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turns 300

The legacy of the
'grand itinerant'

7 Questions with
Thomas Kidd

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Publisher:
Steve Watters

Executive editor:
James A. Smith Sr.

Editor:
S. Craig Sanders

Copy editor:
Andrew J.W. Smith

News writer:
RuthAnne Irvin

Creative director:
Eric Jimenez

Art director:
Andrea Stember

Graphic designer:
Daniel Carroll

Photographer:
Emil Handke

CONTACT INFO

Phone: (502) 897-4000
E-mail: towers@sbts.edu
Web: towers.sbts.edu
The Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary
2825 Lexington Rd.
Louisville, KY 40280

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POSTMASTER

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12 The life and ministry of Whitefield

Michael A.G. Haykin examines the life and ministry of the “grand itinerant,” the 18th-century evangelist George Whitefield, who captured the hearts and minds of Britain and colonial America during the Great Awakening.



From the editor:

The farthest my entire family ever traveled from our North Carolina home was to New York City in the summer of 2005. It marked the occasion of Billy Graham’s final evan-

gelistic crusade. Like many who heard the legendary evangelist in person, I regard it a significant spiritual milestone. Though I had first heard him preach at a crucial moment in my childhood, this crusade was the ultimate swan song in the world’s most important city.

Hearing Graham preach is the closest any of us can compare with the experience of colonial Americans when the “grand itinerant” George Whitefield belted powerful sermons to tens of thousands in the open

air. While Graham may not have elicited the same emotional outbursts, he bested Whitefield’s attendance records and matched his celebrity — all while emphasizing the gospel of the new birth which made Whitefield so important.

As we approach the tricentennial of Whitefield’s birth on Dec. 16, 1714, I am hopeful that the recognition he receives spurs others to embrace his spirit of tireless evangelism and proclaim the necessity of the new birth.

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Trustees accept gift of Wisconsin campus

Southern Seminary trustees voted to accept Northland International University in Dunbar, Wisconsin, as a new extension of the seminary and Boyce College.

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Seifrid talks commentary on 2 Corinthians

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Our mission is to use our time, resources, and talents to tell the Southern story in an accurate, timely, and creative manner to the glory of God.

Newslog

‘Daily Dose of Greek’ provides a refresher for pastors, former students

By Andrew J.W. Smith

As a New Testament professor, Robert L. Plummer is concerned that his former students are apostatizing. But he says graduates from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary are not turning from their faith, but turning from their Greek.

Plummer, professor of New Testament interpretation, has taught Greek courses at Southern for 15 years. After watching students invest so much time into Greek only to see their skills wilt from disuse, Plummer resolved to fight back against linguistic atrophy.

His website, “Daily Dose of Greek,” features two-minute videos which are emailed daily to over 3,000 subscribers in 75 countries. In each video, Plummer translates one verse from the Greek New Testament.

“I asked myself what I really wanted to accomplish and in what ways God has gifted me,” Plummer said. “I feel like God has gifted me with a love and ability to teach Greek.”

While taping a series of lectures for the online version of his Elementary Greek course, Plummer grew interested in the tablet technology he was using and realized he could use it to release daily Greek screen-casts called “Daily Dose of Greek.”

Plummer said it is easy for students to let their Greek skills slip away once class requirements, peer encouragement, and professorial guidance are removed.

“The website is part of my ongoing life work to leave behind a vast spiritual army of men and women knowledgeable in and zealous for the Word of God,” he said.

“Daily Dose of Greek” can be found online at www.dailydoseofgreek.com.



‘Timeless’ ministry of Spurgeon examined in Alumni Academy

By Jeff Robinson

More than 125 alumni of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary attended a two-day Alumni Academy, Oct. 9-10, devoted to the life and ministry of the great British pastor Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

“The ministry of a man like Spurgeon is timeless,” said Thomas J. Nettles, who studied the “prince of preachers” for nearly 20 years in writing *Living By Revealed Truth: The Life and Pastoral Theology of Charles Haddon Spurgeon*. “His attentions and affections were focused on things that were not merely ephemeral, but were eternal. The longevity of interest in him is something that certainly commends him to all of us.”

Nettles, who retired from full-time teaching at Southern Seminary in May after more than 35 years as a professor of historical theology, served as the main lecturer for the conference. He taught on Spurgeon as a pastor-theologian, Spurgeon’s biblical preaching, his writing as a pastoral discipline, his commitment to benevolent ministry, and his involvement in theological controversies of the day.

In his first lecture, Nettles argued that God’s work in and through Spurgeon began early in his life, during his teenage years. Nettles identified lessons Spurgeon learned early in life that established the foundation for his ministry, including the interpretation of his life in

light of God’s providence, a conviction of Baptist ecclesiology, and commitment to Scripture as the bedrock for his preaching and writing.

In his widely read *Lectures to My Students*, Spurgeon set forth four evidences that a man has been called to preach God’s Word: he must have a saving experience of the gospel; he must have a superior esteem for the worthiness of the gospel; he must possess an inability to give himself to any other work than the gospel ministry; and he must have natural gifts for preaching and teaching.

“Spurgeon believed a man whom God calls to preach the Word must have a resolute confidence in the sufficiency of Scripture and must be committed to the exposition of it,” Nettles said.

Southern Seminary professors Michael A.G. Haykin and Donald S. Whitney also lectured on topics related to Spurgeon. Haykin examined the necessity of the Holy Spirit in the Christian ministry, a fundamental part of Spurgeon’s teaching. Whitney addressed the piety of Spurgeon, asserting that meditation on Scripture was Spurgeon’s priority in his daily walk with the Lord.

Alumni Academy provides free ongoing instruction for alumni and prospective students of Southern Seminary. To find out more about the program, visit events.sbts.edu.

Southern Seminary students ‘preach the Word’ across Kentucky

By Hayley Schoeppler

Students from Southern Seminary preached at churches throughout Kentucky, Sept. 28, as part of Operation: Preach the Word. This initiative, sponsored by the Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization, marks the first time Southern Seminary collectively sent students to speak in churches that give to the Cooperative Program. The 11 students who participated included Garrett Milner, who spoke at Gethsemane Baptist Church in Louisville, Joshua Cottrell, who spoke at First Baptist Church in Jackson, and David Bearden, who spoke at Crossroads Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. Each student spoke on the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.

Paul Chitwood, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, met with and encouraged the students prior to the event. Eleven churches participated, and students traveled a total of 2,314 miles to preach. Several of the churches invited the students to return and preach again. Next year, the Bevin Center plans to expand Operation: Preach the Word to 50 churches across Kentucky.

Impoverished nations need free enterprise, scholars say at Commonweal Conference

By Jeff Robinson

The Bible provides a blueprint for impoverished nations that gives hope for flourishing, said Wayne Grudem and Barry Asmus at Southern Seminary’s Commonweal Conference, Sept. 26-27.

“Our message is that there is hope for poor nations,” said Grudem, research professor of theology and biblical studies at Phoenix Seminary. “The Bible supports a nation producing its own products and building its own [economic health].”

Grudem and Asmus, senior economist at the National Center for Policy Analysis, co-authored the 2013 book *The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution*, arguing a biblical case for a free enterprise economy. The conference theme, “The hard work of human flourishing,” arose from the book.

The two main components of a nation’s economic strength or weakness, Grudem and Asmus said, are per-capita income and Gross Domestic Product — the market value of all goods and services produced in a country within one year. If per-capita income and GDP are both high, a nation will flourish.

The presence of Christian faith is a central factor for the growth of a nation, Asmus said. Poverty-stricken nations such as Haiti and India have suffered economically

for generations because the dominant religions in those countries resist progress.

“Christianity is progress-prone,” he said. “Most religions are progress-resistant. You can start to see countries recover economically and begin to flourish where Christianity is introduced.”

Grudem built a biblical case for human flourishing, arguing that the eighth commandment — “You shall not steal” — provides a theological basis for humans producing goods and owning private property. Some Christians see material flourishing as participating in greed, Grudem pointed out, but God has designed mankind in his image with skills to be productive.

“I do not think it is greed,” he said. “I don’t think this drive is sin. I think it was in the heart of Adam and Eve from the beginning before there was sin. It is a God-given desire that meshes with God-given wisdom and skill and ability.”

The Commonweal Project on Faith, Work, and Human Flourishing, funded by the Kern family, is an academic initiative at Southern Seminary to foster a theology of work and economics.

Audio and video from the Commonweal Conference are available at sbts.edu/resources.

Andrew Peterson plays at Sampey Commons

By Hayley Schoeppler

Andrew Peterson, popular musician and author, surprised the Boyce College community with an acoustic concert in Sampey Commons, Oct. 1. He sang for a filled-to-capacity audience and performed planned and requested songs. Peterson’s song repertoire included “Dancing in the Minefields,” “Rest Easy,” “The Reckoning,” and more.

“I’m always amazed by great poetry and Andrew Peterson did it again,” tweeted Boyce College student Christa Wing (@XaWing) after the concert.



Southern Seminary trustees accept gift of Wisconsin university campus

By James A. Smith Sr.



Trustees of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary unanimously accepted the gift of a Christian university campus in Wisconsin as a new extension campus of the seminary and Boyce College during its fall meeting, Oct. 13-14.

Northland International University, an evangelical Christian school located in Dunbar, Wisconsin, will become the first campus outside of Louisville for Boyce College, Southern's undergraduate school. The action is effective Aug. 1, 2015.

"The fact that there will be a Boyce College and Southern Seminary campus located in Wisconsin on a campus of this stature is an enormous step forward for Southern Baptists," said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. "I can only imagine what the founders of the Southern Baptist Convention would think to know that the reach of the SBC and its mother seminary is now of this magnitude in the upper Midwest."

Daniel Patz, president of Northland since 2013, attended the meeting and told trustees, "This is a gift from Northland to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. But really, I feel almost, even more so, it is a gift to us in order for this legacy and this mission to continue; it is the greatest mission in the world, to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth."

Paul Patz, the grandfather of Daniel Patz, founded Northland in 1958 as a camp and expanded it in 1976 to become Northland Baptist Bible Institute. One year later, Northland became an undergraduate college, adding

a graduate program in 1988. Throughout its history, the school has continued to operate Northland Camp & Conference Center, which hosts camps, Bible conferences, and other ministry events. Northland has produced nearly 2,900 alumni serving in ministry around the world.

