

 **Slide 1:** Intro: Pray for the help of the Almighty and the Spirit of Liberty. LET THERE BE AN AWAKENING BEFORE ANOTHER REVOLUTION. Thanks you ladies and gentlemen, brethren and sisters.

PAY ATTENTION TO SLIDES

I stand before you guilty of my own ignorance and that it is my own awakening for what I didn't know that makes this content so meaningful to me personally, I'm guilty of my own shallow knowledge, and not understanding the deepest roots of where we come from and why the ideas that we have worked so well, Its easy to focus on the lower hanging fruit of personal liberties, equalities, etc. than it is to see what lies as the foundation for them

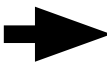
I MUST FIRST DECLARE THE LAW OF LIBERTY, WHICH IS A LAW OF HEAVEN

 **Slide 2:** *A quaker and pacifist named Potts was out walking near where Washington's troops were at Valley Forge, the British were occupying American homes and quite comfortable...his troops starving, with little clothes and shoes or food, rampant disease, up to three thousand died from the conditions. While walking he came upon a figure kneeling with sword to side and overheard fervent prayer..startled he realized it was Washington himself and, once home, told his wife "I never thought a man could be Christian and a soldier, when I heard Washington pray I knew I was wrong." Potts shortly after changed his pacifist beliefs and became an advocate for the war. Nothing works without prayer....thanks Tim for that great message.*

EXPLAIN LEARNING VS THINKING

I've been asked in the series to share some of what was occurring in the messages of America in the 1700s. The amount I discovered is so massive that I'm only going to give you highlights, or shorts, or reels as the youth call them, because that's the best we can do in the time that we have. There is some content that will be upstream of the great awakening in America and then some downstream, ultimately leading to the ideas that created this nation, which are theocentric not secular. This isn't even debatable by anyone who's willing to read any history with honesty.

I'm not here to judge all these men for the way they did things perfectly or imperfectly, that is the supreme judges job, (no rope unties itself, it can get tangled on its own, but takes time to unravel) **I am here to defend the ideas that God gave these men** who then tried to implement them. We all know their imperfection but make no mistake we're defending heaven's ideas. Other reductionist minds can try and make it about the people. The people are imperfect, but history will judge all of us, and usually will do so harshly, what should any of us get to the level of fame these men did, we should hope that the quality of our ideas and our efforts towards virtue were outstanding, not just our failures. **AND NEVER BE BULLIED INTO THINKING THESE GUYS WERE DUMMIES, THE WERE LIBRARIES OF KNOWLEDGE.** what I can say is that the idea that God gave them was so good that over the last 5800 years and hundreds of nations, the average length of the governing documents was 17-19 years. France had



their Revolution about 20 years after we did, they have been through 15 Constitutions yet we have had the same document, its that good...regardless of our ability to fully actualize it. We frequently hear that we couldn't possibly know what the founders actually thought about a lot of issues, but that's nonsense. Historians at the UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON who were curious as to where the ideas came from wanted to know, and it turns out that these guys loved writing... Washington has over 100,000 pieces of personal correspondence, he has a hundred volumes of writing, as does Jefferson, Franklin has 80, on and on. These aren't emoji's and memes either, these are lengthy letters and correspondence discussing everything going on in their world and lives. Since the goal was to understand what informed the documents of our founding they started with 15,000 documents, then down to the 1000 most significant, governing documents etc. They looked through all of them for things that were quotes or sourced, here's what they found after TEN YEARS, released in this book "The Origins of American Constitutionalism."

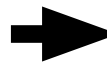
Slide 3

*The Single most cited person was Baron Charles Montesquieu, (spirit of the laws, separation of powers, branches, odd number) Second was Judge William Blackstone, Third was John Locke, (virtuous society provided life liberty property. They knew they would have to deal with slavery later, focused on unified colonies) **but the most cited source, not person, was the Bible.** 34% of all their quotes came from it, that's more than most preachers on Sunday morning Ladies and Gentleman.*



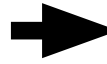
When Washington retired he wrote his Farewell Letter, which every student in America until the 20th century, when progressives started getting involved and decided history didn't matter, took a yearly exam on, along with the **Constitution, Declaration of Independence**, (break up letter with the crazy significant other) their **state Constitution and Washingtons Farewell Address.**

Slide 4



When Washington resigned it was called the Age of Revolution, France was in revolution along with others, societies were falling apart yet we were growing like crazy... Washington made this point in his letter, it was a reminder to everyone: **Slide 5 "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports." These things are the pillars of our nation, indispensable. (Two legs)**

BEAR THIS IN MIND WHEN WE TALK ABOUT RELIGION, (EXPLAIN) THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT DENOMINATIONS, NOT OTHER WORLD VIEWS



Slide 6: Briefly explain the different types of churches/ministers.

