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“THE GRAND ENCOURAGEMENT”: ANDREW FULLER’S
PNEUMATOLOGY AS A RECEPTION OF AND ADVANCEMENT
ON ORTHODOX, PURITAN, AND EVANGELICAL
PERSPECTIVES ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

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“THE GRAND ENCOURAGEMENT”: ANDREW FULLER’S
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To Whitney, my wife, friend, and encourager; and to our two daughters, Marlie and Isabella, who bring my life untold measures of joy.

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PREFACE

A project such as this requires a mix of love and sacrifice from a number of people. I am forever grateful for the support and sacrifice of my wife, Whitney, and our daughters, Marlie and Isabella. The Lord has shown magnificent kindness to me through them. The support of my parents, in-laws, and grandparents has been constant, and I owe them a great debt of gratitude. My late maternal grandfather, Sibley McKenzie, did not get to see this dissertation through to completion, but without the lessons I learned from him through the years, this undertaking would not have been conceivable.

The idea for this project was birthed during my time as a student at Southwestern Seminary. I owe a great deal to the instruction and encouragement I received from the faculty there, as well as the friendships formed among my fellow students. It was also during my time as a student there that I met my supervisor, Dr. Michael A. G. Haykin. He delivered a lecture on the important role friendship played in the revival of the Northamptonshire Association, and I was hooked. I count it a great honor to have served under his guidance during my time as a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; but most of all, I value his friendship.

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Dustin B. Bruce

Louisville, Kentucky

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In an 1810 circular letter, Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), a British evangelical Baptist, described the complicated relationship between the church of his day and the Holy Spirit: “The influence of the Holy Spirit is by some disowned, by others abused; and even those who are the subjects of it, from various causes, enjoy much less of it than might be expected.”¹ Fuller’s comment reflects the struggle of evangelical Protestants to give due consideration to the Nicene Creed’s confession, “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.”² While Fuller possessed a rich theological heritage from the Puritan and Particular Baptist movements when it came to the doctrine of the Spirit, he understood the importance of the doctrine in a particularly evangelical manner. For Fuller, the “promise of the Holy Spirit” was nothing less than the “grand encouragement in promoting the spread of the gospel.” Therefore, he sought “not merely to oppose the adversaries of the doctrine, but to instruct and impress the minds of its friends.”³

Thesis

This dissertation argues that Andrew Fuller appropriated orthodox, Puritan, and Evangelical perspectives on the Holy Spirit in a synthesis that proved vital for both the renewal of the Particular Baptist denomination and the development of the modern

¹Andrew Fuller, “The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 3:359.

²Discussions regarding the eclipse, or perhaps more recently, the recovery, of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit have become all but commonplace within evangelicalism. For example, see Francis Chan and Danae Yankoski, *Forgotten God: Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009).

³Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:359.

missions movement. At the turn of the twentieth century, Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield (1851–1921) observed that “the developed doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is an exclusively Reformation doctrine, and more particularly a Reformed doctrine, and more particularly still a Puritan doctrine.”⁴ Such sentiment could also be applied to Fuller’s Particular Baptist ancestors, whose theology was essentially that of the Reformed and Puritan movement. Thomas Kidd has argued that an emphasis on the Spirit was present in the revivals that stand at the fountainhead of the Evangelical movement.⁵ As one who appropriated the Evangelical movement within his Particular Baptist denomination, Fuller advanced a doctrine of the Holy Spirit that is consistent with Puritanism and Particular Baptists in maintaining the sovereignty of the Spirit in conversion, but with a missiological importance unique among Evangelicals.

The Life and Ministry of Andrew Fuller

Fuller grew up in a home thoroughly grounded in English dissent. While both sides of his family adhered to English nonconformity, Fuller’s maternal grandmother helped found the Particular Baptist church in Soham where Fuller was baptized and would eventually pastor. The High-Calvinist John Eve (d. 1782) pastored the Soham church, which Fuller attended after moving to Soham from Cambridgeshire.⁶ Fuller’s

⁴Benjamin B. Warfield, introductory note, in *Work of the Holy Spirit* (London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1900), xxxiii.

⁵Thomas S. Kidd, “The Bebbington Quadrilateral and the Work of the Holy Spirit,” *Fides et Historia* 41, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 54.

⁶“High Calvinism” refers to a variation of Calvinistic theology that denies the obligation of the non-elect to repent and believe the gospel. In the High Calvinist system, since believers are justified from eternity and Christ’s death was only for the elect, no calls to repentance and faith should be issued unless a warrant of faith is evident in a sinner. Practically, this meant Christians and churches were under no obligation to extend general calls for men and women to repent and believe the gospel. This dissertation will employ the term “High Calvinism” over the descriptor “Hyper Calvinism.” For further information on High-Calvinism in the context of eighteenth-century English nonconformity, see Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 164–204; Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689-1765* (London: Olive Tree, 1967); Geoffrey F. Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question: A Turning-Point in Eighteenth-Century Dissent,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 16, no. 1 (April 1965): 101–23; Gerald Priest, “Andrew Fuller, Hyper-Calvinism, and the Modern

early theological instruction came from Eve, who had been influenced by John Gill (1697–1771). Though Eve said little to the unconverted, Fuller came to salvation in November of 1769. Fuller describes his experience in a letter: “I was determined to cast myself upon Christ, thinking peradventure, he would save my soul.”⁷ Having become “conscious of my being the subject of repentance, faith, and love,” Fuller continues, “My heart felt one with Christ, and dead to every other object around me. I had thought I had found the joys of salvation heretofore; but now I knew I had found them and was conscious as I passed from death unto life.”⁸ Fuller was baptized into membership at Soham in April 1770 at the age of 16.

The Soham congregation quickly recognized the ministerial gifting of the young Fuller and upon Eve’s leaving, Fuller began preaching regularly. Several years later, on May 3, 1775, Fuller was ordained as pastor of the Soham church. The following year, the young pastor married Sarah Gardiner (1756–1792), a Soham church member.⁹ Sarah would go on to bear eleven children with Fuller, with only three reaching adulthood.¹⁰ Sarah herself died following the birth of a daughter in 1792. In December of 1794, Fuller married Anne Coles (1763–1825). The two would have six children together, three surviving to adulthood.

Question,” in “*At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word*”: Andrew Fuller as an Apologist, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 43–73.

⁷John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope Illustrated in the Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button and Son, 1816), 20.

⁸Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 20.

⁹For a comprehensive treatment of Fuller’s marriages and family life, see chap. 6, “Marriage in the Life and Theology of Andrew Fuller,” in Matthew David Haste, “Marriage in the Life and Theology of John Gill, Samuel Stennett, and Andrew Fuller” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).

¹⁰John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith: the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope, Illustrated in the Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, Late Pastor of the Baptist Church at Kettering, and Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society . . . Chiefly Extracted from His Own Papers* (Charlestown, MA: Samuel Etheridge, 1818).

At first, Fuller’s preaching—undoubtedly informed by his view of the gospel, followed the style of his predecessor, Eve. However, as Fuller began further theological study, he noticed discontinuity between the Calvinism of Gill and the Calvinistic divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly in relation to their manner of addressing the unconverted. Gill and those associated with him generally offered little to no encouragement to unbelievers to place their faith in Christ.¹¹ They generally described salvation without calling anyone to believe in Christ and be saved. The Puritan ministers who preceded Gill, however, often directly exhorted unbelievers to repent of their sins and trust Christ.¹² Through the influence of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and his ministerial friendships in the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, Fuller sided with John Bunyan (1628–1688) and John Owen (1616–1683) over John Gill, embracing a more evangelical Calvinism. This transition prompted Fuller to write *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (henceforth *GWAA*), which contained a key section on the Spirit, although he would not publish it until 1785. Fuller’s time at Soham was a period of major theological development; yet, the Lord did not keep Fuller at Soham long.

¹¹Gill has been the object of numerous harsh criticisms for his unwillingness to offer grace to unbelievers. Peter Naylor recognizes a certain degree of discontinuity between Gill’s stated theology of High Calvinism and his actual practice of occasionally presenting the gospel to unbelievers. Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and the Baptists*, 184–85. This is consistent with the observation of Fuller, who suggests that Gill “in general, opposed these principles; yet frequently, when his system was out of sight, he established them.” Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* [GWAA], in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:356.

¹²Fuller described this realization: “The principal writings with which I was first acquainted were those of Bunyan, Gill, and Brine. I had read pretty much of Dr. Gill’s *Body of Divinity*, and from many parts of it had received considerable instruction. I perceived, however, that the system of Bunyan was not the same with his; for that, while he maintained the doctrines of election and predestination, he nevertheless held with the free offer of salvation to sinners without distinction. These were things which I then could not reconcile, and therefore supposed that Bunyan, though a great and good man, was not so clear in his views of the doctrines of the gospel as the writers who succeeded him. I found, indeed, the same things in all the old writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that came in my way. They all dealt, as Bunyan did, in free invitations to sinners to come to Christ and be saved.” Andrew Fuller, “Memoir,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:15. For an overview of Puritan influence upon Fuller, see Peter J. Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2015), 53–55.

In 1782, Fuller accepted the pastorate of the Particular Baptist church at Kettering, a congregation more closely in line with his evangelical leanings. While much of his theological development had occurred at Soham, Fuller's influence greatly expanded while at Kettering. The first edition of *GWAA* was published in Northampton in 1785, and this work set the trajectory for Fuller's ministry.¹³

The embrace of evangelical Calvinism by Fuller and his friends led to the establishment of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) in 1792. The next year this group of Northamptonshire Baptists sent the missionary William Carey (1761–1834) to India. Fuller's recapturing of the gospel initiated a burden for the souls of the lost. Carey would go and Fuller would lead the support efforts at home. Fuller and his friends John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825) and John Sutcliff (1752–1814) saw themselves as “holding the ropes” as Carey went to India.¹⁴

For Fuller, this meant being the primary theologian and fund-raiser of what is now known as the modern missions movement. Fuller served as the secretary of the BMS from 1792 until his death in 1815. Often traveling several months of the year and across the United Kingdom, Fuller spread his evangelical Calvinistic theology and raised support for Carey. Fuller's self-described “strict Calvinism” drew criticism from various fronts including High-Calvinists, moderate Calvinists, and Arminian Baptists. Often physically drained and heavily criticized, Fuller persevered as the leading evangelical Calvinist who advocated world missions influenced by evangelical Calvinism, an advocacy grounded in his Christ-centered piety.¹⁵

¹³Michael A. G. Haykin, “Andrew Fuller,” in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

¹⁴Haykin, “Fuller,” in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*.

¹⁵Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb: The Spirituality of Andrew Fuller*, Classics of Reformed Spirituality (Dundas, ON: Joshua Press, 2002), 36.

High Calvinism was not the only attack on the gospel in Fuller's day. He penned a number of other influential treatises defending orthodoxy from its heterodox detractors. In 1793, Fuller published *The Calvinist and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared, as to their Moral Tendency*, which served to refute Joseph Priestly's (1733–1804) heterodox Socinianism, which denied the Trinity and Christ's deity.

Fuller also published a popular attack on deism, *The Gospel Its Own Witness*, in 1800. This work responded to the popular promoter of deism, Thomas Paine (1737–1809), and went through three printings by 1802. The great abolitionist William Wilberforce (1759–1833) considered this Fuller's most important work. The popular treatise consisted of two parts. First, Fuller contrasted the moral effects of Christianity with that of deism. Second, he demonstrated the divine origin of Scripture by displaying its consistency.

In a third apologetic work, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, which contains a key section on the Spirit, Fuller engaged the followers of Robert Sandeman (1718–1771), and most notably the Scotch Baptist, Archibald McLean (1733–1812), concerning the erroneous conception of faith as “bare belief of the bare truth.”¹⁶ Sandeman sought to remove any human aspect of faith in an effort to emphasize the freeness of salvation, but in so doing promoted a less than scriptural view of salvation. In response, Fuller appealed to the pneumatological analysis of the role of affections in faith found in *Religious Affections*, a 1746 treatise of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). Fuller offered a two-fold argument. First, if faith is only of the mind, then there is no way to distinguish saving faith from nominal faith. Saving faith engages not just the mind, but the soul as well. Second, Fuller makes the case that knowledge of Christ is a distinct knowledge above understanding mere facts. While these later treatises were not as directly influential in the

¹⁶Andrew Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, in *Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Nathan A. Finn, vol. 9 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016). For an overview of Sandemanianism, see John Howard Smith, *The Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion: A History of Sandemanianism in the Eighteenth Century* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008).

propagation of missions, they helped preserve a biblical view of faith essential to missionary outreach.¹⁷

Amazingly, all of this activity took place while Fuller successfully pastored a thriving church at Kettering.¹⁸ His congregation, which grew from 88 to 174 during his 33-year pastorate, was pleased with its busy pastor. Often upward of a thousand flocked to hear him preach mostly expository sermons, such as the two published series on Genesis and Revelation.

Andrew Fuller corrected the errant thoughts of Baptists as to the nature of the gospel, sparking a recovery of right thinking about the God who said “and he that winneth souls is wise” (Prov 11:30 KJV). Fuller’s earthly life came to an end on May 7, 1815, at 62 years of age. Reportedly, 2,000 attended the service, a tribute to the monumental influence of the High Calvinist turned missionary theologian.¹⁹

***Status Quaestionis* in Fuller Scholarship**

Recent years have witnessed increased scholarly interest in Andrew Fuller and late-eighteenth-century Baptists. As Nathan Finn notes, a select number of important studies were published in the mid-twentieth century, followed by a marked rise in publications during the early 1980s.²⁰ The most recent and significant publication project to date concerning Fuller is the release of the first two volumes of a critical edition of his complete works.²¹ Published by Walter de Gruyter, the presence of a critical edition of his

¹⁷John Piper, *Andrew Fuller: I Will Go Down, If You Will Hold the Rope* (Minneapolis: Desiring God, 2012).

¹⁸For an overview of Fuller’s contribution to pastoral theology, see Keith S. Grant, *Andrew Fuller and the Evangelical Renewal of Pastoral Theology*, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* 36 (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013).

¹⁹Details concerning Fuller’s funeral may be found in a letter from J. K. Hall and his wife as recorded in Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 337.

²⁰Nathan A. Finn, “The Renaissance in Andrew Fuller Studies: A Bibliographic Essay,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 17, no. 2 (2013): 45–46.

²¹The first volume released was a critical edition of Fuller’s *Strictures on Sandemanianism*: the

entire collection of writings places Fuller within an exclusive category, particularly among Baptist theologians. Despite the increased publication of Fuller-related works, a lacuna exists in the area of his pneumatology.

In the category of books and monographs, Peter J. Morden published a critical biography of Fuller in 2015.²² Morden's work should be considered a theological biography, as it gives attention not only to the events surrounding the life of Fuller, but his intellectual and theological contribution as well. In his presentation of Fuller's life and thought, Morden gives significant priority to Bebbington's conception of Evangelicalism as represented by his "Evangelical Quadrilateral."²³ While a largely original work, Morden's biography built on his 2003 title, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, a revised version of his thesis.²⁴ Prior to Morden's volume, a biography of Fuller had not been published since the 1961 work of Arthur Kirkby.²⁵ A more substantial older biography is that of Gilbert Laws, who published *Andrew Fuller: Pastor, Theologian, Ropeholder* in 1942.²⁶

Fuller's soteriology has played a significant role in a number of books. Philip Roberts, in his 1989 work *Continuity and Change*, addresses the rise of Fullerism in relation to High Calvinism within the London Particular Baptist community.²⁷ Tom

second volume published was *The Diary of Andrew Fuller, 1780–1801*, ed. Michael D. McMullen and Timothy D. Whelan, in *Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin, vol. 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2017).

²²Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*.

²³Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 26.

²⁴Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of the Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 8 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003).

²⁵Arthur H. Kirkby, *Andrew Fuller, 1754-1815* (London: Independent Press, 1961).

²⁶Gilbert Laws, *Andrew Fuller, Pastor, Theologian, Ropeholder* (London: Carey Press, 1942).

²⁷R. Philip Roberts, *Continuity and Change: London Calvinistic Baptists and the Evangelical*

Nettles also wrote on Fuller's soteriology, most notably as a chapter in *By His Grace and For His Glory* (1986).²⁸ Taking a particularly negative view of Fuller's soteriology, George Ella makes Fuller the source of theological downgrade in his *Law and Gospel in the Theology of Andrew Fuller* (1996).²⁹ Of particular importance, 'At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word': *Andrew Fuller as an Apologist* (2004), edited by Michael Haykin, draws together a number of chapters by leading scholars on Fuller's theology and apologetics set within the context of Fuller's controversies and debates.³⁰ Paul Brewster's *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian* (2010) argues that Fuller's brand of evangelical Calvinism and theologically-informed ministry serves as a potential source of renewal for the Southern Baptist denomination.³¹ Similarly, Keith Grant's *Andrew Fuller and the Evangelical Renewal of Pastoral Theology* (2013) makes the case that Fuller's pastoral theology was influential upon and indicative of broader trends in pastoral ministry among English Evangelicals.³² Two recent works have also placed Fuller in conversation with other significant theologians. A. Chadwick Mauldin's *Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism: A Historical and Theological Comparison of the Missiology of Andrew Fuller and John Calvin* (2011) argues that Fuller's theology and vision of mission is superior to that of John Calvin.³³ Chris Chun's work *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the*

Revival, 1760-1820 (Wheaton, IL: Richard Owens Roberts, 1989).

²⁸Tom J. Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life*, 20th anniversary ed. (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2006).

²⁹George Melvyn Ella, *Law and Gospel in the Theology of Andrew Fuller* (Durham, England: Go Pub., 1996).

³⁰Michael A. G. Haykin, ed., "At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word": *Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004).

³¹Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian*, *Studies in Baptist Life and Thought* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010).

³²Grant, *Andrew Fuller*.

³³A. Chadwick Mauldin, *Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism: A Historical and Theological Comparison of the Missiology of Andrew Fuller and John Calvin* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010).

Theology of Andrew Fuller (2012), explores Fuller's theological dependence upon America's greatest theologian and determines that Fuller remained closer to Edwards than the New Divinity theologians of Fuller's generation.³⁴

In addition to the book-length treatises, a number of articles and chapters on Fuller have been published. Most relevant to this study are the articles focused on Fuller's theology and apologetics. Geoffrey Nuttall published an important article in 1965, which focused on the "Modern Question" of whether or not the unregenerate should be encouraged to repent and believe the gospel.³⁵ E. P. Clipsham argued for Jonathan Edwards as the greater influence on Fuller, as compared to John Calvin, in a series of *Baptist Quarterly* articles in the 1960s.³⁶ Fuller's controversy with proponents of Sandemanianism has also been the topic of publication, including a chapter by Martyn Lloyd-Jones in *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (1987).³⁷ Haykin has also published an article on the topic.³⁸ The only article dealing explicitly with Fuller's pneumatology, "Andrew Fuller and the Promise of the Spirit," was also published by Haykin in *Banner of Truth* in 1986.³⁹ Fuller's doctrine of particular redemption has also

³⁴Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2012).

³⁵Nuttall, "Northamptonshire and the Modern Question."

³⁶Ernest F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism," pt. 1, "The Development of Doctrine," *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (1963): 99–114; Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism," pt. 2, "Fuller and John Calvin," *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1963): 147–54; Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism," pt. 3, "The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation," *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 5 (1964): 215–25; Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism," pt. 4, "Fuller as a Theologian," *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 6 (1964): 269–76.

³⁷David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "Sandemanianism," in *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 170–90.

³⁸Michael A. G. Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanians," *Evangelical Times* (September 1998), accessed January 12, 2017, <http://www.evangelical-times.org/archive/item/69/Historical/Defenders-of-the-faith/>.

³⁹Michael A. G. Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Promise of the Spirit," *Banner of Truth* 278 (November 1986): 1–8.

been the subject of publication, by both Haykin and Jeremy Pittsley.⁴⁰

Several articles and chapters dealing with Fuller's relationship to the broader theological landscape have published, including one by Morden.⁴¹ Chun's "A Mainspring of Missionary Thought: Andrew Fuller on Natural and Moral Inability" examines the influence of Edwards's distinction between moral and natural ability on Fuller.⁴² Peter Beck, Finn, Haykin, and Nettles have also published articles related to Edwards's influence upon Fuller.⁴³ Articles relating Fuller to John Owen and John Gill have also been published.⁴⁴

Fuller has also been the topic of numerous unpublished theses and dissertations. The oldest of these is Pope A. Duncan's 1917 Th.D. thesis at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which focused on Fuller's evangelical Calvinism in relation to the High Calvinism of his day.⁴⁵ John Eddins completed a Th.D. dissertation at

⁴⁰Michael A. G. Haykin, "Particular Redemption in the Writings of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)," in *The Gospel in the World: International Baptist Studies*, ed. David W. Bebbington, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 1 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2002), 107–28; Jeremy Pittsley, "Christ's Absolute Determination to Save: Andrew Fuller and Particular Redemption," *Eusebia: The Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 135–59.

⁴¹Peter J. Morden, "Andrew Fuller and the Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation," in *Pulpit and People: Studies in Eighteenth Century Baptist Life and Thought*, ed. John H. Y. Briggs, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 28 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2009), 128–51.

⁴²Chris Chun, "A Mainspring of Missionary Thought: Andrew Fuller on Natural and Moral Inability," *American Baptist Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2006): 335–55.

⁴³Nathan A. Finn, "Andrew Fuller's Edwardsean Spirituality," in *The Pure Flame of Devotion. The History of Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Michael A. G. Haykin*, ed. Steve Weaver and Ian Hugh Clary (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2013), 387–406; Michael A. G. Haykin, "Great Admirers of the Transatlantic Divinity," in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of New England Theology*, ed. Oliver Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 197–207; Peter Beck, "The Gospel According to Jonathan Edwards: Andrew Fuller's Appropriation of Jonathan Edwards' Justification by Faith Alone," *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Jonathan Edwards Centre for Reformed Spirituality* 4 (Spring 2005): 53–76; Thomas J. Nettles, "The Influence of Jonathan Edwards on Andrew Fuller," *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 91–116.

⁴⁴Barry Howson, "Andrew Fuller's Reading of John Gill," *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 71–95; Carl R. Trueman, "John Owen and Andrew Fuller," *Eusebia: The Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2009): 53–69.

⁴⁵Pope Alexander Duncan, "The Influence of Andrew Fuller on Calvinism" (ThD thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1917).

Southern Seminary a half-century later on the same topic.⁴⁶ More recently, Doyle Young authored a Ph.D. thesis at Southwestern Seminary on Fuller's role within the missions movement.⁴⁷ Robert Oliver's 1986 thesis, "The Emergence of a Strict and Particular Baptist Community among the English Calvinistic Baptists," examines Fuller's soteriology within the dominant context of High Calvinism.⁴⁸ In 1989, Thomas Ascol wrote a dissertation examining the federal theologies of John Gill and Andrew Fuller.⁴⁹ Fuller's response to Sandemanianism was the subject of a 1993 Th.D. thesis by Thomas South.⁵⁰ In 2009, two dissertations were completed on Fuller, with Bart Box authoring "The Atonement in the Thought of Andrew Fuller" and Nigel Wheeler writing "Eminent Spirituality and Eminent Usefulness: Andrew Fuller's (1754–1815) Pastoral Theology in His Ordination Sermons."⁵¹ Fuller has also been examined alongside other theologians of significance in a number of recent theses.⁵²

In all of these works, there is no substantial monograph-length study of Fuller's pneumatology. This lacuna provides this thesis with its *raison d'être*.

⁴⁶John W. Eddins, Jr., "Andrew Fuller's Theology of Grace" (ThD thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1957).

⁴⁷Doyle L. Young, "The Place of Andrew Fuller in the Developing Modern Missions Movement" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981).

⁴⁸Robert W. Oliver, "The Emergence of a Strict and Particular Baptist Community Among the English Calvinistic Baptists" (PhD diss., London Bible College, 1986).

⁴⁹Thomas K. Ascol, "The Doctrine of Grace: A Critical Analysis of Federalism in the Theologies of John Gill and Andrew Fuller" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989).

⁵⁰Thomas J. South, "The Response of Andrew Fuller to the Sandemanian View of Saving Faith" (ThD thesis, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993).

⁵¹Bart D. Box, "The Atonement in the Thought of Andrew Fuller" (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009).

⁵²Haste, "Marriage in the Life and Theology of Gill, Stennett, and Fuller"; Aaron Jason Timmons, "The Cause of God and Truth: Arguments for the Deity of Christ in the Anti-Socinian Writings of John Gill, Dan Taylor, and Andrew Fuller" (ThM thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008); Jonathan Anthony White, "A Theological and Historical Examination of John Gill's Soteriology in Relation to Eighteenth-Century Hyper Calvinism" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010).

Methodology

The primary methodology of this study is an inductive analysis of Andrew Fuller's primary source artifacts, supplemented by available secondary source material. Fuller's biography is largely drawn from published accounts, as well as his own autobiographical writings. A significant portion of the study also makes use of primary and secondary source materials from Puritan, and Evangelical authors relevant to understanding Fuller. As a late eighteenth-century British Dissenter and Evangelical, Fuller stood in a rich tradition of pneumatological reflection. Because this background was so influential upon Fuller, significant attention is given to the context and theology of his seventeenth and eighteenth-century forbearers. Particular attention is given to the categories of conversion and mission as they relate to the Spirit.

With respect to Puritan pneumatology, the writings of John Owen play a prominent role, since Owen was deeply read by Fuller. Of particular relevance will be Owen's writings on the Trinity (vol. 2 of his published works), his work on the Holy Spirit (vols. 3 and 4), and his writings on Socinianism (vol. 12). The most relevant secondary source is Geoffrey Nuttall's *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*.⁵³ Scholarly secondary sources related to Owen are also utilized.