In addition to its academic expansion of Boyce, the Northland campus will provide an ideal location for youth camps, church planting training, faculty retreats, and other events on its 660-acre campus located about 90 minutes north of Green Bay, Wisconsin, officials said. Northland trustees have approved the gifting of its campus and school.

Mohler added, "This is important not just for Southern Seminary and not just for the cause of Christian higher education, but for the cause of Christ and the future of the Southern Baptist Convention. This is exactly the kind of development that Southern Baptists should celebrate. In particular, Southern Baptists should be both humbled and deeply encouraged by the fact the trustees of Northland entrusted the future of their hopes and dreams in Southern Seminary and Boyce College precisely because of the theological commitments made at such cost by the Southern Baptist Convention."

Trustees also elected three professors and granted sabbatical leaves to four members of the faculty.

Elected, effective Jan. 1, 2015, were Adam W. Greenway, dean of the Billy Graham School and William Walker Brookes Associate Professor of Evangelism and Applied

Apologetics; Denny Burk, professor of biblical studies; and Donald S. Whitney, professor of biblical spirituality.

Trustees granted sabbaticals to Burk for Feb. 1-July 31, 2015; Jim S. Orrick, professor of literature and culture, for Aug. 1, 2015-July 31, 2016; Peter J. Gentry, Donald L. Williams Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, for Feb. 1-July 31, 2016; and Michael A.G. Haykin, professor of church history and biblical spirituality, for Feb. 1-July 31, 2016.

Trustees responded to two referrals from the 2014 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting on biblical tithing and reduced fees for online education. Trustees affirmed the Baptist Faith and Message statement on tithing, which is "taught in faithfulness and in fullness at Southern Seminary," and expressed appreciation for Southern Baptists' CP support "that makes this pricing structure the wonder of the evangelical Christian world."

In other actions, trustees approved an amended seminary strategic plan, 2013-2018; approved the seminary's 2013-2014 consolidated financial statements in preparation for the annual financial audit; received reports of its Financial Board indicating the school ended the 2013-2014 fiscal year \$1.413 million over budget in revenues and \$581,000 under budget in expenses; approved amended and restated bylaws of the Southern Seminary Foundation; and its Executive Committee approved the election of foundation directors.





Southern Seminary celebrates BGS anniversary during Heritage Week

By SBTS Communications

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry during its annual Heritage Week, Oct. 13-16.

Thom Rainer, the founding dean of the Billy Graham School, delivered a sermon on evangelism and SBTS President R. Albert Mohler Jr. read a congratulatory letter from the Graham family at a chapel service marking the anniversary, Oct. 14.

Mohler read the letter from Will Graham, grandson of Billy Graham, who sent greetings from the Graham family on the occasion of the BGS anniversary. The nearly 96-year-old world-renowned evangelist is “homebound, frail, and weak, but confident in heart about the promises of eternity and the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,” his grandson wrote.

Introducing Rainer, Mohler said he is “one of the great denominational statesmen of our age” and said “the story of the Billy Graham School is inseparable from the story of Dr. Thom Rainer and his leadership of the Graham School for many years.”

Rainer served as the founding dean of the Billy Graham School, 1994-2005. Before he spoke, Rainer received the E.Y. Mullins Distinguished Denominational Service Award, one of the seminary’s highest honors, Mohler said in presenting the award. Rainer was rec-

ognized for his “remarkable legacy of leadership” as pastor, scholar, teacher, and founding dean of the Billy Graham School, as well as for his role as author, speaker, and president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Rainer preached a sermon, “We Are Unable to Stop Speaking,” on the imperative of evangelism from Acts 4:13-22.

The passage is the account of Peter and John before the council after healing a lame man. When the council charged Peter and John to stop witnessing to people, they refused and said, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20).

Rainer presented four truths in the passage which lead to bold evangelism: the power of the gospel is sufficient for evangelism; Christians will always face persecution; right theology leads to evangelism; and gospel-powered evangelism cannot help but speak.

“Don’t just talk evangelism, don’t just program evangelism,” he said. “Let it be so much of who you are that you cannot help but speak about what you have seen and heard.”

On Wednesday, Mohler preached a special chapel message about opposition to Christianity in today’s society.

“Opposition from the world is an opportunity to witness,” said Mohler, preaching from John 15:18-27. “The opportunity of greatest Christian witness is not when

we think the world loves us, but when the world quite openly hates us.”

But Jesus had a proper understanding of hatred, said Mohler. In biblical terms hatred is a lack of obedience and a refusal to love.

Mohler concluded with observations on how the growing threat of persecution in America could alter the purpose of Southern Seminary.

“Maybe the mission of this school is actually to train up a generation of preachers, missionaries, and evangelists who will be martyrs,” Mohler said.

Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, concluded Heritage Week by urging students to complete the Great Commission in this generation.

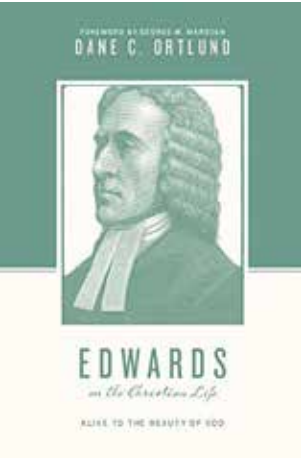
He preached from the Great Commission texts in the New Testament to emphasize Jesus’ command for Christians to go and make disciples.

Floyd told students to think about their part in the Great Commission, whether it is overseas in closed countries or in hostile neighborhoods in the United States.

“Let us go to places where the gospel has never been,” he said. “We must complete the Great Commission in our generation, and we need to make a commitment together that their spiritual death will not happen on our watch.”

Audio and video from Heritage Week is available online at sbts.edu/resources.

Book Reviews



(Crossway 2014, \$18.99)

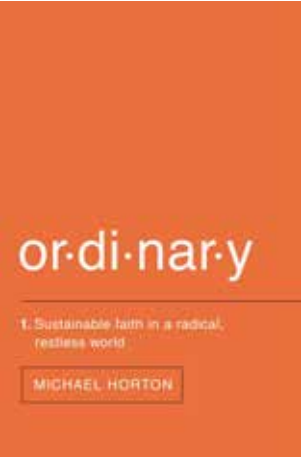
Edwards on the Christian Life: Alive to the Beauty of God

Dane C. Ortlund Review by Colton Guffey

In *Edwards on the Christian Life: Alive to the Beauty of God*, Dane C. Ortlund reflects on how Jonathan Edwards understood the Christian life in hopes that the reader may grow more aware of the beauty of God.

The author structures the book to focus on different aspects of the Christian life, including new birth, love, joy, gentleness, Scripture, prayer, pilgrimage, obedience, Satan, the soul, and heaven. Ortlund reflects on how each of these subjects blossoms out of the center of Edwards’ theology: being made alive to the beauty of God. The author ends the book with a chapter of four criticisms of Edwards’ theology. Referencing Hebrews 13:7, the author urges his readers to imitate Edwards but not to replicate.

This book is full of insight into the theology of Jonathan Edwards while also having a devotional quality to it.



(Zondervan 2014, \$15.99)

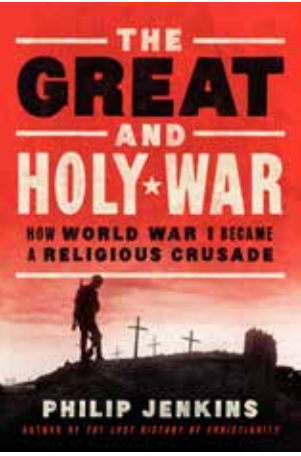
Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical, Restless World

Michael Horton Review by RuthAnne Irvin

Augustine famously said that the human heart is restless until it rests in God. In his new book, *Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical, Restless World*, Michael Horton suggests the same for Christians today. Horton takes readers through a balanced, biblical view of ambition, the new radical Christianity, contentment, and ultimately loving God and neighbor more than self.

Horton argues that Christians need to return to a love and appreciation of “ordinary life,” because that is where real ministry occurs for the average person.

Horton writes, “We’ve forgotten that God showers his extraordinary gifts through ordinary means of grace, loves us through ordinary fellow image bearers, and sends us out into the world to love and serve others in ordinary callings.”



(HarperOne 2014, \$29.99)

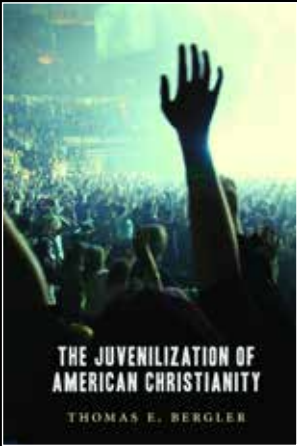
The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade

Philip Jenkins Review by Ivan Mesa

This summer marked the centennial of World War I (1914-1918), often forgotten and little understood. Philip Jenkins retells the story afresh in *The Great and Holy War*, arguing that we cannot understand the war apart from understanding its religious and spiritual aspects.

“The war took place in a world in which religious faith was still the norm,” the Baylor history professor writes. “Religion is essential to understanding the war, to understanding why people went to war, what they hoped to achieve through war, and why they stayed at war.”

Jenkins highlights several examples of the prevailing religious rhetoric, such as the national “messianic” visions in Germany and Russia, and the crusade-like calls-to-arms in America. Jenkins also argues that the war set in motion a more activist radicalization of Islam.

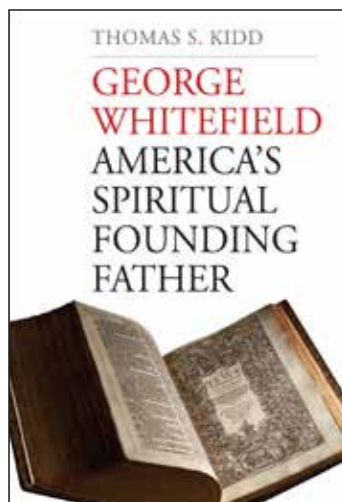


The Juvenilization of American Christianity
Thomas E. Bergler
(Eerdmans 2012, \$25)

“Bergler offers a fascinating account and fair diagnosis of the generational segregation of American Christianity. A prescription is lacking, but perhaps that will appear in his forthcoming book, From Here to Maturity. It is an issue that deserves further reflection. An older work that speaks to an earlier generation, The Christian Future by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, is worth reading alongside Bergler.”

