Baptist Churches began their decline into Hyper-Calvinism. . . Most likely, Hyper-Calvinists used Gill's theology and went past him to solidify their own theology.

XIII) Gill is the first major writing Baptist theologian and his works retain its influence even to this day.

XIV) On his gravestone is written, "In this Sepulcher are deposited the remains of John Gill, professor of Sacred Theology. A man of unblemished reputation, a sincere disciple of Jesus, an excellent preacher of the gospel, a courageous defender of the Christian faith. Who, adorned with piety, learning and skill, was unwearied in works of prodigious labour for more than fifty years. To obey the commands of his great master, to advance the best interests of the church, to promote the salvation of men, impelled with unabated ardor, he put forth all his strength. He placidly fell asleep in Christ, the 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1771, in the 74th year of his age."

— **Brief Biography of John Gill (1697-1771) by Allen Mickle, Jr.** - <https://allenmickle.com/2008/01/15/brief-biography-of-john-gill-1697-1771/>

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT JOHN GILL

1. He had not formal education beyond the age of eleven, yet he learned Latin, Greek, and was a master of the Biblical Hebrew language.
 - **Everyone say, "Gill stopped school at eleven."**
2. He pastored the church that Benjamin Keach once pastored, and the very same that Charles Haddon Spurgeon would one day lead.
 - **Everyone say, "Gill paved the way for Spurgeon."**
3. He pastored the same church and wrote extensively for 51 years in his public ministry.
 - **Everyone say, "Gill was faithful for over 50 years."**
4. He wrote a commentary on the entire Old and New Testaments.
5. He wrote it all by hand, and even did the proof-reading once it returned from the printers before publication.
6. After completing his entire Bible commentary, Gill wrote a systematic theology, titled, "A Body of Divinity."
7. His first sermon was at the age of 19, and he preached from 1 Corinthians 2:2, "I determined to know nothing among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
 - **Everyone say, "Gill preached Christ crucified."**
8. When they built a new Church building, Gill said this in His opening sermon: "In all places where I record my name, &c." Upon this occasion, in his sermon, the Dr. said, "We enter upon this new place of worship, by recording the name of the Lord therein; namely, by preaching the

doctrines of the grace of God; of free and full salvation alone, by Jesus Christ; and by the administration of gospel ordinances, as they have been delivered to us. What doctrines may be taught in this place, after I am gone, is not for me to know; but, as for my own part, I am at a point; I am determined, and have been long ago, what to make the subject of my ministry. It is now upwards of forty years since I entered into the work, and the first sermon I ever preached was from those words of the apostle, I determined, &c. (1 Cor. 2:2.) Through the grace of God, I have been enabled, in some good measure, to abide by the same resolution hitherto; and I hope, by Divine assistance, I ever shall, as long as I am in this tabernacle, and engaged in this solemn work. I am not afraid of the reproaches of men; I have been inured to these, from my youth upwards; none of these things move me."

9. His dying words were, "O my Father, my Father!"

RECAP

In the Eighteenth Century, God used John Gill to model for us hard work, Bible study, the importance of doctrine, and that we must always preach Christ crucified.

THEOLOGY

I) Hard work in study pays off.

- **Everyone say, "Hard work pays off."**
 - ***Formal education only til age eleven**
 - ♦ **Proverbs 23:23** "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding."

II) The complete Bible is needed to make a complete Christian.

- **Everyone say, "I need the whole Bible."**
 - ***Entire Bible Commentary**
 - ♦ **2 Timothy 3:16** "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. . ."

III) Doctrine matters.

- **Everyone say, "Doctrine matters."**
 - ***A Body of Divinity**
 - **GILL:** "Without the knowledge of God there can be no true

worship of him."

- ◊ **Titus 1:9** "He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it."

IV) The importance of the Civil Government obeying God's Law.