Just like in today's America the 1700's held a wide variety of religious views. In fact, if we go back to the early 1600's and watch the expansion of these colonies they had very little in common with each other, kind of like modern Poland and France, on the same continent but completely opposite in many ways, and really didn't like each other, North Carolina and South Carolina had border wars, the same with Virginia and Maryland. The last colony to be founded in

1732 was Georgia and the chaplain was a guy named George Whitefield, we will be talking about him shortly.

As you can see, some of them were established churches (like the Anglican Church, which was the Church of England), some focused more on deep theology, some from traveling preachers that brought strong messages of repentance. In some cases during the Awakening whole cities would be saved and every bar and brothel closed, church services would last for hours, with the singing of the Psalms, many times repeatedly...Psalms 119 (the longest one) was even sung, imagine if we did that and decided to “take it from the top” again. e.

Now It would be impossible to fairly talk about this without understanding what the reason for their beliefs was, so let me just give a quick bit of context.

Because America is a youngish country we have not participated in the endless cycles of conflict many others have, notably regarding religious freedom. After the death of Christ, the early church had about 300 years of heavily persecuted, but highly productive success. It grew all over the world and witnessed the end of several world super powers of the time. After being turned into a state religion by Constantine and the shift of its power base to St. Peters Christianity began a long decline into brutal, incredibly dark ages. The average person couldn't read the Bible as it was in Latin, you had to purchase your loved ones soul from hell, or pay for their sins. Basically the freedom that Christ bought was taken and exchanged for hundreds of years of perversion and tyranny. Thankfully the Enlightenment came (due to the entrance of HIS WORD) and the teachings of Christ began to explode once again, passed from mouth to mouth and through the mechanisms of print. This eventually led to the Protestant Reformation.

Henry the 8th then came along and created the Church of England, which was not separate from government. The Monarch of the country was now the the head of the church...all in the name of creating political unity, as religious divisions could make civil unrest. (This is one of the reasons for the founders positions on separation (establishment clause JEFFERSON due to the abuses that came) This meant that obedience to the Church of England became mandatory, which did not allow for outside theology. Fines, varied punishments, imprisonment and even execution were used to enforce compliance. If you wanted to hold certain public offices or government roles, oaths of allegiance to the Anglican Church had to be taken, causing many to lose their jobs or not have access.

 **Slide 7:** One of the most notable people persecuted under these regimes was John Bunyan, he was still fairly normal to hear of 30 or 40 years ago in the Christian circles as his book “Pilgrims Progress” was a legendary piece of writ and study for Christians.

I bring him up because it goes to motive my friends, just like I hear messages from my favorite preachers and their ideas impact my messages, or you listen to Furtick or Pastor Tim and that shapes your beliefs, so would his beliefs and messages as well as story been part of the early

preachers in America, **source for the messages of the BOTH Awakenings**, and a direct cause of people fleeing for religious reasons.

John Bunyan was put in jail for 12 years because he would not quit preaching even though he was unlicensed by the Anglican Church of England. He also refused to quit preaching in the future and to quit organizing meetings outside of the Church.

He was imprisoned in 1660 in Bedford until 1672. He was given the opportunity to be released if he would promise not to preach, but he replied that he was called by God to do so and must obey God rather than man. He said “If I am released today, I will preach tomorrow by the Grace of God.

His imprisonment brought horrible hardship on his family, He had 4 children, including one that was blind. He made long shoelaces while in prison to try and make some monies to support them, faithful friends helped as well. He wrote three books, including Pilgrims Progress.

It sold over 250 Million copies

Never gone out of print for almost 400 years

Translated into over 200 languages

The most widely read book in the English speaking world after the Bible for time.

How does his life and beliefs connect to the early colonies and the founders?

He was deeply admired by the Puritans and Pilgrims, and they held to his message that Government should not have license over a persons faith or preaching, and that a persons religious belief and worship is a matter of conscience not government permission, a principle that drastically impacted Americas religious liberty and First Amendment.

