

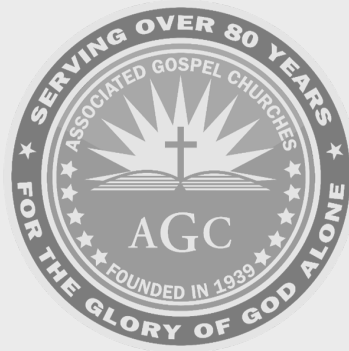
— The AGC —

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Rooted in the Great Commandment (*Matthew 22:36-40*) and the Great Commission (*Matthew 28:18-20*), and recognized by the federal government as an official ecclesiastical endorsing agency, the Associated Gospel Churches (AGC) exists to represent Biblically Christ-centered churches, for the purpose of recruiting, endorsing, educating and supporting ordained men to serve as chaplains—pastors in uniform—in publicly-restricted access institutions.

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FOR CHRIST AND COUNTRY

*υποφέρουν από δυσκολίες μαζί μου, ως καλός
στρατιώτης του Ιησού Χριστού*

– II Tim 2:3

THE AGC JOURNAL

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the spring edition of the *AGC Journal*. For those unfamiliar with this journal, it is a dedicated “toolbox” resource for those in Chaplain ministries., courtesy of the Associated Gospel Churches (hence “AGC”). We are an ecclesiastical endorser for those military and civilian Chaplains committed to evangelizing the lost and believe in the Plenary, Verbal inspiration of the Bible. This issue has articles collected from leading conservative Bible professors, Pastors and Chaplains who have graciously allowed access to their work. Hopefully the collection will help build up the saints by providing you Biblically based resource materials to help you serve your “congregation” in each and every aspect of your Chaplain ministry. You will find each article not only informative but engaging as well.

New to this volume is the inclusion of book reports which are practical and current, namely, Biblical counseling and a theological assessment of the Woke Movement. In short, there should be something for everyone in this issue.

If there is a topic or an issue you would like to see addressed, feel free to contact me at agcchaplaincy.com/contact. Include your name and contact information, as well as your inquiry. I will get back to you as soon as I get it from the home office.

For those who are interested in what we have for you, here is a short synopsis on what is included:

SERMON PREPARATION

“Accuracy Counts” by Dr. Bill Barrick.

One of the fellow professors of Dr. Barrick when he was teaching at Master’s Seminary once commented to me: “Bill Barrick has forgotten more about this subject than I will ever know!” This article is a reminder to us of how we learned to put together an ideal sermon when we were in seminary. Starting from the text, going through the literature, exegeting from the original languages and building a working outline until the

delivery of the sermon, Dr. Barrick gives us a lot of insight from the life of Samson on the importance of correctly engaging the text to the glory of God. It's very technical, but also a wonderful model of how important it is for us to be good stewards of what God has entrusted to all of us.

EVANGELIZING AND CHAPLAIN HISTORY

“George Whitefield’s Influence on Army Chaplains-Part Two” by Dr. Ken Lawson

Dr. Lawson gives us some little-known facts about those colonial pastors who left their local pastorates and then recruited their congregations to fight in Washington’s army at the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

“Walter Colton and the Californian Gold Rush” by Dr. Tim Demy

Dr. Demy highlights a part of the life and ministry of an early Navy Chaplain named Walter Colton. Colton was the first governor of California as well as the one who broke the news of the California Gold Rush to the rest of the country.

“George Washington Sacred Fire” by Dr. Peter Lillback

We are extremely fortunate to include this most gracious review of Dr. Lillback’s book by the author himself on the faith of George Washington. If you want to know what Washington really believed about God, this is the resource you need for your library. The book itself is over 1200 pages, but in this review, Dr. Lillback gives a summary of each chapter.

CHAPLAIN MINISTRIES & CURRENT EVENTS: BOOK REVIEWS

Is It Abuse? A Biblical Guide to Identifying Domestic Abuse and Helping Victims by Darby Strickland.

Reviewed by Andrew Lawson (Ph.D. Candidate). This gives a good overview for Chaplains to identify and help those who are suffering from domestic abuse.

Christianity and Wokeness: How the Social Justice Movement Is Hijacking the Gospel—and the Way to Stop It by Owen Strachan.

Reviewed by Dr. Dick Mayhue. As a member of our advisory board, Dr. Mayhue has extensive theological expertise to assess this movement and Dr. Strachan’s arguments. Chaplains who are on the ground floor of this ministry need to understand this insidiously evil movement.

FINAL MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS AND THE LAST WORD:

1. If you want more of Dr. Barricks' work, please visit his website (drbarrick.org). He has given permission to use most of his work for your ministry. You will not be disappointed!
2. I asked Dr. Mayhue if he could make a few recommendations which he thought would be helpful for Chaplains. He is a Viet Nam vet and was on the staff of Admiral Zumwalt, so he understands Navy language and the stresses of the ministry. Each are available on Amazon. They are:
 - *Bible Boot Camp: Spiritual Battles in the Bible and What They Can Teach You* (Christian Focus). This involves character sketches of 12 OT persons.
 - *How to Study the Bible* (Christian Focus).
 - *Practicing Proverbs: Wise Living for Foolish Times* (Christian Focus).
 - *The Healing Promise: Is It Always God's Will to Heal?* (Christian Focus). This is the most biblically thorough book about physical healing - it concludes that salvation is God's greatest "healing promise."
 - *Unmasking Satan: Understanding Satan's Battle Plan and Biblical Strategies for Fighting Back* (Kregel).

Books 1, 2, and 5 are ideal for a 13-week, group Bible study series. Books 3 and 4 could be used for a group Bible study series but might be best for individual study. All 5 could be used as Bible-based counseling tools.

3. We will be doing more on Navy and Army Chaplains which fought in the Revolutionary War in future issues. Stay tuned for more exciting and informative historical stories showing America's early Christian heritage!

May the Lord bless you as you serve Him and this great nation of ours!

By God's Grace,

Bob Freiberg, editor

CDR, CHC, USN-ret, M.Div, Th.M, D.D., D. Min.

ACCURACY MATTERS
WHEN SOULS ARE AT STAKE
Interpreting the Word with care and precision

William D. Barrick

Dr. Barrick is a Professor of Old Testament at The Master's Seminary. He first presented this work as a lecture at the Shepherd's Conference in 2012. You can find it online if you would like to listen.

How does the preacher prepare his exposition of God's Word in order to present a powerful pulpit? How can he study his text with accuracy and care, so that he preaches with precision as well as with power? He must saturate himself with the text and apply it to his own life before stepping into the pulpit. Rushing into exposition produces shallowness, irrelevance, and hypocrisy—neither accuracy nor power. Lack of preparation spiritually, mentally, and emotionally will produce inaccuracy.

GET IT RIGHT FROM THE START

Unless the heart and mind are right with God, there is no way that the expositor can be right with the text.

We are, in a certain sense, our own tools, and therefore must keep ourselves in order. If I want to preach the gospel, I can only use my own voice; therefore, I must train my vocal powers. I can only think with my own brains, and feel with my own heart, and therefore I must educate my intellectual and emotional faculties. I can only weep and agonize for souls

in my own renewed nature, therefore, must I watchfully maintain the tenderness which was in Christ Jesus. It will be in vain for me to stock my library, or organize societies, or project schemes, if I neglect the culture of myself; for books, and agencies, and systems, are only remotely the instruments of my holy calling; my own spirit, soul, and body, are my nearest machinery for sacred service; my spiritual faculties, and my inner life, are my battle axe and weapons of war.¹

Since preaching without prayer is presumption, pray with the psalmists:

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer”
(Ps 19:14, NKJV).

“Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law”
(Ps 119:18, NKJV).

Exegesis starts with the text and views it within its syntactical, lexical, literary, historical, social/cultural, geographical, and theological contexts. Although exegesis of the biblical text focuses upon the languages, the expositor must give attention to more than just the language factor. Everyday life in Bible times differed greatly from our present-day Western culture. In biblical times, culture changed from one century to another, from one people to another, and from one environment to another—just as it changes within our own setting. We must give attention to identifying the separate context for each passage. So much is unfamiliar to the modern, Western reader: clothing, food, the medium of exchange, local customs, religious observances, and dialects. How did these factors affect the meaning for both writer and recipient? This is the exegete’s (and, the expositor’s) challenge.

Resist the temptation to merely catalogue, collate, and arrange information. Exegesis consists of more than the collection and filing of data. Focus on interpreting information you glean from the biblical text itself. Biblical exposition does not consist of merely copying and pasting quotations from electronic sources and references into a MSWord document. You must examine, evaluate, assimilate, and interact with the biblical text in a coherent interpretative exposition employing only the most pertinent citations. In addition, you must synthesize the interpretation and its theological and pragmatic implications. When your sermon preparation reflects this

¹ C. H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (reprint; Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., n.d.), 1–2.

approach, you will have attained a significant goal in your ministry: you will become an accurate exegete and expositor of God's Word.

THE EXEGETICAL PROCESS

The following steps represent one potential approach to the biblical text designed to produce a full examination of the language, context, and background with a view to exposition. For a sample text, I will employ Judges 16:1–3 to illustrate the exegetical process.

1. READ/TRANSLATE

Read and reread the text until saturated with it—not just the sermon passage, but the entire book that forms its setting. If you know the biblical language, perform a provisional or preliminary translation of the sermon text. Diligently compare the original language with a literal translation such as the New American Standard Bible (NASB) or New American Standard Update (NASU), New King James Version (NKJV), English Standard Version (ESV), or Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB). Note any translational variations from the original language.

Compose a preliminary summary statement for what the passage says. What did the text mean to the original recipients? Describe briefly what the text talks about.

Judges 16:1-3: *Samson visited a harlot and got trapped, but miraculously escaped.*

2. OBSERVE

Ask questions about anything and everything in the text. What information does it give? *Who?*—list all persons in the text and identify the key players. *What?*—list all actions, objects, and conditions. Move on to the adverbial questions: *When?*—establish the historical context for the text. *Where?*—identify the geographical setting(s). *How?*—specify the way the subjects act. *Why?*—look for reasons (“because/for”), purposes (“in order that”), and results (“so that”). Pay attention to details—be a Sherlock Holmes! Record any question that comes to mind—even if it might turn out to be a “dumb” one upon further reflection. Determine to discover the basis

for any textual variant followed by the translation or suggested in the margins of the translation. Remember: no translation is perfect.

- *Who?* —Samson, son of Manoah from the tribe of Dan, became Israel's warrior deliverer from the Philistines in the days of the judges. Judges 13–16 records his story. Samson's reputation involved his physical strength and his moral weakness (especially for Philistine women).
- *When?* —The date of the Book of Judges rests heavily upon one's dating of the exodus out of Egypt. The early date of the exodus (which has the strongest biblical and extrabiblical evidence) places the Book of Judges in the period between the 14th and 11th centuries B.C. Samson's day comes late in the chronology of the Israelite judges, in the early 11th century B.C.
- *Where?* —As far as location goes, this brief text unit focuses on the Philistine city of Gaza and then moves to the area of Hebron, about 40 miles away as the crow flies (by modern highways between the two locations the distance is over 45 miles). Gaza was one of the five chief cities (pentapolis) of the Philistines. It had been the capital of Egyptian-controlled Canaan (1550–1150 B.C.). The Sea Peoples attacked Egypt by land and sea in the first half of the 12th century B.C. Among them were the Peleset or Philistines. The Philistines originally came from Greece via Crete and Cyprus. When Pharaoh Rameses III (1195–1164 B.C.) defeated the Sea Peoples, they took Gaza and settled in south-western Canaan.
- Obtain a sense of the passage's overall tone. Samson's problem with women continues. The prostitute goes about her publicly recognized business, but Samson does not go about his publicly recognized business (Boling, *Judges*, AB, 247). He uses his God-given strength to get him out of a fix.

Revise your preliminary summary statement. What did the text mean to the original recipients? Start developing your descriptive summary statement toward a theological and prescriptive summary.

Judges 16:1–3: *Samson's victory over 1,000 Philistine warriors in chapter 15 contrasts greatly with his moral defeat at the hands of one Philistine woman. His loose living gets him into a tight place. He escapes trouble by using the physical strength God gave him but did not escape the temptation by using the spiritual strength God could give to him.*

3. IDENTIFY

Analyze the text word by word and phrase by phrase. For many pastors with limited biblical language skills, good commentaries and various language tools provide a great deal of information for grammatical, literary, and lexical analysis (word studies). Read as many of the better exegetical commentaries as possible. Keep an accurate record of every element that has potential exegetical and expository significance—observe how commentators explain the significance of each element of the text.

The most consistently reliable commentary series include,

- Baker Commentary on the Old Testament (BCOT)
- Baker Exegetical Commentary (BEC)
- Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (EEC)
- *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (EBC)
- New American Commentary (NAC)
- New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT)
- New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)
- NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)
- Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC)
- Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)

An excellent series does not guarantee that each volume treats the text in the same way or with consistency interpretatively. Keep in mind that some independent commentaries are superior to those within a series. Read book reviews and talk with other expositors about the volumes they have found most helpful. When looking at a commentary prior to purchase, look at how it handles a text with which you are most familiar exegetically.

3.1. Grammar and syntax.

3.1.1. To what does each word, phrase, clause, sentence, and paragraph relate? in what way? for what purpose? Diagramming (either grammatical diagramming for NT or logical block diagramming for OT and NT) can be a valuable aid for understanding the text's structure (see 3.1.2, below).

OT: Andersen, Francis I., and A. Dean Forbes. *The Hebrew Bible: Andersen Forbes Phrase Marker Analysis*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2006.

NT: Rogers, Cleon L., Jr., and Cleon L. Rogers III. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.

- Judges 16:1— “Now” (NKJV, NASU), “Once” (NJPS, NRSV), and “One day” (NIV) are all legitimate translations of the Hebrew *wayyiqtol* (וַיִּקְטֹל, *wayyēlek*). At the beginning of a new section, the conjunction need not be translated at all (ESV, HCSB).
- Judges 16:1— “to Gaza” represents the proper noun with a *he*-directive as a suffix (עַזְזָתָה, ‘*azzātā*).
- Judges 16:2— לְעַזְזִים | לְאָמַר (la ‘*azzātīm lē`mōr*) represents either the loss of the initial verb or an idiomatic way of saying “the Gazites were told.”
- Judges 16:2— וַיִּתְחַרְשׁוּ (wayyithārēšū) stands alone as the only Hithpael form of חָרַשׁ (*hrš*) in the Hebrew Bible. Its normal stem is Hiphil. Keil suggests that the unusual stem evidently indicates “the subordinate idea of giving themselves up to careless repose.” However, it might have nothing more than a reflexive sense: “they kept themselves quiet.” The Hiphil means to keep something or someone else quiet.
- Judges 16:2— עַד־אֹר הַבֶּקֶר וְהַרְגָנְהוּ (‘*ad-`ôr habbōqer wahārgēnuhū*) employs an ellipsis of the understood concept “let us wait,” placing emphasis upon the time (“until the light of the morning” = “until daylight” or “until dawn”). The *waw*-correlative on the Qal perfect 1cpl verb introduces a temporal clause, “When we will kill him.”
- Judges 16:3— אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי חֶבְרוֹן (‘*āšer ‘al-pēnē hebrōn*) allows some ambiguity: “in front of Hebron” or “in the direction of Hebron” (the latter being the opinion of Karl Friedrich Keil in his commentary). However, many sound exegetes take the position that Samson did carry the gates to a hill just outside Hebron: Boling (AB), Block (NAC), Jackman (Preacher’s Commentary), and Moore (ICC). Moore says, “A late Latin tradition, of which the inhabitants of the city are said to know nothing, fixes the place where Samson deposited the gates of Gaza at El-Muntār, a hill SE. of Gaza, and only a quarter of an hour outside the walls, and this site is adopted, against the plain text, by some recent commentators, who are inclined to reduce as much as possible the wonderful character of Samson’s feats.” Jackman provides an interesting aspect of the issue, “Goslinga asserts, ‘I believe that Samson indeed brought the gates back to Israelite soil, and that the author included the name Hebron to show that he deposited them in the centre of Judah so that Israel would have tangible proof of his victory.’ Admitting that this

would involve a journey of forty miles, he nevertheless argues that the lifting of the gates at all was a miracle, and that such a great distance presents no additional problem for supernatural power. Certainly, it would seem to give more purpose, both to the event itself and to its being recorded here, if the people of Israel saw this visible reminder of Yahweh’s power over their enemies, within their own land.”