Mark Seifrid
Mildred and Ernest Hogan
Professor of New Testament
Interpretation





(Yale 2014, \$38)

George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father

Thomas S. Kidd

Review by S. Craig Sanders

International celebrity, relentless gospel preaching, innovative communication strategies, and interdenominational appeal — that's the portrait Baylor professor Thomas S. Kidd paints in a new biography of the father of modern evangelicalism, George Whitefield.

In *George Whitefield: America's Founding Father*, Kidd presents a full-orbed view of the “grand itinerant” on the 300th anniversary of his birth. Kidd helps restore appreciation for the largely forgotten figure whose efforts

in the Great Awakening shaped the evangelical movement and the founding of America.

Whitefield, who rocketed to fame in his early 20s, preached the gospel of the new birth across colonial America and Britain to crowds in the tens of thousands. His tireless travels unified a transatlantic evangelical identity marked by Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley.

For Whitefield, “the gospel was important enough to use the new means of the marketplace to deliver it effectively,” Kidd writes. He examines the close relationship Whitefield enjoyed with Benjamin Franklin, who capitalized on Whitefield's fame by publishing his sermons and journals for a massive audience.

What may surprise many is that Kidd

likens Whitefield to someone who “becomes an international media sensation and then spends the rest of his or her career coping with the memory of that season of celebrity.” Yet “the greatest evangelical preacher the world has ever seen,” Kidd writes, persisted preaching the new birth — “the center of Whitefield's gospel ministry and the defining cause of his life.”

Kidd carefully explores the lifelong and rocky relationship between Whitefield and Wesley, Whitefield's odd marriage, and the troubling role Whitefield played in introducing slavery to the colony of Georgia. Despite its relative brevity, the biography is a riveting narrative that delivers a comprehensive view of America's spiritual founding father.

The Second Letter to the Corinthians

Mark A. Seifrid

Review by Andrew J.W. Smith

Other than Jesus himself, there is perhaps no more important figure in Christian history than the Apostle Paul. As the one given as a “light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:47), Paul embodies a unique role as Christ's instrument for a massive shift in redemptive history. While the gospel message itself is timeless and transcendent, it also can't be divorced from the character of its greatest messenger.

In his new commentary on 2 Corinthians, Mark A. Seifrid, Mildred and Ernest Hogan Professor of New Testament

ister of an infinitely powerful gospel. The message of 2 Corinthians lies in its paradox: Paul is forced to legitimize his own apostolic ministry as superior to other, “super-apostle” claimants, but instead of drawing on impressive physical presence or rhetorical flair, he appeals to his own hardship and frailty. He is the suffering apostle of the crucified and resurrected Christ. Seifrid interprets Paul's thanksgiving to God, who “in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession” in 2 Corinthians 2:14, as Paul's participation in the suffering and shame of the crucified Christ. Paul is “always carrying in the body the death of Jesus” (2 Cor. 4:10-11) in his own life, and even in his boasting, he boasts in the midst of weakness and in the power of Christ expressed through him (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

[Paul] is thrust again and again into distress ... in order that God's power, and not his own, might be manifest in him. The life of an apostle, and thus the life of a Christian, is fundamentally passive. It is not a 'purpose-driven life' but a 'God-driven life.'

Interpretation at Southern Seminary, presents Paul as the unimpressive min-

The life of Paul is also the life of the believer, Seifrid argues, for the apostolic

experience is the Christian experience “written large” and in “large-screen display.” Paul not only begs us to understand his apostolic purpose but invites us to participate in the life of Christ in suffering just as he does, Seifrid writes. Salvation itself is the expression of God's power working through human weakness, and the entirety of the Christian life is not only the proclamation of the way of the cross, but the personal experience of it.

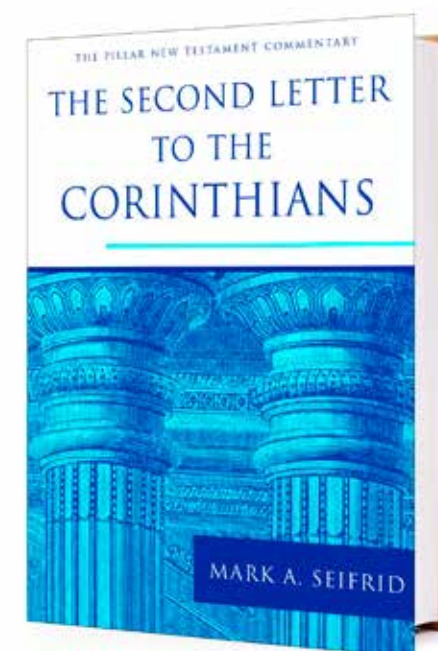
For Seifrid, the nature of both Paul's apostolic ministry and our experience as believers is counterintuitive: it's not judged by the outward appearance or by postures of power, it is legitimized by trials and built on an eschatological hope yet to be fully realized. Seifrid argues that suffering and hope are unquestionably bound together for Paul (2 Cor. 4:17).

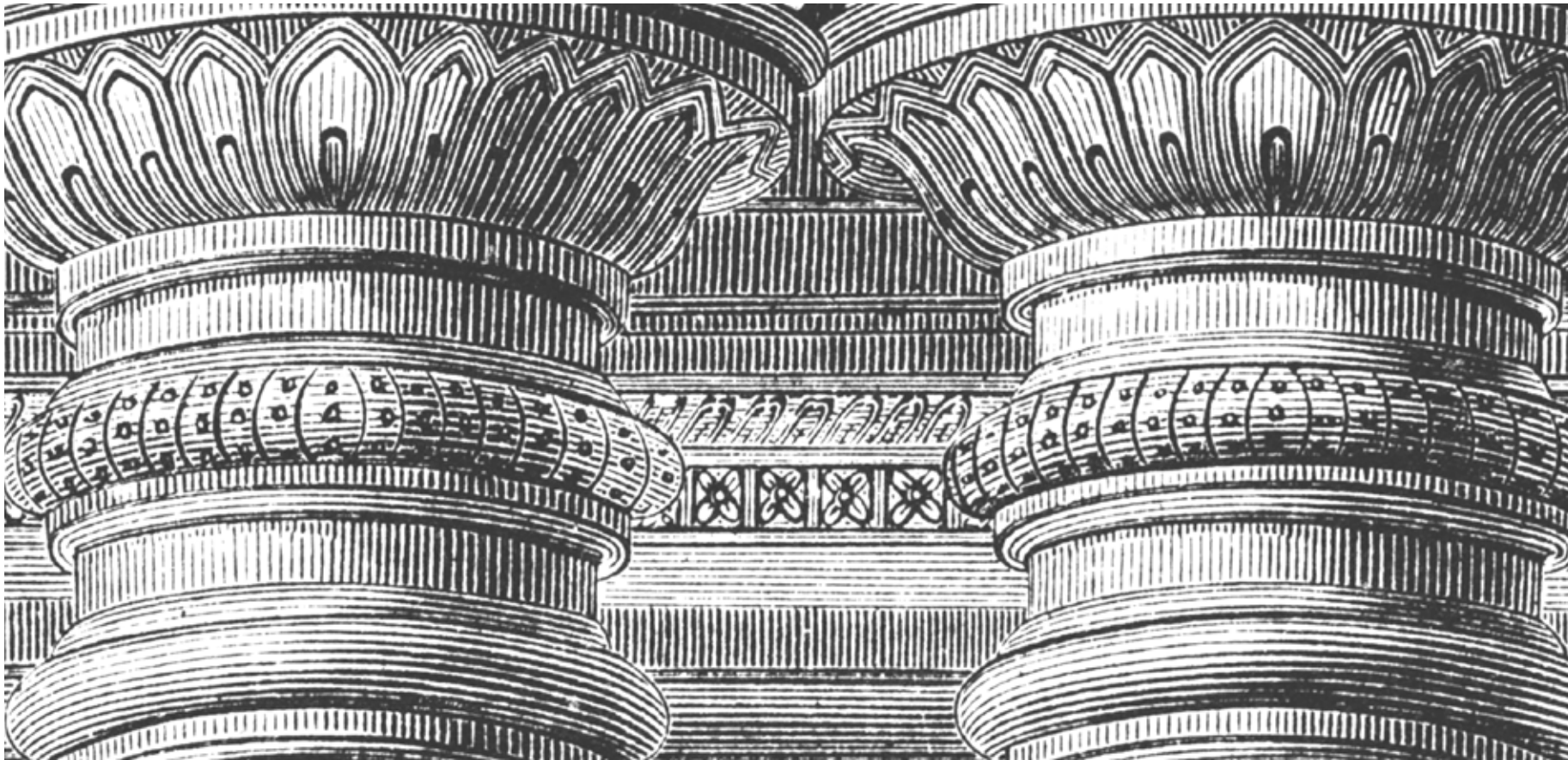
Seifrid interprets 2 Corinthians in a distinctly evangelical and fully unified manner, unlike the majority of scholarship on the letter. Many interpreters argue that 2 Corinthians is a compilation of separate letters — the apparent shift in tone between chapters 1-7 and chapters 10-13 indicates two different letters, and other possible insertions suggest as many as five disparate fragments. Seifrid dismisses these arguments and reads the letter as a unified whole, resisting the com-

mon maximalist “mirror-reading” of the Corinthian background and the precise theology of his opponents.

His interaction with 2 Corinthians is thoroughly exegetical, deeply theological, and often pastoral in tone. He refreshingly avoids getting caught up in overly technical, intramural debates between competing scholars, but focuses heavily on the text itself and its implications on the lives of believers.

(Eerdmans 2014, \$50)





The gospel of the suffering apostle

SEIFRID DISCUSSES NEW COMMENTARY ON 2 CORINTHIANS

By Andrew J.W. Smith

EDITOR'S NOTE: Below, Mark Seifrid, Mildred and Ernest Hogan Professor of New Testament Interpretation, discusses his new commentary, The Second Letter to the Corinthians, with Towers writer Andrew J.W. Smith.

AJWS: Second Corinthians tends not to garner the same popular attention among evangelicals as Romans, Ephesians, or even 1 Corinthians. What makes 2 Corinthians important in the Christian canon?