Understanding Fuller's eighteenth-century context requires a knowledge of the competing visions held by the High-Calvinist Particular Baptists on the one hand and the Evangelical revivalists on the other. From among the High Calvinists, the theology of John Gill, as the most prominent English Baptist theologian immediately prior to Fuller, receives the most detailed exposition. Gill's *The Doctrine of the Trinity, Stated and Vindicated*, along with his *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, and *The Cause of God and Truth* serve as the primary documents for analysis, with supplemental

⁵³Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1992).

material drawn from key passages in Gill's commentaries and his *Exposition of the Book of Solomon's Song*.

As the most influential theologian of the Great Awakening and a particularly important influence upon Fuller's thought, Jonathan Edwards's writings serve as the basis for much of the eighteenth-century Evangelical background. After drawing from scholarly secondary sources to provide an overview of the Great Awakening, relevant primary sources from Edwards are analyzed, particularly his *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*.⁵⁵ Research of Edwards was conducted from the Yale edition of his works.

While Fuller never wrote a lengthy treatise on the Holy Spirit, his pneumatology may be understood from his apologetic, theological, and occasional writings. In order to ascertain the work of the Spirit in conversion, Fuller's apologetic writings focused on High-Calvinism, Arminianism, Sandemanianism, and Universalism are analyzed, with priority given to *The Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation (GWAA)*, and *Strictures on Sandemanianism*. Along with *GWAA*, Fuller's "The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel," features prominently in an analysis of the Spirit in mission within Fuller's theology. The resources mentioned above are primarily accessible through Fuller's published work, with the Sprinkle edition as the main source, supplemented by the Walter de Gruyter critical editions as available.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter 1 introduces the main research question and presents the thesis of this dissertation. The chapter explains the methodology, sources used, and stresses the

⁵⁵Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 2.

importance of this study for understanding the convergence of Evangelicalism and Particular Baptists.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the Puritan movement that served as a key influence upon Fuller's theology; this includes a discussion of key figures who were particularly influential, namely John Bunyan, John Owen, and Thomas Goodwin.

Chapter 3 explores Puritan pneumatology using the categories of conversion and mission. With these categories in view, the chapter develops important characteristics of Puritan pneumatology shown to be foundational for Fuller's theology of the Spirit.

Chapter 4 overviews the Evangelical Revivals of the eighteenth century alongside the High Calvinism that formed Fuller's immediate background. The influence of John Gill for Particular Baptists and Jonathan Edwards for Evangelicals receives significant treatment.

Chapter 5 overviews the pneumatology of the Evangelical awakening of the eighteenth century and the pneumatology of the High Calvinists. Focusing on Jonathan Edwards as the primary theologian of the Awakening, this chapter explores the developments and significant contours of Evangelical pneumatology. Furthermore, John Gill's theology looms large in this chapter, given his role as the dominant Baptist theologian of the mid-eighteenth century. Again, the categories of conversion and mission structure the chapter.

Chapter 6 focuses on Fuller's doctrine of the Spirit in conversion and deals with key issues such as regeneration and faith. Fuller's apologetic exchanges with proponents of hyper-Calvinism, Arminianism, Sandemanianism, and Universalism are used to demonstrate the role of the Spirit in conversion. *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* and *Strictures on Sandemanianism* are key works explored in this chapter.

Chapter 7 addresses the work of the Spirit in mission and focuses on Fuller's missiological writings. *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, "The Promise of the Spirit

the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel,” and other related writings serve as the primary sources of theological reflection for this chapter.

Chapter 8 concludes the dissertation by discussing the continuities and discontinuities between Fuller’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit and his Puritan, Particular Baptist, and Evangelical forbearers. Conclusions are drawn related to the importance of the Spirit within the formation of the BMS and the launch of the modern missions movement.

CHAPTER 2

PURITAN PNEUMATOLOGY: ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In an essay titled “Dissent,” Andrew Fuller commented, “In reading the lives of the puritans and nonconformists, I read the lives of men whom, with all their faults, the world was not worthy.”¹ In another place, Fuller described the Puritans as “some of the best men who have ever written.”² The Puritans had, of course, played a significant role in Fuller’s theological development. His writings feature quotations from or references to a number of Puritan divines, particularly Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680) and John Owen (1616–1683).³ Of Owen, Fuller wrote, “I know of no writer for whom I have so great an esteem; it would be a faint expression for me to say I approve his principles—I admire them.”⁴ Puritanism, then, forms an essential context for understanding Fuller’s theology.

Puritanism in Historical Context

Originally a term of contempt, “Puritanism” as a historical category has been the subject of much definition and debate.⁵ John Coffey and Paul Lim offer a helpful

¹Andrew Fuller, “Dissent,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 475. Fuller likely read about the lives of the Puritans in a series contained in his library: Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans* (London: 1732). For the contents of his library, see “Appendix A,” in *Diary of Andrew Fuller, 1780–1801*, in *Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2017), 1:215–36.

²Andrew Fuller, “Reflections on Mr. Belsham’s Review of Mr. Wilberforce’s Treatise on Christianity,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:289.

³Puritans referenced by Fuller include Thomas Boston (1676–1732), John Bunyan (1628–1688), Stephen Charnock (1628–1680), John Flavel (1628–1691), and Isaac Watts (1674–1748). For an overview of Puritan influence in Fuller’s theological development, see Peter J. Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller, 1754–1815* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2015), 53–55.

⁴Andrew Fuller, “Memoir,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:39.

⁵For an overview of historiographical debates surrounding the terminology of “Puritan,” see Ian Hugh Clary, “Hot Protestants: A Taxonomy of English Puritanism,” *Puritan Reformed Journal* 2, no. 1

starting point for outlining the movement:

Puritanism is the name we give to a distinctive and particularly intensive variety of early modern Reformed Protestantism which originated within the unique context of the Church of England but spilled out beyond it, branching off into divergent dissenting streams, and overflowing into other lands and foreign churches.⁶

The “distinctive and particularly intensive” moniker relates to the spiritual climate of the Puritan movement, an important element Geoffrey F. Nuttall expounds on in his work *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*.⁷ Patrick Collinson also sounds this note when he describes the Puritans as “those hotter sort of Protestants.”⁸ J. I. Packer speaks of the Puritan movement as “at its heart, a movement of spiritual revival.”⁹

Elizabethan Puritanism

Puritanism arose from within the Church of England as Queen Elizabeth I (1533–1603) brought order to the tumultuous English Reformation by furthering and formalizing the *via media* originally associated with her father, Henry VIII (1491–1547). Henry led the English church out of fellowship with the papacy in 1534 when he was declared “the only Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England” in the Act of Supremacy.¹⁰ Sincere but moderate in his religious beliefs, Henry instituted a number of practical reforms consistent with Protestant trends, while maintaining a commitment to

(2010): 41–66; Brian H. Cosby, “Toward a Definition of ‘Puritan’ and ‘Puritanism’: A Study in Puritan Historiography,” *Churchman* 122, no. 4 (2008): 297–314.

⁶John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 1–2.

⁷Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1992).

⁸Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 27.

⁹J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2010), 37. Packer states, “Puritanism I define as that movement in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England which sought further reformation and renewal in the Church of England than the Elizabethan Settlement allowed.” Packer, *Quest for Godliness*, 35.

¹⁰Gerald Lewis Bray, *Documents of the English Reformation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 114.

aspects of Roman Catholic doctrine.¹¹ Following Henry's death in 1547, his son Edward VI (1537–1553) assumed the throne at the age of nine.¹² Edward's reign brought significant Protestant theological reforms, first initiated under the influence of his Lord Protector, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset.¹³ Due to popular unrest and a costly war with Scotland and France, Somerset's protectorate ended in with a coup in 1549. John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, Earl of Norwick (1504–1553), became the unchallenged leader at court.¹⁴ Faithful to the wishes of Edward, who had been raised Protestant, Dudley continued a policy of reform until Edward's untimely death in 1553.

With Edward dead, his half-sister and staunch Roman Catholic, Mary I (1516–1558), succeeded the throne. Desirous to bring England back within Rome's fold, Mary chose the Spanish prince, Philip II (1527–1598), as her husband and began a series of efforts to roll back Protestant reforms. In 1544, Mary recalled Cardinal Reginald Pole and the English church was reunified with Rome. The next few years witnessed the burning of Protestant martyrs and the removal of Thomas Cranmer as archbishop of Canterbury. Numerous Protestants fled England for the European continent in what came to be known

¹¹For the traditional Protestant view of the English Reformation, see A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989); for a revisionist view, see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, C.1400-C.1580* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); for a less reactionary synthesis of previous historiography, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603*, 2nd ed. (Hampshire, England: Palgrave, 2001); Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life*, rev. ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016); G. W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

¹²Dale Hoak, "Edward VI (1537–1553)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [ODNB]* (Oxford: University Press, 2004-), accessed November 3, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8522>.

¹³Barrett Beer states, "As lord protector Somerset pursued a cautious but consistent programme of religious reform, one that transformed the Henrician church into one that can be described as protestant or evangelical. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer provided the religious leadership, but Somerset and his political allies determined the pace at which the reform programme proceeded." Barrett L. Beer, "Seymour, Edward, Duke of Somerset (c.1500–1552)," in *ODNB*, accessed November 6, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25159>.

¹⁴David Loades, "Dudley, John, Duke of Northumberland (1504–1553)," in *ODNB*, accessed November 6, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8156>.

as the Marian exile. Most landed in Reformed lands, such as Geneva, where the English men and women only grew in their Protestant convictions. When Mary died in 1558, the Marian exiles returned to England, anxious to bring further reform to their native land.

With Mary dead, Elizabeth I ascended the throne in 1558 and would rule to 1603. Under the leadership of Elizabeth, The Church of England reasserted its independence from Rome and established its trajectory in the 1559 Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity.¹⁵ Under the Act of Uniformity, all services within the Church of England had to follow a revised Book of Common Prayer, which made some changes in favor of Protestant doctrine, but retained significant aesthetic features of late medieval Roman Catholic worship, including placing the communion table at the center of worship and requiring vestments.¹⁶ To the many Protestants who considered the Church of England “but halfly reformed” under the Elizabethan settlement, a further reformation was needed.¹⁷

Puritan rumblings turned to outright opposition in the late 1560s as Matthew Parker (1504–1575), archbishop of Canterbury, urged strict conformity to the requirements found within the prayer book, particularly the wearing of vestments by clergy.¹⁸ Elizabeth doubled down, issuing the Thirty-Nine Articles in 1563 and revising and ratifying them in 1571. An update to the Forty-Two Articles issued by Cranmer in

¹⁵In the 1559 Act of Supremacy, the title of the English monarch in relation to the Church of England changed from “supreme head” to “supreme governor.”

¹⁶Queen Elizabeth’s motivations in pursuing a *via media* for the Church of England are difficult to establish, but Collinson notes that they are likely a reflection of her personal beliefs as a moderate Protestant and an attempt to establish an ecclesial consensus that would unite as many as possible within England and offend as few as possible abroad, due to England’s weakened political state. Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 29.

¹⁷Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 29.

¹⁸The vestiarian controversy ignited in London in 1566 as thirty-seven ministers refused to wear the prescribed surplices and were suspended from their duties. Most eventually accepted their orders begrudgingly, but a few were permanently removed from their posts and imprisoned. A pamphlet war ensued, and by 1570, many were questioning the legitimacy of the English ecclesial hierarchy itself. Carlos M. N. Eire, *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 342–43.

1553, Elizabeth's Articles defended core Protestant beliefs, such as *sola scriptura* and *sola fide*, but with language that allowed great latitude as consistent with her *via media*.¹⁹ A coalition of Puritans responded in 1572 with an *Admonition to Parliament* calling for the removal of all Roman Catholic traces left within the English church. A second *Admonition* came soon after, which had been authored primarily by Thomas Cartwright (1534/5–1603), who was soon chased into exile. After a failed attempt at wooing Puritans with the appointment of a nonconformist minister, Edmund Grindal (1519–1583), as archbishop of Canterbury, Elizabeth entered into open conflict with the growing Puritan party when she appointed John Whitgift (1530–1604) to the see of Canterbury.²⁰ Whitgift lived up to his reputation as a staunch anti-Puritan, forcing conformity among many, but pushing others outside the bounds of the Church of England. Despite the efforts of Elizabeth and Whitgift, the Puritan party grew in numbers and strength during the final two decades of the Tudor dynasty. As Carlos Eire poignantly summarizes, “Puritan dissent would be the largest problem inherited by her successor, James I, and his son, Charles I. Eventually it would lead to civil war and the undoing of the nation.”²¹

Stuart Puritanism

When James I (1566–1625) assumed the throne of England, the Puritan party held high hopes for the trained Calvinist theologian who had formerly been James VI of Scotland.²² Because of the rise of Presbyterianism within Scotland, the Puritans who preferred a Presbyterian system of church government held out hope that James would reform the Church of England along such lines. However, James set a trajectory of continuing the *via media*, as he saw Presbyterianism to be in opposition to monarchy

¹⁹Eire, *Reformations*, 343.

²⁰Eire, *Reformations*, 344.

²¹Eire, *Reformations*, 345.

²²John Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603-1689* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 59.

since it lacked the formal hierarchy that existed within the Church of England. For James, the episcopacy and monarchy went hand-in-hand: no bishop, no king. The Puritan party received little of what they requested from James, the one major exception being the commissioning of a new edition of the English Bible.

Rather than concede to the desires of the reform-minded clergy, James I began a campaign to enforce subscription to the Prayer Book and Thirty-nine Articles. This resulted in the removal of between 73 and 83 clergymen from their benefices between 1604 and 1609.²³ While the Church of England generally dealt with dissenters in a lenient fashion during this period, a number of the ejected ministers began considering separation from the Church of England. In 1606, a group of ministers met near Coventry to consider separation. The pastor of the Gainsborough congregation, John Smyth (d. 1612), attended the meeting and soon thereafter fled to Amsterdam along with his congregation.²⁴ While his congregation would split amidst controversy, Smyth would be credited with beginning the General Baptist movement.²⁵ His colleague, Thomas Helwys (c. 1575–1614), led one portion of the split congregation back to London in 1612, establishing the first General Baptist congregation on English soil.²⁶ While Fuller was not a part of the General Baptist denomination, the birth of widespread dissent in general—and Baptists in particular—remains significant for his ecclesial and theological background.

²³Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 61.

²⁴Jason K. Lee, *The Theology of John Smyth: Puritan, Separatist, Baptist, Mennonite* (Macon, GA: Mercer Press, 2003).

²⁵The group became known as the “General Baptists” due to their rejection of particular redemption in favor of a general view of the atonement. This represented a departure from mainstream Puritan theology and was a major differentiator between the General Baptists and the Particular Baptists, whose origins will be discussed below. Timothy George, “The Reformation Roots of the Baptist Tradition,” *Review and Expositor* 86, no. 1 (February 1989): 9.

²⁶Joseph E. Early, ed., *The Life and Writings of Thomas Helwys* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009).

In 1625, after the death of his father, Charles I (1600–1649) ascended the English throne. Like his father, Charles I understood the important role the church played in civil matters and sought to maintain unity.²⁷ However, increasing division among English Christians created a volatile ecclesial atmosphere. As John Spurr notes, “Under James I, puritan MPs and their allies took up specific issues, but there was no general puritan platform, no puritan opposition to a deaf or hostile government, no campaign against the government of the church as there had been under Elizabeth. This was to change under Charles I.”²⁸ Grievances against Arminianism, Roman Catholicism, and the Spanish monarchy became commonplace in parliament. By 1629, Charles I was convinced that most of his enemies were best described as “Puritan.” That same year, he dismissed a disgruntled parliament, engaging in what came to be known as his “Personal Rule” from 1629 to 1640.²⁹

Charles I found an able and willing anti-Puritan leader in William Laud (1573–1645), who would eventually become archbishop of Canterbury.³⁰ Laud graduated from Oxford with a B.A. (1594) and M.A. (1598). Even as a student, Laud advocated a vision of the English Church that deviated from Calvinistic orthodoxy.³¹ While he continued to find himself in controversy with prominent Calvinist clerics, such as George Abbot, who preceded Laud as archbishop of Canterbury, Laud progressed through the ecclesial ranks. In 1633, with the death of Lancelot Andrewes, an esteemed mentor of Laud’s, he

²⁷Mark A. Kishlansky and John Morrill, “Charles I (1600–1649), King of England, Scotland, and Ireland,” in *ODNB*, accessed December 16, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5143>.

²⁸Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 85.

²⁹For information regarding Charles’ “Personal Rule,” see Barry Coward and Peter Gaunt, *The Stuart Age: England, 1603–1714*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge), 178–93.

³⁰Anthony Milton notes, “Laud, who was made bishop of London in 1628 and archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, shared with Charles several key principles: the desire to quell disputes within the English church, to increase respect for its established liturgy and doctrine, and to improve its infrastructure from training and funding clergy to rebuilding decayed churches.” Anthony Milton, “Laud, William (1573–1645),” in *ODNB*, accessed December 18, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16112>.

³¹Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 183.

received the post as dean of Chapel Royal, with a promise to be appointed to archbishop of Canterbury at a later time.³² In 1630, Laud was elected chancellor of Oxford, where he possessed the authority to put his reforming zeal on display. His work as chancellor prefigured his pursuits as archbishop. As Anthony Milton notes, “Puritan nonconformists were Laud's chief target, and ceremonial conformity was the essence of his ecclesiastical policy.”³³ As archbishop, he used his power to unbendingly coerce the national church to conformity in all matters. His bishops were content to use violence against anti-Laudian ministers when necessary.³⁴ When power shifted, his enemies would not forget Laud's actions and temperament; after being held in the Tower of London for months, Laud was executed in January 1645.

In the wake of a failed war against the Scottish and in need of tax money, Charles I called for a meeting of parliament in the spring of 1640, effectively ending his personal rule.³⁵ When Charles became convinced that the “Short Parliament” would not agree to his terms, he dissolved the meeting after a mere three weeks and began preparations to invade Scotland without the needed funds. When failure became apparent, he called for another meeting of parliament. When the “Long Parliament” convened in November 1640, Charles's situation was desperate and the members knew it. The situation continued to deteriorate and was severely impacted by events in Scotland and Ireland.³⁶ After Charles accused five members of parliament with high treason and sought to arrest them at a meeting, only to find out they had escaped, the stage was set for civil war; by 1642, England was in the midst of just that.

³²Milton, “Laud, William.”

³³Milton, “Laud, William.”

³⁴Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 94.

³⁵Milton, “Laud, William.”

³⁶For more, see Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 83.

Religion had not been the only factor, but Puritan and anti-Puritan sympathies, emboldened by zealous preachers and ministers, certainly had an effect.³⁷ Parliament, recognizing the need to replace the abolished episcopacy, called for a meeting of divines to determine a new foundation for ecclesial life in England. The Westminster Assembly was called to order on July 1, 1643, and it would continue until 1652.³⁸ As their first task, the Assembly sought to revise the Thirty-Nine Articles, but soon considered a total rewrite of the doctrinal foundations necessary. The Assembly produced an array of religious documents, the most significant being the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the Westminster Shorter and Longer Catechism.³⁹ Spurr rightly describes these documents as “benchmarks in the English-speaking Calvinist tradition.”⁴⁰ In the fall of 1643, parliament signed a treaty with the Scots, having a common enemy in Charles. As part of the agreement, parliament bound themselves to the Solemn League and Covenant, which meant linking ecclesial arms with the Scots in order to drive out popery and prelacy and establish a thoroughly Reformed church. The Presbyterian faction within the Assembly increasingly gained the upper hand, creating an Independent faction who withdrew to draft their own model of government to submit to the Assembly; simultaneously, the increasingly powerful New Model Army became known for hosting a variety of religious opinions among the soldiers. Cromwell’s interest was in the promotion of “honest, sober Christians.”⁴¹ His army was reportedly filled with Separatists, Congregationalists, Baptists, and even more radical movements such as Quakers and Levellers.⁴² The army and Parliament differed on more than just religious

³⁷Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 99.

³⁸Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly: Reading its Theology in Historical Context* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Pub.), 31.

³⁹*Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646; repr., Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Pub., 2003).

⁴⁰Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 103.

⁴¹Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 109.

⁴²Quakers have generally been considered pacifists, but pacifism was not the uniform position

opinions and in December 1649, Colonel Thomas Pride stood at the door of parliament in order to exclude 110 members, with many more voluntarily withdrawing.⁴³ On January 6, 1649, after a military coup had limited his options to abdication or death, Charles was executed by beheading.

With the king dead, the British government went through several tumultuous transitions.⁴⁴ From 1649 to 1653, England existed as a Commonwealth governed by the Rump Parliament. When old animosity continued to prevent the Parliament from functioning effectively, Cromwell dissolved the Long Parliament in order to replace it with a nominated assembly.⁴⁵ From July to December 1653, this assembly, known as the Barebones Parliament ruled and included forty Baptists and Independents among the 140 members. While short-lived, the Barebones Parliament represented the high point of Puritan influence and expectation. Such zeal was too much for the Conservatives to bear and they orchestrated to return authority to Cromwell, who led the country from December 1653 to May 1659 as Lord Protector. He maintained a practice of general religious toleration for orthodox Protestants who agreed to worship peacefully.⁴⁶ Cromwell desired unity, but hoped God's Spirit would unify the godly without political coercion. Upon his death, the role of protector fell to his son, Richard. Unable to maintain rule, Richard served for only a few months before a military coup forced his resignation. With little promise of political stability, as parliament and army continually collided, a movement to restore the Stuart monarchy began to gain traction. By May 1660, terms had been reached between parliamentary and military leadership regarding Charles I's son,

during the early days of the movement. For more information, see Lonnie Valentine, "Quakers, War, and Peacemaking," in *Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, ed. Stephen W. Angell and Ben Pink Dandellion (Oxford: University Press, 2013), 363–76.

⁴³Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 261.

⁴⁴Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 268–318.

⁴⁵Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 115.

⁴⁶Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 120.

Charles II (1630–1685).⁴⁷ On May 29th, Charles II entered London as king and the monarchy was restored.

Under the reign of Charles II, any hopes of a tolerant, or even Presbyterian, form of church government were crushed. As Barry Coward and Peter Gaunt describe, “No greater contrast could have been devised than that between the broad tolerant Cromwellian Church, and the narrow, bigoted, Anglican Church that was restored in the 1660s.”⁴⁸ Popular sentiment railed against Independents, Baptists, Quakers, and other dissenting sects. Between 1661 and 1665, the Cavalier Parliament passed a series of five statutes aimed at unifying and strengthening the Anglican Church. Perhaps the most notorious of these statutes, the Act of Uniformity (1662) required all church ministers to swear an oath of approval to the new prayer book. An estimated 1,909 ministers vacated their livings before the deadline of Bartholomew’s Day, which fell on August 24, 1662. Among these were 149 ejected from universities or schools. To stomp out unauthorized meetings of dissenters, the 1664 Conventicle Act forbade all assemblies of more than five persons not held in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer. While parliament reacted strongly against dissent, Charles maintained an openness to the toleration of Roman Catholics and Protestants throughout his reign, though without ever making a concerted effort to achieve it. The final years of his reign were plagued with charges of attempting to promote Catholicism. Near death in 1685, Charles was received into the Roman Catholic Church.⁴⁹

After his death, Charles’s younger brother, James II (1633–1701), ascended as the undisputed monarch.⁵⁰ James underestimated the strength of anti-Catholic sentiment

⁴⁷Paul Seaward, “Charles II (1630–1685), King of England, Scotland, and Ireland,” in *ODNB*, accessed January 6, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5144>.

⁴⁸Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 332.

⁴⁹Seaward, “Charles II.”

⁵⁰Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 381.

in England and sought toleration and limited political rights for Roman Catholics. His reign was quite unpopular. As Coward and Gaunt note, “Within three-and-a-half years he had forced Anglicans and Protest dissenters to forget their differences temporarily, and to unite against him.”⁵¹ When James recognized that Parliament would never allow for the types of freedoms for Roman Catholics he desired, he began to court dissenters. In April of 1687, James issued a Declaration of Indulgence, which guaranteed the greatest degree of religious liberty in the seventeenth century.⁵² Many dissenting clergy expressed their thankfulness to the king, while others were being courted for a new contender for the throne, William, Prince of Orange (1650–1702).

In the winter of 1688, William, the grandson of Charles I by his oldest daughter, Mary (1631–1660), invaded England.⁵³ By Christmas, James II had fled from his nephew. While James could have marshalled royalist support, he lost his nerve and fled to France.⁵⁴ By the time of William’s arrival in London, he had the support of both the Whigs and Tories. In 1689, parliament passed the Toleration Act, which extended a degree of religious liberty to Protestant nonconformists.⁵⁵ They were now free to worship as registered meeting houses without fear of persecution. This watershed moment within English Protestantism forced dissenters to forge a new identity now that the role of persecuted minority was gone. Furthermore, those “Puritans” who desired a more expansive reform of the Church of England—but who could not adhere to its current policies—were forced to abandon the hope of reconciliation within a thoroughly Reformed national church.

⁵¹Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 377–78.

⁵²Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 147.

⁵³Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 148.

⁵⁴Coward and Gaunt, *The Stuart Age*, 387.

⁵⁵Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 149.

The Emergence of Particular Baptists

The development of the Particular Baptist movement is in many ways a Puritan story.⁵⁶ Within Puritan non-conformity, a number of leaders had begun to argue that a church was not defined geographically as in the parish model, but by a congregation of “visible saints” who voluntarily covenanted together, chose their own elders, and answered to no ecclesial body outside of their own congregation.⁵⁷ In 1616, Henry Jacob (1562/3–1624) established a congregation in London based on these principles. Into the 1630s and 1640s a number of congregations developed out of Jacob’s church, many of which became important Separatist and Baptist congregations.⁵⁸

The first Particular Baptist church developed from a congregation meeting in the Wapping area of London.⁵⁹ In 1633, the congregation appears to have left the church initially pastored by Jacob, which would have then been pastored by John Lathrop (1584–1683). The congregation departed at least partially out of the conviction that only believers should be baptized, though the mode of baptism had not been settled. By 1638, John Spilsbury (1593–c.1662/1668) became the pastor of the Wapping church. B. R. White notes that Spilsbury led the Particular Baptists as the first to “preach and practice believer’s baptism.”⁶⁰ By 1641, the Wapping church was committed to believer’s baptism by immersion. In 1643, Spilsbury became the first Calvinistic Baptist to publish on

⁵⁶Particular Baptists have often been understood as a subset of the Puritan movement. For example, see George Herbert Curteis, *Dissent, in Its Relation to the Church of England* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1872), 211–13.