- **Romans 13:4** "[The governing authority / magistrate] is God's servant for your good."
 - **Everyone say, "Civil government must obey Christ."**
 - **GILL:** "[Civil Magistrates] are to discountenance and suppress impiety and irreligion; and to countenance and encourage religion and virtue; even Aristotle observes in his book of Politics, that the first care of government should be the care of divine things, or what relate to religion. Civil magistrates are appointed for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well; they are to discourage vice, and vicious persons; a king, by his eye, the sternness of his looks, and the frowns of his countenance, should scatter away evil, and evil men; and these being removed from him, his throne will be established in righteousness, (Prov. 20:8; 25:5). Kings are the guardians of the laws of God and man; and Christian kings have a peculiar concern with the laws of the two tables, that they are observed, and the violaters of them punished; as sins against the first table, idolatry, worshipping of more gods than one, and of graven images, blaspheming the name of God, perjury, and false swearing, and profanation of the day of worship: and those against the second table; as disobedience to parents, murder, adultery, theft, bearing false witness, &c. most of which, under the former dispensation, were capital crimes, and punishable with death; and though the punishment of them, at least not all of them, may not be inflicted with that rigour now as then; yet they are punishable in some way or another; which it is the duty of magistrates to take care of." — **John Gill, A Complete Body of Practical and Doctrinal Divinity, Book V, Chapter 4: "Of the Respective Duties of Magistrates and Subjects"**

V) Christ crucified must be the banner we fly.

- **Everyone say, "We preach Christ crucified."**
 - ***First sermon was 1 Corinthians 2:2**
 - ◆ **1 Corinthians 2:2** "For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

VI) The importance of living a blameless life in Christ.

- **Everyone say, "Gill lived a blameless life."**
 - **GILL'S HEADSTONE:** "A man of unblemished reputation"
 - ♦ **1 Corinthians 15:10** "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain."

RECAP

In the Eighteenth Century, God used John Gill to model for us hard work, Bible study, the importance of doctrine, and that we must always preach Christ crucified.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (pt.12) MEMORY VERSE.

- "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain" (**1 Corinthians 15:10**).

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (pt.12) MEMORY QUOTE.

- "Without the knowledge of God there can be no true worship of him." (**John Gill**).

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- John Gill: A Theologian for the Ages: Life, Doctrine, and Relevance for Today - Recovering the Voice of a Forgotten Giant in Reformed Theology (book) <https://a.co/d/bxi1F0e>
- A Biographical Sketch of John Gill by Dane Johannsson (video/message)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6W5DyiksYII>

QUOTES ABOUT JOHN GILL

1. "While true religion, and sound learning, have a single friend in the British empire, the works and name of John Gill will be precious and revered." — **Augustus Toplady (1740–1778), Anglican minister and hymn writer, a personal friend of Gill's, praising his enduring legacy in theology and scholarship.**
2. "If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning, it was Gill." — Augustus Toplady, commending Gill's vast erudition and intellectual breadth.
3. "Gill is the Coryphaeus of hyper-Calvinism, but if his followers never went beyond their master, they would not go very far astray." — **Charles H.**

Spurgeon (1834–1892), Baptist preacher, acknowledging Gill's leadership in high Calvinism while suggesting his views were not extreme if followed precisely.

4. "[The Song of Solomon commentary] was the best thing Gill ever did." — **Charles H. Spurgeon, referring specifically to Gill's commentary on the Song of Solomon as his finest work.**
5. "I stand amazed at the vastness of his erudition and the extent of his writings. Such sustained diligence is worthy of emulation." — **Tom Nettles, praising Gill's scholarly output and work ethic.**
6. "Gill so closely identifies the council [the Covenant of Redemption] with the covenant of grace that the distinctions between them are virtually meaningless. This results in the inevitable tendency to collapse salvation history back into eternity – an error which seventeenth century federalism diligently seeks to avoid." — **Tom Ascol (contemporary Baptist theologian), critiquing Gill's federal theology for blurring key covenant distinctions.**