MS: Because the Corinthian correspondence is so tightly bound up with the particular problems of that church, it seems a bit alien to us. Certain passages from these letters, especially 1 Corinthians, appear more frequently in our preaching and teaching because they deal with questions that remain immedi-

ately relevant for us. Second Corinthians deals with the root issue that lies behind both letters: the question of the legitimization of an apostle. In a certain, obvious sense, we do not have to deal with that issue. Persons claiming apostolic authority don't normally show up in our churches. Or if they do, we already know what to do with them! In other ways, however, this question remains highly relevant. An apostle displays the marks of God's saving work in Christ within the world, the gospel in action. The life of an apostle is nothing other than the life of the Christian written large. As I suggest in the commentary, the Corinthians sense this truth. It is for this reason they are uncomfortable with Paul, who lacked the sort of preaching skills they sought. The Corinthians, who had already resisted Paul's authority, had come to embrace other

apostolic claimants, who had arrived with the charisma, rhetoric, display of power, and claims of remarkable experiences that Paul lacked. We don't have to decide among competing apostolic claims in the immediate sense that the Corinthians did. We are called, however, to discern what is apostolic and what is not. While I was preparing the commentary, the significance of affirming Paul as apostle struck me profoundly. The gospel did not come to us from Paul, but it came to us through him (along with the other true apostles, of course). It makes a world of difference that we have the gospel through this suffering apostle. He is able to speak a word of comfort to us in our troubles that his comfortable opponents could never speak. In varying measures and in varying ways, a measure of suffering and difficulty is given to each of us so that we may

share in the true comfort and salvation that has been given to us in Christ. Paul's message in 2 Corinthians draws us away from a false estimation of power and success, as they are measured by influence, numbers, and other visible standards.

AJWS: Paul repeatedly focuses on his own suffering and weakness as strong evidence that his apostleship is legitimate. What can the church today learn from this?

MS: Paul is forced to speak more fully and directly about his suffering and weakness in 2 Corinthians than he does elsewhere because it has become an open issue between him and the church. The question at stake relates to what the marks of an apostle are supposed to be. An apostle is one who is especially “of Christ.” What does the presence of the indwelling Christ look like in the world? The opponents offered powerful preaching (at least as far as the tastes of the Corinthians were concerned), signs and wonders, and claims to visions. But the gospel has its own rhetoric, and works its own wonders in its own ways. God works his saving purposes only under the form of the opposite: power is hidden within weakness, wealth within poverty, life within death, and so on. That is true first of all in Christ, who, according to Paul, is the crucified one who lives. As Christ's apostle, Paul is given over to death again and again so that the life of Jesus might be manifest in him. He is thrust into trouble and then delivered, and on and on goes his life. Between death and life, he speaks in faith, announcing the gospel, not only with his mouth but also with his body and life. It is important to see that Paul is not speaking about a general truth, as if weakness could at all times be turned into a strength, or poverty into wealth, or that human beings might somehow take tragedy and make it meaningful. That would be a misun-

to “suffer” God's work in us. True suffering is never chosen. It comes to us unsought, unwanted. In a sense, the whole of Paul's message in 2 Corinthians can be summed up in the last lines of the Sunday School song, “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know”: “we are weak, but he is strong.” That was Christ's message to Paul. That is Paul's message to the Corinthians, and through them to us.

AJWS: In the commentary, you downplay the likelihood that Paul's “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7) is a kind of chronic physical malady — whether an eye problem or some sort of sexual temptation. What is the thorn, and how does it function within his larger point about his suffering as an apostle?

MS: It is significant, I think, that Paul does not tell us precisely what the “thorn in the flesh” was. The details are irrelevant. What is significant is his experience of constant suffering. Precisely because he describes his suffering only in metaphor as a “thorn,” his experience has become a comfort to countless Christians through the centuries. Paul's point (or, rather, Christ's point to him) is that power finds its perfection in weakness. That is the opposite of what the Corinthians thought. They imagined that power is present in order to remove weakness, and that power is present in power. But Christ tells Paul, “my grace is sufficient for you.” Paul is called to live in a relationship of communication with Christ, in which he remains weak so that Christ's power may “encamp” upon him. He is made strong, but the strength never becomes his own. He cast upon Christ. It is Christ's power, and decidedly not that of Paul that is displayed in him. That is the essence of the apostolic life, of the Christian life, and of salvation itself. “Little ones (that's us!) to Him belong.

It is Christ's power, and decidedly not that of Paul, that is displayed in him. That is the essence of the apostolic life, of the Christian life, and of salvation itself.

derstanding of Paul's message. We are not called to wallow in our weaknesses, or to attempt to use weakness as a tool to achieve power. Paul's message about suffering and weakness is determined by Christ, and “localized.” The exchange between death and life, weakness and power, sin and righteousness takes place in Christ and in Christ alone. It does not lie in our hands or within our judgment.

Although we certainly have tasks to which we are called, and labor in which we are to engage, the Christian life, like that of the apostle, is fundamentally passive. We are acted upon by God in Christ. We are

They are weak, but He is strong.” The incarnate Christ himself was crucified in weakness, but lives even now by the power of God.

AJWS: There's been a lot of speculation among other commentators regarding Paul's Corinthian opponents, both their identity and their exact arguments. What's the danger of a maximalist “mirror-reading” of 2 Corinthians, and of Pauline literature in general?

MS: “Mirror-reading” Paul's opponents from his

statements concerning them in his letters is a necessary part of interpretation. We know about Paul's opponents only from that which he says about them. Reconstruction of the historical setting and context requires that we “mirror-read” Paul's letters in order to get a picture of his adversaries. But we should exercise considerable caution in such reconstructions. We must listen to the text very carefully. In that sense, a “minimalist” mirror-reading is to be preferred. There are at least two dangers inherent to any “mirror-reading.” First, we bear in mind that what we find in Paul's letters are his characterizations of the adversaries. We have to be careful about attributing those characteristics to them directly. Thus, for example, Paul tells the Corinthians that others have come to them “preaching another Jesus.” Did the opponents know that they were preaching “another Jesus?” Or did they imagine that they were offering the real Jesus, but doing so better than Paul did? It is a bit strained to try and reconstruct what sort of Christology the opponents might have presented. The second danger is to read into the letter the adversaries that we find in other letters of Paul, as if the same sort of opponents appeared everywhere. Some have argued that Paul faces advocates of Judaizing as he has done elsewhere. Others have argued that the opponents were some sort of Jewish-Hellenistic “divine-men” who offered a developed theology concerning participation in divine power. The opponents are clearly Jewish. And their thought is clearly Hellenistic. But neither one of these constructions fits Paul's argument in the letter.

AJWS: What's the most difficult part about writing a commentary?

MS: Listening to the text is the most difficult part of writing a commentary, or any interpretation of Scripture. Listening, listening, and listening again. There is a fourfold responsibility here. First, to let the text speak in all its particularity and detail, even (or especially) where it challenges our thinking. Second, not to lose the forest for the trees. We have to be able to synthesize, to gain a perspective on the whole of what the text is saying. Third — and here many New Testament scholars fail — we have to be aware of what we are saying with respect to the Christian tradition, with respect to what Christians have believed, taught, and confessed before us. Fourth, we have to remember that we are writing for others. Their needs and concerns must be in our minds. Someone has described preaching as being placed between the upper and lower millstones of the Word of God and the congregation, and attempting to come through the grinding. Writing a commentary is something like that.

‘A flame of pure and holy fire’

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD

By Michael A.G. Haykin

Three hundred years ago, the father of modern evangelicalism was born in Gloucester, England. George Whitefield (1714-1770) is widely regarded as a powerful preacher and the greatest evangelist in modern times. His ministry consisted of innovative methods to reach the masses and tireless travels to spread the gospel.



(C 1394.28, Houghton Library, Harvard University)

In 1835, two prominent English Baptists traveled to Newburyport, Massachusetts, to view the tomb of George Whitefield. The “grand itinerant” had died on Sept. 30, 1770, at the home of Jonathan Parsons, pastor of the town’s First Presbyterian Church. Whitefield had been interred two days later in a vault below what is now the center aisle of this church, where his remains were on display all through the 19th century. As Francis Alexander Cox and James Hoby descended into the vault, they recalled that “deep expectant emotions thrilled our bosoms.” They “contemplated and handled the skull,” while they “thought of his devoted life, his blessed death, his high and happy destiny.”

Of all the great preachers raised up in the transatlantic Great Awakening, none gripped the public mind and imagination more than Whitefield. Benjamin Colman and William Cooper viewed Whitefield as “the wonder of the age” and were convinced that “no man more employs the pens, and fills up the conversation of people, than he does at this day.” Shortly after the evangelist’s death, Augustus Montague Toplady, author of the famous hymn

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,” remembered him as “the apostle of the English empire.”

‘A ray of divine life’: The pathway to conversion

Born Dec. 16, 1714, George Whitefield was the youngest son of Thomas Whitefield, the proprietor of the Bell Inn, at the time the finest hotel in Gloucester, England. George’s father died when he was two and so he was raised by his mother Elizabeth. His school record was unremarkable, save for a noticeable talent for acting. As he later said, “During the time of my being at school, I was very fond of reading plays, and have kept from school for days together to prepare myself for acting them.”

But his mother longed for something better for her son. Her persistence and the kindness of friends enabled him to enter Pembroke College, Oxford University, in November 1732. It was here in the following summer that he first met John Wesley and his younger brother Charles, who were regularly meeting with a group of men known to history as the “Holy Club.” This was a company of men who were trying to live religious lives in an extremely dissolute age.

Whitefield, like-minded and longing for spiritual companionship since starting at Oxford, joined them. He engaged in numerous religious exercises such as fasting, praying regularly, attending public worship, and seeking to abstain from worldly pleasures. Despite the evident zeal he brought to these religious activities he had no sense of peace with God. He was, though he did not know it at the time, treading a pathway similar to the one that Martin Luther had taken over 200 years earlier. And just as Luther's conversion was the spark that lit the fires of the Reformation, so Whitefield's conversion would be central to kindling the blaze of the 18th-century Great Awakening.