Pilgrims Progress was one of the most common books in Colonial America, Many of the Founders would have read it, if not all of them, as it was used in basic education. His preaching was the seedbed of thought for a whole group of people fleeing Europe to the Americas, and his sermons and books most certainly were cited for thousands of messages that would be preached here.



Slide 8: Who were some of the preachers in the Great Awakening?

This slide shows some of the more prominent ministers at the time, along with the thousands we will never know about. Its here that we see why the Great Awakening was the forge that the fire of our religious liberty as well as national liberty was forged in. These messages carried the Spirit of life that Paul talked of, being born again as Jesus told the Pharisee...of the transforming work of the Spirit. These men unpacked the new revelation on “the letter of the law vs the spirit, in this the Constitution and the Declaration were coupled like Old and New Testament. One must understand the Spirit behind the law in order for it to work. THESE MEN FOLLOWED 10

LAWS, OUR CURRENT CODE IS THOUSANDS OF PAGES. This spirit of liberty after centuries of rote performance (INDULGENCES) impacted our nation in a way that no nation has ever experienced, to the point that those liberties not only caused the eventual overturning of slavery, but an exporting of the ideas of freedom and liberty the world over. For hundreds of years people have risked deadly seas, left family behind, scrimped and saved to buy any passage, in order to taste the fruit this country offered. Lets start with the most well known.....**George**

Whitefield. Slide 9

Whitefield was considered the most influential figure before the American Revolution. Historians often say that He, along with Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin had much to do with how the colonists began to see themselves as one people. Because of his traveling and working with Franklin to print his messages, people across the colonies heard a singular idea and moved towards a unified outlook.

George Whitefield was determined to preach to as many as possible, and started traveling **Slide 10/11** from Georgia all the way up to Maine and back with a portable pulpit preaching the need to be Born Again and live a life of holiness before God. George traveled those roads 7 times friends, we can't even begin to imagine those hardships, the peril, bloodletting if you got sick, the dentist only had wood for replacements, these men were unbelievably strong. I have driven a lot of these united states and I can't imagine trying to do it by horseback.

George did this for 34 years, he would stop, get the pulpit down, a crowd would show up and this is how we got the Great Awakening, without which we would still be like Europe, fighting each other, etc. **Slide 12** Over those years he preached 18,000 sermons, he did another 16,000 in Europe. That's 34,000 done in 34 years, which is about a 1000 a year, which is about three messages a day. 80% of all Americans physically heard him without Tik Tok, which is unbelievable.

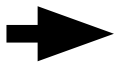
He had a famous sermon called the Father Abraham sermon that many of the Founding Fathers wrote about, many of them reflected on it, with John Adams recounting it to Jefferson, and the story behind that is this: Whitefield (Along with the Wesleys) was part of founding the Methodist church. In the message he said "I had this dream last night where I went to heaven and met Father Abraham at the gates, I was so excited and I said "Father Abraham, I am so glad to be here and to see all my Methodist brothers and sisters!" Father Abraham says "I am so sorry we dont have any here." Whitefield is stunned and says "Well, I have lots of Presbyterian friends, where are they?" He replies "We have none." Whitefield goes through all the denominations getting the same answer before he finally says "well, who is here?" Abraham quotes to him Acts 10:35 **Slide 13** After this Whitefield preached to lay aside all the things that divide (WE ARE ALL THE BODY, NO CANNIBALSIM)us and find what unifies us, now remember that he is one of the only people that every colony is hearing.

If you fast forward to 1774, first time there is a National Congress who have decided to push back against Great Britain as a unified group instead of 13 difference ones, this is the beginning

of the records of Congress. **On this day the records reflect that they opened with prayer.**

John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail about it, he said “Abigail when the Congress first met Mr. Thomas Cushing of Massachusetts made a motion that it should be open with prayer at that point in time it was opposed by Mr. Jon Jay of New York and Mr. John Rutledge of South Carolina. Now let me point out that all of these men were pious men all professing Christians, but they were all from different denomination types as that picture I showed you earlier reflected. John J was a Presbyterian, Jon Rutledge was an Anglican, Cushing was a Congregationalist, so they all said no we can't do that. We can't have prayer. Adams told his wife we were unbelievably divided because we were from so many different religious sentiments some Anna Baptist some Presbyterian some congregation list we could not join in the same prayer and worship.