⁵⁷Edmund Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1963).

⁵⁸Spurr, *English Puritanism*, 64. For a history of this church, see Ernest F. Kevan, *London’s Oldest Baptist Church: Wapping 1633 – Walthamstow 1933* (London: Kingsgate Press, 1933).

⁵⁹Steve Weaver, *Orthodox, Puritan, Baptist: Hercules Collins (1647–1702) and Particular Baptist Identity in Early Modern England*, *Reformed Historical Theology* (Gottingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 38.

⁶⁰B. R. White, *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* (London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1996), 72.

believer's baptism, with his *A Treatise Concerning the Lawfull Subject of Baptisme*.⁶¹ In 1644, Spilsbury signed, and perhaps drafted, the *First London Confession of Faith*.⁶² In response to objections from his paedobaptist contemporaries, Spilsbury sought to demonstrate continuity with the Puritan tradition.⁶³

According to Stephen Weaver, seventeenth-century Baptists understood themselves as Puritans in at least four ways.⁶⁴ First, Baptists traced their historical roots back to the Puritan congregations they separated from. While Baptist origins have been a source of controversy in certain periods of Baptist life, sound historical scholarship demonstrates continuity between Particular Baptists and the Puritan-Separatist tradition.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Weaver has demonstrated that Hercules Collins (1647–1702) explicitly denied the charge that the Particular Baptists had their origins with Smyth's self-baptism while in Holland.⁶⁶ Collins contended that the Particular Baptists had recovered the

⁶¹White, *English Baptists of Seventeenth Century*, 72.

⁶²William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, ed. Bill J. Leonard, rev. ed. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011), 133.

⁶³Thomas J. Nettles, *The Baptists*, vol. 1, *Beginnings in Britain* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor), 126.

⁶⁴Weaver, *Orthodox, Puritan, Baptist*, 96–98.

⁶⁵For the historiography surrounding Baptist origins, see B. R. White, "The Origins and Convictions of the First Calvinistic Baptists," *Baptist History and Heritage* 25, no. 4 (October 1990): 39–47; Martyn J. Whittock, "Baptist Roots: The Use of Models in Tracing Baptist Origins," *Evangelical Quarterly* 57 (October 1985): 317–26; Gordon L. Belyea, "Origins of the Particular Baptists," *Themelios* 32, no. 3 (May 2007): 40–67.

See also William H. Whitsitt, *A Question in Baptist History: Whether the Anabaptists in England Practiced Immersion before the Year 1641* (Louisville, KY: Chas T. Dearing, 1896). Whitsitt (1841–1911) authored an important work related to Baptist origins that engendered a great deal of controversy. As the subtitle of Whitsitt's work suggests, the question he addressed was "Whether the immersion of adult believers was practiced in England by the Anabaptists before 1641?" The common assumption among Southern Baptists of Whitsitt's day was that English Baptists learned the practice of believer's baptism by immersion from Anabaptists in England. This belief was largely connected to the commonly held "Landmarker" position, which posited an unbroken chain of true churches stretching back into the Apostolic period. Whitsitt's research led him to deem the Landmarker position untenable. New evidence proved immersion was not the mode of baptism practiced by English Anabaptists or continental Anabaptists of influence before the year 1641. Thus, believer's baptism by immersion developed from within English Separatist ranks during the year 1641. For more information, see James H. Slatton, *W. H. Whitsitt: The Man and the Controversy* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009).

⁶⁶Weaver, *Orthodox, Puritan, Baptist*, 95.

practice only recently based on the community's reading of Scripture. Second, Baptists considered themselves doctrinally aligned with the Puritan movement, as evidenced by their reliance on the Puritan confessional tradition when drafting their own confessional and catechetical documents. The 1644 *First London Confession* drew from the 1596 *True Confession* associated with Francis Johnson (1562–1618) and his congregation of English Separatists in exile in the Netherlands.⁶⁷ Along with the *True Confession*, several other Puritan documents were used including William Ames's *The Marrow of Sacred Divinity*.⁶⁸ The *Second London Confession* was largely based upon the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1647), arguably the most significant Puritan document, and related *Savoy Declaration* (1658), which had been crafted by Congregationalists, including John Owen.⁶⁹ Third, Baptists read and quoted Puritan authors frequently. Collins serves as an example here. In a work aimed at assisting those called into ministry, the Particular Baptist pastor suggested a majority Puritan books, including Matthew Poole, Stephen Charnock, William Perkins, Edward Leigh, Jeremiah Burroughs, Richard Sibbes, William Ames, John Owen, and more.⁷⁰ Fourth, as Weaver argues, "Whenever these Baptists differed from their Puritan counterparts, they did so based upon the fundamental Reformed/Puritan principle of the authority of Scripture over worship commonly referred

⁶⁷For more information, see Scott Culpepper, *Francis Johnson and the English Separatist Influence: The Bishop of Brownism's Life, Writings, and Controversies* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2011).

⁶⁸James S. Renihan, *True Confessions: Baptist Documents in the Reformed Family* (Palmdale, CA: Reformed Baptist Academic Press, 2004), 3; Jay Travis Collier, "The Sources Behind the First London Confession," *American Baptist Quarterly* 21, no. 2 (June 2002): 197–214.

⁶⁹Whereas the drafters of the *First London Confession* did not name their sources, the framers of the *Second London Confession* acknowledged their influences in the document's introduction.

For more on the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, see Ligon Duncan, ed., *The Westminster Confession into the 21st Century: Essays in Remembrance of the 350th Anniversary of the Westminster Assembly*, 3 vols. (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2003); J. V. Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards: Historical Context and Theological Insights* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014); Letham, *The Westminster Assembly*.

⁷⁰Weaver, *Orthodox, Puritan, Baptist*, 98.

to as the regulative principle of worship.”⁷¹ This principle, found first within John Calvin’s (1509–1564), writings, had been a hallmark of Puritan teaching.⁷² Jeremiah Burroughs summarized the principle well when he argued that “all things in God’s worship must have a warrant out of God’s Word. It must be commanded; it’s not enough that it is not forbidden.”⁷³ And while Burroughs did not apply the principle to baptism, at least from a Baptist perspective, Thomas Crosby (1683–1751) appropriated his forbearer’s very axiom to argue against paedobaptism.⁷⁴ For at least these four reasons, the Particular Baptist movement may be understood as a subset of Puritanism. Of significance for this work, Fuller understood the Baptist movement alongside the Puritan movement under the category of “dissenters.”⁷⁵ Perhaps he revealed something of his understanding when he explained, “The greater part of the Reformers, the puritans, the nonconformists, and the Baptists . . . have arisen from a conscientious desire to restore Christianity to its primitive purity.”⁷⁶

Overview of Puritan Pneumatology

According to Nuttall, “The doctrine [of the Spirit] with its manifold implications, received a more thorough historical and detailed consideration from the Puritans of the seventeenth-century England than it has received at any other time in

⁷¹Weaver, *Orthodox, Puritan, Baptist*, 98.

⁷²John Calvin, “The Necessity of Reforming the Church,” in *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, ed. and trans. J. K. S. Reid (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1954), 187–92.

⁷³Jeremiah Burroughes, *Gospel-Worship: Or, the Right Manner of Sanctifying the Name of God in General* (London: Peter Cole and R. W., 1647), 11.

⁷⁴Thomas Crosby, *The History of English Baptists* (London: 1738), 1:xi–xiii.

⁷⁵Fuller wrote often of Protestant dissent and considered himself a dissenter. For examples, see Fuller, “Dissent,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:474–78; Fuller, “A Brief Statement of the Principles of Dissent,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:459–63.

⁷⁶Andrew Fuller, “The Necessity of Seeking First the Things of Greatest Importance,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:796.

Christian history.”⁷⁷ Jerald Brauer agrees, claiming “the personal or experiential nature of Puritanism resulted in a concern with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which is unparalleled in Christian history.”⁷⁸ He continues, “At some point, almost every Puritan preached about the Spirit or attempted to place this doctrine at the center of his religious life.”⁷⁹

As post-Reformation Reformed theologians,⁸⁰ the Puritans followed John Calvin in recognizing the prominent role of the Holy Spirit within a wide range of theological discourse.⁸¹ While applied soteriology remained the most often discussed pneumatological category, Puritans also spoke of the work of the Spirit in areas such as preaching, prayer, and interpreting Scripture.

Dependence upon John Calvin

Scholars have long noted the importance of pneumatology in the theology of John Calvin, bestowing upon him the title of “theologian of the Holy Spirit.”⁸² Consistent with his thoroughgoing Trinitarian commitments, Calvin’s work represents the most developed doctrine of the Spirit among the Reformers. According to Alexander Ganoczy,

⁷⁷Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, xxviii.

⁷⁸Jerald C. Brauer, “Reflections on the Nature of English Puritanism,” *Church History* 23, no. 2 (June 1954): 102.

⁷⁹Brauer, “Reflections on Nature of English Puritanism,” 102.

⁸⁰The Puritan movement fell within a phase of theological development commonly known as Reformed Orthodoxy. Recent scholarship has tended to view Reformed Orthodoxy as in continuity with the Reformers’ theology, over against older scholarship that saw great contrast. Richard Muller has led the efforts to re-envision Reformed Orthodoxy, describing it as “a theology both like and unlike that of the Reformation, standing in continuity with the great theological insights of the Reformers but developing in a systematic and scholastic fashion different from the patterns of the Reformation and frequently reliant on the forms and methods of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.” Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena to Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 28.

⁸¹Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2012), 419.

⁸²Benjamin B. Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine*, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1956), 484.

“Pneumatology is present everywhere in Calvin’s thought.”⁸³ John Hesselink argues that fundamental to Calvin’s pneumatology is his binding of the Spirit to Christ.⁸⁴ “I hold it as a settled point,” Calvin writes, “that Christ cannot be disjoined from his Spirit.”⁸⁵

Similar to the Puritans, the Reformers found themselves engaging with a radical wing of the Reformation that sought to emphasize the Spirit at the expense of the Word.⁸⁶ In response, the Reformers argued for the inseparability of Word and Spirit.⁸⁷ While the Reformers were not uniform in their expressions, Calvin represented the major Reformed position when he stated,

For by a kind of mutual nexus the Lord has joined together the certainty of his Word and Spirit, so that the true religion of the Word may abide in our minds when the Spirit, who causes us to contemplate God’s face, shines; and that we in turn may embrace the Spirit with no fear of being deceived when we recognize him in his own image, namely in the Word.⁸⁸

While Calvin understood Word and Spirit as intimately bound, he did not conflate the two. According to Hesselink, Calvin referred to the Spirit as “governing” or “guiding” believers in areas not specifically addressed in Scripture.⁸⁹ The Spirit imparts spiritual insight at his discretion, which Calvin understood as an aspect of the doctrine of sanctification. For Calvin, the inner work of the Spirit was never in conflict with the external Word. As Hesselink explains, “To be governed or guided by the Spirit may mean

⁸³Alexandre Ganoczy, *The Young Calvin*, trans. David Foxgrover and Wade Provo (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 135.

⁸⁴I. John Hesselink, “Pneumatology,” in *The Calvin Handbook*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 300.

⁸⁵John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, trans. John Pringle, in *Calvin’s Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 20:386.

⁸⁶For an overview of the Radical Reformation, see George Hunston Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 3rd ed. (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000).

⁸⁷Hesselink, “Pneumatology,” 300.

⁸⁸John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, Library of Christian Classics (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 1.9.3.

⁸⁹I. John Hesselink, “Governed and Guided by the Spirit: A Key Issue in Calvin’s Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” *Zwingliana* 19, no. 2 (January 2010): 163.

new insights, deeper understanding, and concrete applications or directions for our lives, but no new revelations.”⁹⁰

Calvin also understood Spirit and Word as instrumental in conversion. Against those who demanded rational proof of the truthfulness of Scripture’s claims, Calvin wrote, “The highest proof of Scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it.”⁹¹ He continued, “The testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the World will not find acceptance in men’s hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit.”⁹² Continuing his line of argumentation, Calvin declared: “that those whom the Holy Spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated.”⁹³

As Calvin emphasized in Book 3 of the *Institutes*, the Holy Spirit subjectively appropriates what Christ objectively accomplished for the redemption of sinners.⁹⁴ “First,” Calvin wrote, “we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value for us.”⁹⁵ However, by “the secret energy of the Spirit” believers “come to enjoy Christ and all his benefits.”⁹⁶ “To sum up,” he explains, “the Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ effectually unites us to himself.”⁹⁷ For Calvin, the work of Spirit applies the work of Christ to the sinner. Without the

⁹⁰Hesselink, “Pneumatology,” 301.

⁹¹Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.7.4.

⁹²Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.7.4.

⁹³Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.7.5.

⁹⁴Hesselink, “Pneumatology,” 304.

⁹⁵Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.1.1.

⁹⁶Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.1.1.

⁹⁷Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.1.1.

Spirit's applicatory action, Christ's work would offer no practical value to sinners.

The Spirit initiates the conversion of a sinner at regeneration. In short, "He regenerates us and makes us new creatures."⁹⁸ Regeneration takes place in response to the Word. As Calvin comments in reference to 1 Timothy 1:2, "He regenerates us all by his word, and by the power of his Spirit."⁹⁹ God graciously allows ministers to have a part in the conversion of sinners, but "he parts with nothing that belongs to himself." Calvin carefully maintains,

Nothing is accomplished by preaching him [Christ] if the Spirit, as our inner teacher, does not show our minds the way. Only those men, therefore, who have heard and have been taught by the Father come to him. What kind of learning and hearing is this? Surely, where the Spirit by a wonderful and singular power forms our ears to hear and our minds to understand.¹⁰⁰

For Calvin, the Spirit of God regenerates those the Father has drawn by giving spiritual understanding to those who have heard the word of Christ.

While regeneration remains totally passive on the part of the sinner, faith, according to Calvin, involves activity from the believer, while remaining primarily the Spirit's work.¹⁰¹ "Faith," for Calvin, "is the principal work of the Holy Spirit."¹⁰² In book three of the *Institutes*, Calvin gives a lengthy exposition of faith. He defines faith as "a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed to our hearts through the Holy Spirit."¹⁰³ Hesselink argues that Calvin's emphasis falls not on the

⁹⁸Calvin, "The Catechism of the Church of Geneva," in *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, 102.

⁹⁹John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. William Pringle, in *Calvin's Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 21: 21.

¹⁰⁰Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.2.20.

¹⁰¹Hesselink, "Pneumatology," 305.

¹⁰²Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.1.4.

¹⁰³Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.2.7.

intellect, but on the heart.¹⁰⁴ This focus on the existential aspect of faith explains the importance of the Spirit's work. Faith requires a special kind of knowledge that must be given by the Spirit.

For Calvin, being united to Christ by the Spirit results in the double-blessing of justification and sanctification.¹⁰⁵ However, in Pauline fashion, Calvin understands “that the main purpose and function of faith is justification.”¹⁰⁶ As W. Stanford Reid explains, faith “is the result of the individual's regeneration by the Holy Spirit, which comes with union with Christ. Christ's life-giving Spirit renews the individual who is then enabled to have a true knowledge of God, in both his wrath and mercy, with the result that he places his faith in Christ as his Saviour.”¹⁰⁷ He continues, “Regeneration always means justification, for the one who is regenerated will believe on Christ as the sole source of righteousness before God.” Calvin defines justification as “the acceptance with which God receives us into his favor as righteous men. And we say that it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.”¹⁰⁸

While Calvin's influence upon later Reformed theology has been overstated at times, there is little doubt that his emphasis on the work of the Spirit in his theology exerted tremendous influence within English Puritanism.

¹⁰⁴Hesselink, “Pneumatology,” 306.

¹⁰⁵For more information, see Cornelius Venema, *Accepted and Renewed in Christ: The “Twofold Grace of God” and the Interpretation of Calvin's Theology*, Reformed Historical Theology (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).

¹⁰⁶Barbara Pitkin, “Faith and Justification,” in *Calvin Handbook*, 292. Also see Barbara Pitkin, *What Pure Eyes Could See: Calvin's Doctrine of Faith in Its Exegetical Context*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford: University Press, 1999).

¹⁰⁷W. Stanford Reid, “Justification by Faith According to John Calvin,” *The Westminster Theological Journal* 42, no. 2 (Spring 1980): 296–97.

¹⁰⁸Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.11.2.

Key Puritans

John Bunyan

To quote Fuller, the “ingenious” John Bunyan (1628–1688) is recognized as the most well-known Puritan author.¹⁰⁹ This recognition may be attributed to the blockbuster success of his allegory *The Pilgrim’s Progress* (1678), which stands as the most popular work of fiction published in the seventeenth century.¹¹⁰ Bunyan was baptized on November 30, 1628 at Elstow, Bedfordshire. His father, Thomas (d. 1644), and mother, Margaret Bentley (d. 1644), shared three children, of whom John was the eldest. Thomas worked as a brazier and the family was poor, but not destitute.

Bunyan’s father sent him to school to learn to read and write, though he later disparaged his education as deficient.¹¹¹ His later writings revealed a man comfortable with the grammar and syntax of the English language, as well as knowledgeable in a range of subjects. Right before his sixteenth birthday, Bunyan joined the New Model Army, either by conscription or enlistment. The details of Bunyan’s military career are sketchy, but he appears to have served with three different military units.¹¹² Undoubtedly, he learned the basic skills of combat, including how to fight with a sword, handgun, and musket; as well as how to survive harsh conditions.

After leaving the army, Bunyan married in the late 1640s.¹¹³ Though he never

¹⁰⁹Andrew Fuller, “Fugitive Pieces,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:812.

¹¹⁰Richard L. Greaves, “Bunyan, John (1628–1688),” in *ODNB*, accessed December 9, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/3949>.

¹¹¹Greaves, “Bunyan, John.”

¹¹²Greaves summarizes what is known about Bunyan’s service: “The muster rolls for the garrison at Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, though incomplete, list him as a member of Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Cokayne's company from 30 November 1644 to 8 March 1645, and of Major Robert Bolton's between 21 April and 27 May 1645; he probably served in Bolton’s company until its disbandment in September 1646 The garrison troops participated in the siege of Oxford and the defence of Leicester as well as periodic patrols, but there is no evidence to indicate whether Bunyan was engaged in the fighting. By June 1647 he had volunteered to serve in Captain Charles O’Hara’s company, which was bound for Ireland to fight the rebels, but on 21 July parliament disbanded the regiment of which O’Hara’s company was a part, thus terminating Bunyan’s military career.” Greaves, “Bunyan, John.”

¹¹³Greaves, “Bunyan, John.”

recorded the name of his wife, they had four children together. The first, Mary, who was baptized on July 20, 1650, was blind from birth. Bunyan's wife was poor, but her father gave two books to the young couple: Lewis Bayly's *The Practise of Pietie* and Arthur Dent's *The Plaine Mans Path-Way to Heaven*. Bunyan began to make an outward display of religion, which lasted for about a year. He improved his morals and attended the parish church. However, upon hearing three female members of John Gifford's separatist congregation discuss religion, a spiritual crisis was awakened. For the next five years, spiritual doubts, anxieties, and depression plagued the tinker. In 1655, Bunyan joined the separatist congregation at Bedford. He was baptized by immersion in a creek near the Ouse River, a deliberate decision on his part since the Bedford church did not require believer's baptism as a prerequisite for membership.¹¹⁴ He began preaching nine months later, though his spiritual trials would not cease until late 1657 or early 1658.¹¹⁵

In the mid-1650s, Bunyan became acquainted with the message of the Quakers, when the sect brought their message to Bedfordshire.¹¹⁶ In the Quakers Bunyan found a dangerous group of false teachers whom he felt compelled to oppose. Worse than the Quakers, were the Ranters. According to Christopher Hill, "Bunyan came to hate the Ranters and Quakers because he had so nearly been convinced by them."¹¹⁷ His early interactions with the Quakers would form the basis of his first published work, *Some Gospel Truths Opened* (1656).¹¹⁸ He would continue to debate Ranters and Quakers in writing, as well as engage in other controversies. However, his manner of engagement

¹¹⁴Allen Smith, "John Bunyan (1628–1688)," in *The British Particular Baptists 1638–1910*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 1998), 85.

¹¹⁵For a biography of Bunyan that focuses on his spiritual trials and depression, see Richard L. Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).

¹¹⁶Greaves, "Bunyan, John."

¹¹⁷Christopher Hill, *A Tinker and a Poor Man: John Bunyan and His Church, 1628–1688* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 75.

¹¹⁸Greaves, "Bunyan, John."

would change after 1658.¹¹⁹ In his spiritual autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, Bunyan explained, “I never cared to meddle with things that were controverted, and in dispute amongst the saints . . . I saw my work before me run in another channel, even to carry an awakening word; to that therefore did I stick and adhere.”¹²⁰

Due to the Restoration of the British monarchy in 1660, Bunyan’s congregation no longer had the right to use St. John’s Church and began meeting in secret.¹²¹ When informed that he was soon to be arrested for preaching without a license, Bunyan chose not to flee arrest, but to set an example of enduring persecution for other nonconformists. When offered release under the terms that he would no longer preach, Bunyan refused. At first, Bunyan was given a fair amount of liberty by the jailer, but after being accused of plotting an uprising in London, he was closely confined. Bunyan’s second wife, Elizabeth—who he married in 1659 after the death of his first wife, and with whom he shared two children—petitioned for his release in London, but to no avail. However, Bunyan’s time in incarceration proved profitable, as he devoted his attention to writing.¹²² After twelve years in the Bedford prison, Bunyan was finally released. He would return to confinement in 1676, this time for a comparatively brief six-month term. While the exact time of Bunyan’s writing of *Pilgrim’s Progress* is unknown, he penned

¹¹⁹Hill, *Tinker and Poor Man*, 104.

¹²⁰John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, in *Works of John Bunyan* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1991), 1:54.

¹²¹Greaves, “Bunyan, John.”

¹²²Writing and publishing religious works still proved dangerous for nonconformists. As Keeble states, “Bunyan’s works, like those of other Puritan authors, are hence to be read as oppositional texts produced at considerable risk to all involved.” N. H. Keeble, “John Bunyan’s Literary Life,” in *The Cambridge Companion to John Bunyan*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page (Cambridge: University Press, 2010), 17. For an overview of Bunyan’s literary accomplishments, see Robert G. Collmer, “John Bunyan,” in *Oxford Handbook of English Literature and Theology*, ed. Andrew Hass, David Jasper, and Elisabeth Jay (Oxford: University Press, 2009).

his literary and spiritual masterpiece during his time in the Bedford jail.¹²³ After traveling to London in a rainstorm to mediate a family quarrel, Bunyan became ill and died on August 31, 1688.¹²⁴ As a dissenter, his body was laid to rest in Bunhill Fields.¹²⁵ His writings, however, would continue to teach and inspire countless Christians on their journey to the Celestial City; in particular, Andrew Fuller, who recounted as a teenager, “Sometimes I was very much affected, in thinking of the doctrines of Christianity, or in reading such books as Bunyan’s *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, and his *Pilgrim’s Progress*.”¹²⁶

John Owen

The English theologian John Owen has often been referred to as the “Prince of the Puritans” for his theological acumen, literary output, and colorful life.¹²⁷ Owen was born at Stadham, Oxfordshire in 1616 as the second son of Henry Owen, a local vicar with non-conformist sympathies.¹²⁸ After attending a local grammar school. Owen

¹²³Hill, *Tinker and Poor Man*, 197.

¹²⁴Greaves, “Bunyan, John.”

¹²⁵For a treatment of Bunyan in relation to Bunhill Fields, see Curtis W. Freeman, *Undomesticated Dissent: Democracy and the Public Virtue of Religious Nonconformity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017).

¹²⁶Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:3.

¹²⁷Carl Trueman speaks of a small but growing body of literature on Owen and his theology, but questions the usefulness of speaking of Owen as a “Puritan.” Citing the lack of “consensus on what constitutes a Puritan,” the theological minimalism inherent in the usage of the term, and the parochial limitations of the term, Trueman argues for speaking of Owen in the context of Reformed Orthodoxy. Following Muller, Trueman wants to locate Owen “within the broad methodological and theological developments of Reformed thinking in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,” as well as place him within a broader European theological movement. While Trueman’s concerns are not invalid, he forces an either/or decision unnecessarily. Owen may be rightly considered a Puritan theologian and Reformed Orthodox. Carl Trueman, *John Owen: Reformed Catholic, Renaissance Man* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 1, 5–12.

¹²⁸Owen describes himself as being “bred up from my infancy under the care of my father, who was a Nonconformist all his days, and a painful labourer in the vineyard of the Lord.” John Owen, “A Brief Vindication of the Nonconformists from the Charge of Schism,” in *Works of John Owen* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965) 13:224.

entered Queen's College, Oxford, in 1631.¹²⁹ He graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in 1632 and with his Master of Arts in 1635. Owen's life at Oxford had not been that of a carefree undergraduate, as Arminianism had established a formidable presence within the university.¹³⁰ William Laud was named chancellor in 1633 and by 1637, the Laudian reforms had become too much for Owen's nonconformist conscience. In what was a painful and costly decision, Owen abandoned his formal academic pursuits and left the university.