Conversion came in the spring of 1735 after Charles Wesley had given him a copy of *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* by Henry Scougal. This book was a challenge to Whitefield's endeavor to create a righteous life that would merit God's favor. As Whitefield recalled in a 1769 sermon: "O, says the

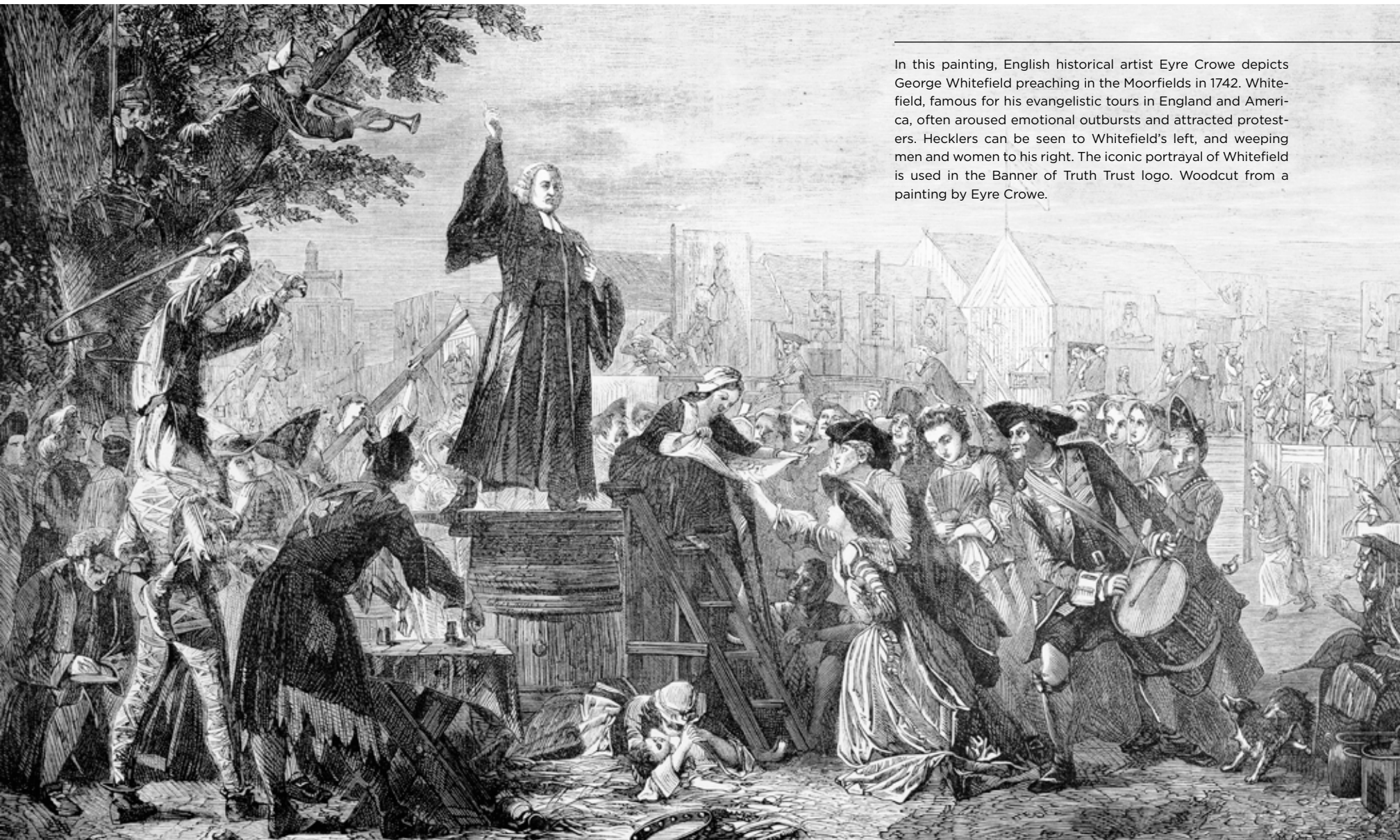
author, they that know anything of religion know it is a vital union with the Son of God, Christ formed in the heart; O what a ray of divine life did then break in upon my poor soul."

Awakened by this book to his need for the new birth, Whitefield passionately struggled to find salvation along the pathway of extreme asceticism but to no avail. Finally, when he had come to an end of his resources as a human being, God enabled him, in his words, "to lay hold on His dear Son by a living faith, and, by giving me the Spirit of adoption, to seal me, as I humbly hope, even to the day of everlasting redemption."

'The open bracing air': The life of a preacher

Always the avid reader, it was Whitefield's prayerful perusal of the Puritan biblical commentaries of William Burkitt and Matthew Henry a few months after his conversion that led to his becoming convinced of "free grace and the neces-

Of all the great preachers raised up in the transatlantic Great Awakening, none gripped the public mind and imagination more than Whitefield.



In this painting, English historical artist Eyre Crowe depicts George Whitefield preaching in the Moorfields in 1742. Whitefield, famous for his evangelistic tours in England and America, often aroused emotional outbursts and attracted protesters. Hecklers can be seen to Whitefield's left, and weeping men and women to his right. The iconic portrayal of Whitefield is used in the Banner of Truth Trust logo. Woodcut from a painting by Eyre Crowe.

sity of being justified in [God's] sight by faith only." Following his ordination as deacon in the Church of England the next year, these Reformation doctrines came to occupy a central place in his preaching arsenal. Dated August 1739, a contemporary observer states that Whitefield preaches "continually about inner regeneration, the new birth in Jesus Christ, the movement of the Spirit, justification by faith through grace, the life of the Spirit."

Whitefield's preaching on the new birth, though, was not at all well received by the Anglican clergy in England, and churches were barred to him. Whitefield, however, was not to be deterred. On Saturday, Feb. 17, 1739, he made the decision to take to the open air and preach to a group of coal miners in the district of Kingswood. These men with their families lived in squalor and utter degradation, squandering their lives in drink, violence, and sex. With no church nearby, they were quite ignorant of Christianity and its leading tenets. It was a key turning point in not only his life but also in the history of evangelicalism. The concern that has gripped evangelicals in the last 200 years to bring the gospel message directly to ordinary people has some of its most significant roots in Whitefield's venture to preach in the open air.

From this point on Whitefield would relish and delight in his calling as an open-air preacher. He would preach in fields and foundries, in ships, cemeteries, and pubs, atop horses and even coffins, from stone walls and balconies, staircases and windmills. For instance, referring to this calling in a letter dated Dec. 14, 1768, he wrote, "I love the open bracing air." And the following year he stated: "It is good to go into the high-ways and hedges. Field-preaching, field-preaching for ever!"

It should also be noted that Whitefield never confined his witnessing about Christ to preaching occasions. He took every opportunity to share his faith. "God forbid," he once remarked, "I should travel with anybody a quarter of an hour without speaking of Christ to them."

At that first open-air service in February 1739 there were 200 people. Within six weeks, Whitefield was preaching numerous times a week to crowds sometimes numbering in the thousands. Whitefield's description of his ministry at this time is a classic one. To visualize the scene in Kingswood, we need to picture the green countryside, the piles of coal, the squalid huts, and the deep semi-circle of unwashed faces as we read his words:

Having no righteousness of their own to renounce, they were glad to hear of a

Jesus who was a friend of publicans, and came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The first discovery of their being affected was to see the white gutters made by their tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks, as they came out of their coal pits. Hundreds and hundreds of them were soon brought under deep convictions, which, as the event proved, happily ended in a sound and thorough conversion. The change was visible to all, though numbers chose to impute it to anything, rather than the finger of God.

Over the 34 years between his conversion and death in 1770 in Newburyport, it is calculated that he preached around 18,000 sermons. Actually, if one includes all of the talks that he gave, he probably spoke about a thousand times a year during his ministry. Moreover, many of his sermons were delivered to massive congregations that numbered 10,000, some to audiences possibly as large as 15,000.

In addition to his preaching throughout England, he regularly itinerated throughout Wales, visited Ireland twice, and journeyed 14 times to Scotland. He crossed the Atlantic 13 times, stopping once in Bermuda for 11 weeks, and preached in virtually every major town on the Atlantic seaboard. What is so remarkable about all of this is Whitefield lived at a time when travel to a town 20 miles away was a significant undertaking.

In journeying to Scotland and to America he was going to what many perceived as the fringes of transatlantic British society and culture. And yet some of God's richest blessings on his ministry was in these very regions. "So pervasive was Whitefield's impact in America that he can justly be styled America's first cultural hero," wrote Harry Stout in *Christian History*. "By 1750 virtually every American loved and admired Whitefield and saw him as their champion."

'An insatiable thirst for traveling': Taking the Word over land and sea

In the early years of the revival, Whitefield's itinerant, open-air preaching was often paraded as evidence of his "enthusiasm," or fanaticism. Part of Whitefield's response was to go back to the example of the Apostle Paul as found in the Book of Acts. "Was he not filled," he asked his opponents, "with a holy restless impatience and insatiable thirst of traveling, and undertaking dangerous voyages for the conversion of infidels?" Here Whitefield reveals the spiritual passion that spurred his own incessant traveling over land and sea: the longing

to see sinners embrace Christ as Lord and Savior and find their deepest spiritual thirst and hunger satisfied in Christ alone.

Criticism of the wide-ranging nature of his ministry also came from such ardent evangelicals as Ebenezer Erskine and his younger brother Ralph, founders of the secessionist Associate Presbytery in Scotland. The Erskines had invited Whitefield to preach solely in their churches. But Whitefield refused to be pinned down and insisted on preaching wherever he was given a pulpit in Scotland. He told the Erskines that he was "more and more determined to go out into the highways and hedges; and that if the Pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim the righteousness of Jesus Christ therein."

His reply reveals his passion for the salvation of the lost wherever they might be. As he told the Scottish Lord Rae a few days after this discussion with the Erskines, the "full desire" of his soul was to "see the kingdom of God come with power." He was, he went on, "determined to seek after and know nothing else. For besides this, all other things are but dung and dross."

While the surrounding scenery is different, this passion burned as bright as ever during his third preaching tour of America. "Oh that I was a flame of pure and holy fire, and had [a] thousand lives to spend in the dear Redeemer's service," he told Joshua Gee, for the "sight of so many perishing souls every day affects me much, and makes me long to go if possible from pole to pole, to proclaim redeeming love."

"Had I a thousand souls and bodies," he noted on another occasion, "they should be all itinerants for Jesus Christ."

Nothing gave Whitefield greater joy than to report to his friends that God was blessing his preaching. Writing from Pennsylvania in May 1746, Whitefield informed a correspondent in Gloucestershire, England, that Christ "gives me full employ on this side the water, and causes his word to run and be glorified. ... Everywhere the fields are white ready unto harvest. I am just now going to tell lost sinners that there is yet room for them in the side of Jesus."

Michael A.G. Haykin is professor of church history and biblical spirituality and director of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. This article is adapted from a March 25, 2014, keynote address delivered at Tyndale Seminary's sixth annual Wesley Studies Symposium.