In this moment, Sam Adams (way more to this guy than beer) became the turning point. he's here as part of the Congress and has heard the motion and he has something to say so John Adams records that Mr. Sam Adams rose to his feet and said that he was no bigot and said that he could hear a prayer from a gentleman of piety and virtue, who is at the same time a friend to his country. Basically saying that if you love God and have piety and virtue and you love this country then I'm willing to hear you pray and join it. So here we have all these brilliant man who came with all these ideas to try and unify, but they couldn't get along because of their denomination differences, but Sam Adams says not me. He clearly had heard the great George Whitfield sermon 30 years before, and that message was what changed the ability of our Congress to get together and pray. How they not applied the father Abraham message, because both Jefferson and Franklin, as well as Adams both stated how that message was a fundamental part of getting the colonies to overlook their religious differences, we would not have a Congress today.



In fact, in the painting of them praying all of those gentlemen are pictured...**Slide 14** What is amazing about this is that Sam Adams asked for Duche to pray, this is significant because Duche was Anglican, the state established church of Virginia, and they had persecuted other denominations and even killed and almost caused a war already. Adams was a congregationalist, which is the group that most hates the Anglicans and yet he says “lets have him pray...which was a reach WAY across the aisle. John Adams wrote to his wife that it was a remarkable moment, that the prayer was about 2 hours and then they studied 4 chapters of the Bible together. The messages of unity preached by Whitefield, as well as his constant travels between colonies preaching is responsible. As a side note, one of the men in the room wrote that the prayer Duche prayed was **“worth riding 100 miles to hear” a phrase that commonly meant three days in the saddle.**

Whitefields messages emphasized a true conversion of the heart, not just moral behavior, he crossed denominational lines and produced content that was read all over the colonies as many were published. Here is an excerpt from a message that seems like something my dad would preach...**challenging men to lead their homes.**

How such a general neglect of family-religion first began to overspread the Christian world, is difficult to determine. As for the primitive Christians, I am positive it was not so with them: No, they had not so learned Christ, as falsely to imagine religion was to be confined solely to their assemblies for public worship; but, on the contrary, behaved with such piety and exemplary holiness in their private families, that St. Paul often styles their house a church: “Salute such a one, says he, and the church which is in his house.” And, I believe, we must for ever despair of seeing a primitive spirit of piety revived in the world, till we are so happy as to see a revival of primitive family religion; and persons unanimously resolving with good old Joshua, in the words of the text, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

From which words, I shall beg leave to insist on these three things.

I. First, That it is the duty of every governor of a family to take care, that not only he himself, but also that those committed to his charge, “serve the Lord.”

II. Secondly, I shall endeavor to show after what manner a governor and his household ought to serve the Lord. And,

III. Thirdly, I shall offer some motives, in order to excite all governors, with their respective households, to serve the Lord in the manner that shall be recommended.

And First, I am to show that it is the duty of every governor of a family to take care, that not only he himself, but also that those committed to his charge, should serve the Lord.

And this will appear, if we consider that every governor of a family ought to look upon himself as obliged to act in three capacities as a prophet, to instruct: as a priest, to pray for and with; as a king, to govern, direct, and provide for them. It is true indeed, the latter of these, their kingly office, they are not so frequently deficient in, (nay in this they are generally too solicitous) but as for the two former, their priestly and prophetic office, like Gallio, they care for no such things. But however indifferent some governors may be about it, they may be assured, that God will require a due discharge of these offices at their hands. For if, as the apostle argues, “He that does not provide for his own house,” in temporal things, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel;” to what greater degree of apostasy must he have arrived, who takes no thought to provide for the spiritual welfare of his family!

In this message Whitefield goes for the throat of a culture not unlike today's where men have by and large abandoned the seat of spiritual responsibility, he directly states that men are to be prophets, priests and kings, but makes the necessary expansion at the end to say that evidently most men have no problem, playing king at home but do not care for being prophet, (providing direction and hearing God) and priest (leading home worship, teaching the word). These focused types of messages stirred men back to penitent hearts and to become leaders of their homes.

Needless to say his fame drew mixed audiences, and his preaching style would notoriously cause disruptions in towns, **on more than one occasion had stones thrown at him, once a dead cat, and one offended person climbed into a tree and tried to make a wee on him as he walked past.**

Whitefield was also close friends with Benjamin Franklin, who although never admitting to become fully evangelized by him deeply loved him and printed many of his messages from his printing press. Although Franklin directly attributed his writing style to how much he attempted to copy **John Bunyan**, he greatly admired Whitefield's ability to communicate and learned the value of drawing large crowds and spreading information through print. Their relationship was a true showcase of a country where two men with different approaches to morality (Franklin certainly believing in morality and virtue, but disputed some of the churches orthodoxy) could be close friends and work together, again the unity that Whitefield had championed.