3.1.2. *Where is the prominence or emphasis?* Pay attention to word order and the employment of emphatic words.

- Judges 16:1–3: The emphatic elements in this particular text unit relate to a literary analysis by diagramming more than to a grammatical analysis.

1a		וַיִּלְדֹּם שִׁמְשׁוֹן עֶזְתָּהּ	1
1bα		וַיִּרְאֶשֶׁם אִשָּׁה ↔ זֹנָה	
1bβ		וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ:	
2aα	A	לְעֶזְתָּיִם לְאִמֹּר	2
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">בָּא שִׁמְשׁוֹן הִנֵּה</div>	
2aβ	B	וַיִּסְבּוּ	
2aγ		וַיִּאָרְבוּ	
		לוֹ	
		כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה	
		בְּשַׁעַר הָעִיר	
2bα	B'	וַיִּתְחַרְשׁוּ	
		כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה	
2bβ	A'	לְאִמֹּר	
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">עַד־אֹר הַבֶּקֶר וַהֲרַגְנָהּוּ:</div>	
3aα		וַיִּשְׁכַּב שִׁמְשׁוֹן	3
		עַד־חֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה	
3aβ		וַיִּקָּם	
		בְּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה	
3aγ		וַיֵּאָחֵז בְּדַלְתוֹת שַׁעַר־הָעִיר	
		וּבִשְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת	
3aδ		וַיִּסָּעַם	
		עַם־הַבְּרִיחַ	
3aε		וַיֵּשֶׁם	
		עַל־כַּתְּפָיו	
3b		וַיַּעֲלֵם	
		אֶל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר	

Here is what this diagram looks like in English (NKJV), retaining the Hebrew structure:

<p>1a Now Samson went to Gaza 1bα and saw a harlot there 1bβ and went in to her. 2aα <i>When</i> the Gazites <i>were told</i>,</p>	A
<p>2aβ they surrounded <i>the place</i> 2aγ and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city.</p>	B
<p>2bα They were quiet all night, saying,</p>	B'
	A'
	<p>“In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him.”</p>
<p>3aα And Samson lay <i>low</i> till midnight;</p>	
<p>3aβ then he arose at midnight,</p>	
<p>3aγ took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts,</p>	
<p>3aδ pulled them up, bar and all,</p>	
<p>3aε put <i>them</i> on his shoulders,</p>	
<p>3b and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.</p>	

Prepare an exegetical outline that reflects the major divisions of the text. This might not be your actual sermon outline, although the divisions should be the same.

- I. Samson’s fleshly desires take him to Gaza where he gets involved with a prostitute (Judg 16:1).
 - A. Samson travels to Gaza (v. 1a).
 - B. Samson gets involved with a prostitute (v. 1b).
 - 1. He sees a prostitute (v. 1ba).
 - 2. He lies with that prostitute (v. 1bb).

II. The Gazites' plot to kill Samson (Judg 16:2).

- A.** Someone *speaks* to the Gazites about Samson's presence in Gaza (v. 2aa).
- B.** The Gazites set an **all-night** trap for Samson (v. 2ab).
- B'.** The Gazites keep silence **all night** (v. 2ba).
- A'.** The Gazites *speak* about their plan to kill Samson **in the morning** (v. 2bb).

III. Samson escapes the Gazites' trap (Judg 16:3).

- A. At midnight** Samson breaks free from the Gazites' trap (v. 3a).
 1. Samson lays in bed **until midnight** (v. 3aa).
 2. Samson rises **at midnight** (v. 3ab).
 3. Samson seizes the city gates (v. 3ag).
 4. Samson pulls up the city gates with the bar in place (v. 3ad).
 5. Samson sets the city gates on his shoulders (v. 3ae).
- B.** Samson carries the gates of Gaza to a hill near Hebron (v. 3b).

3.2. Expression.

3.2.1. What idioms does the author employ? What do those idioms mean? What did the original recipients understand by them?

- Judges 16:1, “and went into her” (וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ, *wayyābô' 'ēleyhā*): This comprises a euphemism for having sexual intercourse with a woman.
- Judges 16:2, “In the morning when it is daylight” (עַד־אֹר הַבֹּקֶר, *'ad-'ôr habbōqer*): Literally, “until the light of the morning” = “until daylight” or “until the dawn.” This might not refer to the actual sunrise, which can come up to an hour after the first light of day.
- Judges 16:3, “the top of the hill” (רֹאשׁ הַהַר, *rô's hāhār*): Literally, “the head of the hill.”
- Judges 16:3, “that faces Hebron” (NKJV; אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי חֶבְרוֹן, *'āšer 'al-pēnê hebrôn*): See discussion under 3.1.1, above.

3.2.2. *What is the literary form (type of literature)?* **Some refer to the literary form as the genre. Is the text narrative or poetry? Is it a national history or personal history? Is it law? —case law or direct commandment? Is it prophecy or wisdom? Is it lament or praise? Is it an epistle or a gospel? Is it a parable?**

Resource: Sandy, D. Brent, and Ronald L. Giese, Jr., eds. *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995.

- Judges 16:1–3 is *narrative*. The elements of Hebrew narrative include:
 - ✓ *Scene*: A segment of an account with a specific time and place with two or more characters.
 - ✓ *Plot*: Sequential movement toward a climax and resolution.
 - ✓ *Point of View*: The teller’s perspective.
 - ✓ *Characterization*: Development of characters, their actions, and their words.
 - ✓ *Setting*: Space and time location of the account.
 - ✓ *Dialogue*: Conversations between characters or groups.
 - ✓ *Key Word(s)/Leitwort(e)*: Repetition and pattern of the leading word(s) throughout the account.
 - ✓ *Structure*: A deliberate arrangement of the account.
 - ✓ *Rhetorical Devices*: Literary devices employed in narrative may include inclusio (inclusion or envelope figure), repetition, chiasm (chiasmus or inverted parallelism), ellipsis (gapping), metaphor, irony, and paronomasia (word play or pun).
- **Guidelines for analyzing Hebrew narrative:**
 - ✓ *Identify the limits of the text unit.*
 - (1) For Judges 16:1–3 this must first involve giving attention to the cycles in the Book of Judges:
 - Rebellion: 3:7 – “So the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD”; cp. 2:11.
 - Retribution: 3:8 – “Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of”; cp. 2:14.
 - Request: 3:9 – “When the children of Israel cried out to the LORD”; cp. 2:18.

- Rescue: 3:9 – “the LORD raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them”; 3:10 – “The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel”; cp. 2:16.
- Rest: 3:11 – “So the land had rest for forty years.”

(2) Next the exegete must look closely at the larger Samson account:

Resource: Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 607–13.

- Rebellion: 13:1a – “Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD.”
- Retribution: 13:1b – “and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.”
- Request: cp. 13:8.
- Rescue: 13:5 – “For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines.”
- Rest: 16:31 – “He had judged Israel twenty years.”

✓ *Identify the structure of the Samson account using literary and grammatical elements.*

(1) Note that the Masoretes indicate major section breaks at 12:15 and 13:1 to be major section breaks by using a פ (= paragraph division). פתוּ (petûah, “open”), referring to an “open paragraph,” which they follow with a large space. They employ ס to identify a “closed [סְתוּמָה, setûmâ] paragraph.” פ is the more major break that might contain within its section a number of occurrences of the ס. Two examples help to illustrate these markers:

12:15 נִימַת עֲבָדָיו בְּיַד הַלֵּל הַפְּרַעֲתוֹנִי וַיִּקְבֵּר בְּפְרַעֲתוֹן בְּאַרְץ
 אֲפְרַיִם בְּהַר הָעֵמֶלְקִי: פ

13:18 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מִלֵּאדָּה יְהוָה לָמָּה זֶה תִּשְׁאַל לְשָׁמִי וְהוּא־פְּלֵאִי: ס

(2) Next, note the employment of macrosyntactic וַיְהִי (*wayyehi*, “Now there was” NKJV) to commence the following narrative section:

(3) Observe the subsequent repetitions of the various פ and ס paragraph markers and the macrosyntactic וַיְהִי:

➤ פ: 31:7, 52; 41:4, 91; 51:2, 61:32, 31.

➤ ס: 31:81; 8:15.

➤ וַיְהִי: 13:20 (concluding and followed in 13:21 by a disjunctive clause); 14:11 (concluding; but followed by *wayyiqtol* in v. 12); 14:15 (initial); 14:17 (internal); 15:1 (initial); 15:17 (internal); 16:4 (initial); 16:16 (initial); 16:21 (internal); 16:25 (initial); 17:1.

➤ Note the use of disjunctive clauses as markers: esp. 16:31b,

וַיֵּרְדוּ אֲחִיו וְכָל־בֵּית אָבִיהֶוּ וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ וַיַּעֲלוּ וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אוֹתוֹ בֵּין צָרְעָה וּבֵין אֲשֶׁת־אֵל בְּקֶבֶר מְנוּחַ אָבִיו וְהוּא שֵׁפֶט אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה: פ

(4) Develop an outline of the Samson account that observes these markers as much as the context allows.

✓ *Identify the scenes in the Samson account with regard to place, time, and characters.*

(1) 13:2–24 (the messenger of Yahweh, Manoah and his wife).

(2) 13:25–15:20 (Samson’s Timnite affairs).

(3) 16:1–31 (Samson’s Gazite affairs).

✓ *Determine the point of view.*

Ultimately, this is God’s Word from His perspective. Although the book is anonymous, the human author might have been Samuel, who was a prophet (seer), having received direct revelation from God. Such direct revelation accounts for the details of the account that only could be known firsthand.

- ✓ *List the characters in the immediate text unit (Judges 16:1–3).*

16:1—Samson and the Gazite prostitute.

16:2—The Gazites.

16:3—Samson.

- ✓ *Analyze the plot of Judges 16:1–3.*

Samson is attracted to a prostitute and fulfills his desire/lust (16:1). Parenthetical information (incomplete, non-verbal clause)—Samson's presence in the city is exposed (16:2a).

The Gazites conceive a plot against Samson's life and take steps to see it through to completion (16:2b).

Tension: Will he escape? If so, how?

Resolution: Samson escapes (16:3).

- ✓ *Research the geographical, historical, and cultural aspects of the setting.*

Resources:

- ▶ Aharoni, Yohanan, and Michael Avi-Yonah. *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*. Revised edition. New York: Macmillan Company, 1977.
- ▶ Baly, Denis. *The Geography of the Bible: A Study in Historical Geography*. Revised edition. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- ▶ Barrick, William D. "Samson's Removal of Gaza's Gates." *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* 8 (1976): 83–93.
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- ▶ Currid, John D., and David P. Barnett. *Crossway ESV Bible Atlas*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.
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- ▶ King, Philip J., and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- ▶ Smith, George Adam. *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*. 3rd edition. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1895.

- ▶ Unger, Merrill F. *The New Unger's Bible Handbook*. Edited by Gary N. Larson. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984.
- ▶ Walton, John H., ed. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
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- (1) The gates of Gaza probably weighed over 10,000 pounds without the bar of bronze or iron and without the gate posts.
- (2) As the crow flies, the distance from Gaza to Hebron stand around 36–40 miles over terrain that starts at an elevation of about 100 feet above sea level at Gaza to over 3,300 feet above sea level at Hebron—a change of 3,200 feet in elevation.
- (3) Only a divine miracle provides a plausible explanation for this performance (even if Samson only carried the gates a half-mile to a hill top near Gaza).

See William D. Barrick, “Samson’s Removal of Gaza’s Gates,” *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* 8 (1976): 83–93.

3.2.3. *What literary devices* (repetition, parallelism, inclusio, chiasm, assonance, paronomasia, etc.) are employed? What are the shifts or pivots in the passage? Is dialogue present? How is it employed to tell the story?

Resource: Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

- *Inclusio:* The key place names bracket (mark off) this text unit: “Gaza” (v. 1), “Hebron” (v. 3).
- *Repetition:* כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה (*kol-hallayēlā*, “all the night”—2x); חֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה (*hāṣī hallayēlā*, “midnight”—2x); שַׁעַר הָעִיר (*ša‘ar hā‘ir*, “the gate of the city”—2x). The 5-fold use of time phrases (see next device, also) focuses the reader or hearer on the timing of events. This builds tension in the account. The repetition of “the gate of the city” places attention on the key object in the account.
- *Ellipsis:* עַד־אֹר הַבֶּקֶר (*‘ad-’ôr habbōqer*, “Let us wait until the morning light,” NASU, ESV, HCSB, NRSV; “He will not leave until morning comes,” NET). Omission of the verb engages the reader’s or hearer’s

imagination and contributes to an emphasis on this time element in the middle of the account. Note that the other two-time phrases are evenly distributed before and after this time phrase.

- *Chiasm*: Note how the two occurrences of “saying” bracket the two major actions of the conspiring Gazites. Note that the two occurrences of “all the night” precede the reference to “the morning light” and that the two occurrences of “midnight” follow it—making “the morning light” the focal point.

3.2.4. Perform a word study for each word crucial to the text. Keep in mind that many words have no great “golden nugget” of expositional truth outside their usage within the text’s proposition (which proves true in these three verses).

- The only candidates for word studies (meaning that something more might be gained than what lexicons offer) in Judges 16:1–3 are וַיֵּאָרְבוּ (*wayye’erēbū*) and וַיִּתְחַרְשׁוּ (*wayyithārēšū*). Both occur in verse 2.
- וַיֵּאָרְבוּ (*wayye’erēbū*): From the root אָרַב (*’rb*) meaning “lie in ambush” or “lay an ambush” or “lie in wait.” The OT uses the verb of animals lying in wait for their prey but occurs metaphorically for the way that enemies ambush their victims. Beyond this, no other meaning or figure presents itself.
- וַיִּתְחַרְשׁוּ (*wayyithārēšū*): From the root חָרַשׁ (*hrš*) which carries a variety of meanings from “be deaf” to “remain inactive,” as well as “keep still” or “become silent.” Because of the Hithpael stem used for the verb in Judges 16:2, the silence or stillness or inactivity comes as the result of self constraint. The reflexive factitive stem brings out the meaning “they brought themselves into the state of being silent/still.” It fits well the setting of the ambush.

➤ Valuable tools for word studies include:

OT: VanGemeren, Willem A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. 2 volumes. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.

NT: Brown, Colin, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 4 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.

Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Abridged edition. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985. (“Little Kittel”).

THE EXPOSITIONAL PROCESS

Moving from exegesis to exposition requires consideration of the theological teaching of the text unit and its practical implications (application). Then the preacher must produce the sermon proposition and homiletical outline. These are the vehicles for making the implications plain to the listeners sitting in the pews.

1. Biblical Theology and Practical Implications

Examine the canonical and theological implications of the text unit (Judg 16:1–3) and summarize its theological teaching.

- ✓ Being proud and arrogant, Samson depends upon his strength and enters the chief city of his enemies, the Philistines (Judg 16:1; cp. 1 John 2:16).
- ✓ Samson yields to the lust of the eyes and the lust of his flesh when he sees the prostitute (Judg 16:1; cp. 1 John 2:16). Samson, like other disobedient Israelites, “did what was right in his own eyes” (Judg 21:10).
- ✓ Arrogant actions and attitude together with sinful lusts will bring a person into danger (Judg 16:2; cp. Prov 1:8–19; 5:1–23; 6:24–29; Rom 6:23).
- ✓ Failure to obey God and to live a holy life can only lead to trouble and a fall. Even God-given physical strength eventually will fail to be sufficient to deliver Samson from the dangers he encounters due to his sinful behavior.
- ✓ The cycles of the Book of Judges will also play out in Samson’s life as an individual: rebellion (Judg 16:1–20) > retribution (16:21–27) > request (16:28) > rescue (16:29–30) > rest (16:31).