Owen served as a private chaplain on two different estates, but moved to London when civil war erupted in 1642.¹³¹ In 1643, Owen published his first book, *Theomachia*, in which he attempted to refute Arminianism. That same year, Owen married Mary Rooke (d. 1676). Owen's son, John, the first of eleven children, was baptized the following year. Tragically, Owen buried all eleven of his children, with only one surviving until adulthood.¹³² By 1644, Owen was a convinced Presbyterian.¹³³ Following his reading of John Cotton's *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644), Owen adopted a congregational polity sometime prior to 1648. In the summer of 1648, Owen began as minister to the parliamentary troops near Colchester, affirming their justified role in restraining the evil committed by the king. His sermons also indicated his belief in the imminent institution of the millennium. Cromwell heard Owen preach and soon sought his appointment as chaplain to the Irish expeditionary force. Upon his return

¹²⁹For information about the University of Oxford during Owen's days as a student, see Nicholas Tyacke, *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 4, *Seventeenth Century Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

¹³⁰Crawford Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism: Experiences of Defeat*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford: University Press), 27–36.

¹³¹Greaves, "Owen, John (1616–1683)," in *ODNB*, accessed December 12, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21016>.

¹³²Tim Cooper, *John Owen, Richard Baxter and the Formation of Nonconformity* (Farnham, England: Ashgate), 3.

¹³³Greaves, "Owen, John."

from Ireland, Owen preached before the Rump Parliament on February 28, 1650. After preaching weekly to parliament for a time, he travelled to Scotland with Cromwell's troops.

Back in London in early 1651, Owen accepted an appointment as dean of Christ Church, Oxford on March 18th.¹³⁴ As Crawford Gribben notes, his "return to Oxford must have been triumphant."¹³⁵ While his administrative responsibilities captured a significant portion of his time, Owen continued to preach occasionally before Cromwell and parliament.¹³⁶ At the order of parliament, he also rotated preaching responsibilities with Thomas Goodwin at St. Mary's, Oxford. His responsibilities continued to expand, as he eventually served as vice-chancellor of Oxford at Cromwell's recommendation. He continued to publish significant polemical works and was awarded the doctor of divinity in December of 1653. Owen remained engaged academically and politically through the 1650s. He fastidiously opposed unorthodox religious expressions, such as Socinianism, worked towards the acceptance of Congregationalism within the English church, and generally sided with the army politically.

Unlike Goodwin, Owen was not with Cromwell when he died, but did attend his state funeral.¹³⁷ Soon thereafter, Owen helped draft *A Declaration of the Faith and Order* at the Savoy conference. He continued his involvement in both religious and political matters, generally siding with military leadership against parliament. In March of 1660, parliament removed Owen as dean of Christ Church. Now a political outsider, Owen moved to Stadham and spent the majority of his time writing.

With the monarchy restored and nonconformist ministers ejected, Owen

¹³⁴Greaves, "Owen, John."

¹³⁵Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism*, 124.

¹³⁶Greaves, "Owen, John."

¹³⁷Greaves, "Owen, John."

advocated for toleration and received limited protection from persecution due to influential friendships.¹³⁸ Owen remained hidden in plain view; continuing his literary career, but with little biographical reference interjected.¹³⁹ He considered an invitation to become the minister of the Boston congregational church, but ultimately declined.¹⁴⁰ He maintained a prodigious level of writing and publication, as well as served in various ministry capacities. Though the acts comprising the Clarendon Code made serving as a dissenting minister increasingly difficult and dangerous, Owen continued to lead a Congregationalist church and work toward religious freedom for nonconformists. His wife died in 1676, but he remarried Dorothy, a wealthy widow, a year later. Despite being prosecuted for his nonconformity, Owen continued to write profusely and preach fearlessly until he was near death. By January 1683, Owen's health had severely deteriorated. He died at home on August 24, 1683, and was buried at Bunhill Fields on September 4th. Attendees recorded estimates of nearly a hundred influential noblemen and gentlemen.¹⁴¹

While Owen's expansive works cover a wide range of theological topics, his writings on the Holy Spirit arguably stand forth as his most substantial and unique contribution. Addressing the readers of his *Pneumatologia*, Owen himself admits, "I know not any who ever went before me in this design of representing the whole economy of the Holy Spirit, with all his adjuncts, operations, and effects."¹⁴² Owen's treatment of pneumatology is not just significant for its scope, but for unique contributions as well. Owen developed a theology of the work of the Spirit in the "old creation" to a degree

¹³⁸Greaves, "Owen, John."

¹³⁹Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism*, 211.

¹⁴⁰Greaves, "Owen, John."

¹⁴¹Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism*, 263.

¹⁴²John Owen, *Pneumatologia*, in *Works of John Owen*, 3:6.

unknown among other Reformed theologians.¹⁴³ Owen defined “old creation” as the period of creation prior to Adam’s fall and argued that it was the particular work of the Spirit that made Adam in the image of God.¹⁴⁴ From his analysis of Genesis 1:26, Owen concludes that the Spirit’s operations are “peculiarly committed” to the “perfecting and completing of all divine works.”¹⁴⁵ In a key phrase for understanding his pneumatology, he explains, “Whereas the *order of operation* among the distinct persons depends on the *order of their subsistence* in the blessed Trinity, in every great work of God, the *concluding, completing, perfecting acts* are ascribed unto the Holy Ghost.”¹⁴⁶ As a result, the Spirit acts directly upon humanity both before and after the fall. The Spirit “is promised and given as the *sole cause and author of all the good* that in this world we are or can be made partakers of.”¹⁴⁷ As Ryan McGraw summarizes, “The Holy Spirit is the only person of the Godhead that we deal with ‘immediately’ in this life.”¹⁴⁸ This aspect of Owen’s pneumatology had ramifications for multiple theological loci, particularly his doctrine of conversion.

Thomas Goodwin

On October 5, 1600, Thomas Goodwin was born prematurely to Richard Goodwin (d. 1632) and Katherine Collingwood Goodwin (1577–1645) in Norfolk County, England.¹⁴⁹ Shortly after Thomas’s birth, the Goodwin family returned to King’s

¹⁴³Maarten Wisse and Hugo Meijer, “Pneumatology: Tradition and Renewal,” in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis, Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 493–94.

¹⁴⁴Ryan M. McGraw, *John Owen: Trajectories in Reformed Orthodox Theology* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 144.

¹⁴⁵John Owen, *Pneumatologia; or, a Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, in *Works of John Owen* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1851), 3:101.

¹⁴⁶Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 94.

¹⁴⁷Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 157.

¹⁴⁸McGraw, *John Owen*, 144.

¹⁴⁹T. M. Lawrence, “Goodwin, Thomas (1600–1680),” in *ODNB*, accessed November 11,

Lynn, Richard's birthplace and a town in which he would be able to accumulate some influence and wealth, as well as send his son to grammar school. Goodwin studied under Henry Alston, then William Armitage, at King's Lynn, before entering Christ's College, Cambridge, in August of 1613. Cambridge contained a strong Puritan influence to which Goodwin was initially drawn. Not only would he attend the weekly catechism and prayers of the Puritan tutors, but he attended the preaching of Richard Sibbes, John Preston, and John Rogers. It was not long, however, before Goodwin rejected Puritanism in favor of the preferment that came with preaching more positive sermons in the model of Richard Senhouse (d. 1626).¹⁵⁰ Committed to preaching against the Puritans in his hometown of King's Lynn, Goodwin graduated with his Bachelor of Arts in 1617. He then attended St. Catherine's College, where he earned a Master of Arts in 1620. In March of the same year, Goodwin was elected fellow and college lecturer.

In October of 1620, Goodwin experienced conversion while listening to a funeral sermon preached by Thomas Brainbridge.¹⁵¹ For the next decade, Goodwin increasingly associated with Puritan ministers, even supporting the moderate Puritan, Richard Sibbes, in his election as master of St. Catherine's in 1626. Having been ordained a deacon in 1622, Goodwin was licensed to preach at St. Andrew's the Great in 1625 and became curate in 1628. That year, Goodwin succeeded Preston as the town lecturer at Holy Trinity. In 1632, Goodwin became vicar of Holy Trinity, but resigned the following year, likely in response to the republication of the Book of Sports. Having become convinced the English church was in need of a second Reformation, Goodwin began to envision himself as called to pursue reform around Congregationalist

2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10996>.

¹⁵⁰Mark Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth: The Christology of the Puritan Reformed Orthodox Theologian, Thomas Goodwin, 1600–1680*, Reformed Historical Theology (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), 40.

¹⁵¹Lawrence, "Goodwin, Thomas."

principles.¹⁵² Goodwin remained at St. Catherine’s until 1638, when he resigned to marry Elizabeth Prescott, a wealthy London heiress.¹⁵³ Within the year, Goodwin departed London for the Netherlands, where he served as a teacher of the English congregation in Arnhem. John Archer (d. 1639) had led the congregation of around 100 to relocate in 1637 out of objection to the Laudian reforms. With the freedom afforded him in Arnhem, Goodwin was able to participate in a church governed by Congregationalist principles—principles which he saw as consistent with Scripture.

In 1640, with the Long Parliament called to session, Goodwin returned to England.¹⁵⁴ While pastoring a congregation that had returned with him from the Netherlands, Goodwin preached several times before parliament and became active in the meetings of the Westminster Assembly. Goodwin agreed to keep silent regarding his polity for the greater good. However, after a dispute brought the issue of polity to the forefront in 1644, Goodwin formally sided with the advocates of congregationalism.¹⁵⁵ With Presbyterianism the victor at the Assembly, Goodwin’s participation decreased and fearing intolerance, he nearly left for the American colonies at the invitation of John Cotton.¹⁵⁶ His circumstances changed, however, when Cromwell’s New Model Army triumphed. In May of 1649, Cromwell ordered a lectureship be established for Goodwin at Oxford. Two weeks later he joined John Owen in preaching before parliament. The following day, parliament recommended Owen and Goodwin become heads of houses at Oxford. His wife having died the previous year, Goodwin also married Mary Hammond. The couple had four children, two of which lived to adulthood.

¹⁵²Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 41.

¹⁵³Lawrence, “Goodwin, Thomas.”

¹⁵⁴Lawrence, “Goodwin, Thomas.”

¹⁵⁵Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 44.

¹⁵⁶Lawrence, “Goodwin, Thomas.”

Parliament appointed Goodwin president of Magdalen College, Oxford in January of 1650.¹⁵⁷ He rotated preaching responsibilities at St. Mary's with Owen and also hosted a gathered church in his home. Along with Owen and Philip Nye, he was a principal framer of the Cromwellian settlement.¹⁵⁸ For the next few years, Goodwin, along with Owen, served as key advisors to Cromwell and the parliament on religious matters. Goodwin sought to balance a commitment to a broad national church with convictions regarding orthodoxy and Trinitarianism. He retired from Magdalen College in 1657 to focus on his writing projects, including a work against the rising Socinian movement.¹⁵⁹ In June of 1658, Goodwin stood at Cromwell's bedside as the lord protector passed, serving as a witness that Cromwell nominated his son, Richard, to take his place. In September of the same year, Goodwin joined Owen, Nye, and others in Savoy to draft a confession of faith. The finished product, which he presented to Richard Cromwell, was largely a reaffirmation of *Westminster*, but with a vision for the church as articulated by the Independents.

With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Goodwin's vision for the widespread implementation of congregationalism was lost.¹⁶⁰ Having resigned the presidency of Magdalen College, Goodwin moved to London, where he worked to secure toleration for the church he pastored there.¹⁶¹ He continued preaching and teaching into the early 1670s, when his health began to deteriorate.¹⁶² He died on February 23, 1680, and was buried in Bunhill Fields. As T. M. Lawrence notes, Goodwin's life is "significant for the insight his career affords into the processes and events which

¹⁵⁷Lawrence, "Goodwin, Thomas."

¹⁵⁸Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 46.

¹⁵⁹Lawrence, "Goodwin, Thomas."

¹⁶⁰Lawrence, "Goodwin, Thomas."

¹⁶¹Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth*, 50.

¹⁶²Lawrence, "Goodwin, Thomas."

transformed early Stuart puritanism into later Stuart dissent.”¹⁶³ He continues, “Rather than the first congregationalist, Goodwin is more accurately remembered as one of the last of the puritans.”¹⁶⁴

1689 London Baptist Confession

What has come to be known as the *Second London Confession of Faith* and associated with the year 1689 was actually written and first published in 1677.¹⁶⁵ The *1644 Confession* had served Baptists well while they experienced relative freedom during the Interregnum.¹⁶⁶ In an era of increased restrictions upon dissenting churches, the Particular Baptists in and around London demonstrated their agreement with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists by crafting a new confession which took the *Westminster Confession* as its base.¹⁶⁷ Baptist churches throughout England and Wales received invitation via circular letter to send delegates to a general meeting of Particular Baptist congregations in London in 1677. In preparation for the meeting, William Collins and Nehemiah Coxe of Petty France Church in London revised the *Westminster Confession* from a Baptist perspective. This version was presented to the Baptist representatives and when agreement was reached, the document was published anonymously. The introductory note claimed general agreement with the 1644 *London Confession*, but explained copies were “not now commonly to be had” and that “many others have since embraced the same truth which is owned thereof.”¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the framers claimed the purpose of the new confession was to display “hearty agreement”

¹⁶³Lawrence, “Goodwin, Thomas.”

¹⁶⁴Lawrence, “Goodwin, Thomas.”

¹⁶⁵Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 217.

¹⁶⁶Michael A. G. Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach: Rediscovering our English Baptist Heritage* (Leeds, England: Reformation Today Trust, 1996), 62.

¹⁶⁷Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 217.

¹⁶⁸Lumpkin, *Second London Baptist Confession*, in *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 224.

with Presbyterians and Congregationalists “in that wholesome protestant doctrine, which with so clear evidence of Scripture they have asserted.”¹⁶⁹ As William Lumpkin points out, the *Second London Confession* is much more a revision of the *Westminster Confession* along Baptist lines than an updated *First London Confession*.¹⁷⁰

While the *Second London Confession* does display profound unity with the Presbyterian theology of the Westminster divines, as well as with the Congregationalist edits of the Savoy theologians, the Particular Baptists did make strategic changes. The majority of changes involved the doctrine of the church, but not all. The Baptists softened the language of reprobation and allowed for “hymns and spiritual songs” to be sung along with psalms.¹⁷¹ While the changes were important, the *Second London Confession* testified to the tremendous agreement between the Particular Baptists and their Presbyterian and Congregationalist counterparts. Furthermore, the *Confession* placed Particular Baptists in continuity with the stream of Puritan theology as codified at the Westminster Assembly. In the area of pneumatology, Particular Baptists demonstrated remarkable consistency with the Puritan movement as a whole. Nuttall referenced Baptist teaching on this doctrine as presenting “no important differentia from Congregationalists writings” of the Puritan period.¹⁷²

Following the Act of Toleration in 1689, London Particular Baptist leaders organized a meeting in London, inviting Calvinistic Baptist congregations across the country to send delegates for an assembly that would begin on September 3rd.¹⁷³ At the London General Assembly, the Particular Baptists officially adopted the *Second London*

¹⁶⁹Lumpkin, *Second London Baptist Confession*, 226.

¹⁷⁰Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 218.

¹⁷¹Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach*, 69.

¹⁷²Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 13.

¹⁷³White, *English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century*, 163.

Confession. The *Confession* was then republished with the signatures of thirty-seven pastors attached. In short order, the *Second London Confession* became the most significant Calvinistic Baptist confession, with editions appearing in 1693, 1699, 1719, 1720, 1791, and 1809.¹⁷⁴

Conclusion

Puritanism, as a renewal movement within the Church of England—which gave birth to English Dissent—should be understood as an essential part of Fuller’s background. Under the influence of John Calvin, Puritanism maintained a strong emphasis on the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer. As a developing theologian, Fuller turned to works by Puritan divines, particularly Bunyan, Owen, and Goodwin.

¹⁷⁴Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 239.

CHAPTER 3

PURITAN PNEUMATOLOGY: ITS THEOLOGICAL CONTENT

Key Issues in Puritan Pneumatology

Puritan theologians both expanded upon the Reformed tradition's emphasis on the work of the Spirit and defended the orthodox conception of the Spirit and his work from various detractors. As a result, Puritan theology was characterized by a doctrine of the Spirit that maintained the Spirit's deity, while stressing his sovereign work in the hearts of sinners.

Word and Spirit

According to Geoffrey Nuttall, "The doctrine [of the Spirit] with its manifold implications, received a more thorough historical and detailed consideration from the Puritans of the seventeenth-century England than it has received at any other time in Christian history."¹ Jerald Brauer agrees, claiming "the personal or experiential nature of Puritanism resulted in a concern with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which is unparalleled in Christian history."² He continues, "At some point, almost every Puritan preached about the Spirit or attempted to place this doctrine at the center of his religious life."³ As a result of such substantial reflection, Puritan theologians bequeathed a treasure trove of theological writings related to the work of the Spirit. After addressing key issues within Puritan pneumatology, this chapter focuses on those authors familiar to Fuller, and

¹Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1992), xxviii.

²Jerald C. Brauer, "Reflections on the Nature of English Puritanism," *Church History* 23, no. 2 (June 1954): 102.

³Brauer, "Reflections on Nature of English Puritanism," 102.

explicating the topics of conversion and mission.

The relationship between the Word of God and the Holy Spirit was an essential concern for Puritan theologians.⁴ In this, they were heirs of the Reformers, who discerned that the prime vehicle employed by the Spirit in awakening conversion and growth in Christ was the Word of God. This resulted in a two-fold emphasis on the Spirit as both inspiring the biblical authors and enlightening contemporary hearers and readers.⁵ A belief in the inspiration of Scripture by the Holy Spirit was axiomatic among Puritans, as well as their more radical counterparts.⁶ Differences arose, however, when it came to beliefs about how the Spirit and Word functioned together.

For Luther, the enlightening activity of the Spirit manifested itself primarily in the act of preaching the Word of God.⁷ The Puritans extended the spiritual experience to

⁴Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 21.

⁵Nuttall argues that the locus of authority transferred from the ecclesiastical tradition to the Scripture beginning with Martin Luther. Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 21.

⁶For recent discussion on the historical understanding of the inspiration of Scripture within the Christian tradition, see Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979); John D. Woodbridge, *Biblical Authority: A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982).

⁷Luther held to the ancient Trinitarian confession of the church, affirming the Holy Spirit as *homoousious* with the Father. Following Augustine, he affirmed the procession of the Spirit from both Father and Son, as well as a distinction between Spirit as *persona* and *donum*. He also affirmed the indivisible operations of the Trinity in God's actions in the world.

According to Lois Malcom, Luther's main pneumatological concern focused on the Spirit as Sanctifier and Comforter. The Spirit proclaims and teaches Christ's person and work, which would otherwise remain hidden to humanity. The Spirit sanctifies unholy men and women by bringing them to Christ. The Spirit sanctifies "inwardly by means of faith and other spiritual gifts, and outwardly by means of the gospel, baptism, and the Lord's Supper." For Luther, the external means always come first and serve as the basis for the internal means. While the Spirit is free, he binds himself to the external Word, "inculcating in the hearer Christ's sufferings for salvation—the 'joyous exchange' whereby Christ shares in the human beings' sins and death, and imparts his righteousness and life." Lois Malcolm, "Holy Spirit," in *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 338.

Malcolm further claims Luther's understanding of the work of the Spirit in the Word through law and gospel as a "signal contribution." The Spirit works through the law to expose sin and accuse the sinner. However, the Spirit's proper work through the gospel comes as he presents himself as a "gift" that sanctifies and quickens. The Spirit continues to work throughout the Christian life, expelling sin so that Christians may bear the cross of Christ and live in love for neighbor. Malcolm, "Holy Spirit," 339.

the private reading of Scripture as well. Describing how Puritans sensed a difference between reading Scripture and reading other books, Nuttall explains, “When they read the Bible something took place in their hearts, not only in their heads. The Holy Spirit was at work, illuminating what was written and enlightening their minds to understand it.”⁸ Furthermore, the work of the Spirit was necessary for proper interpretation to take place. Biblical truth was only accessible through faith and the Spirit’s activity.⁹ According to the widely influential Puritan author William Perkins, “The principall interpreter of Scripture is the Holy Ghost.”¹⁰ The Spirit who inspired the text of Scripture must by necessity illumine the Scripture if any spiritual effects were to take place.

As the Puritan movement developed within seventeenth-century English Christianity, diversity of opinion began to grow in regard to the work of the Spirit within believers. George Fox (1624–1691), to be discussed below, became the most well-known ministry leader to untether the close bond between Word and Spirit. From the 1650s on, one may discern a controversy surrounding this issue.¹¹ Nuttall argues that the question at the root of the controversy is whether the Spirit who worked in the authors of Scripture

Regin Prenter’s work *Spiritus Creator* represents the most significant scholarly treatment of Luther’s pneumatology to date. Prenter uses Luther’s disputes with Roman Catholicism to demonstrate the central role of the Spirit within Luther’s theology. Prenter concludes that without the Spirit, Luther’s theological breakthrough and emphases would be little more than “a great ideology under the law.” Regin Prenter, *Spiritus Creator* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953), 202.

For more information on Luther’s pneumatology, see Bernhard Lohse, “*Spiritus Creator*,” in *Martin Luther’s Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development* (Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 336–45; Jeffrey G. Silcock, “Luther on the Holy Spirit and His Use of God’s Word,” in *Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and L’Ubomir Batka (Oxford: University Press, 2014), 294–309.

⁸Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 22.

⁹James T. Spivey, “The Hermeneutics of the Medieval and Reformation Era,” in *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*, ed. Bruce Corley, Steve Lemke, and Grant Lovejoy (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2002), 113.

¹⁰William Perkins, *The Arte of Prophecyng: Or a Treatise Concerning the Sacred and Onely True Manner and Methode of Preaching* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1607), 55.

¹¹Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 28.

continued to work in believers in the same manner. He denotes three positions within English Protestantism at the time revolving around the terms “ordinary” and “extraordinary.”

All held that the Spirit worked within the biblical authors, but the conservative faction regarded this work as “extraordinary” and therefore wholly different from the Spirit’s contemporary work. Lazarus Seaman (d. 1675), Thomas Hall (1610–1665), and Richard Hollingsworth (d. 1654) represent the conservative party. John Spilsbery captures this sentiment well when he claims, “God hath communion with none in his word, but by his Spirit and faith.”¹² The middle party, associated with men such as Richard Baxter (1615–1691) and John Owen, elevated the Spirit’s work within the apostles and biblical authors, particularly when it came to infallibility, as compared to his contemporary work, but maintained a greater connection between the two works than the conservatives. Baxter summarized the middle position well, “The Holy Spirit, by immediate inspiration, revealed unto the apostles the doctrine of Christ, and caused them infallibly to indite the Scriptures. But this is not the way of ordinary illumination now.”¹³ Finally, the radical party considered themselves possessors of the Spirit in a manner quite similar to the apostles and prophets.¹⁴ Samuel Petto (c.1624–1711), Morgan Llwyd (1619–1659), John Saltmarsh (d. 1647), and are all representatives of the radical position.

Orthodox Trinitarianism

Puritan pneumatology must necessarily be understood within the context of their deep commitment to Trinitarian orthodoxy, which had long upheld the full deity of

¹²John Spilsbery, *A Treatise Concerning the Lawfull Subject of Baptism*, 2nd ed. (London: Henry Hills, 1652), 56.

¹³Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory*, in *Practical Works of Richard Baxter* (London: James Duncan, 1830), 2:104.

¹⁴Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 28.

the Spirit.¹⁵ As expressed by the 381 Council of Constantinople, the Puritans believed “in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and Son is together worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets.”¹⁶ This deep and abiding commitment led the Puritans to defend Trinitarianism against those they saw undermining it, whether theologically or practically.

The Challenge of Socinianism

The Puritans became fierce defenders of the Spirit’s deity against the rising threat of Socinianism, which held to a Unitarian understanding of the Godhead. Harking back to two sixteenth-century Italians, Lelio Francesco Sozzini (1525–1562) and his nephew Fausto Sozzini (1539–1604),¹⁷ Socinianism merged with a growing tide of rationalism in the seventeenth century to challenge the theological boundaries of what Sarah Mortimer has called “Trinitarian communities.”¹⁸ As Mortimer argues, Socinianism was not merely anti-Trinitarian, but represented a completely different manner of reading the Bible and constructing theology.¹⁹ Because Socinians subordinated biblical truth to reason, they rejected a number of doctrines alongside the Trinity, with devastating doctrinal consequences to the person and work of the Holy Spirit.²⁰ As the

¹⁵Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2012), 422.

¹⁶As the early church sought to understand the scriptural record and Trinitarian worship, a distinct Trinitarian consciousness emerged. As theological controversy forced the church to clarify its theology, a clear Trinitarian consensus was reached and codified in the early catholic creeds. For more information, see Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: University Press, 2004).

¹⁷His surname is sometimes rendered Socinus.

¹⁸Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: University Press, 2010), 240–41. Also see William C. Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking About God Went Wrong* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996); Philip Dixon, *Nice and Hot Disputes: The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London: T & T Clark, 2003).

¹⁹Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in English Revolution*, 2–3.

²⁰Ryan M. McGraw, *John Owen: Trajectories in Reformed Orthodox Theology* (Cham,

most prominent alternative to Trinitarianism, Socinianism posed a significant challenge to the orthodox conception of the Spirit.

Several Puritan authors took up their pen in response to the Socinian threat. John Owen, having solidified his reputation as an anti-Socinian polemicist with his 1653 *A Dissertation on Divine Justice*, was commissioned by parliament to write a refutation of the heresy.²¹ This resulted in his 1655 treatise, *Vindiciae Evangelicae*, which took aim at the catechism of John Biddle (1615–1662) and the *Racovian Catechism*.²² Francis Cheynell (1608–1665) also opposed the Socinian threat, first with *The Rise, Growth, and Danger of Socinianism* in 1643, then with *The Divine Triunity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* in 1650. For Cheynell, Christ intentionally refers to the Spirit as “He” in John 16:13 in order to “point out the peculiar substance or person of the Spirit.”²³ He goes on to demonstrate the divinity of the Spirit in a number of NT passages, concluding that Father, Son, and Spirit subsist without multiplying the Godhead.²⁴

Socinians charged that the Spirit referenced in Scripture spoke of the power of God, but not of God himself. This point was earnestly contested by Puritan authors such as John Howe (1630–1705) and Stephen Charnock (1628–1680). Howe appealed to the doctrine of divine simplicity to demonstrate that God’s power must be uncreated.²⁵ Given

Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 140.