'Heavenly comet'

THE INCREDIBLE FEATS OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD

By SBTS Communications

30,000

people could hear Whitefield
preach in the open air

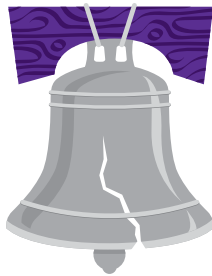


**Founded
Methodism
with John
and Charles
Wesley**



80%

of colonial America
heard Whitefield
preach



**"God forbid, I should travel
with anybody a quarter of
an hour without speaking of
Christ to them."**



Cross-eyed, which earned him
the satirical nickname

"Doctor Squintum"

*"To preach more than
half an hour, a man
should be an angel
himself or have angels
for hearers."*

*"Take care of your life
and the Lord will take
care of your death."*

18,000

sermons preached



Crossed
the Atlantic
13 times



*Best
American
friend*

=

**Benjamin
Franklin**

7 Questions about George Whitefield with Thomas S. Kidd

By S. Craig Sanders

Three hundred years after his birth, George Whitefield is regaining prominence for his role in the Great Awakening and American revivalism. *Towers* editor S. Craig Sanders asks historian Thomas S. Kidd about Whitefield's influence and Kidd's new biography, *George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father*.



— 1 — What most intrigued you about George Whitefield to write this biography?

TK: Whitefield enjoyed unparalleled influence and fame in the 18th century, but he remains relatively unknown today, even among evangelical Christians. There are excellent, older Christian biographies of Whitefield, but I believed I could add a new historical perspective on Whitefield in the context of the Great Awakening and the culture of his British and American audiences.

— 2 — Why is Whitefield important for us today?

TK: He is arguably the most significant evangelist since the Reformation, so Christians should probably want to know more about Whitefield! But the struggles he faced — with popularity, with rival pastors, and with charges of various indiscretions — often seem taken straight from today's religious news. He was hardly a perfect man, and he had a difficult childhood, but he epitomized the way that God can use one person to bring about phenomenal change for the gospel.

— 3 — Did any new discoveries fascinate you or increase your appreciation of Whitefield?

TK: I was struck by the sheer relentlessness of his preaching, in his career of more than three decades. He delivered tens of thousands of sermons, routinely speaking multiple times a day, and kept up a withering travel schedule (in an era where “travel” meant horses, carriages, and boats, not cars and planes). Friends and doctors often cautioned him to take it easy, but Whitefield figured there was no greater cause than to spend his life for the gospel.

I must admit that some discoveries were disheartening, such as the depth of Whitefield's complicity in introducing slavery into the Georgia colony, where slavery was originally banned. On the other hand, this truth about Whitefield seems to fit with the scriptural mode: God uses deeply flawed people for great kingdom purposes.

— 4 — In what way is Whitefield most influential today in America's spiritual formation?

TK: The fact that this gospel-centered evangelist

was the most famous person in America prior to the Revolution tells us a great deal about American culture at that time. Not that everyone in 18th-century America was a believer, of course, but they lived in a culture where even the least educated people often had a deep familiarity with the Bible, one that would probably surpass many churchgoing folks' biblical knowledge today.

—5— How did your study of Whitefield influence your understanding of Jonathan Edwards?

TK: Whitefield deeply admired Edwards and went out of his way to visit Edwards in Northampton, Massachusetts, on his busy American tours. But Edwards and Whitefield's relationship was marked by tension, too, especially on Whitefield's first trip to New England in fall 1740. Edwards was delighted by the massive number of conversions Whitefield was seeing in his preaching ministry, but he also worried that some of the results might be ephemeral, tied more to Whitefield's celebrity than an authentic work of the Holy Spirit. Whitefield and Edwards were also not quite in agreement about how actively a believer could expect the Holy Spirit to lead a person on a day-to-day basis. But Edwards' encounter with Whitefield prompted perhaps the most significant theological reflections of Edwards' career, reflections that resulted in several treatises on the true signs of revival and how to discern the work of the Spirit of God.

—6— 6. What was Whitefield's most interesting personal relationship?

TK: There's no question about this: his most interesting personal relationship was with Benjamin Franklin, who was Whitefield's key publisher in America and a friend of 30 years. Whitefield and Franklin both understood that Franklin was not a born-again believer, and although their professional relationship was productive (and lucrative for Franklin), Whitefield never hesitated to speak with Franklin about the state of his soul. Whitefield wrote to Franklin in 1752, for example, and implored him to consider his standing before God: "As you have made a pretty considerable progress in the mysteries of electricity," Whitefield said, "I would now humbly recommend to your diligent unprejudiced pursuit and study the mystery of the new-birth."

Franklin outlived Whitefield, and recalled in his autobiography that the itinerant would "sometimes pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfac-

tion of believing that his prayers were heard." But in public and private, Franklin consistently defended his friend as a pastor of impeccable integrity.

—7— How do you comprehend Whitefield's ability to preach in the open air to thousands of people?

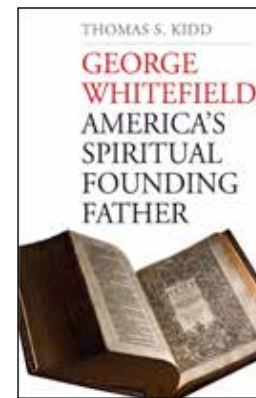
TK: Franklin also supplied an answer to the puzzle of how Whitefield could be heard by audiences of tens of thousands, in an age without electric amplification. The printer was skeptical about the reports of huge crowds who came to hear Whitefield in London, so when the itinerant came to Philadelphia, Franklin went around the margins of the crowd, working to calculate how many could actually hear him speak. He was surprised at Whitefield's effective vocal range, and concluded that 30,000 or more could hear him speak.

We know a great deal more about Whitefield's audiences because of a recent study by Braxton Boren, a Ph.D. student in acoustics at New York University. Boren concluded that, in fact, Whitefield's voice probably could have reached the kind of crowd sizes that Franklin estimated. But if he did, it signals that Whitefield — who had a background in the theater — was able to project his voice quite effectively, and that he could preach at an extraordinarily loud volume.

Even given those speaking gifts, we must understand that a colonial American audience would have understood that "hearing" Whitefield did not necessarily mean picking out every single word, particularly if you were not close to the front of the crowd. Some of the people on the margins would have been able to understand only a few words, or none at all. But a Whitefield sermon was such a sensational event that many people would have been willing to attend even under less-than-optimal acoustic conditions!

BONUS: If you could go on a time traveling adventure with George Whitefield, where would you go and why?

TK: I would love to go with Whitefield on his initial visit to Northampton in October 1740, when he met Jonathan Edwards and his family, and preached at Edwards' church. It was an emotional moment: the normally somber Edwards wept during Whitefield's sermon. As I mentioned, Edwards would develop certain reservations about Whitefield's ministry, but overall Edwards regarded the Great Awakening — in which Whitefield was the indispensable human figure — as "the dawning of a day of God's might, power, and glorious grace."



George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father

Thomas S. Kidd
(Yale University Press, \$38)



Scholars celebrate Whitefield's evangelistic legacy at annual Fuller Center conference

By S. Craig Sanders

Thousands of people flocked to the Bruton Parish Church in colonial Virginia on Sunday, Dec. 16, 1739, to hear a famous young preacher they called the “heavenly comet.” Church members were joined by curious on-lookers and some eager visitors who traveled a then-remarkable 14 miles to hear the powerful voice of George Whitefield proclaim the new birth.

Though he made no mention of it in his journal, the “grand itinerant” turned 25 years old that day. Despite his youth, Whitefield had already attained a level of popularity in Britain and colonial America that arguably no one has since matched. Turning to his text, Matthew 22:42, Whitefield asked the congregation a classic question:

“What think ye of Christ?”

He was received with unusual warmth from the Anglican minister and faced no immediate controversy from his sermon. By the time Bruton Parish received letters from the Church of England to bar Whitefield from its pulpit, the evangelist was already on his way through the colonies for “the greatest preaching tour of any preacher since the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul,” said Steven J. Lawson, president of OnePassion Ministries in Dallas, Texas.

Lawson, who wrote *The Evangelistic Zeal of George Whitefield*, delivered a plenary address at the eighth annual conference for the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

on “Whitefield and the Great Awakening,” Oct. 21-22. The two-day conference honoring the tricentennial of Whitefield’s birth featured key scholars such as Thomas S. Kidd, professor of history at Baylor University and author of the recent *George Whitefield: America’s Spiritual Founding Father*, and David Bebbington, professor of history at the University of Stirling and author of notable works on modern evangelicalism.

The reason Whitefield stirred so much anger with Anglican authorities, Lawson said, is because the evangelist used sermons like “What Think Ye of Christ?” to diagnose what he believed to be “the chief spiritual plague of the day: unconverted church members and, worse,

unconverted ministers.”

“He saw the unconverted multitudes, but more than that, he saw the unconverted ministers who stood in pulpits,” Lawson said. “Whitefield saw the necessity of awakening slumbering sinners from their spiritual lethargy and from their lost condition.”

Whitefield’s preaching style was remarkable because he needed no electric amplification to project his voice to thousands. His background in theater empowered his inflection in such a way contemporaries envied how he could pronounce “Mesopotamia” and deliver an exclamatory “O!”

“Whitefield has been remembered as a preacher who might have graced the stage as much as the pulpit,” said Bebbington. For many of his hearers, the action of his preaching was the most dominant trait, Bebbington said of Whitefield’s legacy.

Whitefield’s content, however, was marked by rich Calvinist theology and a confrontation of sinners, both of which have carried on his legacy to the present.

“I fear many of us who are Reformed in our theology, who are Calvinistic, we never get to the ‘come,’” Lawson said about Whitefield’s evangelistic call in his sermons. “It’s not simply stating the plan of salvation, we must go further — we must plead, we must invite, we must urge those who are without Christ to come to faith in him.”

“Man is nothing,” Whitefield wrote in a letter to his friend and theological opponent John Wesley, “he hath a free will to go to hell, but none to go to heaven, till God worketh in him.”

His establishment of the Calvinistic Methodist Association in 1742 and decades-long theological controversy

with John and Charles Wesley are evidence that Whitefield firmly rooted his evangelistic ministry and promotion of the new birth in the tenets of Calvinism.

“Whitefield’s convictions about man’s deep depravity melded with his belief in God’s sovereignty and in God’s predestination of the elect to salvation to make him a principled Calvinist, in addition to being the most accomplished revival preacher of the era,” Kidd said.

Whitefield’s method of open-air preaching and the marketing strategy of publicizing his ministry and publishing his journals were innovative, Kidd said, but they did not detract from his traditional Calvinist teachings.