- ✓ In God's grace, Samson becomes God's instrument to deliver His people Israel from the Philistines. Flawed as he is, Samson appears in the roll call of faith in Hebrews 11:32.

The Lord remains faithful to His covenant promises to Abraham and his descendants regardless of the seemingly contradictory circumstances that had fallen upon the Israelites and their leaders. For blessing to take place, individuals and the nation must exercise faith and obedience.

Because evangelical expositor often harbors a reluctance to derive New Testament preaching from the Old Testament, we should consider at least some of the biblical justification for applying Old Testament narrative to New Testament saints. The texts that are primary in such a consideration include Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6–13; and 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

2. Sermon Proposition

To produce the sermon proposition, you must seek to reduce all the biblical theological thoughts and practical implications to one simple statement:

We must obey God and His Word, rather than yielding to sinful pride or to the lust of our eyes and of our flesh.

3. Homiletical Outline

The homiletical outline follows the divisions of the exegetical outline as closely as possible. The key rests in seeking to restate each point so as to express the practical implications of each section of the text:

- I. We must turn from our fleshly desires that take us into places where we should not go or to get us involved with the wrong people (Judg 16:1; cp. 1 John 2:15–17; James 1:14; 4:4–10).
 - A. We should turn from “the pride of life,” so that we go to places unlike those where we used to go (v. 1a).
 - B. We should abandon fellowship with those who lead us into temptation and disobedience to God (v. 1b).
 - 1. We should love the Father, rather than the lust of our eyes (v. 1ba).

2. We should submit to the Father, rather than to the lust of our flesh (v. 1bb).
- II. We must understand that our enemies, chief among whom is Satan, seek to trap us by means of our own sins (Judg 16:2; cp. John 15:19; 1 Pet 5:8; James 1:15).
 - A. Our enemies will learn of our disobedience (v. 2aa; cp. Num 32:23).
 - B. We should behave like “children of the day” rather than like children of the night and darkness (v. 2aβ–bβ; cp. Rom 13:12; Eph 5:11; 1 Thess 5:5).
 - III. We should depend upon God to deliver us, rather than depending upon our own strength or wisdom (Judg 16:3; cp. James 4:10).
 - A. We must use the gifts of God for His service and praise, rather than for personal gain and comfort (v. 3a; cp. 1 Tim 6:5; 1 Pet 5:2).
 - B. We must avoid displaying the trophies of our own strength and wisdom, rather than allowing God’s deeds to be the focus (v. 3b; cp. John 3:30).

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*EDITOR'S NOTE

Due to the difficulty in the formatting change of going to a smaller page from the larger original, some of the vowel pointing of the Hebrew words may have shifted. If you want a copy of the original Hebrew charts, please visit drbarrick.org/papers to download the larger unedited version.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD, THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR IN AMERICA, AND THE AMERICAN MILITARY CHAPLAINCY [PART 2]

Kenneth Lawson

This article is the second part of a study on Rev. George Whitefield's influence on the Revolutionary War in America and on colonial military chaplains who served in this war. The first section of this article appeared in the Fall 2021 edition of The AGC Journal.

It was completely consistent with Whitefield's revivalist, New Light theology to apply liberty in Christ towards the pursuit of the Kingdom of God without outside interference, unjust taxation, or a corrupt Anglican hierarchy. As biblical characters like Abraham, Moses, David, and others fought for God and civil freedom, and as Jesus in the book of Revelation returns to earth as a military conqueror, so colonial American clergymen were willing to fight against the encroachments and abuses of Great Britain.¹ While no book-length study has been done relating George Whitefield's influence upon colonial army chaplains, some helpful conclusions may be drawn from the number of New Light military chaplains who served in the war.²

¹ Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 259-311.

² In 1861, Joel T. Headley wrote the first detailed study of colonial army chaplains in the American Revolution. He lamented the fact that up to that point, the religious aspects of the revolution had been ignored. See his *The Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, (1861: reprinted by Solid Ground Christian Books, Birmingham, AL: 2005), 13-14. In the last twenty or so years there has been a scholarly reexamination of religion and the Revolutionary War.

Clergymen were typically the most influential persons in their communities. Their opinions carried great influence.³ During the Revolutionary War, colonial army chaplains served on the staff of their commander. The chaplains had no military regulations, and simply did what they did in their civilian communities – they preached, counseled, performed weddings and funerals, held small group prayer and bible study meetings, and ministered to the wounded and dying in hospitals. Through his relentless itinerant ministry throughout the thirteen colonies, Whitefield was a unifying factor in helping the separate colonies come together as one nation. By the time of the American Revolution in 1776, hundreds of American clergymen who supported Whitefield served as military chaplains in the colonial army. The purpose of this article is to trace Whitefield’s influence on the Revolutionary War in America, and to recognize the influence of Whitefield’s preaching and theology on the colonial chaplains in the American Revolution.

WHITEFIELD’S INFLUENCE ON COLONIAL CHAPLAINS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Chaplains in colonial militia units were present when the first Europeans settled in the New World. That there would be military chaplains in the American Revolution was not a surprise. What is interesting to note is the many colonial chaplains who were followers or supporters of George Whitefield. We know of 219 men who served as military chaplains in the Revolutionary War, 111 chaplains in the Continental Army and 108 militia chaplains from the thirteen colonies. These numbers do not account for civilian clergy that temporarily ministered to the troops stationed in their communities. During the war, 25 chaplains were killed by disease or by the enemy.⁴ The four New England colonies – New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island – provided more military chaplains in the war than the other nine colonies combined. The Massachusetts Colony provided the most chaplains to the war effort, 52 clergymen total.⁵ This

³ Bob Ruppert, “The Influence of the Black Robes,” *Journal of the American Revolution*, August 25, 2014, <https://allthingsliberty.com/2014/08/the-influence-of-the-black-robos/>. Frank S. Child, *The Colonial Parson of New England*, (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1896), 11-44.

⁴ Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 6.

⁵ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy: from its European Antecedents to 1791*, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1978), xviii-xix, 245-267.

section will examine the strong sentiment of New England colonial army chaplains who supported George Whitefield.⁶

First, we must identify the names of the New England civilian pastors who supported Whitefield and became military chaplains in the Revolutionary War. This is done by examining the official U.S. Army chaplain roster for the war. Then we must determine whether the chaplain had ever met Whitefield, and if the chaplain supported, opposed, or was indifferent to Whitefield's itinerant ministry in New England. The numbers of Revolutionary War military chaplains from the New England colonies are as follows: Massachusetts – 52; Connecticut – 51; New Hampshire – 11; and Rhode Island – 7. Examples of colonial army chaplains who supported George Whitefield follow.

Rev. Hezekiah Smith (1737-1805) of Haverhill, Massachusetts was a respected Baptist and well-liked New Light pastor. He was born in Long Island, New York and educated at Princeton, at a time when Whitefield was welcome on the campus. Smith followed Whitefield's example of itinerant evangelism and was widely accepted by supporters of revival. In 1764, Smith preached in New England and briefly settled in a Congregational church in Haverhill. The First Baptist Church in Haverhill was founded in 1765. Smith remained the pastor of this Baptist church until his death forty years later. His only interruptions to his work in Haverhill was when he did itinerant preaching, and when he served as a chaplain for the continental army in the Revolutionary War.

Hezekiah Smith was born as the Great Awakening was spreading through New England. He grew up in a household that supported the revivals.⁷ After his graduation from Princeton in 1762, Smith's itinerant preaching often took him to the southern colonies. In the 1760s, Smith preached several times at Whitefield's orphanage in the Savannah, Georgia area.⁸ Smith was affectionately called "a second Whitefield."⁹ In February 1770, Hezekiah Smith preached at the Savannah orphanage and shared at least two meals with

⁶ Joel T. Headley, *The Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, (1861: reprinted by Solid Ground Christian Books, Birmingham, AL: 2005), 16.

⁷ John D. Broome, *The Life, Ministry, and Journals of Hezekiah Smith, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Haverhill, Massachusetts 1765 to 1805 and Chaplain in the American Revolution 1775 to 1780*, (Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 2004), 6-7.

⁸ John D. Broome, *The Life, Ministry, and Journals of Hezekiah Smith*, 18-19, 22.

⁹ John D. Broome, *The Life, Ministry, and Journals of Hezekiah Smith*, 41.

Whitefield.¹⁰ In September 1770, as the itinerant Whitefield travelled and preached in Massachusetts, Smith tried to go and hear him preach, but their schedules did not match. Smith wrote in his diary, “Went as far as Byfield in order to see Mr. Whitefield but was disappointed.”¹¹ Apparently, Whitefield had agreed to preach for Smith in Haverhill in October 1770, but Whitefield died a few weeks earlier.¹²

Hezekiah Smith transferred his theology of freedom in Christ and liberty of conscience, to freedom and independence in civil and political concerns. Whitefield and the Great Awakening caused Smith to evaluate his world through the eyes of religious individualism and self-sufficiency.¹³ To him, direct access to God through Christ made the petty claims of British tyrants across the ocean irrelevant, even ridiculous. When war broke out between the American colonies and Great Britain, Hezekiah Smith volunteered to serve as chaplain to the 4th Continental Infantry, served as a brigade chaplain, and occasionally as an aide-de-camp.¹⁴ He served in the colonial army in and around New York City and the Hudson River area, as well as in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.¹⁵ Smith was a confidant of General George Washington and other senior colonial leaders.¹⁶

Chaplain Smith’s journal has many notations showing his evangelistic and morale enhancing activities among the troops in the field. He endured the winter encampment at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in 1777-1778. Under General Washington’s orders, Smith was made commander of a large detachment of troops that were sick and wounded. Smith saw his service to his country, and the salvation of the souls of the troops, as the same mission. In March 1776, Smith was asked by his commander and his troops to extend his tour of duty as a

¹⁰ Hezekiah Smith, *The Journals of Hezekiah Smith*, (1805: reprinted by Particular Baptist Press, Springfield, MO: 2004), 358-359. John D. Broome, *The Life, Ministry, and Journals of Hezekiah Smith*, 108-109.

¹¹ Hezekiah Smith, *The Journals of Hezekiah Smith*, 369.

¹² John D. Broome, *The Life, Ministry, and Journals of Hezekiah Smith*, 154.

¹³ Hezekiah Smith, “Commemorative Sermon Preached on the Second Anniversary of Burgoyne’s Surrender, October 17, 1779,” Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 283-288.

¹⁴ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 249, 262, 267.

¹⁵ Reuben A. Guild, *Chaplain Smith and the Baptists*, (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1885), 5.

¹⁶ “Hezekiah Smith,” *Baptist History Homepage*, <https://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/smith.hezekiah.bio.html>.

chaplain. He agreed, writing that the “cause of our country, joined with that of usefulness of souls, inclines me to yield to their request.”¹⁷ Hezekiah Smith brought his Whitefield-like theology into the army chaplaincy. A biographer of Smith wrote, “Mr. Smith was a great admirer of Whitefield, whom in some respects he imitated.”¹⁸ In 1780, Hezekiah Smith returned to the First Baptist Church in Haverhill, successfully serving there until his death in 1805.

Rev. Samuel Spring (1746-1819) was thirty years old when he volunteered to serve as a colonial army chaplain in the Revolutionary War. He was born in the farming community of Uxbridge, Massachusetts. His minister in Uxbridge was Rev. Nathan Webb. Webb was an outspoken advocate of George Whitefield, so much so, that Webb signed the 1743 *Testimony* in support of Whitefield and the Great Awakening.¹⁹ Samuel Spring was the son of a successful farmer who was also a deacon in the Congregational church under Rev. Webb. Sensing a call to the ministry, Spring did college preparation studies with Webb before he attended college in Princeton, New Jersey. At that time, Princeton was distinctly a New Light, evangelical Christian school. We do not know if Samuel heard Whitefield preach while he was a student at Princeton. After graduating in 1771, Spring continued his theological studies and was licensed to preach in 1774.²⁰ His preparation for ministry was distinctly evangelical, greatly influenced by the legacy of George Whitefield.

In April 1775, the British sieged Boston. Samuel Spring quickly volunteered to be a continental army chaplain. That summer, Spring served as chaplain to the American troops that invaded Canada. Spring shared in all the hardships of the troops, and quickly won their respect. The journey to Canada to capture Quebec from the British was a disaster. The men were cold, hungry, exhausted, and poorly supplied. Spring counselled and prayed with the men, buried the dead, encouraged the senior leaders, and held church services. When Sundays came, the men would pile their knapsacks into a makeshift pulpit, as Chaplain Spring preached to the troops in the open fields. An assistant would help the chaplain

¹⁷ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 164.

¹⁸ Reuben A. Guild, *Chaplain Smith and the Baptists*, 138.

¹⁹ *The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors of Churches in New England, at a Meeting in Boston, July 7, 1743, Occasioned by the Late and Happy Revival of Religion in Many Parts of the Land*, (Boston, MA: 1743).

²⁰ Joel T. Headley, *The Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, 90.

mount the makeshift raised pulpit.²¹ The message of salvation only through Jesus Christ was a common theme in his preaching.²²

Montreal was the key prize for the colonial army in the invasion of Quebec. Attacking Montreal was a misadventure, as the city was walled and well defended. After a failed siege of several months, the troops returned home. Chaplain Spring was part of the New Year's Eve attack on Montreal. Spring assisted the severely wounded Colonel Benedict Arnold on the battlefield, then transported him back to a hospital. After months of living in filth and crude army encampments around Montreal, the Americans departed. Many were sick, as was Chaplain Spring. Towards the end of 1776, Spring departed the army and settled into a church in Newburyport, Massachusetts.²³

The affection Chaplain Samuel Spring had for George Whitefield was demonstrated as his unit prepared to depart Massachusetts for the invasion of Quebec and the attack on Montreal. The troops were scheduled to depart by boat from Newburyport, Massachusetts to a port in Maine, then march through the wilderness to Montreal. While in Newburyport, Spring had the commanders assemble the troops in the Old South Presbyterian Church. This church was pastored by the staunch Whitefield ally, Rev. Jonathan Parsons. Whitefield preached dozens of times for Parsons from this pulpit, and upon Whitefield's death in 1770, he was buried in a crypt in the basement of the church building. The body of Whitefield lay beneath the feet of the troops as Chaplain Spring preached to the men.

Assembling at Newburyport on Sept. 17, [1775] the soldiers listened to their chaplain, Rev. Samuel Spring, lead in a worship service. Chaplain Spring described the service in his own words: "On the Sabbath morning the officers and as many of the soldiers as could be crowded onto the floor of the house, were marched into the Presbyterian Church in Federal Street. They marched in with colors flying, and drums beating, and formed two lines, through which I passed - they presented arms and the drums rolling until I was seated in the pulpit. Then the soldiers stacked their arms all over the aisles, and I preached to the army and to the citizens, who crowded the galleries, from this text: "If thy spirit go not with us, carry us not up hence." Following the service the unit officers

²¹ Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 131.

²² Joel T. Headley, *The Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, 96.

²³ Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 132.

visited George Whitefield's crypt, opened it, and finding his collar and wrist bands intact, cut them in pieces for treasured relics.²⁴

Another account of this unusual respect shown George Whitefield by the officers and the troops states that after the soldiers were marched into the church by drumbeat, Chaplain Spring preached to the standing-room-only crowd of troops, with civilians packed in the upper galleries. The senior officers asked Chaplain Spring if it was appropriate to visit the basement tomb of Whitefield. As the chaplain, Colonel Arnold, and others stared at the dusty remains of Whitefield, they cut away portions of his clothing and stood over the corpse "with solemn awe and reverence."²⁵ After his army chaplaincy, Rev. Samuel Spring married, had a large family, and served a Congregational church in Newburyport until his death in 1819.