²¹John Owen, *A Dissertation on Divine Justice*, in *Works of John Owen* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 10:481–624.

²²The *Racovian Catechism*, first published in Polish in 1605, represented the codified anti-Trinitarian statement of belief for the Polish Brethren, a heterodox group that split from the Polish Reformed Church in 1565. The work reflects the theology of Fausto Sozzini. John C. Godbey, “Racovian Catechism,” in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. Hans J. Hillebrand (Oxford: University Press, 2005), accessed April 12, 2017, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195064933.001.0001/acref-9780195064933-e-1158>.

²³Francis Cheynell, *The Divine Triunity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* (London, 1650), 32.

²⁴Cheynell, *Divine Triunity*, 40.

²⁵Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 421.

that “everything that is uncreated is God,” Howe contends, “if he be then a created power . . . then it seems God did, without power, create this power, and was without power till he had created it; so that he did the act of creation when he was impotent.”²⁶ Similarly, Charnock demonstrates that Scripture attributes works of omnipotency to the Spirit, including the work of regeneration.²⁷ Since the creation of man was by the power of God and the regeneration of man is a greater work, the Spirit must be divine.

The Puritans were not just concerned with defending the divine status of the Spirit, but his distinct personality as well. Referencing Peter’s rebuke of Ananias for lying to the Spirit in Acts 5:3, Owen argues that a “power” cannot be lied to, but only “one as is capable of hearing and receiving a testimony . . . without which personal properties of will and understanding none can be.”²⁸ Highlighting the work of the Spirit in Acts 13, Owen concludes, “Nor is either the Father or the Son in the Scripture introduced more directly clothed with personal properties than the Holy Ghost is in these places If a divine person be not hereby described, I know not how he may so be.”²⁹ For the Puritans, the distinct personality of the Spirit was vital because the relationship between the Spirit and the believer was personal in nature.³⁰ Goodwin captures Puritan sentiment well, when he encourages,

If we believe he is a person in the Trinity, let us treat him as a person, apply ourselves to him as a person, glorify him in our hearts as a person, dart forth beams of special and peculiar love to, and converse with him as a person. Let us fear to grieve him, and also believe on him as a person; which our very Creed directs us to.³¹

²⁶John Howe, “The Principles of the Oracles of God,” in *Works of the Rev. John Howe*, ed. Edmund Calamy (New York: John P. Haven, 1838), 2:1094.

²⁷Stephen Charnock, *Discourses Upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (London: Thomas Tegg, 1840), 86.

²⁸John Owen, *Pneumatologia*, in *Works of John Owen*, 3:87.

²⁹Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:86.

³⁰Garth B. Wilson, “The Puritan Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: A Critical Investigation of a Crucial Chapter in the History of Protestant Theology” (ThD thesis, Toronto School of Theology), 263.

³¹Thomas Goodwin, *Work of the Holy Ghost in Our Salvation*, in *Works of Thomas Goodwin*,

In a practical but important defense of the deity of the Spirit, the Puritan authors argued for the worship of the Spirit along with the Father and the Son. Cheynell accused not only Socinians of being “blasphemous Heretiks” for denying worship to the Spirit, but Arminians and Jesuits as well.³² Owen looked to Christ’s institution of baptism in the Triune name found in Matthew 28:19 as the starting point for establishing that the Spirit is due worship: “All our obedience and profession,” Owen writes, “are to be regulated by this initial engagement.”³³ Drawing upon the *communicatio idiomatum* to make his point, Owen argued that “whatever is ascribed unto the other persons, either with respect unto themselves or our duty towards them, is equally ascribed unto the Holy Ghost.”³⁴ Owen concluded, Christians baptized in the Triune name of God are “sacredly initiated and consecrated . . . unto the service and worship of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”³⁵

In orthodox fashion, the Puritans affirmed traditional implications of the essential unity of the Godhead. While the outward works of the Trinity are undivided (*opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*), a particular person within the Godhead often served as the author or agent of the work (*terminus operationis*).³⁶ As McGraw helpfully summarizes, “Though all three persons work simultaneously, they do not act in the same way . . . (or) contribute to three parts of a single work. They accomplish a single work in a threefold manner.”³⁷ The Puritans often divided the Trinitarian works into categories of

(Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), 6:39.

³²Cheynell, *Divine Triunity*, 39. Beeke and Jones explain that “not to worship the Holy Spirit undercuts Trinitarian theology, and this conviction explains why so many Reformed theologians accused Arminian divines of being sub-Trinitarian at many points.” Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 422.

³³Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:72.

³⁴Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:72.

³⁵Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:72.

³⁶Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 423.

³⁷McGraw, *John Owen*, 23–24.

immanent, transient, and applicatory. Thomas Goodwin, who made use of these classifications, argued that though the Spirit's work was applicatory, it was no less significant than the immanent work of the Father or the transient work of the Son. He wrote that "all that Christ did would have profited us nothing, if the Holy Ghost did not come into our hearts and bring all home to us."³⁸ "Christ," Goodwin continued, "leads us to the Father with one hand, the Holy Ghost with the other."³⁹ Thomas Manton noted something similar when he said, "There is a chain of salvation; the beginning is from the Father, the dispensation through the Son, the application by the Spirit; all cometh from God, and is conveyed to us through Christ by the Spirit."⁴⁰ The Spirit, then, not only shares in the divine status of the Godhead, but works in a manner of equal worth as well.

The Challenge of Quakerism

John Owen, while serving as vice-chancellor of Oxford University in June 1654, was forced to confront the challenge of Quakerism when two women visited Oxford as missionaries for the Quaker cause.⁴¹ When their warning to flee academia and gain the "inner light" fell on deaf ears, one of the women bared her breasts and paraded through the streets of Oxford as a symbolic representation of the students' spiritual nakedness. The women were attacked, but remained undeterred. The following Sunday the women disrupted an Oxford church service to warn of divine judgment. The Quaker women were arrested, imprisoned, and ordered to appear before Owen the next day. Owen, responsible for discipline within the university, charged the women with

³⁸Goodwin, *Work of Holy Ghost*, 6:15.

³⁹Goodwin, *Work of Holy Ghost*, 6:21.

⁴⁰Thomas Manton, *Sermons on John XVII*, in *Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2008), 10:205.

⁴¹For the story of Elizabeth Fletcher (c. 1638–1658) and Elizabeth Leavens (d. 1665), see Peter Toon, *God's Statesman: The Life and Work of John Owen: Pastor, Educator, Theologian* (Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1971), 76. For a concise overview, see Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 430.

blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and profaning the Scriptures. As punishment, the women were whipped and ordered to leave town. Quakers, a creation of the turmoil surrounding the English Civil War, would continue to challenge Owen and the Puritans.⁴²

Quakerism emerged from the Seeker movement that grew rapidly in the mid-seventeenth century, as numerous English men and women sought a greater peace from and experience of God than provided by their former churches, many of them Puritan.⁴³ Seekers held that the Roman Church had so corrupted the authority given to the New Testament apostles that no true church could exist until God reestablished apostles.⁴⁴ For many Seekers, the Quakers, with their emphasis on inner light and heightened religious experience, appeared the answer to their searching.⁴⁵ Of several early leaders of the Quaker movement, George Fox rose to become the key catalyst for gathering the Quaker community into what became the Society of Friends.⁴⁶

Fox possessed no formal education, but after leaving his trade and native village of Drayton-in-the-Clay, Leicestershire in 1643, gained spiritual wisdom through four years of wandering through the English Midlands.⁴⁷ During this season, Fox spent considerable time with the English General Baptists, a likely influence on his rejection of Puritan soteriology.⁴⁸ In 1647 and 1648, Fox gained wisdom through a series of

⁴²Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 431.

⁴³Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 431.

⁴⁴Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, vol. 1, *From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 185.

⁴⁵For the relationship between Seekers and Quakers, see J. F. McGregor, "Seekers and Ranters," in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J. F. McGregor and B. Reay (Oxford: University Press, 1984), 122–23.

⁴⁶For an early history, see Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985). For a recent biography of Fox that highlights his role in the emerging movement, see H. Larry Ingle, *First among Friends: George Fox and the Creation of Quakerism* (Oxford: University Press, 1994).

⁴⁷Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 431.

⁴⁸Ingle, *First among Friends*, 35–38, 42.

“openings” that instructed him “without the help of any man, book, or writing.”⁴⁹ Fox developed the conviction that schooling at Oxford or Cambridge was not sufficient to qualify a man as a minister. Christianity as essentially an internal experience was at the heart of Fox’s “openings.”⁵⁰

At the center of Fox’s distinctive teaching stood John 1:9, “That was the Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”⁵¹ According to Fox and his Quaker counterparts, every child is born with the light of Christ, which remains dim due to sin. Conversion involved the light overcoming the darkness of one’s heart, leading them to embrace the Quaker message. In contrast to the Puritan conviction that the Spirit normally works through the means of grace, the Quakers held that the light of Christ shone within dark hearts independent of appointed means.⁵² Whereas Puritan preaching normally encouraged potential converts to look outside of themselves to Christ, Fox’s call was more internal. He sought “to turn people to that inward light, spirit, and grace, by which all might know their salvation, and their way to God”⁵³ The Quaker message of the inner light took root and by the early 1660s, there were between thirty-five and sixty thousand Quakers in Britain alone.⁵⁴

Puritan theologians took issue with Quakers accusing them of failing to balance Word and Spirit. The focus on the indwelling Christ or indwelling Spirit, as the Quakers called it, meant that the Quakers sought to hear a divine inner voice.⁵⁵ Quakers

⁴⁹*The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls (Philadelphia: Religious Society of Friends, 1985), 11.

⁵⁰*Journal of George Fox*, 33.

⁵¹Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 432.

⁵²Hearing the word preached or reading the Scriptures were the most common means of grace the Spirit used in converting sinners. Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 432.

⁵³*Journal of George Fox*, 112.

⁵⁴Reay, *Quakers and English Revolution*, 26–27.

⁵⁵T. L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb’s War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: University Press, 1997), 105–7; Richard Bauman, *Let*

affirmed that God spoke through the written text of Scripture, but this was overshadowed by their insistence that they received immediate inspiration and guidance from the Spirit just as the apostles and saints of the New Testament did.⁵⁶ As Richard Bauman states, “Direct personal communion with God speaking within was the core religious experience of early Quakerism.”⁵⁷ Upon hearing a sermon on 2 Peter 1:9, which set forth “that the Scriptures were the touchstone and judge by which they were to try all doctrines, religions, and opinions,” Fox cried out, “Oh no, it is not the Scriptures.”⁵⁸ He further explained that it was not the Scriptures that formed the touchstone, but “the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried; for it led into all Truth, and so gave a knowledge of the Truth.”⁵⁹ For the Puritans, such statements served as indictments that the Quakers exalted the Spirit over the Word.⁶⁰

The unhinging of Spirit and Word led the Quakers to make unusual theological statements and to act in bizarre ways while attributing their unusual behavior to the Spirit’s leading.⁶¹ The Puritans responded with what Nuttall categorized as “unmitigated abhorrence.”⁶² Many Puritans rejected the Quakers out of hand based on their strange and

Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence among Seventeenth-Century Quakers (Cambridge: University Press, 1983), 24–25.

⁵⁶Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, Lamb’s War*, 26–27, 32–33.

⁵⁷Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few*, 24–25.

⁵⁸*Journal of George Fox*, 40.

⁵⁹*Journal of George Fox*, 39–40.

⁶⁰For a contrasting perspective, see James L. Ash, Jr., “Oh No, It is Not the Scriptures: The Bible and the Spirit in George Fox,” *Quaker History* 63, no. 2 (Autumn 1974): 94–107.

⁶¹Owen’s confrontation with the Quaker women at Oxford was by no means a unique incident. Quakers were known for taking drastic and unusual actions. For one of the most unusual cases, see the account of James Nayler’s reenactment of Christ’s entry into Jerusalem near Bristol in 1656 in Charles L. Cherry, “Enthusiasm and Madness: Anti-Quakerism in the Seventeenth Century,” *Quaker History* 74, no. 2 (Fall 1984): 7–9; Watts, *The Dissenters*, 209–11.

⁶²Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Puritan Spirit: Essays and Addresses* (London: Epworth Press,

sometimes offensive practices. Owen, however, challenged the Quakers through careful theological argumentation.⁶³ For Owen, the Quakers had substituted a preoccupation with subjective spiritual experience in the place of a focus on the objective work of Christ in redemption.⁶⁴ This stemmed from a failure to properly understand and appropriate the Trinitarian nature of redemption. “Convince any of them of the doctrine of the Trinity,” Owen stated, “and all the rest of their imaginations vanish into smoke.”⁶⁵

Christological Context

A distinct emphasis within Puritan pneumatology was the Christological context within which the work of the Spirit must be understood.⁶⁶ Summing up this common theme, Beeke and Jones state that “in the realm of applied soteriology, all blessings that believers receive are first and foremost true of Christ himself.”⁶⁷ The point made by Goodwin, Owen, John Flavel (1628–1691), Richard Sibbes (1577–1635), Isaac Ambrose (1604–1664), and other Puritan authors was that the work of the Spirit in the life of a Christian was rooted in the work of the Spirit upon Christ. Pneumatology and Christology remained inseparably intertwined.

Of concern for Goodwin and Owen was the work of the Spirit in relation to Christ’s humanity.⁶⁸ Christ’s work of redemption, including his earthly life, should not be attributed to his divine status alone. Christ’s possession of the Spirit in full measure was a

1967), 170.

⁶³Maurice A. Creasey, “Early Quaker Christology with Special Reference to the Teaching and Significance of Isaac Pennington, 1616–1679” (PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1956), 158.

⁶⁴Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 435.

⁶⁵Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:66.

⁶⁶Beeke and Jones consider this “a unique contribution to Christian theology.” Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 423.

⁶⁷Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 423.

⁶⁸Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 423.

defining characteristic of his ministry. Isaac Ambrose reasoned that Christ possesses a “compound of all the graces of the Spirit. . . . He received the Spirit out of measure; there was in him as much as possibly could be in a creature, and more than in all other creatures whatsoever.”⁶⁹ The work of the Spirit was instrumental throughout Christ’s humiliation, from cradle to grave.⁷⁰ The Spirit formed the human nature of Christ within the womb of Mary. The anointing of the Spirit marked Christ’s public ministry, including his preaching, healing, and yielding himself unto death. Furthermore, the Spirit empowered his human obedience to the law and will of the Father, as well as animated his prayer life. Owen sums up these truths well, “And hence is [the Spirit] the immediate operator of all divine acts of the Son himself, even on his own nature. Whatever the Son of God wrought in, by, or upon the human nature, he did it by the Holy Ghost, who is his Spirit, as he is the Spirit of the Father.”⁷¹ This point is not merely Christological, but practically affects believers. As McGraw helpfully states, “The relationship between the Spirit and the humanity of Jesus is both the foundation of and the prototype for his work in the believer.”⁷² The Spirit remained central following Christ’s death, raising him from the dead and glorifying his earthly body.⁷³ In his exalted state, Christ pours out the Spirit into the hearts of men, beginning the process of redemption.

The development of covenant theology within Puritanism also gave a degree of prominence to the Holy Spirit, but within a Christological framework. Puritan expressions of covenant theology were not monolithic or settled, but Reformed Orthodox theologians generally distinguished between three covenants. First, the “covenant of

⁶⁹Isaac Ambrose, *Looking Unto Jesus: A View of the Everlasting Gospel, Or, the Soul’s Eyeing of Jesus, as Carrying on the Great Work of Man’s Salvation, from First to Last* (London, 1674), 201.

⁷⁰Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 424.

⁷¹Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:162.

⁷²McGraw, *John Owen*, 145.

⁷³Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 424.

works” represented the initial relationship between God and man in the Garden of Eden.⁷⁴ Second, the “eternal covenant of redemption” or *pactum salutis* referenced a covenant made between the Father and Son outside of time, in which they agree to the terms that will secure the temporal “covenant of grace.”⁷⁵ Owen advanced the theological concept by stressing the role of the Holy Spirit within the covenant of redemption.⁷⁶ The covenant of grace, or *foedus gratia*, represents God’s gracious response to Adam’s transgression in promising and providing a way of salvation to fallen sinners.⁷⁷ Owen, describing the core differences between the covenant of works and covenant of grace, explained that the latter justification is entirely by grace and also has a “mediator and surety” in Jesus Christ.⁷⁸ This Christological focus did not result in a diminished role for the Spirit. To the contrary, Wilson notes, “To speak of the ‘covenant of grace’ is to speak of the Spirit, and one might add, the ‘condescension of the Spirit.’”⁷⁹ As McGraw emphasizes, “This is where the Holy Spirit becomes prominent, since it is he who applies the redemption purchased by Christ to his people. This means that even though Christ and the Father are the parties of the covenant of redemption, and Christ and believers are the primary parties of the covenant of grace, neither could come to fruition or fulfill the divine plan of redemption without the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁰

John Owen affirmed the *filioque* against the Socinians in order to emphasize

⁷⁴Richard A. Muller, “The Covenant of Works and the Stability of Divine Law in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Orthodoxy: A Study in the Theology of Herman Witsius and Wilhemus a Brakel,” in *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition*, ed. Richard A. Muller (Oxford: University Press, 2003), 175–89.

⁷⁵Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 237.

⁷⁶Trueman, *John Owen*, 86.

⁷⁷Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 259.

⁷⁸John Owen, *The Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, in *Works of John Owen*, 5:276.

⁷⁹Wilson, “Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit,” 157.

⁸⁰McGraw, *John Owen*, 34.

that the Spirit's work was bound up with the Son's work of redemption.⁸¹ Citing John 15:26, Owen argued that the Spirit "proceedeth from the Father; and being the Spirit of the Son, he proceedeth from him in like manner."⁸² Furthermore, the Spirit proceeds in a twofold manner. First, according to Owen, the Spirit proceeds in a "natural" or "personal" way that "expresses his eternal relation to the persons of the Father and the Son."⁸³ Second, Owen argued for a procession that is "dispensatory" in manner.⁸⁴ This procession Owen understood to be purely voluntary on the part of the Spirit and not bound up with his person. For Owen, just as the Spirit "goeth forth or proceedeth in the pursuit of counsels and purposes of the Father, and, as sent by him, to put into execution, or to make them effectual," the Spirit "in like manner he proceedeth from the Son, sent by him for the application of his grace unto the souls of the elect."⁸⁵

The Spirit in Conversion within Puritanism

As Reformed theologians, the Puritans were concerned to emphasize the grace of God in soteriology.⁸⁶ This was particularly true of "effectual calling" or "regeneration," which the Puritan theologians understood to be the starting point of practical soteriology.⁸⁷ Puritan theologians also emphasized God's activity in faith,

⁸¹McGraw, *John Owen*, 140.

⁸²Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:116.

⁸³Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:116.

⁸⁴Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:117.

⁸⁵Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:117.

⁸⁶Maarten Wisse and Hugo Meijer, "Pneumatology: Tradition and Renewal," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 501.

⁸⁷In earlier Reformed writings, such as Calvin's *Institutes* or the Belgic Confession (art. 24), "regeneration" encompassed the entirety of the Spirit's work in renewing believers. Puritans such as Owen and Goodwin took regeneration in the narrow sense of the initial work of the Spirit upon the believer. This shift in terminology was consistent with Reformed scholasticism as a whole, which began referring to regeneration as the initial awakening of a spiritually-dead soul, as evidenced by the Canons of Dordt (3/4, art. 12). Wisse and Meijer, "Pneumatology," 501.

justification, means of conversion, and revival. Conversion was first and foremost a work of the Spirit. John Owen, in his catechism, asked, “What do we ourselves perform in this change, or work of our conversion?” His answer summarized Puritan teaching well: “Nothing at all, being merely wrought upon by the free grace and Spirit of God, when in ourselves we have no ability to any thing that is spiritually good.”⁸⁸

Regeneration

In opposition to the Roman Catholic Church, which taught regeneration as a result of baptism, the Puritans constructed a theology of regeneration that was robust, practical, and paramount.⁸⁹ “Regeneration,” said Goodwin, was “his prime work in us.”⁹⁰ This represented a shift from Calvin, who claimed the Spirit’s principal work was faith.⁹¹ Regeneration was necessary because of man’s fall into sin. The depravity of man demanded a wholly miraculous act. Charnock summarized Puritan sympathies well when he argued the “new birth is necessary in every part of the soul. . . . Because there was an universal depravation by the fall, regeneration must answer it in extensiveness in every faculty. Otherwise it is not the birth of the man, but of the part.”⁹² For depraved sinners, the only solution requires being born again as a new creature. And as Owen demonstrated, “Regeneration in Scripture is everywhere assigned to be the proper and peculiar work of the Holy Spirit.”⁹³

Of utmost importance for the Puritans was the notion of regeneration being a monergistic work of the Spirit in which “divine grace reigns and the human nature is

⁸⁸John Owen, *The Greater Catechism*, in *Works of John Owen*, 1:486.

⁸⁹Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 464.

⁹⁰Goodwin, *Work of Holy Ghost*, 6:17.

⁹¹Wilson, “Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit,” 54.

⁹²Stephen Charnock, “The Necessity of Regeneration,” in *Complete Works of Stephen Charnock* (1845; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), 3:26–27.

⁹³Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:189.

passive.”⁹⁴ A natural corollary to the doctrine of depravity, the Puritans insisted upon man’s regeneration by the Spirit prior to any spiritual life or good works. As Goodwin argued, “The Spirit is given from mere grace and love, and not according to works.”⁹⁵ While the Spirit’s work of regeneration is in no way initiated by an individual person, that is not to say the Spirit does not work through instrumental means. Most often, the Spirit accompanies the means of the preaching or reading of the Word.

The conjunction of Spirit and Word was instrumental at conversion. Richard Sibbes represents the Puritan tradition when he stated, “God, joining with the soul and spirit of a man whom he intends to convert, besides that inbred light that is in the soul, causeth him to see a divine majesty shining forth in the Scriptures, so that there must be an infused establishing by the Spirit to settle the heart in this first principle, . . . that the Scriptures are the word of God.”⁹⁶ This close association of Spirit and Word in conversion may be the reason many Puritans used the terminology of “calling.” As Louis Berkhof explains, “The extensive use in Post-Reformation times of the term ‘calling’ rather than ‘regeneration,’ to designate the beginning of the work of grace in the life of sinners, was due to a desire to stress the close connection between the Word of God and the operation of His grace.”⁹⁷

Regeneration makes the Christian life possible. As Beeke and Jones highlight, “personal regeneration serves as the foundation” of Puritan practical theology.⁹⁸ The change is not merely abstract, but as Owen reminded, a “real physical work of the Spirit upon the souls of men.”⁹⁹ Real moral transformation remains impossible apart from the

⁹⁴Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 470.

⁹⁵Goodwin, *Work of Holy Ghost*, 6:653.

⁹⁶Richard Sibbes, as quoted in Nuttall, *Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 23.

⁹⁷Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 470.

⁹⁸Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 463.

⁹⁹Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:307.

Spirit's work. Owen explained the significance of regeneration, when he defined it as the "infusion of a new, real, spiritual principle into the soul and its faculties, of spiritual life, light, holiness, and righteousness, disposed unto and suited for the destruction or expulsion of a contrary, inbred habitual principle of sin and enmity against God, enabling unto all acts of holy obedience."¹⁰⁰ For the Puritans, regeneration by the Spirit was no mere theoretical doctrine, but produced visible consequences for the renewed person.

Faith

Bunyan captured a common Puritan concern in poetic form when he wrote, "The word of faith unto me pardon brings, show me the ground and reason whence it springs."¹⁰¹ Roman Catholics and Socinians agreed with the Reformed that justification was by faith.¹⁰² However, much debate raged about the nature of faith and its precise relationship to justification. The Westminster divines captured the key issues surrounding faith well when they stated,

The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.¹⁰³

For the Puritans, the Spirit gives faith, generally in conjunction with the preached Word.¹⁰⁴ It is "by this faith, a Christian believes to be true whatsoever is revealed in the

¹⁰⁰Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:218–19.

¹⁰¹John Bunyan, *Ebal and Gerizzim*, in *Works of John Bunyan* (Glasgow: Blackie and Son, 1853), 3:737.

¹⁰²Owen, *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, 5:70.

¹⁰³*Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646; repr., Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Pub., 2003), 14.1.

¹⁰⁴Muller summarizes, "Not only is it the case that the Reformed doctrine of Scripture was designed to support and defend the basic Reformation assumptions that the Word of God must be preached as inspired and authoritative and that faith arises through the hearing of the Word, in addition the conception of the authority of Scripture as self-authenticating and as prior to all human authority established, from the beginning, a sense of the fundamental relationship of faith and inward illumination to the scriptural revelation. . . . What is more, a powerful sense of the central issue of faith as an inward, faithful apprehension of Christ was clearly linked by the Protestant orthodox to their sense of Christ as the center and 'foundation' or 'scope' of Scripture." Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy*, vol. 2, *The Cognitive Foundation of*

Word, for the authority of God speaking therein.”¹⁰⁵ “The principle acts of saving faith,” however, “are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.”¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, faith was no meritorious work. “God’s bestowing faith on us,” Owen reminded, “is antecedent to our believing.”¹⁰⁷

For Puritan practical theology, faith played a vitally important role in one’s apprehension of Christ and his benefits. The question that haunted the seventeenth-century English church, however, was the problem of how one may know he or she possesses faith; and perhaps a question that caused greater consternation—how could one be sure of possessing saving faith. The issue had been around since the previous century, when Reformers, such as Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and Bucer simplified the confusing categories of faith inherited from the medieval church into two categories: genuine faith and false faith.¹⁰⁸ Near the beginning of his treatise, Owen stated the problem well when he said,

For there is a faith whereby we are justified, which he who hath shall be assuredly saved; which purifieth the heart and worketh by love. And there is a faith or believing, which doth nothing of all this; which who hath, and hath no more, is not justified, nor can be saved. Wherefore, every faith, whereby men are said to believe, is not justifying. Thus it is said of Simon the magician, that he ‘believed,’ Acts 8:13, when he was in the ‘gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity’; and therefore did not believe with that faith which ‘purifieth the heart,’ Acts 15:9.¹⁰⁹

Bunyan captures Owen’s sentiment in *Pilgrim’s Progress* when Christian and Hopeful meet the Shepherds on Delectable Mountain. After learning the Delectable Mountain

Theology, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 290.