QUOTES BY JOHN GILL

- "God's love to His elect is not of yesterday; it does not begin with their love to Him, we love Him, because He first loved us. It was bore in His heart toward them long before they were delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. It does not commence in time, but bears date from eternity, and is the ground and foundation of the elect's being called in time out of darkness into marvelous light: I have loved thee, says the Lord to the church, with an everlasting love." John Gill, *A Body of Doctrinal Divinity; or, A System of Evangelical Religion* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1769), bk. 2, chap. 4.
- "this is indeed a clear proof that the love of God to his people is entirely free from all motives and conditions in them, being before they had done either good or evil; and therefore did not arise from any goodness in them, nor from their love to him nor from any good works done by them." John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old Testament*, vol. 6 (London: Printed for the author by Aaron Ward, 1748–1763), on Malachi 1:2.
- "God is faithful to all His promises, nor can He fail, or deceive; He is all wise and foreknowing of everything that comes to pass; He never changes His mind, nor forgets His word; and He is able to perform, and is the God of truth, and cannot lie; nor has He ever failed in any one of His promises, nor will He suffer [allow] His faithfulness to fail; and this is a strong argument to hold fast a profession of faith." John Gill, *An Exposition of the New Testament*, vol. 2 (London: Printed for the author

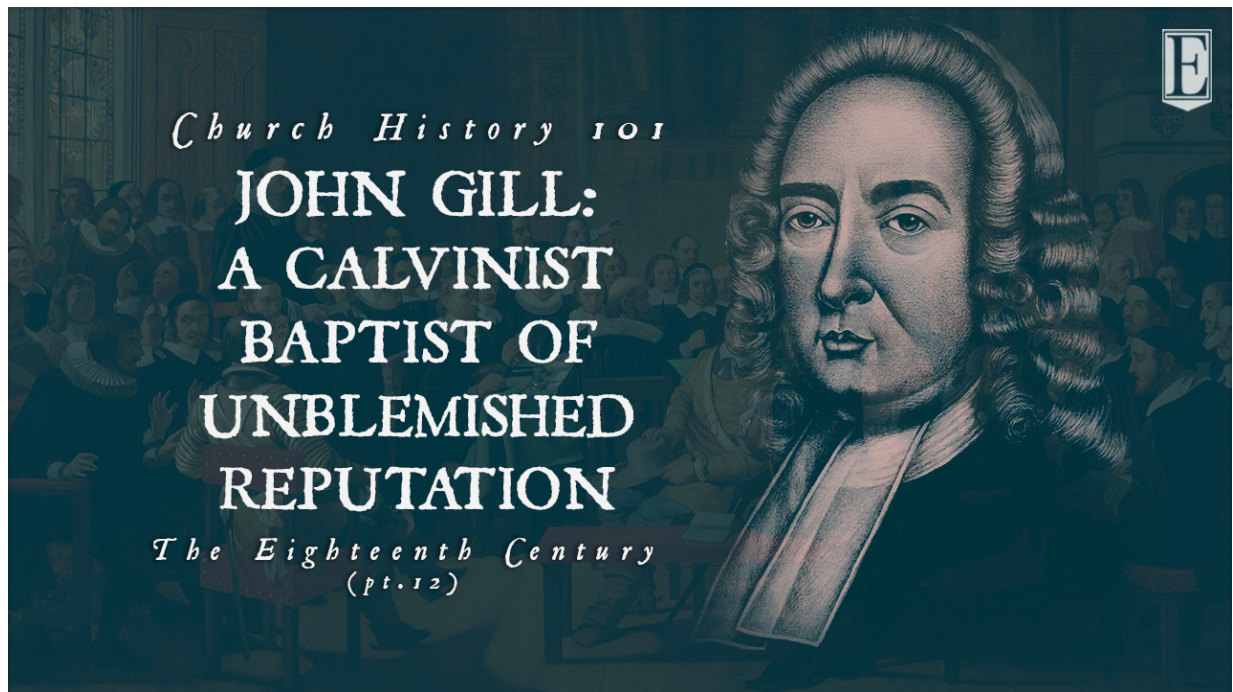
by Aaron Ward, 1746–1748), on 1 Corinthians 10:13.