Chaplain Ebenezer David (1740-1778) of Newport, Rhode Island had a brief but interesting military chaplain experience. He was a graduate of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island in 1772. Throughout his youth and formative years, George Whitefield made numerous visits to Rhode Island. Ebenezer David was from the Seventh Day Baptist tradition. He was baptized as a 30-year-old man in 1770, while a student at Rhode Island College (later Brown University).²⁶ This was around the time Whitefield was traveling and preaching in the area. As a Baptist, David had differences with Whitefield over infant baptism, but David overlooked these differences based on their unified evangelical faith.

Ebenezer David was raised in a pro-Whitefield household. Before coming to Rhode Island, David was a student at the Philadelphia Academy in Pennsylvania, an institution that was founded with significant influence from Whitefield. He then attended Rhode Island College; another institution influenced by Whitefield. Ebenezer's father, Enoch Davis, so admired Whitefield that the two travelled together for weeks at a time doing itinerant evangelism.²⁷ While a student in Providence at Rhode Island College, David spent weekends and school vacations in Newport with members from the

²⁴ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 122.

²⁵ Joel T. Headley, *The Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, 93.

²⁶ James N. Arnold, *Rhode Island Vital Extracts, 1636-1899*, (Providence, RI: 1900), Vol. 7, 628.

²⁷ Ebenezer David, *A Rhode Island Chaplain in the Revolution: Letters of Ebenezer David to Nicholas Brown, 1775-1778*, (Providence, RI: The Rhode Island Society of the Cincinnati, 1949), xvi.

Seventh Day Baptist Church.²⁸ His graduation ceremony was in the nearby large Beneficent Congregational Church in Providence.²⁹ After he graduated college in 1772, David taught college preparatory courses and did itinerant preaching. The church licensed him to preach in 1773, after which he began an itinerant evangelistic ministry in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania.³⁰ Clearly the influence of George Whitefield was on this man. The Seventh Day Baptist Church in Newport ordained Ebenezer David in 1775. This was the oldest congregation of this denomination in America. David ministered in a meetinghouse constructed in 1729.³¹ Ebenezer David served the church in Newport for a brief time until he became a chaplain for the Continental Army under General George Washington.

The religious zeal of Rev. Ebenezer David easily transferred to the cause of religious and political freedom in the American Revolution. In 1776 he became a chaplain with the Ninth Continental Infantry. He then served from 1777-1778 with the Second Rhode Island Regiment. Poor health did not allow him to have an extended military chaplain career. Chaplain David was one of the first chaplains commissioned in the Continental Army. He served in the siege of Boston, in the New York campaign, and he wintered in 1777-1778 with General Washington and the freezing and starving troops at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Due to the poor treatment of the wounded, and the sicknesses and diseases in the camps, he thought he could help by transferring to be a medical officer.³² From his declining health, Chaplain David was discharged from the military in 1778, and he died shortly thereafter. This New Light civilian pastor volunteered to be a military chaplain, to protect and preserve what he saw as spiritual and civic freedoms in a newly forming nation.

²⁸ George Whitefield had a significant influence on Baptists throughout the American colonies. Baptists with a Reformed or Calvinistic theology readily embraced Whitefield, including the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Newport. See Charles K. Adams, *Universal Cyclopedia and Atlas*, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1903), 1:492. Michael A.G. Haykin, *George Whitefield*, (Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2014), 105-121.

²⁹ Rev. Joseph Snow, Jr. was minister at the Beneficent Congregational Church from 1743 to 1793. He was a firm Whitefield supporter.

³⁰ Ebenezer David, *A Rhode Island Chaplain in the Revolution*, xxi-xxii.

³¹ *History of Newport County, Rhode Island; from the year 1638 to the Year 1887*, (New York: L.E. Preston & Co., 1888), 440-441.

³² Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1978), 108, 119, 140, 155-156. Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 97, 154,

Rev. Timothy Dwight IV (1752-1817) was one of the fifty-one continental army chaplains we know of that resided in Connecticut. He was born on May 15, 1752, in Northampton, Massachusetts. His father was Timothy Dwight III, a successful merchant and farmer. His mother was Mary Edwards, the third daughter of pastor and theologian Rev. Jonathan Edwards. Their marriage occurred five months after Jonathan Edwards was forced out of his ministry at Northampton. Since Jonathan Edwards died in 1758, his grandson Timothy may have had only a few memories of his influential grandfather. As a child, Timothy learned all about his grandfather and his revivalist theology from his mother. Although she lived in Northampton all her life, and raised a large family in the town, Mary never forgave the townsfolk for dismissing her father from the church in Northampton.³³ Timothy Dwight was raised in a home where the memories of the Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield were appreciated. In 1740, Whitefield spent time in the Edwards home. Mary was six years old. On October 19, 1740, Whitefield wrote in his *Journal* that he was impressed with the orderly Edwards household, and with Mary and her siblings in their “Christian simplicity.”³⁴

After schooling at home, Timothy enrolled at Yale College, graduating in 1769, and stayed in New Haven as a grammar schoolteacher and then a rector at Yale College until 1777. After two decades of controversy, in 1764 George Whitefield and Yale College had reconciled their differences, and the itinerant evangelist was welcomed to preach that year at Yale.³⁵ As with his home, Timothy Dwight attended a college where the name of Whitefield was respected.

In the 1770s, while Dwight was teaching at Yale College, tensions between the American colonies and Great Britain turned to bloodshed. Dwight was licensed to preach in 1777, and shortly thereafter was appointed by the Continental Congress as a chaplain with Connecticut’s Continental Brigade. Chaplain Timothy Dwight served with distinction as his troops fought skirmishes and performed raids against the British in New York and

³³ Harry S. Stout, editor, “Dwight, Mary Edwards,” *The Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2017), 160.

³⁴ George Whitefield, *Journals of George Whitefield*, (1756: reprinted by Banner of Truth Trust, Carlisle, PA, 1985), 477.

³⁵ Roberta B. Mouheb, *Yale Under God: Roots and Fruits*, (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2012), 58. Arnold Dallimore, *George Whitefield: The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth Century Revival*, (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 2:433.

Connecticut. Dwight was a confidant of General George Washington, and his chaplain ministries during the war were lauded.³⁶

Dwight was stationed at West Point, New York when news of the death of his father forced him to resign his chaplaincy and return home. While in the army, Chaplain Dwight preached as a passionate, biblical speaker that caught the attention of men of all ranks. George Whitefield served as a model of ministry for Timothy Dwight, as both were like-minded Calvinists that preached election, while being aggressively evangelistic.³⁷ Others have seen the ministry of Timothy Dwight as a reflection of his grandfather, Jonathan Edwards, and George Whitefield.³⁸ An unnamed colonial army general said of Dwight and his knowledge of the Bible, “Well, there is everything in that book, and Dwight knows just where to lay his finger on it.”³⁹

After the war, men like Timothy Dwight understood that just as God had granted them freedom in Christ, so God was the granter of victory in the war of independence. He applied his revivalist faith to help build the fledgling nation.⁴⁰ His first post-war experiences were as a pastor of churches in Massachusetts and Connecticut. In 1795, he was appointed president of Yale College. Soon after, a series of extended revivals swept through the campus and the surrounding community. Hundreds of students were affected. Extended church meetings were held, prayer groups were formed, and many repented and made professions of faith. President Timothy Dwight encouraged and led these revival meetings at Yale. It appeared that the Great Awakening under Whitefield from the 1740s had returned to campus. Dwight built upon the reputation and methods of Whitefield in the Yale revivals.⁴¹ Another author stated that George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and Timothy Dwight were all from “The Revivalist School” of Calvinistic

³⁶ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 176, 205.

³⁷ G. Wright Doyle, *Christianity in America: Triumph and Tragedy*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2013), 165.

³⁸ Alice B. Kehoe, *Militant Christianity: An Anthropological History*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Publishers, 2012), 61.

³⁹ Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 64.

⁴⁰ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 215.

⁴¹ Chauncey A. Goodrich, “A History of Revivals of Religion at Yale College from its Commencement to the Present Time,” *American Quarterly Register*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (1838), 289-310.

Puritans of like faith and practice.⁴² From his childhood, through his army chaplaincy, to his post-war ministries in churches and at Yale College, Timothy Dwight admired and respected the legacy of George Whitefield. Not one to separate the secular from the sacred, Dwight saw his preaching in spiritual matters as a key to the development of the new nation.

Rev. Samuel Bird (1724-1784) was a student at Harvard College when George Whitefield first travelled through Massachusetts in 1740. We do not know if Bird was already an advocate of the Great Awakening before his college days. But all Massachusetts was disturbed by the itinerant preaching of Whitefield. Harvard College was shaken with revival. One of those students supporting Whitefield and the revival at Harvard was Samuel Bird.

Born in Dorchester, Massachusetts in 1724, Samuel Bird was raised in a comfortable middle class home, where his father owned a wharf and was at various times employed as a constable, a selectman, and an assessor. Bird enrolled at the nearby Harvard College, perhaps in preparation for the ministry. He was intended to graduate with the class of 1744, but he did not graduate. Bird was expelled from Harvard because of his pro-Whitefield ideas and his New Light theology.⁴³ For a few years, Bird was a minor player in the ecclesiastical disputes between New Lights and Old Lights that overtook New England. We do not know for how long Samuel Bird preached in the Nashua, New Hampshire/Dunstable, Massachusetts area before he was called to be the minister of a local Congregational church in 1747. Of his time in Nashua/Dunstable it was stated, "He was an ardent follower of Whitefield, and hence was called one of the New Lights."⁴⁴

In 1751, Bird departed for a ministry in New Haven, Connecticut. He married a Connecticut woman and began his ministry at a recently formed congregation, what was later called the North Church in New Haven. Samuel Bird served this growing congregation for sixteen years, then resigned due to poor health.⁴⁵ Bird and his wife and children stayed in New Haven as he did

⁴² Lars P. Qualben, *A History of the Christian Church*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2008), 471.

⁴³ "Rev. Samuel Bird," <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/8940406/samuel-bird>. For a broader view of Harvard and the Great Awakening, see George J. Gatgounis, "How did Harvard College Respond to the Great Awakening?" *The Christian Observer*, March 2, 2014, <https://christianobserver.org/how-did-harvard-college-respond-to-the-great-awakening/>.

⁴⁴ John H. Goodale, *History of Hillsborough, New Hampshire*, (Philadelphia, PA: J.W. Lewis & Company, 1885), http://www.nh.searchroots.com/documents/Hillsborough/History_Nashua_NH_7.txt.

⁴⁵ *Hartford Courant*, January 18, 1768, 3.

part-time political⁴⁶ and ministerial work until the beginning of the Revolutionary War, when he volunteered to be an army chaplain. The official history of the North Church states,

Rev. Samuel Bird, came from Dunstable, Mass., and was installed October 15, 1751... Mr. Bird was twenty-seven years of age at the time of his settlement, very evangelical, impressive, popular, and successful. During the sixteen years of his ministry the church became the largest in the town, containing 302 members... But Mr. Bird's health failing, he resigned, and afterward became a chaplain in the Revolutionary army.⁴⁷

The pro-Whitefield, revivalist ministry of Samuel Bird transferred from his civilian church ministries to his ministries as a colonial army chaplain. He was assigned to the 7th Connecticut Provincial Regiment from April to December 1775.⁴⁸ The regiment was raised from Fairfield, Litchfield, and New Haven counties.

Bird was at the siege of Boston, when British troops were surrounded by colonial forces and abandoned the city.⁴⁹ In August 1775, the Regiment was designated "The 39th Regiment of Foot." During Samuel Bird's time as chaplain, the 7th Connecticut Regiment served mostly in Connecticut, securing port facilities, patrolling the coast, guarding bridges, and providing supplies for the continental army. On September 14, the regiment was ordered to Boston. His nine months as an army chaplain expired upon completion of his term of service.

Samuel Bird was one of many evangelical, New Light ministers who left civilian occupations to serve in the continental army as chaplains. The Whitefield-driven Great Awakening of the 1740s had a lifelong influence on a generation of ministers like Samuel Bird. When the Revolutionary War came in the 1770s, the religious freedoms from the awakening transformed for many into a civil and political force for independence.

Rev. John Cleveland (1722-1799) was a New Light leader born out of the Great Awakening of the early 1740s. He came to prominence from his conflict with the administration of Yale College, where he was a student.

⁴⁶ Rev. Samuel Bird represented the First Parish in New Haven for the 1774 Connecticut Congress. See *Hartford Courant*, November 21, 1774, 2.

⁴⁷ *Manual of the North Church in New Haven, May 1742 – May 1867*, (New Haven, CT: E. Hayes, Printer, 1867), v.

⁴⁸ Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 152.

⁴⁹ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 114.

Cleveland heard George Whitefield preach at Yale and was fully supportive. After refusing to repent for attending a New Light meeting, Cleveland was expelled from the college in 1745. Thereafter, he served at a newly established Separatist church in the maritime Chebacco community of Ipswich, Massachusetts, also known as the Fourth Church in Ipswich.⁵⁰ He was ordained there in 1747, and except for his military service as an army chaplain, he ministered in the Ipswich area until his death in 1799.

John Cleveland successfully served as a pro-Whitefield, New Light pastor in the riverfront Chebacco-Ipswich shipbuilding community. Under Cleveland's ministry, the church had several periods of revival, as hundreds in and around the community experienced religious conversion. From the 1740s to 1770, Whitefield's itinerant preaching brought him in and around John Cleveland's home and parish ministry. Whitefield was frequently a guest in the Cleveland home. For example, Mary Cleveland, wife of Rev. John Cleveland, had fond recollections of Whitefield's visit in her home in 1754. Her journal has random entries, several years apart. Her recorded comments reveal the most important events of her life. On October 28, 1754, she recorded,

The Rev. Mr. Whitefield came to our house and preached the next morning in Mr. Cleveland's meeting house and went to (the common) and preached two times and came and lodged with us that night. I think it is a great honor to have his company.⁵¹

For ministers like John Cleveland, freedom in Christ meant direct access to God without ecclesiastical or political interference. In his world, God was the center of everything. Through the new birth, a person had religious autonomy. In a world where there was a blending of the sacred and the secular, ecclesiastical sovereignty meant spiritual and practical independence. Church and politics were not separate, and religious self-reliance against the Church of England easily transferred to political antagonism against intrusive and unfair British laws. In the fall of 1768, Rev. John Cleveland of Chebacco parish wrote his first political essay for the newly founded *Essex Gazette*

⁵⁰ "John Cleveland Papers," *Congregational Library and Archives*, <https://www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/series2/ClevelandJohnPapers>. There is some variation in the spelling of the name as Cleveland or Cleaveland.

⁵¹ "Journal of Mary Cleveland," *John Cleveland Papers*, (Salem, MA: Peabody Essex Institute Historical Folders).

newspaper. His theme was in protest of increasing taxation without proper legal representation from the colonists. Cleveland stated,

Is it not the birthright of Englishmen to be free? Can they be free if they are taxed, to raise a revenue, without their consent? ... Is there here not a such thing belonging to Englishmen as property? Can one man dispose of the property of another without his consent and not be guilty of robbery?⁵²

John Cleveland is a clear example of a New Light devotee of Whitefield who was an ardent patriot in the cause of independence from Great Britain. From rural Chebacco, Cleveland wrote numerous articles and preached many sermons on Christian religious and civil liberty before serving as a chaplain in the War of Independence. In an open letter published in the *Essex Gazette*, Cleveland asked, shortly after the battles of Lexington and Concord,

Is the time come, the fatal era commenced, for you to be deemed rebels, by the Parliament of Great Britain? Rebels! Wherein? Why, for asserting that the rights of men, the rights of an Englishman belong to us... O my dear New England, hear thou the alarm of war! The call of Heaven is to arms! To arms... Behold what all New England must expect to feel, if we don't cut off and make an end of those British sons of violence, and of every base Tory among us...

We are, my brethren, in a good cause; and if God be for us, we need not fear what man can do... O thou righteous judge of all the earth, awake for our help. Amen and amen.⁵³

John Cleveland witnessed men from his Chebacco New Light assembly enthusiastically enlist in the military in the war for liberty. Under rising military and political pressure from Great Britain, Cleveland reminded his readers in the *Essex Gazette* of the right to fight to maintain the Puritan ideals of New England's founding fathers.