¹⁰⁵*Westminster Confession of Faith*, 14.2.

¹⁰⁶*Westminster Confession of Faith*, 14.2.

¹⁰⁷John Owen, *The Doctrine of the Saints’ Perseverance Explained and Confirmed*, in *Works of John Owen*, 11:301.

¹⁰⁸Barbara Pitkin, *What Pure Eyes Could See: Calvin’s Doctrine of Faith in Its Exegetical Context*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford: University Press, 1999), 12.

¹⁰⁹Owen, *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, 5:71.

contains a “byway to hell, a way that hypocrites go in,” Hopeful asks, “I perceive that these had on them, even every one, a show of pilgrimage, as we have now; had they not?”¹¹⁰ The Shepherds respond, “Yes, and held it a long time too.” Bunyan captures the anxiety of this revelation well when he said, “The remembrance of that last thing that the Shepherds had showed them, made their hands shake.” Elsewhere, Bunyan wrote, “A false faith has done great things; it has made men believe lies, plead for them, and stand to them, to the damnation of their souls.”¹¹¹

Owen contended that the primary distinction between a faith that justifies (a sincere faith) and a faith that does not (a temporary faith) lies in whether or not a person merely assents to the truth of the gospel or possesses a trust in Christ.¹¹² He explained, “They may give an assent unto the truth of it, so far as it is a mere act of the mind,” but what is lacking is “the heart’s approbation of the way of life and salvation by Jesus Christ.”¹¹³ For Owen, as for the Puritans in general, faith was more than mere knowledge of the gospel or intellectual agreeableness to the truth of Christ. Justifying faith required an element of trust in Christ that went well beyond the intellect. When a sinner truly trusts in the truths of the gospel, “the heart doth rest in it, and apply itself unto it, according to the mind of God.”¹¹⁴

The authors of the 1689 *Second London Confession* were also concerned with a right understanding of saving faith. In chapter fourteen, “Of Saving Faith,” the

¹¹⁰John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, in *Works of John Bunyan*, 3:145.

¹¹¹John Bunyan, *Christ a Complete Saviour*, in *Works of John Bunyan*, 1:228.

¹¹²According to Muller, “In virtually all of the Reformed writers of the era of orthodoxy, faith is defined as consisting in knowledge, in assent to the truth of the knowledge, and, most importantly, in the faithful apprehension of the truth. Such faith embraces the whole person and is both intellectual and volitional.” Muller, *Cognitive Foundation of Theology*, 291. Owen collapses knowledge and assent together in his *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, likely for polemical purposes. Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 494.

¹¹³Owen, *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, 5:95–96.

¹¹⁴Owen, *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, 5:100.

Particular Baptists adopted the clarified language of the *Savoy Confession* over the *Westminster Confession*, when they testified that saving faith may “be different in degrees, and may be weak, or strong; yet it is in the least degree of it, different in the kind, or nature of it (as is all other saving Grace) from the Faith, and common grace of temporary believers.”¹¹⁵ Saving faith was not understood as a mature version of temporary faith, but as an altogether different disposition.

As a Baptist, Bunyan was concerned that only those who professed faith be admitted into the membership of the church. In a work published shortly after his death, Bunyan cautioned that church members should be “brought in . . . by confession of faith, of sin, and a show of repentance and regeneration;” lest “false brethren creep in unawares!”¹¹⁶ Baptists also linked faith with believer’s baptism. In his defense of believer’s baptism, Spilsbury argued that infants should not be baptized because they are incapable of expressing faith consistent with a conversion to Christ.¹¹⁷ For the Particular Baptist, infants are unable to hear, believe, and receive the Spirit’s testimony. Against his paedobaptist Puritan contemporaries, Spilsbury argued, “To affirm this to be Gods way to bring persons to the faith, by working so upon them by his Spirit in their infancy, argues some ignorance of the true nature and work of grace, as the Gospel holds it forth.”¹¹⁸ For Spilsbury, the very notion of an infant being regenerated went against the pairing of Word and Spirit found within the Scripture and upheld by his Puritan contemporaries. By necessity, this restricted the covenant blessings to those who professed faith in Christ. For Spilsbury, the linchpin was faith:

¹¹⁵William L. Lumpkin, “Second London Baptist Confession,” in *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, ed. Bill J. Leonard, rev. ed. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011), 14.3.

¹¹⁶John Bunyan, *The Barren Fig-Tree; or, the Doom and Downfall of the Fruitless Professor*, in *Works of John Bunyan*, 3:563.

¹¹⁷Spilsbury, *Treatise Concerning Baptism*, 2.

¹¹⁸Spilsbury, *Treatise Concerning Baptism*, 2.

We shall find in the Scriptures of God, all the sweet promises of Grace under the New Testament, holding forth their blessings, and blessed privileges only to such as believe. And that to the Elect themselves, as they are considered in Christ, and appear so by some effect of grace, declaring their faith, and they to be such as God approves of in his Son, and so to have visible right to those privileges they are visibly justified by, and possessed in, as such that have a visible right unto the same. Which can come to us Gentiles no other way then by Christ, and Faith in his Name.¹¹⁹

As part of the Reformed tradition, the Puritans and their dissenting counterparts prized the doctrine of justification by faith alone.¹²⁰ In a 1677 tome on the subject, Owen described general Puritan sentiment well when he stated, “In my judgment, Luther spake the truth when he said, ‘For if the doctrine of justification is lost, the whole of Christian doctrine is lost.’”¹²¹

The Spirit in Mission within Puritanism

The work of the Spirit in regard to mission is a topic that remains virtually unexplored within scholarship. This is largely due to the negative perceptions that have so often characterized the Reformed tradition’s missional commitments in the past.¹²² At the turn of the twentieth century, Gustav Warneck, a Protestant missiologist, argued, “We miss in the Reformers not only missionary action, but even the idea of missions, in the sense in which we understand them today.”¹²³ For Warneck, this was not merely an issue of geographical limitations, but “because some fundamental theological views hindered

¹¹⁹Spilsbery, *Treatise Concerning Baptism*, 2-3.

¹²⁰For more information see chap. 4 of Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 2005).

¹²¹Owen, *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, 5:64. Owen appears to be quoting from Luther’s commentary on Galatians. Owen cites in Latin; however, the translation can be found in the following: Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians, 1535, Chapters 1–4*, in *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1999), 27:9.

¹²²For a recent apologetic of the Reformed tradition’s missional commitments, see Michael A. G. Haykin and C. Jeffrey Robinson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin’s Missional Vision and Legacy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014).

¹²³Gustav Warneck, *Outline of Protestant Missions from the Reformation to the Present Time*, trans. George Robson, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: Anderson & Ferrier, 1906), 9.

them from giving their activity, and even their thoughts, a missionary direction.”¹²⁴ While this view has not gone unchallenged, particularly in regards to the missionary commitments associated with Calvin’s Geneva, a negative connotation remains.¹²⁵ Thus, there has been little development on the topic of mission within the Reformed tradition in general and in Puritanism consequently.¹²⁶ Scholarly treatments of the Spirit in mission within the Reformed tradition prove rarer still.¹²⁷ What the best of the small amount of scholarship on this subject demonstrates is that though the missionary work of the early Reformed Protestantism did not rival their Roman Catholic counterparts, the Reformed Protestants did possess a concern for and a theology of missions.¹²⁸

Puritan Missionary Activity

While missionary efforts among Reformed Protestants would expand in the late eighteenth century, the seventeenth century was not void of missionary activity. John Eliot’s (1604–1690) mission to the Native Americans remains the most recognizable example of Puritan missionary activity.¹²⁹ However, Sidney Rooy has argued that the Puritan movement contained an impulse toward mission within its theological core from

¹²⁴Warneck, *Outline of Protestant Missions*, 9.

¹²⁵Defenders of the Reformed concern for missions often point to Genevan Protestant efforts to colonize and evangelize near Brazil from 1555 to 1560; see R. Pierce Beaver, “The Genevan Mission to Brazil,” in *The Heritage of John Calvin*, ed. John H. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 55–73.

¹²⁶The most widely known study of a Puritan theology of missions is Sidney H. Rooy, *The Theology of Missions in the Puritan Tradition: A Study of Representative Puritans, Richard Sibbes, Richard Baxter, John Eliot, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965).

¹²⁷Yuzo Adhinarta included a chapter in his published dissertation from Calvin Theological Seminary on the Spirit in mission within the Reformed confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The chapter includes no reference to a secondary source particularly on the Spirit in mission within the Reformed tradition. See chap. 6, “The Holy Spirit and the Doctrine of the Church: The Church’s Evangelistic Mission,” in Yuzo Adhinarta, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Major Reformed Confessions and Catechisms of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Carlisle, England: Langham Partnership Intl., 2012), 163–84.

¹²⁸Adhinarta, *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 165.

¹²⁹Richard W. Cogley, *John Eliot’s Mission to the Indians before King Philip’s War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

the earliest stages of the movement. According to Rooy, “The fundamental principles of mission which are found in [Richard] Sibbes reach through the whole Puritan period.”¹³⁰

John Eliot arrived in New England in 1631.¹³¹ The twenty-seven-year-old Englishman was born in Widford, Hertfordshire into a wealthy family and earned his B.A. at Jesus College, Cambridge in 1623. In 1629, Eliot served as an assistant master in a school run by Thomas Hooker (1586–1647), a notable nonconformist minister. He was converted under Hooker’s influence and when the school closed, Eliot set off for New England. He served as interim preacher in the Boston church for a year, then founded a church five miles away in Roxbury. The English settlers of Roxbury maintained a good relationship with the Native American tribe nearby, the Narragansett. Early in his tenure at Roxbury, Eliot demonstrated a confidence the tribe would turn to Christ. While at Roxbury, Eliot married Anne, who had traveled to the new world to marry him. The couple had five sons and one daughter, but buried four of their sons.

Eliot demonstrated a strong Puritan piety as he ministered to both the English and the Native Americans near Roxbury. The Puritan minister preached regularly to the Roxbury congregation, remained involved in the broader New England church context, and fulfilled civic obligations as well. Despite these obligations, he engaged in extensive ministry to the Native Americans. Summarizing Eliot’s efforts, Rooy stated, “He preached bi-weekly at Natick until he was past eighty, and for a shorter period to other Indian settlements. He travelled on foot and horseback, taxing his strength to the utmost, sometimes drenched for days at a time, all to bring the gospel to the natives.”¹³² However, Eliot’s concern for the Native Americans extended beyond the salvation of their souls. He also advocated for their physical and legal well-being. Rooy continued,

¹³⁰Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 13.

¹³¹Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 156.

¹³²Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 159.

“He brought cases to court to prevent defraud of Indian land, pleaded clemency for convicted Indian prisoners, fought the selling of Indians into slavery, sought to secure lands and streams for Indian use, established schools for Indian children and adults, translated books, and attempted to train the Indians to adopt a settled way of life.”¹³³ Increase Mather echoed Eliot’s reputation well when referring to him as the “Apostle to the American Indians.”¹³⁴

In his old age, when others had taken interest in ministering to the Native Americans, Eliot turned his attention toward the African slaves working on the English plantations.¹³⁵ Eliot considered it a travesty that slave holders withheld the truth of the gospel from their slaves out of fear of losing their service. When Eliot died in 1690, he was in the process of getting permission from local plantation owners to catechize their slaves.

While Eliot’s efforts to spread the gospel among Native Americans stand out, he was by no means the only Puritan interested in such missionary efforts.¹³⁶ His contemporaries in both Old and New England promoted news of Eliot’s progress. Interested readers kept up with Eliot’s work in what came to be known as the “Eliot Missionary Tracts.” The tracts were written by various Puritans, primarily from New England, and published and distributed by supporters in Britain. When the “Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England” was organized in 1649, it took over publishing the tracts. Oliver Cromwell heartily supported Eliot’s work, and publication all but ceased after the Restoration.

English Independent ministers were notable supporters of Eliot’s efforts.

¹³³Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 159.

¹³⁴Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 159.

¹³⁵Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 159.

¹³⁶Rooy, *Theology of Missions in Puritan Tradition*, 160.

Owen, along with eleven other Independents, drafted a letter to parliament in 1652 in support of missionary efforts among Native Americans.¹³⁷ The letter was published in Henry Whitfield's *Strengthe Out of Weaknesse; Or a Glorious Manifestation of the further Progresse of the Gospel among the Indians in New England* (1652). The letter invited parliament to rejoice in the conversion of the Native Americans and declared, "He hath powred his Spirit on the seeds of the Heathen, & his blessing on their Offspring."¹³⁸

Theology of Mission

In response to a charge leveled by Donald MacGavarn that Reformed confessions are typically "silent about the missionary function of the Holy Spirit," Robert Recker, Fred Klooster, and Anthony Hoekema argue that while the modern emphasis on foreign missions cannot be found, the biblical and theological fundamentals of mission are present.¹³⁹ Similarly, Adhinarta argues that while the modern terminology of "evangelism" cannot be found, Reformed confessional and catechetical teaching demonstrated great concern for propagating the gospel.¹⁴⁰ Evangelistic concern primarily revolved around the calling and equipping of ministers for the church, but occasional remarks regarding the responsibility of the church as a whole may be found.

According to Owen, the spread of the gospel is primarily a work of the Spirit. "It is the work of the Spirit," he reminded, "to remove and take away this darkness;

¹³⁷Greaves, "Owen, John (1616–1683)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [ODNB]* (Oxford: University Press, 2004-), accessed December 12, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21016>.

¹³⁸Henry Whitfield, *Strengthe out of Weaknesse; or a Glorious Manifestation of the Further Progresse of the Gospel among the Indians in New England* (repr., New York: Joseph Sabin, 1865), 7.

¹³⁹Donald MacGavarn, "A Missionary Confession of Faith," *Calvin Theological Journal* 7, no. 2 (November 1972): 141. MacGavarn is a former professor at the Fuller School of World Missions; his charges were met with a well-orchestrated response by Anthony A. Hoekema, "The Missionary Focus of the Canons of Dort," *Calvin Theological Journal* 7, no. 2 (November 1972): 209–20; Robert Recker, "An Analysis of the Belgic Confession as to Its Mission Focus," *Calvin Theological Journal* 7, no. 2 (November 1972): 158–80; Fred H. Klooster, "Missions—the Heidelberg Catechism and Calvin," *Calvin Theological Journal* 7, no. 2 (November 1972): 181–208.

¹⁴⁰Adhinarta, *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 166.

which until it is done no man can see the kingdom of God, or enter into it. And this he doth by sending the word of the gospel into any nation, country, place, or city, as he pleaseth.”¹⁴¹ Though God calls, equips, and sends men to preach the gospel, he does so “according to the sovereign will and pleasure of the Spirit of God.”¹⁴² While Christians are called to “take care and pray” for the “continuance” and “propagation” of the gospel, Owen cautioned against being “over-solicitous about it.”¹⁴³ Owen’s comments should not be taken as evidence of his having little concern for missions, but as confirmation of his reliance upon the Spirit to spread the gospel throughout the world.

Owen grounded his conviction that the gospel would reach the world in the promises of the new covenant. For it is in the “economy and dispensation of grace in the new covenant,” Owen argued,

Jesus Christ taketh all nations to be his inheritance, dispensing to all men the grace of the gospel, bringing salvation, as seemeth best to him, Tit 2:11, 12. For being lifted up, he drew all unto him, having redeemed us with his blood, ‘out of every kindred and tongue, people and nation,’ Apoc. 5:9. And on these two grounds it is that the gospel hath in itself a right and fitness to be preached to all, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.¹⁴⁴

Owen grounded the legitimacy of indiscriminate gospel proclamation and mission in the truth that Christ’s work was for all nations. He also recognized the spiritual blessings that had fallen upon his native region and encouraged his hearers and readers toward mission. Owen called all “in whose hand there is any thing” to “set in for the help of those parts of this island that as yet sit in darkness.”¹⁴⁵ “Oh that God would stir up the hearts,” he exhorted, “of ministers, to cast off all by-respects, and to flee to those places

¹⁴¹Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:247.

¹⁴²Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:247.

¹⁴³Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 3:248.

¹⁴⁴John Owen, “A Vision of Unchangeable, Free Mercy in Sending the Means of Grace to Undeserving Sinners,” in *Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1862), 8:21.

¹⁴⁵Owen, “Vision of Unchangeable, Free Mercy,” 8:40.

where, in all probability, the harvest would be great, and the labourers are few or none at all!”¹⁴⁶ According to Owen, the merchants, Roman Catholics, and heretics were risking their lives “to scatter their superstitions.” He continued, “Only the preachers of the everlasting gospel seem to have lost their zeal.”¹⁴⁷

Eschatology. Puritan eschatological expectations played a significant role in their theology of mission. While the British Reformed Orthodox displayed a variety of thought in their understanding of eschatology and millennialism, they were united by a commitment to the study of biblical prophecy with the aim of interpreting its relevance to their times.¹⁴⁸ Whereas the sixteenth-century Reformed confessions had rejected millenarianism, the position had resurfaced as respectable among the English Puritans by the seventeenth century.¹⁴⁹ Millenarianism, drawn principally from the prophetic vision of Revelation 20, focused on a 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth. As Jeffrey Jue comments, many Puritans “understood that this prophetic vision would be fulfilled literally in specific geo-political and spiritual events which had yet to occur but were now . . . near at hand.”¹⁵⁰ Goodwin expressed the Puritan hope well: “God is beginning to stir the world, and do great things in the world.”¹⁵¹ According to Wilson, an expectation of immanent “latter-day glory” among many Puritans is evident from at least the 1630s and

¹⁴⁶Owen, “Vision of Unchangeable, Free Mercy,” 8:40.

¹⁴⁷Owen, “Vision of Unchangeable, Free Mercy,” 8:40.

¹⁴⁸Crawford Gribben, “Millenialism,” in *Drawn into Controversie: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Mark Jones, Reformed Historical Theology (Gottingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 84–85.

¹⁴⁹Jeffrey K. Jue, “Puritan Millenarianism in Old and New England,” in *Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 259.

¹⁵⁰Jue, “Puritan Millenarianism,” 261.

¹⁵¹Thomas Goodwin, “A Glimpse of Zion’s Glory; or the Church’s Beauty Specified,” in *Works of Thomas Goodwin* (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1866), 12:73.

strongly concentrated among Congregationalists.¹⁵² He explains,

Congregational eschatology was ‘post-millennialism’ if not in detail, at least in spirit. The return of Jesus Christ would be preceded by ‘latter-day glory,’ a time of great peace and prosperity for the church. It was to be the last period of all in history, an epoch in which the power and influence of Satan both in politics and religion would be more than checked by the special outpouring of the Spirit, and all people would confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.¹⁵³

Debates surrounding the particulars of the millennium became quite severe. Gribben explains that the issue of eschatology was “applied rather than abstract,” influencing participation in the cultural and political moment.¹⁵⁴

Interpretations could change based on political circumstances. The Restoration of the monarchy, for example, caused a number of Puritans to amend previous interpretations.¹⁵⁵ When an uprising of Fifth Monarchists, a group with radical eschatological convictions, turned violent in 1661, dissenting ministers such as Goodwin and Bunyan distanced themselves from the group’s radicalism, but remained hopeful the millennium would soon arrive.¹⁵⁶ Benjamin Keach’s apocalyptic poem, *Sion in Distress* (1681), encouraged dissenters to wait and pray for the Lord to work. Keach wrote,

When the set time is come, I fully know
I shall deliver’d be, as Truth doth show;....
Wherefore my Children, I do say again,
Do you not stir; he hath some time to reign:
Him to destroy, it is beyond your skill;....
To suffer still it is for me appointed,
Till some to do this Work shall be anointed
With God’s good Spirit, that most holy Oyl;
And then they shall this cruel Beast quite foyl.
Your present work is therefore to pray,
To be prepared for that blessed Day.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵²Wilson, “Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit,” 310.

¹⁵³Wilson, “Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit,” 312.

¹⁵⁴Gribben, “Millennialism,” 94.

¹⁵⁵Jue, “Puritan Millenarianism,” 272.

¹⁵⁶Jue, “Puritan Millenarianism,” 268. For more information on the Fifth Monarchists, see Bernard Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study in Seventeenth-Century English Millenarianism* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972).

¹⁵⁷Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress: Or, the Sad and Lamentable Complaint of Zion and Her*

Puritan millennial thought included a belief in the conversion of the Jewish peoples. This belief remained widespread among the Puritans and was likely influenced by Peter Martyr's 1568 *Commentary on Romans*.¹⁵⁸ Unexpectedly, this belief in the conversion of the Jews combined with Eliot's mission work to further eschatological expectation. Eliot thought the Native Americans were possibly descendants of the lost tribes of Israel and that their conversion would contribute to the mass national conversion of the Jewish peoples.¹⁵⁹

The millennial expectation of many Puritans was closely bound with the work of the Spirit to expand the kingdom of God. The general belief was that the Spirit works "by degrees" in both individuals and in history.¹⁶⁰ Referencing the Reformation, Goodwin contended that "since that great light first broke out . . . we have had the light of the gospel rising still clearer and clearer."¹⁶¹ He continued, "For God to do this by degrees and by ordinary means, it is a greater glory than to send apostles." The Lord has chosen to continue to pour out his Spirit by ordinary means until "Jesus Christ shall come to possess his kingdom."¹⁶² Thus, God has chosen to extend his kingdom, not through extraordinary means, but by the instruments of Word and Spirit.¹⁶³

Children (London: 1666), 8.

¹⁵⁸Wilson, "Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit," 315.

¹⁵⁹Jue, "Puritan Millenarianism," 272.

¹⁶⁰Wilson, "Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit," 317.

¹⁶¹Thomas Goodwin, *A Discourse on the Glory of the Gospel*, in *Works of Thomas Goodwin*, 4:290–91.

For a contextualized interpretation of Goodwin's reading of Revelation, see Beeke and Jones, "How History Informs the Historicist: Thomas Goodwin's Reading of Revelation," in *Puritan Theology*, 803–18.

¹⁶²Goodwin, *Discourse on the Glory of the Gospel*, 4:291.

¹⁶³Wilson, "Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit," 316.

Missio Dei. Since for the Puritans, the “Spirit is always the Spirit of mission,” the Spirit was understood as the “vital force in the *missio Dei*.”¹⁶⁴ According to Adhinarta, the Reformed confessional tradition links the church’s mission of proclaiming the gospel with the mission of God.¹⁶⁵ The mission of the church as manifested in its responsibility to call out to sinners with the gospel is rooted in the activity of God to call and convert sinners. While Reformed confessional documents dating back to Calvin ground the church’s mission in the mission of God, the Westminster Standards provide a particularly Puritan example.¹⁶⁶ Citing chapter 10 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Adhinarta summarizes, “Both the outward preaching of the gospel or the ministry of the Word and the inward or effectual calling are the works of God through his Spirit by which God calls and draws sinners to him, and offers his grace to them.”¹⁶⁷ The *Confession* addresses the inward operations of the Spirit—effectual calling in particular—with the most detail, but does emphasize the external operations in relation to the preached word. Even the non-elect who never come to Christ “may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit.”¹⁶⁸

While the Puritans did not express the same level of missionary activity as their Roman Catholic counterparts, Puritan theology did contain the essential elements of a robust missional theology that would serve as the theological framework for the missiological developments associated with the Evangelical movement. As Klooster argued, the theology of Reformed Protestantism “leads inevitably to missions—both home and foreign missions.”¹⁶⁹ That this was demonstrably true of Puritanism is

¹⁶⁴Wilson, “Puritan Doctrine of Holy Spirit,” 336.

¹⁶⁵Adhinarta, *Doctrine of Holy Spirit*, 167.

¹⁶⁶Adhinarta, *Doctrine of Holy Spirit*, 173.

¹⁶⁷Adhinarta, *Doctrine of Holy Spirit*, 173. *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 10.1–2.

¹⁶⁸*Westminster Confession of Faith*, 10.4.

¹⁶⁹Klooster, “Missions—Heidelberg Catechism and Calvin,” 208.

confirmed by the missional and evangelistic turn associated with the Evangelicals, Jonathan Edwards and Andrew Fuller; both of whom were heavily indebted to Puritan theology.

Unity of Spirit. Richard Baxter, known for his catholic spirit, did invoke the Holy Spirit in relation to mission. In his *Reasons for Christian Unity and Concord*, Baxter argued, “An earnest desire of the world’s conversion, and of bringing in the barbarous, ignorant, infidels, and impious, to the knowledge of Christ doth show a large degree of charity and unity of the Spirit, which would fain bring in all men to the bond of the same unity, and participation of the same Spirit.”¹⁷⁰ And in an explanatory footnote, he said, “Such as now worketh in Mr. Elliot in New England, and Mr. Thomas Gouge in England, towards the Welsh; and in many ministers, who suffer the reproach and persecutions of men, because they will not consent to be as lights put under a bushel.”¹⁷¹

Conclusion

Puritan theology as a whole is profoundly Trinitarian and particularly pneumatological. As Wisse and Meijer demonstrate, Goodwin and Owen stand out among their Reformed Orthodox peers as exceptionally interested in the Holy Spirit.¹⁷² They consider the fact that both men belong to the “Puritan, Anglo-Saxon strand of Reformed Scholasticism” to be “striking.” What is also striking is that Goodwin and Owen were both seminal influences upon Andrew Fuller, particularly in regard to his great call for missions, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰Richard Baxter, *Reasons for Christian Unity and Concord*, in *Practical Works of Richard Baxter* (London: 1707), 4:634.