- "though he is a Lamb, he has wrath in him, and when the great day of his wrath comes in any form on earth, there is no standing before him; and how much less when he shall appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire; then kings and freemen will call to the rocks to fall upon them, and hide them from him." John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for the author by Aaron Ward, 1748–1763), on Psalm 2:12.
- "the Gospel is good tidings of great joy; the kingdom of God is not in things external, but in joy in the Holy Ghost; and, above all, respect is had to a rejoicing in Christ Jesus, in his person, righteousness, and salvation: and which is consistent with 'trembling'; not with a fearful looking for of judgment, but with modesty and humility; in which sense this word, when joined with 'fear' as here, is used Phil 2:12, and stands opposed to pride, haughtiness, and arrogance; men should so rejoice in Christ as to have no confidence in the flesh, or assume any degree of glory to themselves, or have any rejoicing in themselves, but wholly in Christ, giving all the glory of what they have to him." John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for the author by Aaron Ward, 1748–1763), on Psalm 2:11.
- "in acting according to the will of God revealed in his word, and in the whole worship of him, both internal and external: and this is to be done 'with fear', not with fear of man, nor with servile fear of God, but with a godly and filial fear, with a reverential affection for him, and in a way agreeable to his mind and will; with reverence and awe of him, without levity, carelessness, and negligence." John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for the author by Aaron Ward, 1748–1763), on Psalm 2:11.
- "There is a legal and there is an evangelical repentance.—A legal one, which is a mere work of the law, and the effect of convictions of sin by it, which in time wear off and come to nothing; for,—1. There may be a sense of sin and an acknowledgment of it, and yet no true repentance for it, as in the cases of Pharaoh and of Judas, who both said, I have sinned; yet they had no true sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, nor godly sorrow for it." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 3, chap. 6.
- "There is a hypocritical repentance, such as was in the people of Israel in the wilderness, who when the wrath of God broke out against them for their sins, returned unto him, or repented, but their heart was not right with him, Psalm 78:34–37; so it is said of Judah, she hath not turned unto

me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord; and of Ephraim, or the ten tribes, they return, but not to the Most High, they are like a deceitful bow, Hos. 7:16, who turned aside and dealt unfaithfully." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 3, chap. 6.

- "There is an external repentance, or an outward humiliation for sin, such as was in Ahab, which, though nothing more, it was taken notice of by the Lord, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? and though it lay only in rending his clothes, and putting on sackcloth, and in fasting, and in a mournful way, yet the Lord was pleased to promise that the evil threatened should not come in his days, 1 Kings 21:29. And such is the repentance Tyre and Sidon would have exercised, had they had the advantages and privileges that some cities had, where Christ taught his doctrines, and wrought miracles; and of this kind was the repentance of the Ninevites, which was also regarded of God, Matt. 11:21." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 3, chap. 6.
- "Repentance is expressed by sorrow for sin." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 3, chap. 6.
- "It is a change of the mind for the better, and which produces change of action and conduct: this, as it is expressive of true repentance, flows from the understanding being enlightened by the Spirit of God, when the sinner beholds sin in another light than he did, even as exceeding sinful; and loaths it, and abhors it and himself for it." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 3, chap. 6.
- "Without the knowledge of God there can be no true worship of him." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 1, chap. 3.
- "It is godliness which distinguishes between one who truly serves and worships God, and one that serves and worships him not." John Gill, *A Body of Practical Divinity; or, A System of Practical Truths* (London: Printed for the author, and sold by George Keith, 1770), bk. 4, chap. 1.

IMAGE



JOHN GILL – A CALVINIST BAPTIST OF UNBLEMISHED REPUTATION

In an era when Baptist theology teetered between Calvinism and Arminianism, Christ raised up John Gill, a prolific theologian and pastor whose writings and faithful ministry modeled diligence, doctrinal precision, and Christ-centered preaching. Through Gill's extensive commentaries, systematic theology, and

unwavering commitment to Scripture, Christ preserved sound doctrine and equipped His people, even paving the way for great men such as Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

John Gill (1697-1771)

John Gill was born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, England, on November 23, 1697, to Edward and Elizabeth Gill.^[^1] His parents were God-fearing individuals of the Calvinistic Baptist tradition. His father served as a deacon in the Baptist work in Kettering.^[^2] Gill grew up in a good Christian home. His early years were spent studying in the local grammar school where he excelled in languages.^[^3] Unfortunately, he was no longer able to attend by the age of eleven since it was required that students attend morning prayer at the parish church. His parents, being dissenters, would not allow this. This was the end of Gill's formal education but he spent his time wisely teaching himself and not only excelled in Greek and Latin but was quite adept at Hebrew by the age of nineteen.^[^4] Gill was converted to Christ at the age of twelve but was not baptized until he was nineteen on November 1, 1716.^[^5] He was married to Elizabeth Negus (d. 1764) in 1718 and they had three children that lived beyond infancy: Elizabeth, John, and Mary.^[^6]