What shall we do to save ourselves from the distresses brought upon us by an untoward generation? I answer, be not cast down, O America! Be not discouraged, O Boston!... Let all ranks and orders of men reform from every immorality and vicious practice, and pray to the God of

⁵² Christopher M. Jedry, *The World of John Cleveland: Family and Community in Eighteenth Century New England*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979), 131-132.

⁵³ John Cleveland, "To the Inhabitants of New England," *Essex Gazette*, April 18 and 25, 1775.

Heaven and Earth, the preserver of men... to break every weapon formed and forming against us, to maintain our rights and privileges, civil and religious; and above all things, to make us a holy and truly virtuous people, and to preserve us pure from the growing pollutions in the world.⁵⁴

In 1775, John Cleveland applied his New Light theology of freedom and independence to military service. Previously, in the 1750s, he served in the French and Indian War as a colonial militia chaplain. Twenty years later, in the Revolutionary War, so the story goes, “He preached all the young men among his people into the army and then went himself, taking his four sons with him.”⁵⁵

During the Revolutionary War, John Cleveland’s experiences as a militia chaplain were varied. While still at his civilian church, he wrote a charter for the local militia company, and joined it. In 1775, when news of bloodshed from the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord reached Ipswich, Rev. Cleveland and the local militia quickly rode several hours on horseback to the scene, but arrived too late. By the summer of 1776, almost three-fourths of the military-age men in Chebacco-Ipswich were part of the war effort. Cleveland was an army chaplain to men who mostly came from his own parish. This militia company saw action at the Battle of Bunker Hill, with one man wounded and one man killed. In the fall of 1776, Cleveland was again serving as a colonial army chaplain with a local Essex County regiment. They served under General George Washington in Long Island and White Plains, New York against British General Burgoyne’s forces. As the theater of war shifted south, Cleveland returned to his civilian ministry.⁵⁶

While in the New York area in 1775, Chaplain John Cleveland was assigned to the Massachusetts 17th Infantry Regiment. In the fall of 1776, he served with Colonel Cogswell’s Essex Country Regiment. In his interaction with colonial army troops, Chaplain Cleveland disliked their “profane swearing...gaming, robbery, and thievery.”⁵⁷ As a chaplain, Cleveland preached to the troops, counselled, prayed with soldiers, ministered to the wounded and dying, buried the dead, and endured their hardships from life

⁵⁴ John Cleveland, *Essex Gazette*, May 31, 1774, 1.

⁵⁵ Christopher M. Jedrey, *The World of John Cleveland of Ipswich, Massachusetts*, 135.

⁵⁶ Kenneth Lawson, *A Historical Overview of the Militia Chaplaincy in Massachusetts*, (Milford, MA: Massachusetts Army National Guard, 1997), 7.

⁵⁷ Jack D. Crowder, *Chaplains of the Revolutionary War*, 43.

in the field. In true Whitefield fashion, Cleveland opposed the theology of Unitarianism that spread through the ranks, believing it to be contrary to the Bible.⁵⁸ And Chaplain Cleveland insisted that the sabbath be observed on Sundays, a habit that was widely accepted during the war.⁵⁹

CONCLUSION

There are dozens of examples of New England clergymen who supported Whitefield and fought for independence from Great Britain. Much more could be written.⁶⁰ Simply put, Whitefield's influence upon colonists in the Revolutionary war was profound.⁶¹ The religious culture in New England was more significant than in other of the American colonies, since many of the original settlers came to the New World from religious persecution.⁶² For them, religious and civil freedoms were one. Colonial New Englanders were for the most part a religious people, and George Whitefield reminded them of what he considered to be their glorious Puritan heritage. Political interference by Great Britain upon the American colonies was seen as an infringement upon their freedoms to worship and live as free citizens.

Throughout his incessant travels throughout the thirteen American colonies, George Whitefield and the Great Awakening unintentionally helped to create a new American nation. His preaching on the freedom to approach

⁵⁸ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 116-117.

⁵⁹ Parker C. Thompson, *The United States Army Chaplaincy*, 138.

⁶⁰ For example, Rev. David Avery of Norwich, Connecticut was converted under Whitefield's preaching in 1764, was educated in Connecticut, and served as a chaplain with Massachusetts and colonial army regiments. Rev. Ebenezer Cleveland was expelled from Yale College for his pro-Whitefield theology, and served as a chaplain with the Twenty-First Infantry Regiment at the Battle of Bunker Hill and in colonial army operations in New York and New Jersey. Rev. Manasseh Cutler of Ipswich, Massachusetts heard Whitefield preach several times and supported the itinerant minister. Cutler served as a colonial army chaplain in 1776 with a Massachusetts regiment, and with another regiment in 1778. Rev. Naphtali Daggett taught at Yale College, and welcomed Whitefield and the revival to campus in 1764. When the British invaded New Haven, Connecticut in 1779, Daggett served as a chaplain to the Yale student militia that fought the British. Rev. Benjamin Pomeroy was 71 years old when he served as a chaplain at the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. A generation earlier, Pomeroy signed the 1743 *Testimony* of New England clergymen in support of George Whitefield. Pomeroy again served as a colonial army chaplain in 1777. Dozens more New England clergymen could be added to this list of pro-Whitefield clergy who served as military chaplains in the Revolutionary War.

⁶¹ For a thorough study, see Cedric B. Cowing, *The Great Awakening and the American Revolution: Colonial Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, (Chicago, IL: Rand McNally & Company, 1971).

⁶² Joel T. Headley, *The Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, 16.

God without political or ecclesiastical permissions helped create a mindset of civil freedom away from Great Britain. After the Great Awakening, the established order of society was completely disrupted. It was during these revivals that the American colonists began to view themselves as capable of interpreting the way and will of God for themselves.⁶³ As previously stated, Thomas Kidd called Whitefield, “America’s Spiritual Founding Father.” Stephen Mansfield identified Whitefield as a “Forgotten Founding Father.” These assertions, though often neglected, are historically accurate.

Whitefield and the Great Awakening was a religious movement with significant civil and political implications. Here was the first unified, mass movement in America, creating a common, independent identity among themselves and against the ceremonies, liturgies, and political interferences from England. New Light preachers, and others, emphasized democratic ideas such as all people have equal standing in the sight of God and should not be ruled by political kings or religious bishops.⁶⁴ This was classic Whitefield preaching and theology. It was as if Whitefield and other New Light preachers weaved people from various religious denominations, and even some of the irreligious, into a spiritual body of independent, freedom-loving thinkers that would withstand a war with Great Britain.⁶⁵ After praising Whitefield and other New Light preachers, Mouheb succinctly stated, “The colonists were strengthened for the American Revolution by experiencing spiritual liberty in Christ which caused them to stand up for political liberty.”⁶⁶ It may be an overstatement to say that without the Great Awakening there would not have been an American Revolution. Yet the influence of the religious revival was certainly a significant contributing factor in raising troops and chaplains for the American colonial fight for freedom.⁶⁷

⁶³ Daniel N. Gullotta, “The Great Awakening and the American Revolution,” *Journal of the American Revolution*, <https://allthingsliberty.com/2016/08/great-awakening-american-revolution/>.

⁶⁴ William J. Bennett and John T.E. Cribb, *The American Patriot’s Almanac*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2008), 402.

⁶⁵ Roberta B. Mouheb, *Yale Under God*, 63. An example of an “irreligious” endorser of George Whitefield was Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia. Franklin never accepted Whitefield’s preaching on the new birth, but he did support Whitefield’s influence upon the fledgling nation. See Randy Peterson, *The Printer and the Preacher: Ben Franklin, George Whitefield, and the Friendship that Invented America*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Books, 2015).

⁶⁶ Roberta B. Mouheb, *Yale Under God*, 64.

⁶⁷ Daniel N. Gullotta, “The Great Awakening and the American Revolution,” 2-3.

CHAPLAIN WALTER COLTON AND THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH

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Except for the Civil War, no other event in nineteenth-century America so captivated the minds of the nation or caused such social upheaval as did the discovery of gold in California. Chaplains and other religious leaders have long proclaimed the biblical maxim that “the love of money is the root of all evil” (1Tim. 6:10). Yet, Navy chaplain Walter Colton may unintentionally have done more to promote this sin than to eradicate it. The California gold rush of the late 1840s and 1850s would have certainly occurred with or without Colton’s help, but his eyewitness accounts of the gold strike were among the first to be published in newspapers along the Eastern seaboard. His enticing and colorful reports ignited and fanned the flames of the gold fever that sent hundreds of thousands of men and women westward by land and by sea in hopes of finding gold.

The California coast had been a quiet haven and paradise for seafarers, receiving only a sporadic visitation and minimal presence from U.S. naval

vessels until the Mexican War erupted in May 1846. When war was declared, U.S. Navy ships, under command of Commodore Robert F. Stockton, sailed from Hawaii into the harbor of Monterey, California to assist naval forces already present under the command of Commodore John D. Sloat. Stockton's mission was to aid American settlers in the fight for independence from Mexico and to establish a United States military presence and government there. Serving as squadron chaplain aboard the United States Fleet (USF) vessel *Congress* was Walter Colton, a Congregational minister with more than fifteen years of naval service as a chaplain.

Walter Colton was a native of Vermont born on May 9, 1797, and raised in New England. He had graduated from Yale College in 1822 and Andover Theological Seminary in 1825. At that time both schools were part of the Second Great Awakening. He was working as a journalist in Washington, D.C., at the time of his appointment as a chaplain in 1831. An ardent social reformer and preacher who occasionally preached at a church attended by President Andrew Jackson, Colton was befriended by Jackson, who was drawn to Colton's preaching and personality. Colton had for years suffered from poor health, and Jackson believed sea duty and service as a chaplain might provide Colton both an opportunity for ministry and a healthful environment.¹ Even though Colton was opposed to some of Jackson's policies and wrote against them, the friendship endured, and Colton benefited from the appointment in the Navy by Jackson.

By the time Colton and the *Congress* rounded Cape Horn, sailed to Hawaii, and reached the waters off California, he had served aboard three ships and was, by any standard, an experienced and salty sailor. He had sailed extensively with the Navy in the Mediterranean and Caribbean Oceans, survived outbreaks of shipboard cholera and yellow fever, responded successfully to threats of both personal harm and court-martial, and repeatedly petitioned the secretary of the navy for improved living and working conditions for sailors.

Upon reaching Monterey in July 1846, Commodore Stockton, as the senior naval officer present, appointed Colton the *alcalde*, or chief civil magistrate of Monterey.² In addition to his responsibilities for maintaining civilian law and order in the newly occupied town, Colton was also required

¹ For an overview of Chaplain Walter Colton's naval career, see Clifford M. Drury, *The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy, 1778-1939*, (Department of the Navy, 1949). Colton is mentioned over thirty times in this text.

² Walter Colton, *Three Years in California* (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1852), 17.

to serve as a naval admiralty judge, overseeing the disposition of Mexican ships captured by the U.S. Navy as war prizes.

Colton vigorously carried out his administrative and judicial duties for more than a year and a half before the presence of large quantities of gold in California was realized. These civil endeavors earned Colton a future prominence and enduring legacy in California history, but it was the gold discovery that gave him a contemporary national audience.

When gold was discovered at Sutter's Fort along the American River in January 1848, it was initially viewed as a matter of importance only to the local population. However, as new finds continued it did not take long for the news to reach the small settlement at Monterey. By late spring 1848, news of the war, now distant for Californians, gave way to news of gold.

A prolific writer³ and experienced journalist, Colton quickly grasped the significance of the gold strike and the potential it held for national interests. On June 6, 1848, he dispatched a

rider to travel four hundred miles on a round-trip visit to the gold sites in order to provide a first-hand report of the finds. When the weary man galloped back into town two weeks later with samples of the ore, Colton described the hectic scene that ensued:

My messenger sent to the mines, has returned with specimens of the gold; he dismounted in a sea of upturned faces. As he drew forth the yellow lumps from his pockets, and passed them around among the eager crowd, the doubts, which had lingered till now, fled. ... The excitement produced was intense; and many were soon busy in their hasty preparations for a departure to the mines. ... All were off for the mines, some on horses, some on carts, and some on crutches, and one went on a litter. ... I have only a community of women left, and a gang of prisoners, with here and there a soldier, who will give his captain the slip at the first chance.⁴

Colton meticulously recorded in his journal much of the enthusiasm and the daily events that followed. He soon realized that not only his, but many

³ Books written by Walter Colton include *The Sea and the Sailor: Notes on France and Italy, and Other Literary Remains of Rev. Walter Colton* (1846); *Visit to Constantinople and Athens* (1849); *Three Years in California* (1850); *Land and Lee in the Bosphorus and Aegean* (1851); *Deck and Port: Or, Incidents of a Cruise in the United States Frigate Congress to California* (1860); and *Ship and Shore, in Madeira, Lisbon, and the Mediterranean* (1860).

⁴ Walter Colton, *Three Years in California*, 246-47.

American lives were going to be changed by the precious metal. Colton wrote:

The gold fever has reached every servant in Monterey; none are to be trusted in their engagement beyond a week, and as for compulsion, it is like trying to drive fish into a net with the ocean before them...These gold mines are going to upset all the domestic arrangements of society, turning the head to the tail, and the tail to the head.⁵

Civilians were not the only ones moving *en masse* to the gold fields. Soldiers and sailors also headed inland, quite a few of them deserting in the process. By the fall of 1848 there were serious morale and personnel problems throughout the naval vessels anchored offshore. By November 1848 the 74-gun ship-of-the-line USS *Ohio* was short one hundred and fifty men. The sloops USS *Dale*, USS *Lexington*, and USS *Warren*, and the supply ship USS *Southampton* were experiencing similar difficulties. Colton wrote in his journal of these incidents: "Another bag of gold came from the mines, and another spasm in the community. ...Three seamen ran from the *Warren*, forfeiting their four years' pay; and a whole platoon of soldiers from the fort left only their colors behind."⁶

Things were indeed bad aboard the *Warren*. In November 1836, Acting Master of the ship William H. Montgomery departed the ship for Sutter's Fort with \$900.00 to pay bills for Navy supplies. The small launch and its crew were never seen again, and it was later learned that Montgomery and the officer's in the launch had been murdered by the launch crew. Their throats were cut, and bodies thrown overboard. The crew divided the money and deserted the *Warren*, going their separate ways.

Having verified the news of the gold strike and having held the precious metal in his own hands, Colton began to write accounts of the gold finds for publication and dissemination back in the United States. It was these newspaper reports that eager readers and financial dreamers pored over in the pages of the *New York Journal of Commerce* and the *Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette*.

Throughout the fall and winter months of 1848-49, these papers published letters written by Colton and delivered by courier Lieutenant Edward F. Beale to Secretary of the Navy John Mason, and Secretary of State

⁵ Ibid., 247-48.

⁶ Ibid., 248-49.

James Buchanan. To reach them, Beale traveled across two oceans and the Isthmus of Panama.

Little could Colton imagine the near hysteria and frenzy created by his and other reports. He boldly proclaimed to newspaper readers and fellow citizens:

The mineral wealth of California is being daily developed. . . . But a recent discovery of gold has thrown all others into the shade. The sands which border Feather River and the American Rock abound in particles of gold—resembling in shape snowflakes. . . . Your streams have a few minnows in them, and ours are paved with gold!⁷

Additionally, he announced:

The gold discoveries still continue—every day brings some new deposit to light. . . . At present the people are running over the country and picking it out of the earth here and there, just as a thousand hogs let loose in a forest, would root up ground nuts.⁸

With accounts such as these, many people could not resist the temptation of acquiring fast fortunes with apparently little effort.