¹⁷¹Baxter, *Reasons for Christian Unity*, 4:634.

¹⁷²Wisse and Meijer, “Pneumatology,” 466.

¹⁷³Peter J. Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller, 1754–1815* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2015), 53–55; Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, vol. 2 (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988).

CHAPTER 4
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EVANGELICALISM:
ITS HISTORY

Andrew Fuller’s eighteenth-century background combines two related but distinct streams of English Protestantism. First, Fuller’s immediate church and denominational context was that of the Particular Baptists, a movement which had come to be dominated by High Calvinists and led by the great eighteenth-century Baptist, John Gill (1697–1771).¹ Fuller’s background, however, also includes the wider context of the transatlantic awakening that had created a new movement within English-speaking Protestantism and powerfully shaped the British landscape. The dominant theologian of these revivals, Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), came to influence Fuller tremendously.² Fuller and his associates united these two movements, which had remained predominately separate, to great effect for the Baptist denomination and global missions.

The Evangelical Revivals and the Baptist Response

Britain and her colonies witnessed a sea change in the eighteenth century. The 1689 Act of Toleration ushered in an environment of relative religious pluralism within the English realm. In such an environment, “a major change occurred in the character of Protestantism,” according to Mark Noll.³ Most simply, this change may be described as a

¹See Peter J. Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2015), 15–28.

²See Michael A. G. Haykin, “Great Admirers of the Transatlantic Divinity,” in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of New England Theology*, ed. Oliver Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 197–207.

³Mark A. Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 51.

turn to the religion of the heart.⁴

The Revivals in Historical Context

While political upheaval was the norm during the seventeenth century, so was religious fervor. As the eighteenth century dawned, the great leaders of the Puritan movement had passed and it was not uncommon to hear pastors and leaders lamenting that churches and general religious sentiment was in a state of decline.⁵ State church ministers across England and Wales were locked into a system that forced them to be educated with, model behavior after, and seek patronage from the landed gentry if they hoped to further their career.⁶ Furthermore, their pulpit ministry often bore the responsibility of contributing and encouraging social stability among the lower classes. As David Bebbington notes, “The church played a salient role in everyday life, but at the expense of imbibing a strong dose of secularity.”⁷ Problems were not restricted to the state church. Despite gaining toleration after the Glorious Revolution, the dissenting churches did not continue to thrive. The Presbyterians grew increasingly heterodox as the eighteenth century progressed. After an assembly of dissenters at Salters’ Hall voted against requiring confessional subscription to traditional Trinitarian doctrine in 1719, Arian views spread among the Presbyterians and General Baptists.⁸ The Independents and Particular Baptists, however, generally retained the Calvinistic theology bequeathed

⁴See John Coffey, “Sources and Trajectories of Evangelical Piety,” in *Heart Religion: Evangelical Piety in England and Ireland, 1690–1850*, ed. John Coffey (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1–28; Ted Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991).

⁵Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 38–48.

⁶David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 17.

⁷Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 17.

⁸Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 43.

to them by Puritanism, but in decreasing numbers. As Bebbington testifies there were fewer Independent and Baptist churches registered in the 1730s than the previous decades; furthermore, both groups were issuing public calls for prayer and fasting.⁹ For example, in 1730, Phillip Doddridge (1702–1751) published *Free Thoughts on the Most Probable Means of Reviving the Dissenting Interest* and Isaac Watts (1674–1748) wrote *An Humble Attempt Towards the Revival of Practical Religion* the following year. The decline within both the state church and dissenting congregations would not last forever. Evangelicals emerged from both groups. Furthermore, Evangelical distinctives became a bond of association and basis for cooperation among the establishmentarians and their dissenting counterparts.¹⁰

The beginning of the Evangelical revivals in Britain can be traced to 1734 and the country of Wales.¹¹ In the spring of 1735, Howell Harris (1714–1773), a schoolmaster living near Brecon, was powerfully converted. Soon after, Daniel Rowland (1713–1790), curate at Llangeitho in Carmarthenshire, experienced a similar dramatic conversion. Both men began itinerate preaching ministries around the south of Wales that attracted large crowds. Over the next few years, five counties in Wales experienced revival.¹² George Whitefield (1714–1770) also underwent conversion as an Oxford undergraduate student in the spring of 1735. By 1737, Whitefield began preaching powerful messages of the new birth around London and Bristol. Charles Wesley (1707–1788), Whitefield’s mentor while at Oxford, experienced conversion in 1738. Within the week, Charles’s brother, John Wesley (1703–1791) had undergone conversion as well. John placed his faith in

⁹Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 21.

¹⁰Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 33.

¹¹Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 20.

¹²Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 81.

Christ alone for salvation and described feeling his heart “strangely warmed.”¹³ The conversion of these men in Britain initiated a powerful movement that would extend throughout the British Isles and the American colonies, effectively reshaping the religious landscape.

The movement worked outside the lines of the established denominational hierarchies and conventions, and engendered a variety of responses from local pastors. Open-air preaching became integral to the movement as the Evangelical preachers were often unwelcome in parish churches or dissenting meeting houses. The crowds of hearers were often too large to fit anyway—or comprised of those seekers who felt uncomfortable in an established church setting. Wesley, following Whitefield’s example, began open-air preaching in 1739 at Bristol.¹⁴ Whitefield traveled to Scotland in 1741 and began preaching to some effect. In 1742, a powerful revival broke out at Cambuslang, near Glasgow, in which many hearers sought the new birth. Scotland was united to England in 1707, giving the Scots trade and travel privileges in the British empire. As Noll points out, this allowed Scottish ministers to become important leaders in the burgeoning Evangelical movement.¹⁵

The beginning of the Awakening was not restricted to the British Isles but occurred in the New England colonies as well. In 1734–1735, while Harris and Rowland were undergoing conversion, the congregation of Northampton, led by Jonathan Edwards, was experiencing revival.¹⁶ Edwards had taken over the New England congregation from his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, five years prior. While Stoddard was a stalwart Congregational pastor among the English settlers of the Connecticut River

¹³John Wesley, *The Journal of John Wesley* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1951), 36.

¹⁴Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 20.

¹⁵Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 29.

¹⁶Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 21.

Valley, Edwards sensed a spiritual deadening in the church, as well as the presence of dangerous theological notions.¹⁷ In response, Edwards delivered a two-sermon series on justification by faith alone in November. In a letter to the Boston pastor, Benjamin Colman (1673–1747), Edwards offered his first description of the congregation’s response:

A concern about the great things of religion began . . . to prevail abundantly in the town, till in a very little time it became universal throughout the town, among old and young, and from the highest to the lowest. All seemed to be seized with a deep concern about their eternal salvation; all the talk in all companies, and upon occasions was upon the things of religion, and no other talk was anywhere relished; and scarcely a single person in the whole town was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world. . . . And the Spirit of God went on in his saving influences, to the appearance of all human reason and charity, in a truly wonderful and astonishing manner.¹⁸

Neighboring towns initially scoffed at the accounts but became convinced upon visiting Northampton. This led to “wounded spirits,” who were unable “to shake off the impression that it made upon them,” and eventually the revival spread to neighboring towns.¹⁹

Revival had spread throughout about twenty-five towns by the spring of 1735 and reports circulated about hundreds being brought to faith in Christ.²⁰ According to Noll, “In the towns touched by the revival, unusual concord prevailed, young people gathered to talk about Christ, Scripture was exalted, preaching was attended to with remarkable diligence, and people received vivid images of Jesus offering his blood for their sins.”²¹ As news began to spread, pastors on both sides of the Atlantic requested an

¹⁷Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 77.

¹⁸Jonathan Edwards, letter to Benjamin Colman, May 30, 1775, in *The Great Awakening*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. C. C. Goen, rev. ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 4:101.

¹⁹Edwards, letter to Benjamin Colman, 101.

²⁰Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 78.

²¹Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 78.

account. Edwards expanded the letter to Colman and entrusted him with publication. In 1737, Edwards's *A Faithful Narrative* was published in London with the sponsorship of Isaac Watts and John Guyse (1680–1761).²² Edwards's published account of the awakening set the New England pastor on a trajectory to become the theologian of the revivals, and strongly influenced John Wesley and the Scottish leaders of the Cambuslang revival. The North American revival which began in Northampton has been termed "The Great Awakening," but was an expression of "The Eighteenth-Century Revival" experienced in the British Isles and colonies.²³

Between 1735 and 1740, the majority of connections that facilitated the awakening were established.²⁴ Furthermore, by 1739, the major characteristics of evangelicalism were present within the movement.²⁵ Whitefield and the Wesley brothers had begun preaching outdoors, garnering rejection and charges of enthusiasm from some Anglican clergy but drawing support from the massive crowds who attended. Whitefield had conducted two preaching tours in America and was well on his way to becoming a celebrity among the colonists. Furthermore, Whitefield began meeting and partnering with influential American revivalists, such as Gilbert Tennent, who arranged for Whitefield to preach in a New York Presbyterian church when the Anglicans refused

²²For information on composition and reception of *A Faithful Narrative*, see C. C. Goen, editor's introduction, in Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 36–45.

²³Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 21.

For a historical overview of the Great Awakening, see Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); Douglas L. Winiarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

²⁴David Ceri Jones, "Calvinistic Methodism and the Origins of Evangelicalism in England," in *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2008), 113.

²⁵Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 101.

him.²⁶ The Moravians were also establishing their mission in Britain. Of no little significance, Wesley published a tract on “free grace” just as Whitefield was leaving for a return trip to America.²⁷ This tract represented the theological differences that would soon strongly divide the evangelical and particularly, Methodist, movement.

Whitefield spent the entirety of 1740 in the American colonies, arriving first in Philadelphia, but conducting preaching tours throughout New England and the southern colonies as well.²⁸ William Seward (1711–1740) accompanied Whitefield as fund-raiser, organizer, and most importantly, publicist.²⁹ Seward provided newspapers and booksellers on both sides of the Atlantic with materials related to the revival, contributing to the exuberance. Colonial Anglicans protested Whitefield’s ministry and in return, the young preacher denounced many of them as unregenerate. His attacks of the established clergy contributed to the penchant for Calvinistic dissent already present.³⁰

When Whitefield visited New England, the crowds were so great that five people were trampled to death by the throngs at a Boston Congregational church.³¹ In what was the first meeting between the preacher of revival and the theologian of revival, Edwards invited Whitefield to preach at his Northampton church in the fall of 1740. Whitefield impressed Edwards with the power of his sermons, but the theologian questioned some of the tactics of the young preacher. When Edwards addressed Whitefield privately over his preaching techniques, the latter refused the conversation.

²⁶Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 103.

²⁷Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 103.

²⁸Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 104.

²⁹Boyd S. Schlenther, “Whitefield, George (1714–1770), Calvinistic Methodist Leader,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [ODNB]*, accessed January 21, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29281>.

³⁰Schlenther, “Whitefield, George.”

³¹Schlenther, “Whitefield, George.”

After over a year of preaching in America, Whitefield had results on his side. Reportedly, over 20,000 people—a crowd greater than the population of the city itself—showed up for Whitefield’s October 12th farewell sermon in Boston.³²

When Whitefield returned to England in March 1741, the preacher found himself not quite the celebrity he had been in the colonies and in fact, suffered difficulties related to his finances and anti-Anglican rhetoric.³³ Furthermore, John Wesley had become the leader of the evangelical movement in England during Whitefield’s absence. Conflict erupted between the two revivalists, primarily involving soteriological issues. The two Methodists were not only publishing antagonistic tracts but denouncing each other in sermons. Whitefield was forced to look for new associates, particularly Calvinistic ones such as Harris and the Scottish Presbyterians.

Whitefield established himself as a revival preacher, not only in England and America, but in Scotland as well. After having recovered from his American venture, Whitefield conducted a preaching tour in Scotland in the late summer of 1741 with moderate results.³⁴ Whitefield ventured to Scotland at the request of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, who had broken from the Scottish state church to form the Associate Presbytery in 1733.³⁵ The Erskines urged Whitefield to limit his association in Scotland to churches of the Associate Presbytery.³⁶ Whitefield refused out of conviction that he ought to preach wherever he found a hearing. In response, the ministers of the Associate Presbytery lambasted the itinerant. Not deterred, Whitefield returned the following year and revival broke out. Cambuslang and Kilsyth became centers of the Scottish awakening, with

³²Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 105.

³³Schlenther, “Whitefield, George.”

³⁴Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 109.

³⁵W. R. Ward, *Christianity under the Ancien Régime, 1648–1789* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 141.

³⁶Schlenther, “Whitefield, George.”

Whitefield recording that the physical outcry of those convicted under his preaching exceeded even what he witnessed in America.³⁷

Whitefield returned to the colonies in the summer of 1744 for what would be a lengthy stay. This time Whitefield was accompanied by his wife, Elizabeth Burnell James (c.1704–1768), a widow who had previously indicated her love for Harris.³⁸ The couple married in November 1741, after Harris reluctantly encouraged her to wed the more famous evangelist so as to be a help. The Whitefields found the American colonies a much less welcoming place in the 1740s. The preacher had been strongly denounced in multiple pamphlets, including two by officials at Harvard and Yale. Two of Whitefield's former associates were partially to blame for the resistance he now faced. When Whitefield left Tennent and James Davenport just a few years prior, he had encouraged the two preachers to fan the flames of revival. In their efforts, Tennent and Davenport created social and religious turmoil that threatened to rend the fabric of New England society. Whitefield did what he could to restore his reputation in New England but focused much of his efforts during this period toward the South.³⁹

In 1748, Whitefield returned to England, where he accepted the position of personal chaplain to Selina Hastings, countess of Huntingdon (1707–1791).⁴⁰ In the service of the countess, Whitefield preached regularly before the socially elite in London. Under her patronage, he continued his ministry at the London Tabernacle and even opened a second location near London's West End in late 1755. With his pulpit now located near the playhouses, the preacher offered vigorous denunciations of amusements such as the theatre. This led to rough treatment by thespian opponents, both

³⁷Schlenther, "Whitefield, George."

³⁸Schlenther, "Whitefield, George."

³⁹Schlenther, "Whitefield, George."

⁴⁰Schlenther, "Whitefield, George."

in print and occasionally, physically. While the evangelist continued to provoke disdain among some, the mature Whitefield devoted no small degree of effort to mending fences with his fellow evangelicals.

Whitefield returned to the American colonies from 1763 to 1765, remaining primarily in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston.⁴¹ His efforts to raise funds for the rebuilding of Boston after a 1760 fire went a long way in repairing relations, and Yale extended an invitation for Whitefield to preach. He also sought to repair his relationship with Wesley, though the breach never quite healed. Whitefield returned to England in 1765 to preach at the opening of the countess's Bath chapel. For the next five-years, he split time between England and her increasingly troubled colonies. He maintained a friendship with Benjamin Franklin and often seemed to prefer the colonists in their dispute with the British government. His relationship to America was permanently sealed, when in September 1770, on his seventh trip to the colonies, the revival preacher died after delivering a two-hour outdoor sermon in Newburyport, Massachusetts.

John Wesley preached Whitefield's London funeral sermon, but the two Methodist itinerants represented a major theological rift within the evangelical movement.⁴² Both men had intended to remain faithful Anglican clergymen, but their non-traditional ministry practices put both outside the bounds of a respectable minister of the Church of England. Throughout his ministry, Wesley continued to face charges of enthusiasm, neglecting to teach good works, and violations of church order.⁴³ Despite this, he energetically promoted revival and developed an organization of evangelicals. Wesley, with the help of his brother Charles, oversaw a network of societies between 1738 and 1744. When greater oversight was needed, Wesley called for a conference in

⁴¹Schlenther, "Whitefield, George."

⁴²Schlenther, "Whitefield, George."

⁴³Henry D. Rack, "Wesley [Westley], John (1703–1791), Church of England Clergyman and a Founder of Methodism," in *ODNB*, accessed January 21, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29069>.

June 1744 in order to solidify matters of doctrine, discipline, and organization.⁴⁴ He spent the rest of his life leading the movement, which he considered to be an auxiliary to the Anglican Church, but with greater religious vitality and superior organization. The evangelical organizer died in March 1791. Within six years of his death, the movement Wesley started separated from the Anglican Church and became an independent denomination.

On the whole, dissenting churches remained slower to embrace the evangelical movement.⁴⁵ Watts and Doddridge had been key exceptions who publicized and encouraged revival among Dissent, but died in 1748 and 1751 respectively. Some dissenting denominations, such as the English Presbyterians, would never embrace evangelicalism and instead, departed from traditional orthodoxy into a rigid rationalism. Other denominations, such as the Particular Baptists, had preserved orthodoxy, but resisted the Evangelical revival due to perceived excesses and its association with the Church of England.⁴⁶ By the end of the eighteenth century, orthodox Dissenters embraced the revivals and experienced their transforming power to the degree that Michael Watts could claim, “The Evangelical revival was initially an Anglican, not a Dissenting movement, but it was Dissent, not the Church of England, that reaped the ultimate benefit.”⁴⁷

Particular Baptist Responses to the Revivals

As the long eighteenth century began, Particular Baptist churches found themselves exhausted, but thankful, for the reprieve that toleration brought. However, as

⁴⁴Rack, “Wesley [Westley], John.”

⁴⁵Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 161.

⁴⁶Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 161.

⁴⁷Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, vol. 1, *From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 440.

Baptist congregations focused inward, they began to experience significant decline. And while religious decline was not limited to the Particular Baptist churches, initial resistance to the evangelical revivals led to a longer period of regression than many of their counterparts in the established church experienced.

The Particular Baptist denomination exploded during the 1640s and 1650s during the Interregnum and managed to maintain momentum through the trials associated with the Restoration.⁴⁸ By 1660, over 200 Baptist churches dotted the British Isles, with over half being Particular Baptist congregations. By the 1720s, that number had grown to over 220 Particular Baptist churches, with 115 other types of Baptist churches in existence.⁴⁹ However, by the end of the same decade, the Baptists had begun to experience significant decline.⁵⁰ As the century progressed, the General Baptists allowed Trinitarian and Christological heresy to overtake the churches of their denomination.⁵¹ For the Particular Baptists, areas of spiritual vitality certainly remained, but by the middle of the eighteenth century nearly a third of the congregations had closed.

Among the Calvinistic Baptists, the dominant metaphor for the church was that of an “enclosed garden.”⁵² This imagery, drawn from Song of Solomon 4:12, not only had a lengthy pedigree among Baptists of the previous century, but effectively captured the inward-looking focus of Baptist ministry during the period.⁵³ As Raymond Brown describes, “In the first half of the new century, with rare exceptions, congregations

⁴⁸Anthony L. Chute, Nathan A. Finn, and Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Baptist Story: From English Sect to Global Movement* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2015), 39.

⁴⁹Chute, Finn, and Haykin, *The Baptist Story*, 61.

⁵⁰Michael A. G. Haykin, “The Baptist Identity: A View from the Eighteenth Century,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 72, no. 2 (1995): 139.

⁵¹Haykin, “The Baptist Identity,” 139.

⁵²Haykin, “The Baptist Identity,” 140.

⁵³Anthony R. Cross, *Useful Learning: Neglected Means of Grace in the Reception of the Evangelical Revival among English Particular Baptists* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Pub., 2017), 1.

strengthened the walls of defensive isolation.”⁵⁴ This protectionist mentality was not without some warrant and did contribute to the maintenance of Trinitarian and Christological orthodoxy among the Calvinist Baptists. However, the ecclesial convictions of the Baptists combined with the isolationist posture led these “visible saints” to appear largely invisible to their world, while they maintained skepticism toward the evangelical revivals.

Along with resisting the revivals for ecclesiological reasons, the Particular Baptists objected to the Arminianism of the revivals as represented by John and Charles Wesley. Whitefield maintained better relations with Calvinistic dissenters generally, and no small number of Particular Baptist ministers credited Whitefield’s preaching as their instrument of conversion.⁵⁵ However, the dominant evangelical influence among the Particular Baptists came from across the Atlantic through the writings of Jonathan Edwards.

The Particular Baptist churches around Northamptonshire had long been wrestling with issues of soteriology.⁵⁶ Six congregations formed the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire Association in 1764 and the group continued to assimilate churches in the region. The association continued to resist evangelical influence until the mid-1770s, when John Ryland Jr. (1753–1825)—pastor at College Lane Church, Northampton—read Edwards’s *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will* and two related sermons by John Smalley (1734–1820). Ryland passed the sermons along to Robert Hall Sr. (1728–1791), pastor of Arnesby Particular Baptist church in Leicestershire, and indicated that Edwards’s distinction between moral and natural inability may prove helpful. Hall responded with skepticism at first, but eventually adopted Ryland’s viewpoint. In 1779, drawing upon

⁵⁴Raymond Brown, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 2, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1986), 12.

⁵⁵Watts, *The Dissenters*, 456.

⁵⁶Watts, *The Dissenters*, 458.

Edwards's evangelical theology, Hall preached before the Northamptonshire Association. His sermon was well received and published in 1781 as *Help to Zion's Travellers*.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Hall continued to appreciate the writings of Edwards and introduced his friend, Andrew Fuller, to them.⁵⁸

Edwards as Theological Interpreter of Revival

The fires of revival sparked during the Great Awakening caused no little controversy among the Trans-Atlantic Christian community. Edwards, at the center of the Awakening in America, responded to questions and concerns in a series of treatises and books. By penning *A Faithful Narrative*, Edwards established himself as a revival leader following the 1734–1735 outbreak of religious fervor. Published in final form in 1737, *A Faithful Narrative* expanded from a 1735 version of only eight pages to 132 pages.⁵⁹ Robert Davis Smart comments, “The dramatic increase in page count seems proportionate to the size of Edward’s growing leadership role in the revival.”⁶⁰ The reputation of the American divine as a theologian and interpreter of revivals would only grow.⁶¹ Edwards’s literary efforts toward defending and explaining the revival culminated in his 1746 publication *Religious Affections*.⁶²

⁵⁷For Hall’s sermon with a historical introduction, see Robert Hall, *Help to Zion’s Travellers*, ed. Nathan A. Finn (1781; repr., Mountain Home, AR: BorderStone Press, 2011).

⁵⁸Watts, *The Dissenters*, 459.

⁵⁹Robert D. Smart, *Jonathan Edwards’s Apologetic for the Great Awakening* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), 14.

⁶⁰Smart, *Jonathan Edwards’s Apologetic*, 14.

⁶¹For a helpful overview of how Edwards’s *A Faithful Narrative* was used to stimulate revivals in other areas, see Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 22–23.

⁶²Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. John E. Smith, vol. 2 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959).

Not all who read *A Faithful Narrative* approved of Edwards's proposal and he gained a number of opponents who found little of the Spirit of God in the movement. To further complicate matters, Edwards's church in Northampton experienced a rapid decline in the effects of revival. This turn of events drove Edwards to think more critically regarding the revival phenomena. Smart concludes "that Edwards's theological interpretation of revival grew stronger in the face of the post-revival circumstances, and that it was his change in emphasis that shaped the morphology of the Great Awakening."⁶³

In a 1741 commencement address at Yale, Edwards's comments evidenced a maturation in thought, as he sought to help the struggling school find its way in the aftermath of revival.⁶⁴ Edwards enlarged and published the work later the same year under the title *The Distinguishing Marks of the Spirit of God*.⁶⁵ In the work, Edwards applied the command of 1 John 4:1, to "try the spirits" to the present circumstances surrounding the revivals.⁶⁶ His work was divided among three parts. First, Edwards laid out a series of nine "negative signs" that failed to prove whether a work was of the Spirit of God or not. Next, he presented five "positive evidences," which serve as distinctive marks that a work was of the Spirit of God. Finally, Edwards applied his thinking, inferring that the recent revival of interest was primarily a work of the Spirit.

In the Yale address, Edwards made an initial foray into the practice of establishing a system by which to judge the genuineness of faith. This type of thinking led him to further consider the role of affections in faith and provide his theological

⁶³Smart, *Jonathan Edwards's Apologetic*, 99.

⁶⁴Smart, *Jonathan Edwards's Apologetic*, 105.

⁶⁵For discussion of the tract and its role in the revivals, see Goen, editor's introduction, *Great Awakening*, 4:52–60.

⁶⁶Edwards, *The Distinguishing Marks of the Spirit of God*, in Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 4:226.

descendants, such as Fuller, with an effective tool for evaluating Sandemanianism. As John E. Smith highlighted, “The *Distinguishing Marks* makes its contribution to an understanding of the *Affections* by introducing us to the idea of a sign through which piety is to be judged.”⁶⁷ Edwards readily admitted to the presence of counterfeits, especially during a time of revival; however, he also contended that God had not left his church without means, found within Scripture, by which to assess the authenticity of religious devotion. Goen speaks to the significance of *Distinguishing Marks* in this respect,

Thus began a critical but sympathetic examination of revivalism which Edwards would continually develop and refine until it issued in the mature statement of 1746, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, wherein he demonstrated that true religion necessarily involves the whole person, and that it can and must be subjected to discriminating judgment.⁶⁸

What Edwards began in *Distinguishing Marks* he worked out further in *Religious Affections* and in a manner, his thinking prepared Edwardseans to meet the future theological challenges associated with John Glas (1696–1773) and Robert Sandeman (1718–1771).⁶⁹

Especially pertinent to the applicability to the later Edwardsean combatants of Sandemanianism was the fact that Edwards was forced to defend the revivals from those who identified true religion in a rationalist sense. Leading this charge was Charles Chauncy (1705–87), pastor of the influential Congregationalist church, First Church, Boston.⁷⁰ George Marsden comments that for several years “much of Edwards’s energy

⁶⁷John E. Smith, editor’s introduction, in Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:6.

⁶⁸Goen, editor’s introduction, *Great Awakening*, 4:53.

⁶⁹In 1742—the same year he preached the series that would become *Religious Affections*—Edwards penned *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England*. In this work Edwards articulated a detailed defense of the Great Awakening for those misinformed as to the events surrounding the Awakening, but not necessarily predisposed against it. Edwards, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England*, in *Great Awakening*, 4:289–529.