“I believe the doctrine of reprobation,” Whitefield wrote, “that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number, and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of Adam, being justly left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death, which is its proper wages.”

His emphasis on the new birth prompted Whitefield to expand his evangelistic activities outside of the Church of England, preaching to and inspiring Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Baptists.

Whitefield declared he saw sincere Christians in every denomination, and thus filled pulpits for Congregationalist ministers like Jonathan Edwards and Presbyterian churches like the one in which he is buried in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, who established the Baptist movement in the South, were converted under Whitefield’s revivalist preaching.

“The roots of Southern Baptists in revivalism,” Bebbington said, “are evident in the altar calls that still mark their services in all types of Southern Baptist churches to this day. Ultimately, that practice is testimony to the legacy of George Whitefield.”

Often considered a pioneer of ecumenical cooperation in this regard, Whitefield “drew sharp theological lines when it came to the doctrine of the new birth, as well as the doctrines of grace,” Kidd said. “He believed that no one could preach a full, biblical gospel while neglecting Calvinist principles.”

Even though he embraced an interdenominational spirit in his ministry, Whitefield’s Calvinism drew from the Church of England’s Thirty-Nine Articles, argued Lee Gatiss, director of the Anglican Church Society. “He always remained doctrinally in line with the Anglican heritage, even when he was being more venturesome in terms of institutional order,” Gatiss said.

Yet it was Whitefield’s defiance of Anglican church order in a church-age society that may have contributed to the American Revolution, said Jerome Mahaffey, professor of communication studies at Northern Arizona University.

“Political power, not religious doctrine, fueled the controversy surrounding the Great Awakening. There was no separation of church and state in the colonies,” said Ma-



haffey, who authored *The Accidental Revolutionary: George Whitefield and the Creation of America*. “Shifts in religion held a profound impact on the evolution of political thought, and shifts of emphasis in the ministry of George Whitefield enabled democratic ideas to go viral and plow the colonies into fertile ground for the republican spirit.”

Whitefield sympathized with Americans and helped overturn the Stamp Act placed on the colonies in 1765. His expansive ministry unified the colonies and provided a moral consciousness, Bebbington countered, “but he was no simple politician.”

The legacy of Whitefield’s Calvinism extends beyond the Great Awakening to a significant theological turn in the 20th century, said Bebbington. While a distaste for Calvinism marginalized Whitefield’s legacy in the centuries after his death in 1770, “his Calvinism was an active agent in subsequent history” through the efforts of Banner of Truth Trust and the ministry of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Bebbington said.

Whitefield’s evangelistic ministry remains a model for preachers today, according to Lawson. “The need of the hour is for Spirit-empowered preachers of the Word of God,” said Lawson, who called for “an army of Whitefields in this land and around the world” to proclaim the nature and necessity of the new birth.

Other topics covered in the two-day conference included Whitefield’s piety, friendship with the Wesleys, and the hymnody of the Great Awakening.

Audio and video from the Andrew Fuller Conference are available at sbts.edu/resources.



How George Whitefield reshaped a famous Christmas carol

HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

By Chris Fenner

Although the name George Whitefield is not readily associated with Christian hymnody, he left his own mark on one of the most famous Christmas carols, penned by his friend and contemporary, Charles Wesley.

The Wesleys had an enduring friendship and connection with Whitefield, beginning with their Oxford “Holy Club,” followed by separate missionary journeys to America, and a call to open-air field preaching in England. During the earlier years of that association, the Wesleys published some of their most enduring poetry, especially in the first edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739). This collection included “And can it be” — deeply inspired by Charles’ conversion in 1738 — “Christ the Lord is risen today,” “Commit thou all thy griefs,” “Jesus, thy boundless love to me,” and a Christmas hymn with a curious text:

Hark how all the Welkin rings
Glory to the King of Kings.

A modern reader might see the words “welkin rings” and immediately gravitate to something out of J.R.R. Tolkien. “Welkin” actually means “sky” or “heavens” — it was a common term in English poetry in that era. Wesley may have been inspired specifically by a poem of William Somerville about fox hunting, called “The Chase” (1735):

The welkin rings, Men, Dogs,
Hills, Rock, and Woods
In the full consort join.

Hymn scholar J.R. Watson explains:

To have altered Somerville’s lines would have been in keeping with Wesley’s habit of appropriating images from

other poems and using them to proclaim the gospel. Here the cries of the huntsmen and hounds become the sounds of the multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, “Glory to God in the highest.”¹

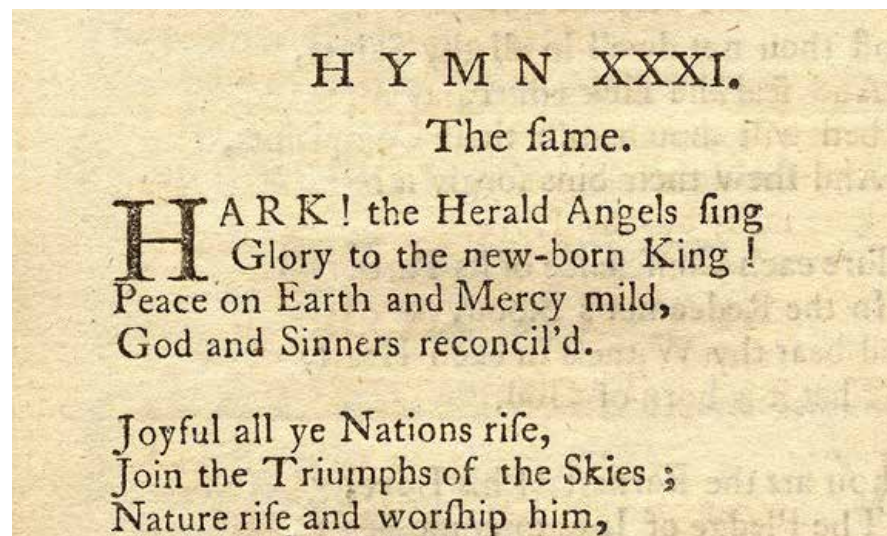
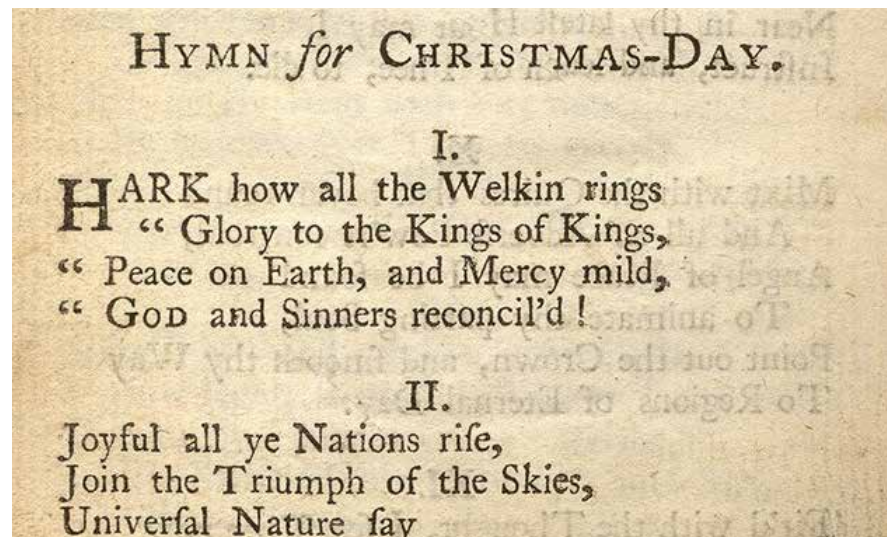
As clever as Wesley’s lines may have been, they failed to resonate with some worshipers, including his friend Whitefield. In 1753, the same year Whitefield began construction on the Tabernacle church, he compiled his own hymnal, *Hymns for Social Worship*. It included 21 hymns from the Wesleys, including the Christmas hymn, but with a significant alteration:

Hark! the Herald Angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!

Whether Whitefield had permission to make that change or if he consulted with the Wesleys is unclear, but it stuck. In fact, the Wesleys incorporated the change back into their own collections, starting with *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* (1780).

Over time, the hymn has absorbed other alterations, but Whitefield’s is the most recognizable. In 1904, the editors of *Hymns Ancient & Modern* (one of the most influential hymnals in England) somewhat infamously changed the text back to “welkin rings;” they were so soundly ridiculed that the next edition returned to “herald angels.”²

If Whitefield had avoided altering the poetry of Charles Wesley, perhaps more English speakers today would recognize the word “welkin,” or perhaps equally as likely, our churches would have passed over this Christmas carol long ago and let it fade into obscurity. We’ll never know, but God be praised for Wesley, White-



field, and tunesmith Felix Mendelssohn, who have crafted a hymn of incarnation worthy to be declared from decades past through decades to come.

The staff of the Archives and Special Collections in the James P. Boyce Centennial Library can advise those interested in further access to resources related to Whitefield, the Wesleys, and hymnology.

ENDNOTES

¹ J.R. Watson, “Welkins,” Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, *Bulletin*, July 2000, 80.

² Timothy Dudley-Smith, “Hark! the herald angels sing,” Canturbury Dictionary of Hymnology, <http://www.hymnology.co.uk/h/hark!-the-herald-angels-sing>

The Boyce College ‘dad’: Dave DeKlavon

SOUTHERN STORY

By Robert Chapman

As Boyce College’s enrollment increases, Dave DeKlavon’s family continues to grow. In the eyes of the world, DeKlavon is childless. However, the associate dean knows there is more to the story.

“Sometimes the hardships of life have their own benefits. My wife and I weren’t able to have any children, so we like to joke that the Boyce students are our adopted children,” DeKlavon said. This adoption has allowed the DeKlavons to trust the sovereignty of God and continue to pour their lives into the students of Boyce College.

“We knew that if we didn’t have involvement with younger people, there would be a lack in our life. We love taking what we have and being able to pass it on to someone else. We just viewed it as an opportunity that the Lord gave us,” said DeKlavon.

During their 17 years at Boyce, the DeKlavons have hosted hundreds of student groups at their home. He also memorizes the names of every student in his classes and prays for them weekly.

“I always hated having students in class who I didn’t know their name, because it is impossible to connect with a student if you don’t know their name,” he said.

DeKlavon has connected with hundreds of students at Boyce, but his journey here was a long process. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, DeKlavon’s mom developed arthritis and the doctors suggested moving to relieve the

into full-time ministry while preaching a youth service during his senior year in high school. After graduating, he enrolled in a pastoral studies program at Miami Christian College.