Multiple thousands of would-be millionaires set off over both land and sea to seek their mineral fortunes. In the months ahead, as they began to converge on California, Colton confided in his journal that perhaps it was the merchants and not the miners who would realize real prosperity. Although prices soared, sometimes ten-fold for items such as lumber, flour, clothing, and coffee, most miners did not allow this to deter them in their quest for success. “Few can be persuaded to leave the expectations of the pick for the certainties of the pack the promises of the cradle for the fulfilments of the freighted wagon. . . . Though all else may end in failure, hope is not bankrupt here.”⁹

Late in the summer of 1848, Colton was able to relinquish his duties as alcalde and personally visit the gold sites. For seven-and-a-half weeks he travelled among and lived with the miners. While some of those he visited found fortunes, others found only failure. Unwilling to stay in one location and work a single site, they continually moved from place to place as word of

⁷ *North American and United States Gazette*, 14 September 1848.

⁸ *Journal of Commerce*, 15 September 1848.

⁹ Colton, *Three Years in California*, 313.

new finds trickled down the rivers and valleys. Always a keen observer of human nature, and as an eyewitness of the miners' excitement and greed, Colton noted:

Were an ounce of diamonds to fall into one of our hands every day, we should hold out the other just as eager and impatient as if its fellow were empty. Such is human nature; and a miserable thing it is, too, especially when touched with the gold fever.¹⁰

While many Americans were still making the westward trek, Colton foresaw the discouragement and failure that would be theirs. Hoping to mine from the ground handfuls of gold, they would, in disappointment and despair, bring forth only dirt and dust that would slip through their hands. Days and weeks of hard labor and sweat would, for many, bring tears of frustration rather than cries of joy. Some few would indeed acquire great wealth, but the majority would not. Those who were either in California at the time of the discovery or arrived soon after were the ones most likely to become rich; by 1850 the greatest fortunes had been made.

For most of Colton's readers the golden dream would tarnish. Colton realized, too late for many of his readers, the impact of his words, but he could do little to stem the human tide that was rolling into California. He wrote:

The indiscretion with which so many thousands are rushing to California will be a source of regret to them, and of sorrow to their friends. Not one in twenty will bring back a fortune, and not more than one in ten secure the means of defraying the expenses of his return. . . . Let me persuade those whom God has blessed with a faithful wife and interesting family, not to abandon these objects of affection for the gold mines of California.¹¹

Regrettably, many did not take his counsel.

Upon his return from the gold fields, Colton was once again reminded of the realities of human nature and the risks of life on the frontier. The miners were the first to come into the new land, but the gamblers, prostitutes, and grogshop owners quickly followed. Rum was soon selling for two dollars a shot and twenty dollars a quart. Colton's California Garden of Eden had

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 276.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 393, 395.

quickly deteriorated into a Sodom and Gomorrah. Sailors and miners alike soon fell prey to a variety of “landsharks.”

Having left Monterey in what he believed to be a state of law and order developed in part by his own judicial reign, Colton returned to find that he had been robbed. Among the items stolen were his walking cane and Bible. He wrote of their theft, “I forgive the burglary for the sake of the benefit.”¹²

In October 1848 Colton received orders instructing him to return to Washington, D.C., and to report personally to the secretary of the navy regarding his California experiences. He had hoped to return home onboard the mail steamship *California*. However, before arriving in Monterey, most of the crew jumped ship in San Francisco and deserted for the gold fields. Colton eventually secured passage onboard the steamship *Oregon* and left California on April 12, 1849, four years and four months after leaving home. In addition to his pastoral and judicial endeavors in California, Colton had many other successes. Among his accomplishments he left behind were the publication of the first newspaper in California, the establishment of the first public school, the building of a town hall, and the first trial by jury.¹³ He had, though, been away from his wife for more than four years and had yet to see his only son who was born several months after his departure from Philadelphia in 1845.

Colton arrived home in June 1849 and, after reporting on his service in California to Secretary of the Navy William B. Preston, continued his chaplaincy duties in Philadelphia until his death on January 22, 1851. He was a dominant figure in the early history of the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, but his influence upon many people came not from his preaching but from his pen. Shortly before his death Colton edited and published his journals from the California years. The volume entitled *Three Years in California* was readily accepted by readers and would-be travelers anxious to read firsthand accounts of the riches and glory of the California gold fields. The gold rush epitomized much of the national spirit of antebellum America. The westward trek, individuality, confidence, enthusiasm, and financial greed were all part of society and the gold mania.

The hoards from the California gold rush, often called Forty-Niners, were a diverse, flamboyant, and mostly optimistic crowd who owed much of their beginnings to Chaplain Walter Colton. But, while he wished they would

¹² *Ibid.*, 340.

¹³ This historic building, located in a plaza by the waterfront, is now called Colton Hall. Built in 1847-1849, the building is a fully restored historic site and is open to the public as a museum.

resonate hymns of praise and seek eternal rewards, they preferred earthly riches and confidently sang:

I'll scrape the mountains clean, my boys,
I'll drain the rivers dry,
A pocket full of rocks bring home,
So brother don't you cry.¹⁴

¹⁴ Donald Dale Jackson, *Gold Dust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 4. The song is "The California Emigrant," also known as "Oh, California!" and was sung to the 1848 Stephen Foster tune "Oh! Susannah."

To Spark an Interest in
GEORGE WASHINGTON'S SACRED FIRE

Peter A. Lillback

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How does the preacher prepare his exposition of God's Word in order to present a powerful pulpit? How can he study his text with accuracy and care, so that he preaches with precision as well as with power? He must saturate himself with the text and apply it to his own life before stepping into the pulpit. Rushing into exposition produces shallowness, irrelevance, and hypocrisy—neither accuracy nor power. Lack of preparation spiritually, mentally, and emotionally will produce inaccuracy.

I am grateful to introduce readers of this journal to the work I authored with Dr. Jerry Newcombe published in 2006 by Providence Forum Press. I thank Dr. Ken Lawson for his kind invitation to do so. *George Washington's Sacred Fire* was published after pursuing the question of Washington's faith as a personal interest from time to time for more than twenty years. Thanks to the late Dr. D. James Kennedy, and my co-author Dr. Newcombe who brought my research to Dr. Kennedy's attention, the book became possible. Dr. Kennedy ordered 19,000 copies—before the book was even written—to share with his international ministry. That invitation clearly helped me to find the time to turn my myriad notes and disorganized reflections into a coherent study! Amazingly, a few years later, while Glenn Beck was on his national Fox Channel daily program, he called on all his viewers to read the

book! After this happened, a second printing became necessary which was published in 2012. As a result, over a 100,000 are in print, and for a week or so, *George Washington's Sacred Fire* was the number one selling book on the Amazon Books list. I am grateful that after all these years, there is still interest in this more than 1,200-page self-published book.

Herein I intend to state the reasons for writing the book and pursuing its themes. I take the liberty to quote text from *Sacred Fire* without giving citations as these are readily available in the book both in print and in digital form. In 2021, the ministry that produced the book, The Providence Forum, gave itself entirely to Coral Ridge Media Ministries. Should there be a desire to secure a copy of *Sacred Fire*, there may still be copies available online with Amazon, and if not, contact D. James Kennedy Ministries in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

To summarize a tome of this magnitude in a journal article is a daunting challenge—especially for the author of both—as there is a biased belief that everything is important! So let me defend my necessarily selective yet lengthy summarization as a humble attempt to provide an introduction for its style and content, and to share some of the prominent peaks of the unique life and writings of America's “indispensable man” and “father of his country.”

SACRED FIRE

The book's title is taken from words of newly elected George Washington's First Inaugural Address delivered April 30, 1789. He declared, “The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.” The fire that had fueled the birth of America in the President's mind was not the wildfire of anarchy as in the French Revolution, not purloined fire seized by mankind through Promethean theft, but sacred or holy fire granted in trust to the American people.

PROVIDENCE

Thus, Washington's First Inaugural was greatly concerned with the divine providence that had so blessed the American experiment in republican government. He insists,

“...it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official Act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the Universe, who presides in the Councils of Nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States, a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes: and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success, the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either. No People can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the Affairs of men more than the People of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency.”

As the first president of the United States under the new constitution, he set a precedent for all who would come after him, namely, to turn Americans' attention to the truth of divine providence. For examples of these, see my small booklet published in 2000 entitled, *Freedom's Holy Light*.

The doctrine of providence was the key theological conception of Washington. In his writings he appeals to providence over 270 times.

General Washington once said of himself that he could become, should time and circumstances permit, “a preacher” of Providence. He made this pronouncement based on the fact he had so often witnessed what he believed to be the Almighty intervening on behalf of the American cause. After several years of battle, the most powerful army in the world could not subdue a rag-tag assembly of farmers. So awestruck was Washington by God's intervention that he said that an American who would not acknowledge God's help to the American cause was “worse than an infidel.” An infidel, by the way, was a synonym for a Deist in Washington's day.

These points, and more, Washington made in a private letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, August 20, 1778: “It is not a little pleasing, nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years Maneuvering and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation both Armies are brought back to the very point they set out from and, that that, which was the offending party in the beginning is now reduced to the use of the spade and pick axe for defense. The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough

to acknowledge his obligations, but it will be time enough for me to turn preacher, when my present appointment ceases; and therefore, I shall add no more on the Doctrine of Providence...¹

But Washington added more on this doctrine when he spoke at his First Inaugural and then continued as a preacher of providence at his First Presidential Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1789: “It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the Providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.”

WHY WAS GEORGE WASHINGTON'S SACRED FIRE WRITTEN?

Sacred Fire was written due to the controversy raised by scholars who have claimed that Washington was a Deist. Consider the juxtaposition of these two quotes, two hundred years apart: “Broadly speaking, of course, Washington can be classified as a Deist.” Paul F. Boller, Jr. (1963), versus the traditional claim that Washington saw himself as a Christian: “On my honor and the faith of a Christian...” George Washington, (1763).

To understand the importance of this question, we need to distinguish the term deist from theist. A theist believes in a personal God who not only created but is present in human history through providence. By providence, the Almighty is governing, sustaining, and directing His creation. He has revealed Himself in the Holy Scriptures, and hears prayers, seeks worship, calls ministers, who has and can perform miracles, and for Christian Theists, has visited our world in the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. A Deist, however, merely believes in a divine first cause of creation, construing God as an absentee landlord of creation. He is a clockmaker who wound up the creation and lets it run out on its own without ever engaging it. Thus, Deists reject providence, divine revelation, the value of prayer, the need for worship, the role of ministers, the possibility of miracles and the deity of Jesus. The question, then, is whether George Washington was a Christian or an unbeliever.

Sacred Fire demonstrates from Washington's own words in his historical context, that he averred to the essence of the Christian faith, including providence, prayer, ministers, biblical revelation, and the divinity of Christ. These were consistent with his low-church colonial Anglicanism and post-revolution Virginian Episcopalianism.

¹ Peter A. Lillback, *George Washington's Sacred Fire*, 579.

THE SUMMARY OF THE CONTROVERSY: WAS WASHINGTON A DEIST OR A THEIST, A BELIEVER, OR AN UNBELIEVER?

George Washington has been described by recent authors as “a lukewarm Episcopalian,” a “warm Deist,” “not a deeply religious man,” “not particularly ardent in his faith,” “one who avoided as was the Deist custom, the word ‘God.’” No wonder Professor Paul Boller wrote, “Broadly speaking, of course, Washington can be classified as a Deist.” Yet paradoxically, this was the man who stood trembling before his new nation to give his First Inaugural Address and spoke of “the sacred fire of liberty.” This was not a secular fire. It was a flame fueled by the holy.

Surprising perhaps, but as we will see, Washington’s description of himself repeatedly used the words “ardent,” “fervent,” “pious,” and “devout.” There are over one hundred different prayers composed and written by Washington in his own hand, with his own words, in his writings. His passions flared in a letter, when his church vestry considered not honoring his purchase of a family pew in his local church. He described himself as one of the deepest men of faith of his day when he confessed to a clergyman, “No Man has a more perfect Reliance on the alwise (sic), and powerful dispensations of the Supreme Being than I have nor thinks his aid more necessary.”

Rather than avoid the word “God,” on the very first national Thanksgiving under the U.S. Constitution, he said, “It is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor.” Although he never once used the word “Deist” in his voluminous writings, he often mentioned religion, Christianity, and the Gospel. He spoke of Christ as “the divine Author of our blessed religion.” He encouraged missionaries who were seeking to “Christianize” the “aboriginals.” He took an oath in a private letter, “on my honor and the faith of a Christian.” He wrote of “the blessed religion revealed in the Word of God.” He encouraged seekers to learn “the religion of Jesus Christ.” He even said to his soldiers, “To the distinguished Character of Patriot, it should be our highest Glory to add the more distinguished Character of Christian.” Not bad for a “lukewarm” Episcopalian!

George Washington is known by Americans as the founding father of our nation. However, there has been great confusion and debate about his faith. The historic view was that he was a Christian. The consensus of scholars that has developed since the bicentennial of Washington’s birth in 1932 is that he

was a Deist, that is, one who believes in a very remote and impersonal God.

...

Who is correct in their assessment of Washington—the recent historians of Washington or Washington himself? We believe this is a fair question. Our purpose is to address the question of Washington’s religion and to answer it in a definitive way, using Washington’s own words. Was he a Christian or a Deist? ...

Everybody wants to claim Washington for their own. The Christians want to make him a devout evangelical. The skeptics want to make him a skeptic. We believe the truth, however, is that he was an 18th century Anglican. He was an orthodox, Trinity-affirming believer in Jesus Christ, who also affirmed the historic Christian Gospel of a Savior who died for sinners and was raised to life. But then again, we also believe it would not be accurate to call him an “evangelical” (by modern standards of the word).

...The importance of this study is more than historical. Establishing that George Washington was a Christian helps to substantiate the critical role that Christians and Christian principles played in the founding of our nation. This, in turn, encourages a careful reappraisal of our history and founding documents. A nation that forgets its past does not know where it is or where it is headed. We believe such a study would also empower, enable, and defend the presence of a strong Judeo-Christian worldview in the ongoing development of our state and national governments and courts. We set out to provide the necessary foundation for an honest assessment of the faith and values of our founders and the government they instituted.”²

ENGAGING THE EVIDENCE THAT GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS A DEIST AND NOT A CHRISTIAN

The evidence for a Deist Washington is examined in Chapter 3 that addresses, “Did Washington Avoid the Name of Jesus Christ? Addressing a Fundamental Argument”. Part VI, chapters 23 to 27 also engage the question, “George Washington the Deist?”. Two quotes set out the issue here:

“...there is no direct allusion to Christ, and the word Christ has been found in none of Washington’s almost countless autographs.” Rupert Hughes, (1926).

² Ibid, 25-27.

“You do well to wish to learn our arts and ways of life, and above all, the religion of Jesus Christ. These will make you a greater and happier people than you are.” George Washington, (1779).

Although Paul Boller, one of the leading advocates of Washington the Deist thesis, “entirely ignores them, there are numerous Gospel phrases in Washington’s writings from the teachings of Jesus, the one whom Washington publicly called “the Divine Author of our Blessed Religion.” Examples of Washington’s extensive references and allusions to the teachings of Jesus include: duties to God and man (the two great commandments, Matthew 22:36-40), eternal rules (God’s Law, Matthew 5:17-19), doing as one would be done by (the Golden Rule, Matthew 7:12), the will of God (Matthew 6:10), daily bread (Matthew 6:11), deliver us from evil (Matthew 6:13), Benign Parent (Good Father, Matthew 7:11), enlightening sounds of the Gospel (Luke 2:10-15; Mark 1:14-15), propagating the Gospel (Matthew 28:19-20), professors [i.e. believers] of Christianity (John 3:16), narrow path (Matthew 7:13), thorny path (Matthew 13:3-7), paths of life (Matthew 7:14), way of life (John 14:6), road to Heaven (John 14:5-7), pour out His Holy Spirit (John 15:26). I’ll stop with these, but there are thirty more examples (pp. 58-59.)