The church at Kettering recognized his gifts as a preacher and in 1719 he became pastor of the famous Horselydown congregation in London. Benjamin Keach had previously served as pastor in this church and eventually C. H. Spurgeon would become pastor of this church.^[^7] Gill would become a prolific author and influential theologian of the Particular Baptist cause.^[^8] Gill's writings include *The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated* (1731), *The Cause of God and Truth* (1735–1738) which was a response to Daniel Whitby's *Discourse on the Five Points* that refuted Calvinism. His magnum opus was his three-volume *An Exposition of the New Testament* (1746–1748) and his six-volume *Exposition of the Old Testament* (1748–1763). He also wrote *A Dissertation on the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language* (1767), *A Body of Doctrinal Divinity* (1767) and *A Body of Practical Divinity* (1770).^[^9] He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of Aberdeen in 1748. He would become one of the most influential Baptist theologians ever.^[^10]

The major controversy that has erupted over the influence of Gill has been over the issue of hyper-Calvinism (the belief that unsaved man is not obligated to respond in faith in Christ and therefore preachers should not offer the Gospel to those who are the non-elect). Some have attributed to Gill to be the first systematizer of a Baptist hyper-Calvinist theology. Others have argued that Gill was in fact not a hyper-Calvinist.^[^11] Regardless, it was during Gill's time period when the Particular Baptist Churches began their decline into hyper-Calvinism.^[^12] Most likely, hyper-Calvinists used Gill's theology and went past him to solidify their own theology.^[^13] Gill is the first major writing Baptist theologian and his works retain its influence even to this day.^[^14] On his gravestone is

written, "In this Sepulcher are deposited the remains of John Gill, professor of Sacred Theology. A man of unblemished reputation, a sincere disciple of Jesus, an excellent preacher of the gospel, a courageous defender of the Christian faith. Who, adorned with piety, learning and skill, was unwearied in works of prodigious labour for more than fifty years. To obey the commands of his great master, to advance the best interests of the church, to promote the salvation of men, impelled with unabated ardor, he put forth all his strength. He placidly fell asleep in Christ, the 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1771, in the 74th year of his age."[^15]

Interesting Facts About John Gill

He had no formal education beyond the age of eleven, yet he learned Latin, Greek, and was a master of the biblical Hebrew language.[^16] He pastored the church that Benjamin Keach once pastored, and the very same that Charles Haddon Spurgeon would one day lead.[^17] He pastored the same church and wrote extensively for fifty-one years in his public ministry.[^18] He wrote a commentary on the entire Old and New Testaments.[^19] He wrote it all by hand, and even did the proof-reading once it returned from the printers before publication.[^20] After completing his entire Bible commentary, Gill wrote a systematic theology, titled, *A Body of Divinity*.[^21] His first sermon was at the age of nineteen, and he preached from 1 Corinthians 2:2, "I determined to know nothing among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."[^22] When they built a new church building, Gill said this in his opening sermon: "In all places where I record my name, &c." Upon this occasion, in his sermon, the Dr. said, "We enter upon this new place of worship, by recording the name of the Lord therein; namely, by preaching the doctrines of the grace of God; of free and full salvation alone, by Jesus Christ; and by the administration of gospel ordinances, as they have been delivered to us. What doctrines may be taught in this place, after I am gone, is not for me to know; but, as for my own part, I am at a point; I am determined, and have been long ago, what to make the subject of my ministry. It is now upwards of forty years since I entered into the work, and the first sermon I ever preached was from those words of the apostle, I determined, &c. (1 Cor. 2:2.) Through the grace of God, I have been enabled, in some good measure, to abide by the same resolution hitherto; and I hope, by Divine assistance, I ever shall, as long as I am in this tabernacle, and engaged in this solemn work. I am not afraid of the reproaches of men; I have been inured to these, from my youth upwards; none of these things move me."[^23] His dying words were, "O my Father, my Father!"[^24]

Theological Lessons from John Gill

John Gill's life teaches six profound lessons for Christ's church.