I must now reference Edwards:

 **Slide 15: Jonathan Edwards**, Whitefield is referred to as America's first celebrity preacher, but Edwards its great theologian of the times. His message "Sinners in the hands of an Angry God." It was the most **famous message of the time** and was widely circulated. Although he delivered it very calmly his use of imagery caused people to shriek in terror with reports of people clawing the pews in front of them for dear life as they sensed that the floor was disappearing and hell was below, awaiting them because of how their sin separated them from God. **Slide 16**



Here is an excerpt from that message that brought so many to Christ and shifted society:

And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south; many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are now in a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him who has loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day! To see so many others feasting, while you are pining and perishing! To see so many rejoicing and singing for joy of heart, while you have cause to mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit!

How can you rest one moment in such a condition? Are not your souls as precious as the souls of the people at Suffield*, where they are flocking from day to day to Christ? Are there not many here who have lived long in the world, and are not to this day born again? and so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and have done nothing ever since they have lived, but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh, sirs, your case, in an especial manner, is extremely dangerous. Your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Do you not see how generally persons of your years are passed over and left, in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You had need to consider yourselves, and awake thoroughly out of sleep.

At the time (as always) comparison occurred between preachers with conversion and listener numbers being talked about. Some people condemned the theatrics they witnessed and questioned the conversions. Edwards' idea of success however was theologically sound, He

taught that all he cared for was to see someone have a genuine conversion, one that was accompanied by a total transformation of the persons life.

While Whitefield was the larger voice of the Awakening, Edwards was the mind and heart, His book “A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God” was read throughout Britain and America, the book served to convince ministers that God was doing something surprising and unexpected, encouraging more revivals.

Edwards drilled down on “**Being born again**” a message shared by Whitefield, which after hundreds of years of people relying on a religious system and state appointed clergy to inform their behavior, put solely on them the need to engage in a relationship with God....this led to the holiness movement by Wesley and others...WHY? Because man being confronted with his own moral responsibility puts the weight of living right with the Grace of Heaven squarely where it belongs, **ON you and I!** This sparked the real cleansing that occurred during the Awakening, messages that shifted duty from organized clergy to an individual.

I wish I had time to unpack so many messages I have read as I studied...let me leave us with just one small piece of writ that is appropriate as we close. Given by Samuel Wales, Professor of Divinity at Yale in 1785.

When we are favored with a profusion of earthly good, we are exceedingly prone to set our hearts upon it with an in moderate affection, neglecting our bountiful creator from whom alone all good is derived, we bathe and bury ourselves in the streams, forgetting the fountain from whence they flow, this is a disingenuous behavior toward the father Mercy's. It is but natural however; to man, we are much more inclined to murmur at God's justice in adversity, than to acknowledge his goodness and prosperity, more ready to view God, as the author of evil than the author of good in the distresses of the late war, though they were most evidently brought upon us by the instrument of men we were nevertheless much more ready to impute them to the hand of God then we are now to acknowledge the same hand in the happiness of peace and the other Rich blessings of his providence and grace when our wants are very pressing, we are willing or pretend to be willing to apply to God for relief, but no sooner as a relief given than we set our hearts upon the gift and neglect the giver or rather make use of his own bounty in order to fight against him because we are more inclined to love the creature than the creator, to be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God....we must not forget the Lord, our God and his goodness goodness for the freedoms we have.

What did they give us, the message was the declaration, every message is. These men preached it, they gave us a place where, unlike many of them, you can live for Jesus instead of die for him. They made a place where you can't just do what you want but rather where you could choose the right thing in your freedoms.

I have studied the ideas of liberty for close to 40 years, but there is something different about the Declaration, this document fueled and inspired by men who preached liberty, personal responsibility, morality, the pursuit of virtue...the thing I love the most is the fact that it is a beautiful break up letter with one old set of ideas, proclaims a new beginning for ideas that reflect heaven, but the ending is up to you, once again mirroring the message of Christ, shown in his 4 Gospels, but as I heard someone recently say, there are actually 5 Gospels...each of you are the 5th.