As we conclude this ... summary of Washington’s understanding of Jesus’ teachings in the Gospels, we should recognize that his biblical literacy encompasses the entire Bible, not just the Gospel teachings presented here. ... it appears that Washington knew his Bible far better than Paul Boller knew Washington’s use of the Bible, given that Boller claimed that Washington never referred to the Bible except “for whimsy.” ... Washington’s written words about Jesus, his reverential use of his name and titles of honor, as well as careful use of his teaching clearly distance Washington from any legitimate possibility of identifying him as a Deist.... Washington reflected these commitments when he wrote in 1779, “You do well to wish to learn our arts and ways of life, and above all, the religion of Jesus Christ. These will make you a greater and happier people than you are.”³

In *Sacred Fire*, four chapters address questions associated with Deism and are claimed to shape Washington’s faith and life. Chapter 24, “George Washington and Religious Liberty: A Christian or Deist Idea?”, shows that the American concept of religious liberty is the fruit of Christian thinkers. Washington’s commitment to religious liberty is furthered in part by his life-

³ Ibid, 59-60.

time favorite Bible verse, Micah 4:4 interpreted in a post-millennial Puritan fashion. He refers to the delayed promised millennium that he awaits on at least two occasions. Quoted more than any other biblical verse, he writes, “Every man shall sit under his vine and fig tree and there will be none to make them afraid.” Washington typically applies this to Mount Vernon, but also to the American nation viewed as an asylum for the earth’s persecuted, and in a letter to a Jewish congregation, to America as a haven of rest for “the stock of Abraham.” In this regard, see another small book I’ve written entitled, *George Washington and Israel* (Providence Forum Press, 2012).

Chapter 25, “George Washington, Member of the Masonic Order” shows the surprising fact that in Washington’s day, being a Mason was an argument for being a Christian rather than a Deist. This is foreign today, but sermons, correspondence, and evidence from Christian leaders reveal that this was true. One bylaw quoted in one of the many sermons Washington collected, stated that “no stupid deist or atheist” could be a member. “Christian Masons” seems an oxymoron today. But Washington explained he had never met a member of the “nefarious illuminati” in a masonic fraternity he had attended.

Chapter 26 is entitled, “More Objections to Washington the Christian: Slaves, Slander, Passion, and Tripoli.” A key point here is that Washington is the only founder to free his slaves by his will and provide for them. As a Virginian, he was guilty of this ancient sin against neighbor. Had all other slave-owners followed this example, there would likely not have been a civil war. Slandorous accusations and passionate outbursts often capture the limelight in our era. The evidence here is fragile, and if true, reminds us of gospel grace addresses—sinners are forgiven. All Christians sin, including George Washington. History gives us little evidence to develop such claims after nearly 300 years. The question of the Treaty with Tripoli is fascinating and confusing due to the incomplete record. While seemingly relevant, it is historically misplaced for our purposes as it was part of the Adams’ administration, not Washington’s. The chapter, however, deals with the data surrounding the Treaty of Tripoli.

Chapter 27, “Minds of Peculiar Structure: George Washington Vs. Deism”, shows that Washington refers to Deists in a non-accepting manner, as revealed by this euphemism from his Farewell Address. He critiqued Deists in writing, refused as President to fellowship with Thomas Paine, erstwhile patriot hero turned Deist, and affirmed a pastor’s published sermon criticizing Deism in a letter sent to the pastor.

Washington never claimed to be a Deist and all the evidence marshaled to show he was, falls when measured by facts. More compelling, however, is the

substantial evidence from his life and writings where he manifests and affirms his Christian faith.

THE EVIDENCE THAT GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS A CHRISTIAN

This is the major concern of *Sacred Fire*. Part II, “The Historical Background of George Washington”, chapters 4-5 shows that his heritage was permeated with Christian faith. Chapter 4, “Washington’s Virginia and The Anglican Mission to the Indians” explains how Christian missions and faith were essential components to the Virginia colony. Chapter 5, “George Washington’s Virginian Ancestors” traces his family tree back through overt believers including clergy.

Part III summarizes the Life of George Washington consistent with his Christian familial heritage. Chapter 6 explores, “The Childhood of George Washington” and chapter 7 reviews “The Christian Education of George Washington” that included Christian teachers and ministers that taught him at school and at home.

The remaining chapters, 8-12 in Part III, explain how his life and character coalesce to reflect his Christian legacy. Chapter 8, reviews “The Personality of George Washington” developing his Christian character. Chapter 9, “George Washington the Soldier”, Chapter 10, “George Washington on Character and Honor”, Chapter 11, “The Sacred Fire of Liberty: Was George Washington a Godly Leader?” and Chapter 12, “George Washington’s Family Life” harmonize with Christian faith.

There is a striking statement by Washington from this era as a soldier that reveals his Christian commitment. At the conclusion of the severe hardships of Valley Forge, Washington declared what he believed to be the highest glory for his soldiers. It had to do with character. But it was not just the character of a patriot. That was a high glory to be sure, but not the highest. The highest glory was having the character of a Christian: “While we are zealously performing the duties of good Citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of Religion. To the distinguished Character of Patriot, it should be our highest Glory to add the more distinguished Character of Christian.” For Washington the “road to glory” led to the “Character of Christian.” (pp. 205ff.)

Chapter 11 asks “Was George Washington a Godly Leader?” The most pointed evidence appears in his most public Circular letter to the newly independent governors of the States on June 8, 1783. He wrote this letter and

signed it personally thirteen times as the victorious general: “I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection, ... and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all, to do Justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that Charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the Characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed Religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy Nation.”

An interesting aspect of this letter is that Micah 6:8, to which Washington is alluding, says “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.” But Washington turns Micah’s phrase “walk humbly with your God” into a reference to Jesus Christ. By implication, he was equating Jesus with God.... Washington is making a profound point that modern Americans would do well to heed: unless we imitate Jesus Christ in his commitment and example with respect to his love (charity), humility, and peace (pacific temper of mind), we cannot hope to be a happy nation.

Chapter 12 discusses Washington’s family and its relationship with his Christian testimony. Did George Washington Parke Custis believe that his grandfather was a Christian? The grandson wrote, “General Washington was always a strict and decorous observer of the Sabbath. He invariably attended divine service once a day, when within reach of a place of worship. His respect for the clergy, as a body, was shown by public entertainments to them....On Sunday no visitors were admitted to the president’s house, save the immediate relatives of the family, with only one exception: Mr. Speaker Trumbull, since governor of Connecticut, and who had been confidential secretary to the chief in the War of the Revolution, was in the habit of spending an hour with the president, on Sunday evenings. Trumbull practiced the lesson of punctuality, ... with such accuracy, that the porter, by consulting his clock, could tell when to stand ready to open to the Speaker’s Bell, as it was called in the family, from the circumstance of no hand other than the speaker’s touching the bell on the evenings of the Sabbath.” He adds, “On Sundays, unless the weather was uncommonly severe, the President and Mrs. Washington attended divine service at Christ church; and in the evenings, the President read to Mrs. Washington, in her chamber, a sermon, or some portion from the sacred writings.”

Washington and his granddaughter, Nelly Custis, were very close. Nellie Custis’ testimony to Washington’s Christianity, given her personal relationship with her parents George and Martha Washington, is conclusive evidence that Washington was not a Deist. She wrote, “He was a silent,

thoughtful man. He spoke little generally; never of himself. ... I was, probably, one of the last persons on earth to whom he would have addressed serious conversation, particularly when he knew that I had the most perfect model of female excellence ever with me as my monitress, who acted the part of a tender and devoted parent.... She never omitted her private devotions, or her public duties; she and her husband were so perfectly united and happy that he must have been a Christian. She had no doubts, or fears for him. After forty years of devoted affection and uninterrupted happiness, she resigned him without a murmur into the arms of his Saviour and his God, with the assured hope of eternal felicity. Is it necessary that anyone should certify, "General Washington avowed himself to me a believer in Christianity"? As well may we question his patriotism, his heroic, disinterested devotion to his country. His mottoes were, "Deeds, Not Words"; and "For God and My Country." With sentiments of esteem, I am, Nelly Custis."

Washington's grandchildren's testimonies to his Christianity, argue for the impossibility of conceiving of Washington as a Deist.

Part IV engages "George Washington the Churchman". An authentic Christian is concerned to be in communion with and in support of the church. Chapters 13-19 demonstrate that Washington was a practicing man of faith who highly valued the Church.

Chapter 13, "George Washington: The Parishioner" catalogues that he rented a pew, paid for the pastor's salary in tobacco tithes, purchased communion wine and helped buy the organ as well as provide the survey for the best location for the church. On Sundays, he and his wife rode some nine miles each way in an unheated carriage to an unheated church.

Chapter 14, "George Washington: The Vestryman" documents that he led both as a vestryman and a church warden, often traveling long distances through inclement weather to fulfill his duties.

Chapter 15, "George Washington: The Low Churchman" shows that his theological affirmations were simple and consistent with the low church of England that predominated in Virginia which was generally uncomfortable with a bishop.

Chapter 16, "George Washington and the Bible" demonstrates that his views of the Bible could not have been held by a Deist. George Washington, though not a theologian, had a doctrine of scripture. This is important since, by definition, a Deist denied the Christian doctrine of written revelation. God was a distant and remote Creator and had never communicated with his

creation. In Deism, there was no doctrine of scripture, because there was no scripture.

Yet Washington referred to the Bible in a variety of ways that reflected Christian teaching on the Scripture. Washington's theology of Scripture included such concepts as Scripture, the Word of God, revealed religion, benign light of revelation, heaven-ordained rules, the precepts of heaven, Holy Writ. We also find phrases in Washington's writings such as: "as the Scripture expresses it," "strictly warranted by the scriptures," "the wonders recorded in Holy Writ," and "strong as proof of Holy Writ in confirmation of it." These titles reflected his high doctrine of scripture. Consider a few examples.

- He referred to both Christianity and the Bible, as we would expect from a Christian, calling the scriptures the Word of God. Note the high view of the Bible in his astute point about how man's sinfulness can impact both church and government: "The blessed Religion revealed in the word of God will remain an eternal and awful monument to prove that the best Institutions may be abused by human depravity; and that they may even, in some instances be made subservient to the vilest of purposes."
- In his First Inaugural Address (1789), he said this: "We ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained." To his mostly Christian hearers that meant the rules found in the Bible. The best summary of them can be found in the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments—from Exodus 20—were read aloud, as a congregation from the colonial churches' plaques mounted on church walls, called a *rerodos*.
- In a letter to Marquis de Chastellux, April 25[-May 1], 1788, Washington indirectly called the Bible "revealed religion." He wrote: "For certainly it is more consonant to all the principles of reason and religion (natural and revealed) to replenish the earth with inhabitants, rather than to depopulate it by killing those already in existence..."
- In his Circular to the States (June 8, 1783), as commander in chief, the general contrasted superstition with revealed religion. He wrote: "Here [in the United States], [the citizens] are not only surrounded with everything which can contribute to the completion of private and domestic enjoyment, but Heaven has crowned all its other blessings, by

giving a fairer opportunity for political happiness, than any other Nation has ever been favored with. ... and above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation, have had ameliorating influence on mankind and increased the blessings of Society.”

Although Washington operated only in the English Bible, he read a portion of the English translation of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament). He had a Latin Bible in his library from school days, and had his son trained by an Episcopal clergyman in the reading of the Greek Testament. He approved of the Bible being given to his soldiers. He did not accept the Deist rejection of the Christian claim that the Bible is divine revelation. He felt no personal incongruity as president in subscribing to an explicitly evangelical study Bible. Washington's doctrine of scripture was matched by his substantial biblical literacy. (Pp. 311-315.)

Chapter 18, “George Washington and Prayer” reveals that rather than rejecting prayer as a Deist would, there are some one hundred prayers included in Washington's letters.

Chapter 19, “Valley Forge: The Crucible of Washington's ‘Sacred Cause’”. Washington's witness for the Christian faith at Valley Forge is manifest in his words, actions, and orders. An eye-witness account led the Lutheran missionary, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg to declare in his personal German language journal that Washington was an authentic follower of the Redeemer.

Part V dissects the Debate Over George Washington and Communion in three chapters, 20. “George Washington and Communion: Did Washington Take Communion?”; 21. “Shadow or Substance? Putting Professor Boller's Evidence for Washington's Deism on Trial”; 22. “The Struggle for the Episcopal Church: Washington's Non-Communication and Non-Communion in Philadelphia”. The essential points in these chapters are that although Washington was an Anglican communicant in early life, he found it difficult if not impossible to commune as he led a war against the head of the Church, the King of England. As the King was deemed a tyrant, there was no communion between them. So, during the war, Washington communed with Presbyterians. He, however, communed immediately after his first inauguration at the Episcopalian Chapel in New York City, as testified to by fellow communicant on that day, Mrs. Alexander Hamilton. Later as President, Washington found himself at odds with the bishop of the newly formed Episcopal church over the decision to not recognize the American Revolution in the Book of Common Prayer in the liturgy for the new Episcopalian Church. Although he worshipped, he did not commune. But he

did commune as President in the Philadelphia area. When the Yellow Fever epidemic broke out in the then Capitol City of Philadelphia, Washington moved his office to a German Reformed Congregation's pastor's office in Germantown. There, according to church records, he communed as President. Thus, the argument that claims Washington was not a Christian because he did not commune as President is untenable.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

Part VII assembles the vast evidence that corroborates the claim that George Washington was a Christian. Chapter 28, "George Washington's God: Religion, Reason, and Philosophy" shows his view of reason was not hostile to religion, but complementary to it. Chapter 29, "Washington and the Doctrine of Providence" is a complete summation of approximately 270 instances of his use of providence showing decisively his belief in the personal presence of God in history. Chapter 30, "George Washington's Christian Worldview" summarizes several points gleaned from throughout his writings that amounts to a brief Christian confession of faith.

Chapter 31, "The Gospel According to George Washington" constructs from Washington's words his understanding of the general Christian gospel message. We engage this point more fully. Consider the following relevant considerations:

Washington's General Orders of November 27, 1779, quotes a Congressional Proclamation: "And above all ... he hath diffused the glorious light of the gospel, whereby, through the merits of our gracious Redeemer, we may become the heirs of his eternal glory."

On as many as eight occasions, Washington took Christian vows-based line by line on the Apostles Creed in public worship, standing as sponsor for a child being baptized. At each of these he publicly declared, "All this I steadfastly believe." Thomas Jefferson, in contrast, would not bring himself to say these words as a sponsor because he did not believe them.

Washington in private settings identified himself as a Christian: He wrote to comfort Major General Israel Putman on October 19, 1777, saying, "...I hope you will bear the misfortune with that fortitude and complacency of mind, that become a Man and a Christian...." Washington wrote to John Christian Ehler on December 23, 1793, "Show yourself more of a man, and a Christian, than to yield to so intolerable a vice...." In September 1775 he spoke as a Christian to Col. Benedict Arnold: "...I also give it in Charge to you to avoid all Disrespect to or Contempt of the Religion [Roman

Catholicism] of the Country [Canada] and its Ceremonies. Prudence, Policy, and a true Christian Spirit, will lead us to look with Compassion upon their Errors without insulting them.... God alone is the Judge of the Hearts of Men....”

Washington in public settings openly identified himself as a Christian: In his General Orders from Head Quarters in New York on July 9, 1776, he called on his entire army to be Christian soldiers: “...The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary but especially so in times of public distress and danger—The General hopes and trusts, that every officer and man, will endeavor so to live, and act, as becomes a Christian Soldier defending the dearest Rights and Liberties of his country.” Consistent with this are his General Orders from Middle Brook on Monday, April 12, 1779, where he “enjoins” a “strict” keeping of a day of prayer and fasting for the forgiveness of sins: “The Honorable the Congress having recommended it to the United States to set apart Thursday the 6th day of May next to be observed as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to acknowledge the gracious interpositions of Providence; to deprecate deserved punishment for our Sins and Ingratitude, to unitedly implore the Protection of Heaven; Success to our Arms and the Arms of our Ally: The Commander in Chief enjoins a religious observance of said day and directs the Chaplains to prepare discourses proper for the occasion.”