First, hard work in study pays off. With formal education only until age eleven, Gill's self-discipline in learning languages and theology yielded profound influence. Reformed theologian John Owen emphasized, "Diligent study of

Scripture equips the believer for every good work, as God rewards faithfulness in pursuing knowledge of Him" (*The Nature and Causes of Apostasy from the Gospel*, 1676, ed. William H. Goold [Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1850], 234).

Second, the complete Bible is needed to make a complete Christian. Gill's commentary on the entire Bible underscores this truth. Charles H. Spurgeon declared, "The whole counsel of God must be proclaimed, for partial truth leads to incomplete discipleship" (*Lectures to My Students*, 1875 [London: Passmore and Alabaster], 112).

Third, doctrine matters. In *A Body of Divinity*, Gill systematized truth for the church. Jonathan Edwards taught, "Sound doctrine is the foundation of faith, guarding against error and guiding holy living" (*A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, 1746 [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1961], 145). Gill affirmed: "Without the knowledge of God there can be no true worship of him" (*A Body of Doctrinal Divinity*, 1767 [London: M. and S. Higham, 1839], 23).

Fourth, the importance of the civil government obeying God's law. In his commentary, Gill stated: "[Civil Magistrates] are to discountenance and suppress impiety and irreligion; and to countenance and encourage religion and virtue. . . Civil magistrates are appointed for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (*A Complete Body of Practical and Doctrinal Divinity*, Book V, Chapter 4 [London: M. and S. Higham, 1839], 456). Thomas Boston echoed: "Magistrates serve as God's ministers, enforcing His law for the good of society" (*The Whole Works of Thomas Boston*, vol. 6, ed. Samuel Colquhoun [Edinburgh: John Reid, 1850], 78).

Fifth, Christ crucified must be the banner we fly. Gill's first sermon at nineteen was from 1 Corinthians 2:2. Andrew Fuller affirmed, "The cross of Christ is the heart of the gospel, to be preached without compromise" (*The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, 1785 [London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1840], 92).

Sixth, the importance of living a blameless life in Christ. Gill's gravestone reads: "A man of unblemished reputation" (Mickle, *Brief Biography of John Gill*, 2008, 145). John Calvin taught, "A blameless life adorns the doctrine we profess, commending Christ to the world" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1559, trans. Henry Beveridge [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1863], 3.6.3).

Conclusion: Christ's Victory in the Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century, God used John Gill to model for us hard work, Bible study, the importance of doctrine, and that we must always preach Christ crucified. Despite limited education, Gill's diligence produced enduring works that fortified Particular Baptists against decline. As Spurgeon reflected, "Gill's commentaries are a treasury of Reformed truth, equipping the church for generations" (*Commenting and Commentaries*, 1876 [London: Passmore and Alabaster], 45). His legacy endures in doctrinal fidelity and Christ-centered preaching.

Let us learn from Gill, pursuing hard work in study, embracing the whole Bible,

upholding sound doctrine, urging civil obedience to God's law, preaching Christ crucified, and living blamelessly. May we trust that Christ continues to conquer the nations, building His church for His glory. Let us live boldly, knowing His kingdom advances, unstoppable, until it fills the earth. Amen.

- [^1]: John Rippon, *A Brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Late Rev. John Gill* (London: J. Bennett, 1838), 1.
- [^2]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 5.
- [^3]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 12.
- [^4]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 15.
- [^5]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 23.
- [^6]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 34.
- [^7]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 45.
- [^8]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 56.
- [^9]: John Gill, *The Whole Works of the Rev. Mr. John Gill*, vol. 1, ed. David Nutt (London: T. Smith, 1763), preface.
- [^10]: Rippon, *Brief Memoir*, 67.
- [^11]: George M. Ella, *John Gill and the Cause of God and Truth* (Durham: Go Publications, 1995), 123.
- [^12]: Ella, *John Gill*, 145.
- [^13]: Ella, *John Gill*, 156.
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