DeKlavon went to college with the idea of being a pastor for life, but after graduation he taught at a local Christian school for two years before becoming an associate pastor. During his years between Miami Christian College and Southern Seminary, DeKlavon served as an associate pastor, senior pastor, youth pastor, and Christian education pastor.

While a Christian education pastor, he was asked to develop and teach an in-depth adult Bible study. That study lasted for more than two years, and through that experience DeKlavon learned he had a passion for teaching and began to consider higher education. He finally decided to go back to school after a conversation with his wife, Jan.

“I went home and talked to Jan and she said, ‘Dave, when you wake up and you’re ready for Social Security and retirement, are you going to regret not going to seminary?’ I didn’t even have to hesitate, I said, ‘Yes, if I don’t go, I will regret it.’ So she said, ‘Then we need to go.’” DeKlavon enrolled as a student at Southern in the fall of 1989.

From 1989-98 DeKlavon completed both an M.Div. and Ph.D. at Southern Seminary. While finishing his Ph.D., in the fall of 1997, DeKlavon became the associate dean of Boyce Bible School and hasn’t left since. In 1998, Boyce began to offer bachelor’s degrees and the name was changed to Boyce College.

Having been at Boyce since its inception, DeKlavon has played a vital leadership role as the undergraduate school has grown up to what it is today.

“When I started in the fall of 1997, we had a grand total of 75 students in the entire school, and Boyce was one half of the Carver building,” he said. “Starting in 1998, we had all of Carver and the dorms on the third and fourth floor were reopened. A few years after that we added Rankin Hall to be part of Boyce, but now with the move to the Mullins Complex it has just been incredible.”

Boyce College now has an on-campus enrollment of over 660 students and continues to grow through the addition of the seminary track and business programs. Beginning in the fall of 2015, Boyce will have its first extension center at the 660-acre Northland campus in Dunbar, Wisconsin.

Just as a dad does not care for his children only while they live at home, so DeKlavon cares for Boyce students long after they leave campus.

“I love to get a newsletter or prayer letter from graduates to see where they are serving now, and with things such as Facebook I can keep track of graduates no matter where they go.”



“Sometimes the hardships of life have their own benefits. ... We love taking what we have and being able to pass it on to someone else. We just viewed it as an opportunity that the Lord gave us.”

pain. After relocating to Florida, the DeKlavons began attending a church in the Miami area where he professed faith in Christ at age 9.

“When I was in the fourth grade, the Sunday School teacher asked me if I was saved. I knew if I said I wasn’t saved that he would want to talk with me after class, so I lied and said that I was. But all day long that question ate at my mind, ‘Are you saved, are you saved?’ So that night I prayed to accept Christ,” DeKlavon said.

After becoming a Christian, DeKlavon was called

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Seen at Southern

The Southern Seminary community welcomed nearly 200 prospective students for the semiannual Preview Day, Oct. 17. Students attended faculty lectures, mingled with faculty at dinner, and met with President R. Albert Mohler Jr. during a reception at his home. Prospective students experienced Southern Seminary and the wider Louisville area through guided campus tours and an information fair. Several prospective students stayed an additional day to participate in the Great Commission Race 5K sponsored by the Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization.





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Viktor and Lena Tolstikov and their seven children live in the small town of Shterovka, Ukraine. They are members of the local church. The father of the family, Victor, is the only one who has found a job. He works at a factory, but his income is not enough for his large family. They have a garden and some livestock (goats and chickens). This family is the only large family in the economically depressed town which has a population of three thousand. They are a great witness to the neighborhood. This family receives support from COAH. There are other families who need our help. Please consider this prayerfully.

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Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people. PS. 96: 3





Don't waste your winter

Edited and compiled by Robert Chapman

Southern Seminary and Boyce College will offer several courses over winter break. Course topics include Christian ethics and human sexuality, history of the Baptists, Islam and the Christian mission, C.S. Lewis, and others. A full list of winter classes is available on Moodle. Southern's winter term begins Dec. 8, 2014, and ends Jan. 30, 2015. The Boyce winter term starts Dec. 1, 2014, and ends Jan. 16, 2015.

The Southern grant is available to students who take six or more on-campus credit hours. The grant reimburses students \$150 at the completion of the winter term.

BOYCE

C.S. Lewis: His Life, Writings, and Legacy

Jan. 12-16, 2015 | Dan DeWitt

This course will be an introduction to the life of C.S. Lewis, a survey of his writings, and an analysis of his contribution to Christian imagination, theology, and apologetics.

SOUTHERN

Christian Ethics and Human Sexuality

Jan. 12-16, 2015 | Kenneth Magnuson

This course is a study of human sexuality from a Christian worldview perspective. Attention will be given to issues such as a theology of sexuality, the sexual revolution, and contemporary perspectives about sex, celibacy, marriage, divorce and remarriage, and reproductive technology.

Intro to Church Revitalization

Jan. 12-16, 2015 | William Henard

This course examines the ministry of revitalizing declining churches, moving from biblical and theological foundations to practical application with case studies. Particular attention will be given to the issues of leading change in the church, conflict management, ministry contextualization, and increasing church evangelistic effectiveness.

Islam and the Christian Mission

Jan. 20-23, 2015 | J. Scott Bridger

This course is a study of Christian mis-

sionary outreach to Muslim peoples. The course will examine the history of Christian missions to Islam, models of missionary methodology, evangelistic approaches that have been used with Muslims, and contextualization issues.

Intro to Biblical Counseling

Jan. 12-16, 2015 | Stuart Scott

This course is a basic introduction to biblical counseling theory and techniques. Attention is focused on how the Scriptures and theology form the foundation and substance for biblical counseling.

Personal Spiritual Disciplines

Jan. 5-8, 2015 | Joseph Harrod

This course is an integrative approach to Christian spirituality emphasizing biblical, classical, and contemporary materials. This course will assist the student in personal discipleship through spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Scripture memory, Bible study, fasting, journaling, and personal evangelism.

The Theology of Andrew Fuller

Dec. 8-12, 2014 | Michael A.G. Haykin

This course will examine the life and work of Baptist theologian Andrew Fuller, who established the Baptist Missionary Society and promoted the Calvinist theology of the Great Awakening.

History of the Baptists

Dec. 8-12, 2014 | Shawn Wright

This course will be a study of Baptist origins, development, principles, leaders, and current trends.

History of Christian Missions

Dec. 15-19, 2014 | Zane Pratt

This course is an intensive study of the worldwide expansion of Christianity from apostolic times to the present.

Greek Exegesis: Ephesians

Dec. 15-19, 2014 | Jarvis Williams

This course will be an exegesis of the Greek text of Ephesians with particular attention to vocabulary, style, and literary relationship to Colossians.

Announcements

Read Towers Weekly

Towers Weekly is a new email publication from the Communications Office at Southern Seminary. It provides an overview of news, events, and announcements for the Southern Seminary community in the week ahead. You can also find complete and updated information at towers.sbts.edu, along with a web version of the monthly Towers magazine publication.

9Marks at Southern

Feb. 27-28, 2015

9Marks and Southern Seminary are partnering together for a third annual conference. This conference is focused on encouraging and equipping church leaders to understand how the gospel alone builds true and healthy churches. Registration closes Feb. 20.

Health and Rec

More information on hours and fitness classes are available at sbts.edu/hrc, the front desk or call 897-4720.

Seminary Clinic hours

Staff, students, and their immediate family members are provided a health maintenance program through the clinic, located on the second floor of the campus center, Honeycutt 213.

Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

More information and price listings are found on the clinic website, www.sbts.edu/clinic.

Renown

March 13-14, 2015

Join R. Albert Mohler Jr., Dan DeWitt, and Rick Holland as they lead the Renown Youth Conference on “Growing Grace,” March 13-14. Students will have the opportunity to learn about what it means to grow in grace as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Registration closes March 6.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
2	3 Boyce Dorm Meeting 9:30 p.m. Heritage Hall Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	4 Chapel 10 a.m. Alumni Chapel Bryan Loritts Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
9	10 Boyce Dorm Meeting 9:30 p.m. Heritage Hall Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	11 Chapel 10 a.m. Alumni Chapel John Kimball Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
16	17 Boyce final exams Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	18 Boyce vs. Wabash College 7 p.m. HRC Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
23	24 Fall reading days Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	25 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

NOVEMBER 2014

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1

5

6

Chapel
10 a.m. | Alumni Chapel
Hugh Hewitt

7

8

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

12

13

Chapel
10 a.m. | Alumni Chapel
D.A. Carson

14

Date Night Out
7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

15

Bouncy house day
9 a.m. - noon | Main Gym

Doxology and Theology Conference

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

19

BGS mentoring groups

20

21

22

SOT shepherding groups

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon**Childcare** 9 a.m. - noon

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

26

27

Thanksgiving Day

28

29

Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

3

Questions

WITH

Barnabas Piper

Content marketing,
LifeWay Christian Resources;
author, *The Pastor's Kid*



-1-

What advice would you give to a young ‘PK’ who can’t see past their family’s ministry struggles?

Talk to your parents about your frustrations. I wish I had done that more as a kid. It’s hard. It’s scary, especially because it might feel like you’re challenging God (since that’s who dad works for, after all). You might not even know exactly how to express them, but do your best. Your parents love you. They need to know what you’re having a hard time with.

And do all you can to see Jesus for who he is. If he is boring to you or too familiar, that just means you haven’t met the real Jesus yet! Go to the Gospels and imagine meeting that man. When you see him you will find a kind of freedom and fullness you have never known. The struggles won’t go away, but you’ll have the means to work through them.

-2-

How can seminary students best prepare to shepherd their children?

I know many seminary students are already in ministry, so the time is now. For those who are looking ahead, the same advice applies. Realize that your kids have more struggles than you know. They need you to clue in. Build the kind of relationship with them that allows you to ask about the pressures, the expectations, the doubt, the guilt.

And don’t bring your pastoring home; when you’re there, just be a parent. They don’t need sermons or counseling. They need conversation and a listening ear. When you model grace, repentance, and forgiveness, it will offer them the freedom they need.

-3-

What is the latest movie you’ve watched?

I went to see *Guardians of the Galaxy* with some friends recently and really enjoyed it. I went in with relatively low expectations and was more than pleasantly surprised. It was clever, funny, and pretty much just unadulterated fun. It made me excited for the sequel. Marvel continues to impress me with their quality movies.