On October 28, 1789, President Washington wrote to the First Presbytery of the Eastward indicating his sympathy for Christianity in its simplicity with respect to “the path of true piety.” He proceeds to declare his intent as leader of the new “government” under its new Constitution or “Magna Charta” to assist these “ministers of the gospel” in the “furtherance” of “true religion”.

While the principles of Washington’s religion were “few and simple,” they were cognizant of the “gospel”. While the following phrases were not constructed in the order that I have put them here, note that all the phrases are Washington’s and that they together frame a Christian understanding of the Christian gospel.

Thus, he spoke of “our blessed Religion,” “the Religion of Jesus Christ,” and “the blessed religion revealed in the Word of God.” Washington spoke of “true religion” coupling it with “a true Christian Spirit.” Consoling a friend he wrote, “...our Religion holds out to us such hopes as will, upon proper reflection, enable us to bear with fortitude the most calamitous incidents of life.” Since the “Lord and Ruler of Nations” and the “Divine Author of life and felicity” has come, soldiers and congressman together can affirm “the

enlightening sounds of the Gospel” that declare that “above all ... he hath diffused the glorious light of the gospel, whereby, through the merits of our gracious Redeemer, we may become the heirs of his eternal glory.” Thus “Ministers of the Gospel” have the duty to “prepare [men] for the other world.” They do this by “instructing the ignorant and reclaiming the devious,” “propagating the gospel” and seeking “to Christianize” non-believers. “Sin” and “evil men” exist. “Sinners” express their “nature,” “iniquity,” “depravity,” “rascality” and failure to heed “conscience,” failing to keep their “duties to God and man. “But, because God is “powerful to save,” “we must place a confidence in that Providence who rules great events, trusting that out of confusion he will produce order, and, notwithstanding the dark clouds, which may threaten at present, that right will ultimately be established.” He is the “the Sovereign Dispenser of life and health” and the “Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and Sovereign Arbiter of Nations.” He rules from a “throne of grace,” extending grace, and mercy, from a propitious heaven for the “professors of Christianity” who seek the “most direct plainest and easiest” “road to heaven.”

As an adult, Washington described the work of the cross with these words: “The blessed religion revealed in the Word of God will remain an eternal and awful monument to prove that the best Institutions may be abused by human depravity; and that they may even, in some instances be made subservient to the vilest of purposes.”

His understanding of Easter is embedded in his worship life. He wrote, but “the seventh, now called the first day of the week” has come. And so, Washington was trained as a fourteen-year-old to determine the precise annual celebration of Easter for each year. In 1768, Easter fell on April 3rd for the 36-year-old Washington. Washington’s diary for that date says, “Went to Pohick church and returned to Dinner.” The prayer that Washington said that Easter Sunday from the Book of Common Prayer affirmed a hearty belief in the resurrection of Christ: “Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee, that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.”

The Anglican Book of Common Prayer, that he had read by torch light at the funeral over fallen General Braddock after the retreat from the massacre at Monongahela during the French and Indian War, began with “I am the

resurrection and the life” from John 11:25, 26. These are the very words placed on Washington’s crypt at Mount Vernon.

Chapter 32, “George Washington and Forgiveness: A Consideration of the Historicity of Two Classic Washington Anecdotes on Forgiveness” gives specific examples of Washington’s application of the Christian doctrine of forgiveness to those who had harmed him or his cause.

Chapter 33, “George Washington’s Clergy and Their Sermons” shows that Washington wrote to some fifty ministers and according to his diaries entertained some fifty ministers at Mount Vernon. Moreover, his letters establish that he collected and read sermons by leading ministers. These letters and relationships exhibit his interest in a serious Christian faith.

Chapter 34, “George Washington on Heaven and Eternal Life” evidences his understanding of the doctrine of eternal life and his personal hope of heaven after death. Finally, Chapter 35, “The Revenge of Parson Weems: Washington’s Unparalleled Praise for an Unexpected Person” demonstrates that this devout minister and Washington’s much assailed first biographer, often rejected as an unworthy source of information on Washington’s life, was not only from Washington’s home area, but remained Washington’s personal friend. Several letters passed between Weems and Washington. In fact, Washington even provided an endorsement for Weems to place on one of his writings.

APPENDICES

The study concludes with ten Appendices that add content, context, clarity, and corroboration for the evidence of Washington’s Christian faith. These are listed below, but the most important is Appendix 2 that provides some 200 Biblical allusions and quotations found in Washington’s writings coming from all parts of Scripture, documenting Washington’s biblical literacy.

Appendix 1: The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversion. This list of God-oriented values shaped his education and later life.

Appendix 2: Representative Biblical Quotations and Allusions Used by George Washington. This illustrates his vast Biblical literacy.

Appendix 3: George Washington’s Written Prayers. This catalogs the one hundred or so prayers found throughout Washington’s writings.

Appendix 4: George Washington’s “Daily Sacrifice Prayers” or “The Spurious Prayers”. This engages and sets aside one of the possible pieces of

evidence for Washington's faith, found in his personal possession years after his death.

Appendix 5: A Summary of Washington's Most Important Sermons. Washington's sermon collection is catalogued and reviewed.

Appendix 6: Abiel Leonard's Prayer. A prayer by one of Washington's favored Chaplains, included as it was published by the American Army for the soldiers' worship.

Appendix 7: Sermon by the Reverend Bryan Lord Fairfax. This is a sermon preached by one of Washington's friends who had not supported the American cause. Yet Washington welcomed him back to Virginia after the war and worshipped with him.

Appendix 8: The Wisdom of George Washington provides significant maxims and sayings from Washington's writings.

Appendix 9: George Washington and the Anglican Theology of Latitudinarianism. The theological concept of latitudinarianism is explained. Its emphasis is primarily moral rather than theological.

Appendix 10: Tributes to Washington by his Contemporaries: His Christian Faith, Striking Appearance, and Moral Character. This is a collection of descriptions by various people who had encountered Washington.

CONCLUSION

Washington, not even once, claimed to be a Deist, despite all that the skeptics and secularists have written. However, at Valley Forge his "General Orders" written for all to read, declared, "While we are zealously performing the duties of good Citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of Religion. To the distinguished Character of Patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished Character of Christian." (pp. 205-06.) A man of honor would never have publicly said this if he had not meant it. Nor would or could a Deist articulate such a view. General Washington spoke thus because he was a Christian.

There are many occasions when Washington identified himself as a Christian. Read *George Washington's Sacred Fire* if this survey has produced a spark of interest in the faith of our Founding Father. And be encouraged, a 300-page abridgment is on the horizon scheduled to appear sometime in the not-too-distant future.

Book Review:

**CHRISTIANITY AND WOKENESS:
How the Social Justice Movement Is Hijacking the Gospel—
and the Way to Stop It.**

Richard Mayhue

Dr. Richard Mayhue, Th.D. is the Research Professor of Theology Emeritus at The Master's Seminary. The book being reviewed is Christianity and Wokeness: How the Social Justice Movement Is Hijacking the Gospel—and the Way to Stop It (Washington, D.C.: Salem Books, 2021. xxvii + 244 pp.) by Owen Strachan.

What are Christians to make of the four-decades-old modern CRT (Critical Race Theory) movement? Is it supported biblically? Does it contribute to sound Christian doctrine? Is it compatible with a Christian worldview? Is this something that ministers of the Gospel should preach? Will it aid biblical counselors and Christian chaplains in their ministries?

Owen Strachan, Ph.D. (respected Christian theologian) thoughtfully and forcefully responds “No!” to the above five questions. His volume is notably well-researched, commendably well-argued, and superbly well-written. Thirty-four endorsements along with a Foreword by John MacArthur convincingly alert the Christian community that this is a must read, both manageable in length and captivating in content.

The book contains 1) a 27-page Introduction, 2) a 210-page body of material footnoted as necessary, 3) a Glossary (pp. 211-213), 4) a Recommended Reading list (pp. 215-216), 5) an extensive Bibliography (pp.

217-32), and 6) a Name and Subject Index (pp. 237-244). This reviewer recommends that a Scripture Index be added for the next printing.

The body of content is laid out very logically into seven chapters with Discussion Questions ending chapters 1-6. The author presents his material meticulously much like a lawyer attempting to convince a jury of his case.

He begins in chapter 1—“How Wokeness is Entering the Culture”—of this superb primer on “wokeness” by providing his readership with the necessary information to understand the historical background, constituent elements, and various contemporary manifestations of the concept. He defines and discusses such issues as wokeness, racism, oppression, intersectionality, gender inequality, race inequality, economic inequality, and class inequality. He asserts that the original basis for modern “wokeness” in all of its current forms originated in the minds of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, then published as *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).

The volume follows with six chapters that explore various relevant elements:

1. “How Wokeness is Entering the Church”
2. “Why is Wokeness an Ungodly System? Part One: Theological Issues”
3. “Why is Wokeness an Ungodly System? Part Two: Cultural Issues”
4. “What Does the Bible Teach about Identity and Ethnicity? Part One: Old Testament”
5. “What Does the Bible Teach about Identity and Ethnicity? Part Two: New Testament”
6. “Hard Questions on American History and Other Hot Topics”

Strachan has done the Christian community a great favor in regard to “Wokeness” by condensing a very extensive and intellectually complex philosophy of thought and action into a most comprehensible essay. He concludes that:

- “Wokeness” is not supported biblically!
- “Wokeness” does not contribute to sound Christian doctrine!
- “Wokeness” is not compatible with a Christian Worldview!
- “Wokeness” is something that ministers of the Gospel should not preach!
- “Wokeness” is not something that will aid biblical counselors and Christian chaplains in their ministries!

In the briefest of summary—Owen Strachan very effectively reasons that “wokeness” is antithetical to Bible-based Christianity.

For those who want to expand on Strachan's excellent contribution, this reviewer recommends two recent publications: 1) Scott David Allen, *Why Social Justice Is Not Biblical Justice: An Urgent Appeal to Fellow Christians in a Time of Social Crisis*, Credo House Publishers, 2020, and 2) Voddie T. Baucham, Jr., *Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism's Looming Catastrophe*, Salem Books, 2021.

***EDITOR'S NOTE**

Although Dr. Mayhue would never admit it, he is the person who John MacArthur used to implement his vision of Master's College (now University) and the Master's Seminary. For almost thirty years, Dr. Mayhue worked side by side with Dr. MacArthur to further the Gospel cause and during that time he wrote many books and articles to help Pastors and Christian workers become more proficient in their perspective ministries. I asked Dr. Mayhue of all the things he has written if he can recommend a few things for Chaplains to use in their military ministries. Here is that list:

- *Bible Boot Camp: Spiritual Battles in the Bible and What They Can Teach You* (Christian Focus). This involves character sketches of 12 OT persons.
- *How to Study the Bible* (Christian Focus).
- *Practicing Proverbs: Wise Living for Foolish Times* (Christian Focus).
- *The Healing Promise: Is It Always God's Will to Heal?* (Christian Focus). This is the most biblically thorough book about physical healing - it concludes that salvation is God's greatest "healing promise."
- *Unmasking Satan: Understanding Satan's Battle Plan and Biblical Strategies for Fighting Back* (Kregel).

Books 1, 2, and 5 are ideal for a 13-week, group Bible study series. Books 3 and 4 could be used for a group Bible study series but might be best for individual study. All 5 could be used as Bible-based counseling tools.

Book Review:

**IS IT ABUSE? A BIBLICAL GUIDE TO
IDENTIFYING DOMESTIC ABUSE AND
HELPING VICTIMS**

Andrew B. Lawson

Andrew B. Lawson is a Ph.D. candidate at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The book being reviewed is Is It Abuse? A Biblical Guide to Identifying Domestic Abuse and Helping Victims (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2020) by Darby Strickland.

Within the last few years there has been a noticeable increase in the reporting of sexual assault and domestic abuse in Christian institutions and in Christian leaders.

Christian ministers today are working in a society increasingly cognizant of domestic or intimate partner abuse. News headlines are full of stories of predatory men and incidents of domestic abuse that spiraled into tragic violence. Denominations, individual churches, and other Christian institutions are struggling to respond to both allegations of abusive behavior and dealing with the fallout of an inadequate response. Meanwhile, the numerous victims of domestic violence (most of them women) often struggle to receive wise counsel or even be heard. Military chaplains and other types of chaplains are on the front lines of this crisis – according to data recorded by

the organization Blue Star Families, incidents of spousal abuse occurred within the military at double the rate of the general population.^{1 *}

In *Is It Abuse? A Biblical Guide*, Darby Strickland has done a great service to Christians seeking to work on behalf of justice and mercy for victims of domestic abuse. Her intended audience are Christian pastors and counselors working in the context of the local church, but the principles and resources she provides will be of great help to chaplains that serve within institutions such as the prison system or the Department of Defense. Strickland is eminently qualified to write this book. She received an M.Div. in counseling from Westminster Theological Seminary (where she now teaches Counseling Abusive Marriages) and has personally counseled dozens of domestic abuse victims from many different situations. Her perspective is in accord with the theological convictions of conservative evangelicals, most crucially the providence of God in all things and the inerrancy and sufficiency of Scripture for our faith and practice. She also tailors her work to be as applicable to different traditions or doctrinal stances within conservative evangelicalism – for example, a counselor will find her work helpful whether he or she believes divorce or remarriage is permitted in the Bible.

References to the Bible suffuse Strickland's work. She uses biblical terminology whenever possible – for example, she uses the term “oppression” to describe abuse, a word found throughout the Scriptures. Her book is divided into three sections: (1) Understanding Oppression, (2) Uncovering Oppression, and (3) Upholding the Oppressed. The root of oppression of any kind is sinful pride and self-centeredness. The oppressor cares only about himself and will do whatever it takes to make his world revolve around him. This contrasts with the humility and love of God and neighbor taught by Christ in the Bible. The pastor or chaplain who is encountering oppression in the home needs to understand the nature of this sinful behavior, or he can end up causing more harm than good.

Detecting oppression within the home is not always easy – most victims are not eager to talk about their experiences or are in denial about the evil that they are facing. Patience and understanding are required, and most cases of marital discord are not abusive. In the section on Uncovering Oppression, Strickland provides practical guidance on what kinds of questions to ask when discerning if someone is experiencing physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, or financial abuse. Each case is different, but the tools Strickland

¹ “Ex-military spouse tells Congress her story of domestic abuse, revealing cracks in military’s response to incidents.” May 26, 2021. <https://bluestarfam.org/2021/05/ex-military-spouse-tells-congress-her-story-of-domestic-abuse-revealing-cracks-in-militarys-response-to-incidents/>

provides (in the form of step-by-step inventories to understand her situation and guidelines on how to apply scripture in helpful ways) are an excellent baseline.

The final section deals with how to respond to abuse or oppression when the counselor is certain that it is present. Police, fire, prison, and military chaplains will no doubt have procedures to be followed in their own unique context, but Strickland's practical instructions on how to prepare a safety plan for those at risk, how to talk to young children about abuse in the home, and how young women can spot abusive tendencies in a potential spouse before marriage will be helpful to all who wish to minister to the oppressed.

Dealing with domestic abuse is a tricky and difficult calling, but one for which every chaplain needs to be prepared for. Strickland's book commended itself in two primary ways. The practical worksheets and appendixes on how to spot oppression and speak in an edifying way to victims are an invaluable resource. In addition, Strickland expertly brings the Bible to bear in a healing way into impossible situations. The reader cannot go more than a few paragraphs in her book before Scripture is being wisely applied. While the military and other chaplain scenarios present a unique set of ministry circumstances than those Strickland has in mind, her book would be an excellent supplement to the work of any chaplain.

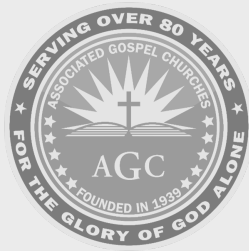
***EDITOR'S NOTE:**

While it is true DOD families suffer abusive home relationships like their civilian counterparts, it should be noted that criteria standards for reporting military abuse is much stricter than what is required for the civilian sector. This is an attempt by the military to de-escalate a potentially serious problem at first sight.

— *The AGC* —

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