⁷⁰For an overview of Charles Chauncy’s life, see Smart, *Jonathan Edwards’s Apologetic*, 161–80.

would be devoted to what amounted to a verbal duel with the Boston pastor Charles Chauncy, the most outspoken champion of the Old Lights.”⁷¹

Chauncy stressed the acceptance of doctrine as indicative of true religion and downplayed personal experience.⁷² The criticism of Chauncy, coupled with the clearly outrageous character of some happenings associated with the revival, forced Edwards to chart a moderate course that recognized the importance of accepting doctrine, but demanded a role for the affections.⁷³ This meant that within his revival writings Edwards contended to defend against an overly rationalistic view of the faith—something that would prove quite useful to his heirs.⁷⁴

Though Edwards never directly interacted with Glas or Sandeman, Smart connects Chauncy directly with the Scottish teachers.⁷⁵ He comments,

In his response to a popular itinerant from Scotland named Robert Sandeman twenty years after his debate with Edwards, Chauncy preached a series of twelve sermons on salvation and justification Although Chauncy rejected Sandeman’s restoration of the primitive rites of worship like foot washing, he embraced the incipient form of rationalism and the aversion to experiential Calvinism in Sandemanianism.⁷⁶

⁷¹George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 238.

⁷²John E. Smith, “Religious Affections and the ‘Sense of the Heart’,” in *Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 105.

⁷³Interestingly, Chauncy’s rationalistic tendencies failed to keep him tethered to orthodoxy. He increasingly moved away from Reformed and Puritan thought, eventually embracing Unitarian and Universalist doctrines. See Smart, *Jonathan Edwards’s Apologetic*, 299–302.

⁷⁴For various essays on Edwards’s theological heirs, see Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney, eds., *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁷⁵Edwards was familiar with Glas’s writing—likely through his correspondence with Scottish evangelicals. Edwards owned a copy of Glas’s *Notes on Scripture-Texts* (1747) and noted the work in the table to “Miscellanies.” Edwards, *Catalogues of Books*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Peter J. Thuesen (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 26:54.

⁷⁶Smart, *Jonathan Edwards’s Apologetic*, 300.

While there were some clear differences between Chauncy, Edwards's formidable opponent, and the Sandemanians, both prized a rationalistic understanding of the faith. In arguing against Chauncy for the presence of religious affections in true religion, Edwards unknowingly equipped his theological heirs to do battle with Glas and his followers.

Key Eighteenth-Century Influences

Jonathan Edwards. In an 1805 letter to Timothy Dwight (1752–1817), Andrew Fuller referred to the writings of Jonathan Edwards, Dwight's grandfather, as “food to me and many others.”⁷⁷ Fuller's sentiment captures what many have long held to be true about Edwards, a thinker often dubbed “America's greatest theologian.”⁷⁸ By the end of his life, Edwards had established a significant legacy through his writings, revival preaching, and personal mentoring.

Edwards was born on October 5, 1703, in East Windsor, Connecticut. A pastor's son par excellence, his father, Timothy Edwards (1669–1758) pastored the Congregational church of East Windsor. His mother, Esther Stoddard Edwards (1672–1771), was the daughter of Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729), the distinguished pastor of the Congregational church at Northampton, Massachusetts. The only son of eleven children, Edwards grew up in a home that prized intellectual acumen and spiritual rigor.⁷⁹ Occasional spiritual awakenings occurred throughout Edwards's childhood and the only preacher who saw more awakenings than Edwards's father was his grandfather in

⁷⁷Andrew Fuller, “Memoir,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 1:85.

⁷⁸For example, Robert Jenson stated, “It has become a truism, that Jonathan Edwards is America's greatest theologian, in the sense that his achievement in the discipline of theology is the most weighty to have appeared on this continent.” Robert W. Jenson, *America's Theologian: A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: University Press, 1988), 1.

⁷⁹Robert W. Caldwell and Douglas A. Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards,” in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 201.

Northampton.⁸⁰ The future pastor traced the beginnings of his own spiritual experience to one of these awakenings, which occurred around 1712 and 1713.

Edwards displayed a promising intellect from a young age and was afforded the luxury of having one of the most respected teachers in the Connecticut River valley as a father.⁸¹ In the fall of 1716, just as Edwards turned thirteen, he matriculated into the Wethersfield branch of Connecticut's Collegiate School, where he studied under a very capable relative, Elisha Williams (1694–1755). By the spring of 1719, Connecticut consolidated its college system and Edwards moved to New Haven, where the school had been officially renamed Yale College after a donor.⁸² He graduated with a B.A. in 1720 and decided to continue studies in pursuit of a M.A., which he earned three years later. As a student at Yale, Edwards thrived intellectually, but struggled spiritually.⁸³ Finally, in the spring of 1721, Edwards experienced conversion while meditating on 1 Timothy 1:17: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.” He later recounted,

As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the divine being; a new sense, quite different from anything I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was; and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up to God in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him. I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to prayer, to pray to God that I might enjoy him; and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection.⁸⁴

⁸⁰Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 25. For Edwards's comments, see Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 154.

⁸¹Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 34.

⁸²Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 36.

⁸³Caldwell and Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards,” 201.

⁸⁴Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. George S. Claghorn and Harry S. Stout (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 16:792–93.

Edwards commented that he did not immediately realize this experience constituted conversion. He remained suspicious of his affections for some time, but something in Edwards had changed and he recognized in himself a growing spiritual sense.⁸⁵

Following his conversion, the 1720s proved a formative time for Edwards's preparation as a pastor and scholar.⁸⁶ Just before his eighteenth birthday, in August of 1722, Edwards began an eight-month term as an interim pastor at a small Presbyterian church in New York City.⁸⁷ In this metropolitan location, Edwards adopted several practices that posterity would associate with him. First, the seaport town offered the young preacher an outlet to the world he had not yet experienced and he began keeping a notebook that related world events to the book of Revelation.⁸⁸ It was in this first pastorate that he also began the Puritan practice of developing a set of resolutions intended to govern his behavior.⁸⁹ By December 1722, he had also begun keeping a spiritual diary.⁹⁰ Edwards left the New York pastorate in April 1723 and spent the summer at home before briefly pastoring another congregation in Windsor, Connecticut. The young preacher took a respite from pastoral ministry between 1724 and 1726; during this period he served his *alma mater* in New Haven as a tutor.

Edwards departed Yale for Northampton in the late fall of 1726.⁹¹ Events were set in motion which would establish Edwards as the heir apparent to the influential pulpit of his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard. The church ordained the young preacher as the

⁸⁵Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 42.

⁸⁶Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 201.

⁸⁷Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 46–47.

⁸⁸Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 48. See Jonathan Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 5:95–304.

⁸⁹Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 50. See Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings*, 753–58.

⁹⁰Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 50. See Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings*, 759–88.

⁹¹Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 110.

assistant pastor on February 15, 1727. In July of the same year, Edwards returned to New Haven where he married Sarah Pierpont, a young woman the former Yale tutor had long held to be exceptionally pious for her age.⁹² The couple experienced a notably joyous and prosperous marriage, with Sarah giving birth to eleven children.

Stoddard's long tenure, powerful preaching, and strong leadership resulted in the Northampton pulpit being the most influential outside of Boston.⁹³ Edwards's training under the legendary pastor proved sufficient and when his grandfather died in February 1729, the young Edwards inherited the pastoral responsibilities in Northampton. His ministry would be marked by both extraordinary seasons of revival and bitter conflict.⁹⁴

The sole preacher behind an influential pulpit, Edwards began to combat what he termed "Arminianism," but may be best understood as a movement towards "reasonable" Christianity within English theology.⁹⁵ Edwards sensed Calvinist orthodoxy was under siege by this new teaching that moderated original sin, exalted free will, and turned Christianity into little more than morality.⁹⁶ His first published sermons *God Glorified in Man's Dependence* (1731) and *A Divine and Supernatural Light* (1734), were both defenses of traditional Calvinist theology.⁹⁷ When Edwards began preaching a series on *Justification by Faith* in 1734, many in Northampton fell under conviction of sin and began seeking conversion. When a young man in the community died unexpectedly, the spiritual temperature sky-rocketed and Edwards seized the moment.⁹⁸ By the beginning of 1735, Northampton was experiencing a degree of revival previously

⁹²Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 201.

⁹³Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 203.

⁹⁴Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 125–26.

⁹⁵Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 203.

⁹⁶Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 137–41.

⁹⁷Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 203.

⁹⁸Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 153.

unknown in the region. Spiritual outpourings spread throughout nearby towns and reports of the awakening were heard throughout the transatlantic community. However, such experiences could not last forever, and as summer approached, signs of a spiritual cooling were evident. In June 1735, the suicide of a prominent townsman—Edwards’s uncle—shocked the community and the awakening drew to a close.⁹⁹ Just as an unexpected death marked the beginning of the 1734–1735 revival, so too would an unexpected death mark the end of it. Edwards removed the recently finished account of the awakening addressed to Benjamin Colman and added a postscript regarding the suicide.¹⁰⁰ The revival was over but Edwards’s *Faithful Narrative* was in seed form and that work, as Kidd notes, “would continue to bear fruit for centuries through the mediation of print.”¹⁰¹

By 1739, Edwards saw glimpses of hope that an international awakening was on the horizon.¹⁰² By 1740, reports of American revival under the preaching of Whitefield abounded and Edwards wrote the British itinerant and invited him to preach at Northampton. Edwards believed the Great Awakening to be a true work of the Spirit of God¹⁰³ and himself “as part of an international Reformed evangelical movement that saw awakening as God’s greatest works in the current age.”¹⁰⁴ Whitefield visited Northampton in October 1741 and Edwards wept at the itinerant’s preaching, as he joyfully recognized a time of renewal was again at hand.¹⁰⁵ Edwards promoted the revival, preaching in churches throughout the Connecticut River Valley, including his

⁹⁹Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 163–69.

¹⁰⁰Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 109.

¹⁰¹Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 21.

¹⁰²Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 201.

¹⁰³Caldwell and Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards,” 203.

¹⁰⁴Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 201.

¹⁰⁵Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 207.

famous *Sinners in the Hands of Angry God*, which he delivered most notably at Enfield, Connecticut in July 1741.¹⁰⁶

The Great Awakening produced converts, but also controversy. Stories of excesses abounded, calling the legitimacy of the revivals into question. Previous supporters and even veterans of the 1734–1735 Northampton revival distrusted the fruits of the recent awakening.¹⁰⁷ Clergy throughout New England divided sharply on the issue and a split between “New Lights” and “Old Lights” solidified.¹⁰⁸ Edwards tried to establish a mediating position during the 1740s with the publication of three major works on the topic: *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God* (1741), *Some Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England* (1742), and his most mature work, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746).¹⁰⁹ In 1742, Edwards published the *Life and Diary of David Brainerd*, which offered readers a biographical example of the evangelical Calvinist piety Edwards heralded.

While Edwards’s reputation grew internationally during the 1740s, he continued to experience controversy within his Northampton congregation.¹¹⁰ Edwards faced severe resistance when he initiated a change from his grandfather’s custom of open communion—a practice that allowed the baptized but unconverted to take the Lord’s Supper—to closed communion, which allowed only the converted to participate. Controversy spread and on July 1, 1750, Edwards preached his farewell sermon after being dismissed as the pastor of Northampton.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶Caldwell and Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards,” 203.

¹⁰⁷Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 228.

¹⁰⁸Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 238.

¹⁰⁹Caldwell and Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards,” 203.

¹¹⁰Caldwell and Sweeney, “Jonathan Edwards,” 203.

¹¹¹Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 360.

The following year, the Edwards family moved to Stockbridge, a frontier town in western Massachusetts. Edwards pastored a small congregation of settlers, while also serving as a missionary to the remaining Native Americans.¹¹² Ministry in Stockbridge was far from easy, but Edwards managed to continue promoting orthodox Calvinism through his writings. From the frontier town he published *Freedom of the Will* (1754), worked on his *Two Dissertations*, and wrote *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* (1758).¹¹³ Having firmly established his academic *bona fides*, Edwards was offered the presidency of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University), which he assumed in January 1758.¹¹⁴ He was not to hold the post for long, however. Mere weeks into the new role, Edwards received a tainted smallpox vaccination that caused severe complications. After suffering for some time, Edwards died peacefully on the afternoon of March 22.¹¹⁵ America's greatest theologian was dead, but the name Jonathan Edwards would forever be associated with the emergence of a renewal movement within Protestantism known as evangelicalism.¹¹⁶

John Gill. John Gill stood forth as a giant among mid-eighteenth-century Baptists.¹¹⁷ "Mr. Voluminous," as he was called for his prodigious writing, established himself as the greatest Baptist leader and theologian of his day. Not only did Gill produce over ten thousand pages, but he was the first pastor to write a commentary on the entire Bible and to develop a complete system of theology.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Gill served for

¹¹²Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 375.

¹¹³Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 204.

¹¹⁴Caldwell and Sweeney, "Jonathan Edwards," 204.

¹¹⁵Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 494.

¹¹⁶For a look at Edwards's life as it relates to the emergence of evangelicalism, see Philip F. Gura, *Jonathan Edwards: America's Evangelical* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006).

¹¹⁷Timothy George, "John Gill," in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, 255.

¹¹⁸Timothy George, "John Gill," in *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition [TBT]*, ed. Timothy

nearly fifty-two years in the same London pulpit, establishing him as a dominant influence among the Baptists of his generation. His great legacy would be one the leaders of the next generation of Particular Baptists, such as Andrew Fuller, would both build upon and contend with.

Gill was born to Edward and Elisabeth Gill in Kettering, Northamptonshire, on November 23, 1697.¹¹⁹ Gill's father was known as a pious man and served as a deacon at the Particular Baptist congregation at Kettering. As a child Gill displayed a tremendous acumen and excelled in his studies at the local grammar school. When he was eleven, Gill withdrew from the grammar school due to the teacher's insistence that all students attend the daily prayer service in the nearby Anglican Church. By that time, Gill had already gained the ability to read Latin and Greek with some fluency, having read through the Greek New Testament at the age of ten. Gill continued his studies, learning Hebrew through self-study.

Along with Gill's intellectual development came spiritual development, and at the age of twelve the future pastor was converted during a sermon by William Wallis (d. 1711), the founding pastor of the church at Kettering.¹²⁰ Gill delayed baptism until he was nineteen, when on November 1, 1716, he entered a local river and underwent baptism by immersion. The following Sunday, his congregation received him into fellowship and quickly began putting the young man's gifts to use.¹²¹ Gill's giftedness had been recognized by some influential London Baptists who encouraged the young

George and David S. Dockery (Nashville: B & H Pub., 2001), 12.

¹¹⁹George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 13.

¹²⁰George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 13. See also, Robert W. Oliver, "John Gill: His Life and Ministry," in *The Life and Thought of John Gill (1697–1771): A Tercentennial Appreciation*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1997), 7–8.

¹²¹George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 13.

preacher to train under a nearby pastor, John Davis.¹²² Finding the suggestion agreeable, Gill traveled to the nearby town of Higham Ferrers to apprentice under Davis. While there, Gill met Elizabeth Negus (d. 1764), a woman of known piety, and the two were married in 1718.¹²³ The couple went on to have three children who survived past infancy. Elizabeth proved a faithful help for over forty-six years.¹²⁴

Shortly after marriage, Gill and his wife moved back to Kettering where he served a brief stint as assistant pastor.¹²⁵ Gill formed a close friendship with John Brine (1703–1765) while serving at his home church.¹²⁶ Gill soon moved to London, but his friendship with Brine remained, until eventually both Particular Baptists found themselves pastoring in London. Gill’s call to London came in 1719 when the Horselydown Baptist church in Southwark, near the London Bridge, invited the young preacher to fill their pulpit.¹²⁷ The congregation had been founded in 1672 by Benjamin Keach; the most recent pastor, Benjamin Stinton, Keach’s son-in-law, died unexpectedly at forty-two.¹²⁸ The congregation initially invited Gill to fill in for several weeks and the majority of the congregation supported issuing the young preacher a call. However, a vocal minority objected due to Gill’s age, him being not yet twenty-two, and eventually controversy erupted.¹²⁹ Contentious members opposed Gill’s call on the grounds that women had been allowed to vote, which was contrary to previous practice.¹³⁰

¹²²Oliver, “John Gill,” 11.

¹²³Oliver, “John Gill,” 12.

¹²⁴George, “John Gill,” in *TBT*, 13–14.

¹²⁵George, “John Gill,” in *TBT*, 14.

¹²⁶Oliver, “John Gill,” 12.

¹²⁷George, “John Gill,” in *TBT*, 14.

¹²⁸George, “John Gill,” in *TBT*, 14.

¹²⁹Oliver, “John Gill,” 14–15.

¹³⁰George, “John Gill,” in *TBT*, 14.

Despite opposition, Gill's call to Horsleydown was formalized on March 22, 1720, in a public ordination service.¹³¹ Sustained by assurance that God had called the young pastor to one of his denomination's largest churches, Gill overcame numerous challenges and emerged as a leading pastor within London's Particular Baptist community. In 1724 Gill became manager of the Particular Baptist fund and published his first treatise, a funeral sermon preached for one of his deacons.

The self-taught Baptist preacher went on to establish a successful literary career. He published his *Exposition of the Song of Solomon* and an influential treatise on baptism by immersion in 1728. By the following year, Gill's notoriety had grown outside of the Particular Baptist community and friends from various dissenting churches established a fund that would allow for Gill to deliver a weekly lecture on Wednesday evenings at Great Eastcheap.¹³² Gill lectured for over twenty-seven years and many of the preacher's most well-known works originated in the Great Eastcheap forum. "Mr. Voluminous" published his *Exposition of the New Testament* in 1748, *Exposition of the Old Testament* in 1766, his *magnum opus*, *A Body of Doctoral Divinity*, in 1769, in addition to a number of other practical, spiritual, and polemic works.¹³³ One of Gill's best known writings *The Cause of God and Truth*, presents a defense of classic Reformed soteriology and was published in four parts between 1735 and 1738.¹³⁴ The London Baptist preacher also engaged with John Wesley over the doctrine of predestination and wrote significant critiques of Arianism, deism, and latitudinarianism. Gill also possessed a reputation for being considerably adept in Semitic languages and Jewish backgrounds,

¹³¹George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 15.

¹³²George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 16.

¹³³George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 16.

¹³⁴George, "John Gill," in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, 256.

as evidenced by the bestowal of an honorary Doctor of Divinity by the University of Aberdeen as recognition for his outstanding work.¹³⁵

Gill's London ministry, born in strife, would continue to draw both loyal admirers and strong opposition. Under Gill's leadership, his church replaced Benjamin Keach's *Confession*, which had served as the doctrinal basis since its founding, with a new and shorter statement.¹³⁶ The new doctrinal confession included significant changes related to the doctrine of justification, as well as removed the article related to the free offer of the gospel.¹³⁷ Both of these changes represented doctrinal beliefs that would become areas of contention within the Particular Baptist community. While some of his views were contested, Gill did recognize the most serious theological threat to the dissenting community in the mid-eighteenth century as anti-Trinitarianism and defended orthodoxy accordingly.¹³⁸ He published *A Treatise on the Doctrine of the Trinity* in 1731 after lecturing on the topic at Great Eastcheap. Gill continued to defend Trinitarianism for his entire ministry, publishing *A Dissertation Concerning the Eternal Sonship of Christ* in 1768.

In 1757, Gill's congregation moved to a newly-built meetinghouse at Carter Lane.¹³⁹ His sermons are said to have been energetic, and Charles Spurgeon referred to Gill as "a sort of archbishop over a certain section" of the Particular Baptist community.¹⁴⁰ Gill's congregation was one of the largest within the denomination and his

¹³⁵George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 16.

¹³⁶Oliver, "John Gill," 19.

¹³⁷Oliver, "John Gill," 20.

¹³⁸Oliver, "John Gill," 30.

¹³⁹George, "John Gill," in *TBT*, 17.

¹⁴⁰Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle: Its History and Work* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1876), 39.

reputation far surpassed his Baptist contemporaries.¹⁴¹ Despite a measure of controversy within his ministry, the London pastor was beloved by his congregation. When Gill attempted to resign due to old age, the congregation would not accept and referred to him as their “father” and themselves as “his affectionate children.”¹⁴² On October 14, 1771, he departed from his congregation and this world after a prolonged illness. In burial, Gill joined the host of old dissenters laid to rest in Bunhill Fields, with many mourners in attendance.¹⁴³ A giant among Particular Baptists had fallen and an era within Particular Baptist history had passed along with him.¹⁴⁴

Key Issues in the Eighteenth Century

The Influence of German Pietism

The Evangelical movement was an expression of both continuity and discontinuity with Puritanism. As Noll writes, “By the late 1730s, when modern evangelicalism emerged, the traditions of experiential Calvinism had weakened considerably throughout all parts of the British empire, but they were being kept alive by many preachers in Massachusetts and Connecticut, by several capable ministers in Scotland and Ireland, and by somewhat lonely voices among English Nonconformists like Philip Doddridge and Isaac Watts.”¹⁴⁵

Another significant contributor to the Awakening sprung from central Europe, as a movement known as Continental Pietism and which arose in the seventeenth century within German-speaking lands.¹⁴⁶ Johann Arndt (1555–1621) laid the foundation for

¹⁴¹Oliver, “John Gill,” 40.

¹⁴²George, “John Gill,” in *TBT*, 18.

¹⁴³Oliver, “John Gill,” 47.

¹⁴⁴Oliver, “John Gill,” 48.

¹⁴⁵Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 59.

¹⁴⁶Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 60.

Pietism with his multivolume *On True Christianity* (1605–1610), in which he argued for a Christianity that went beyond formal religious duties to a heartfelt experience of Christ that prompted action in Jesus’ name.¹⁴⁷ Though Arndt’s work remained influential for decades, the Pietist movement began in 1675, when Philip Jakob Spener (1635–1705) republished a collection of Arndt’s sermons with his own lengthy preface. Soon Spener’s preface was published as a stand-alone work titled *Pia Desideria*. Spener accused many within the established Lutheran church of holding to a counterfeit faith. “True faith,” Spener argued, “is awakened through the Word of God, by the illumination, witness, and sealing of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁴⁸ Spener offered six remedies for restoring the health of the German church, including an increased role for laypersons through small-group gatherings of the faithful known as *collegia peitatis*.¹⁴⁹

While not without his critics, Spener drew a significant following, including the driven and capable August Hermann Francke (1663–1727).¹⁵⁰ Under Francke’s leadership, a group of zealous Pietists engaged in a fury of religious activity. They founded the University of Halle in 1694, published a number of devotional texts, established an orphanage, sent missionaries; in addition, they engaged in entrepreneurial activities, such as the manufacturing and distributing of medicine, in order to fund their good works. As the eighteenth century dawned, Pietism spread rapidly through central and eastern Europe, influencing a range of social classes from German scholars to persecuted Austrians. Pietism entered its third generation when a Saxon count offered a persecuted band of German-speaking Moravian Pietists shelter on his large estate.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 61.

¹⁴⁸Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert (1675; repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 45–46.

¹⁴⁹Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 62.

¹⁵⁰Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 63.

¹⁵¹D. Meyer, “Zinzendorf, Nikolaus Ludwig Von,” in *Biographical Dictionary of*

Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760) was born into a wealthy Saxon family, but his father died shortly after he was born. Zinzendorf’s maternal grandmother took over his upbringing and in 1710 he matriculated at Halle where he studied under Francke, whose missionary work became a significant source of inspiration.¹⁵² Zinzendorf studied law in Wittenberg from 1716 to 1719, but retained an interest in theology. When he married a wealthy countess in 1722, Zinzendorf acquired a significant estate in southwest Saxony. Shortly thereafter, he began welcoming refugees from Bohemia and Moravia who were displaced by persecution from Roman Catholic authorities.¹⁵³ These refugees were members of the Unity of Brethren, or Moravians, and traced their roots back to the pre-Reformation Hussite movement. The settlement became known as “Herrnhut,” meaning “the Lord’s protection.” On his estate, Zinzendorf oversaw a merger between the pietistic Lutheranism of Halle with the revivalistic faith of the Moravians.¹⁵⁴

In 1727, with the Moravian community experiencing significant internal struggles, Zinzendorf stepped in and reorganized the settlement, improving the practical and spiritual life of the members.¹⁵⁵ This included the implementation of small groups aimed at spiritual edification and renewed liturgical forms, which included “love feasts,” set times of prayer, and singing. On August 13, 1727, a profound spiritual experience ignited the Herrnhut community. Members of the Brethren church began making contact with churches of other denominations in pursuit of greater Christian unity. In 1732, the Moravians sent their first missionaries, some to Greenland and others to St. Thomas in

Evangelicals, 760.

¹⁵²Meyer, “Zinzendorf, Nikolaus Ludwig Von,” 759.

¹⁵³Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 64.

¹⁵⁴Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 64.

¹⁵⁵Meyer, “Zinzendorf, Nikolaus Ludwig Von,” 760.

the Caribbean. Moravian mission work became an inspiration for the mission movement that would expand later in the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁶ Fuller possessed a copy of *A Concise account of the Present State of the Missions of the United Brethren; (Commonly Called Moravians)*, which the Moravian church published yearly beginning in 1796.¹⁵⁷

While Zinzendorf's theological roots ran to Halle, he began distancing himself from the Lutheran Pietists during the later years of the 1720s. Zinzendorf opposed the Enlightenment and through controversy with rationalist thinkers, the Saxon church leader solidified his belief that Christ's death made atonement for sinners and purchased reconciliation with God. The suffering and sacrificial Christ became the foundational theological grid through which one could understand theology, ethics, and sin. Moravian piety focused intensely on the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross, even giving attention to Christ's continued bearing of his wounds as testimony of his love for sinners.¹⁵⁸

Zinzendorf proved an able leader of a worldwide movement. He visited the St. Thomas missionaries in 1738 and Moravian communities in North America in 1741. By 1736, the Saxon theologian had been expelled from his homeland and officially broke from the Lutheran state church. In 1749, the English Parliament gave official recognition to the United Brethren and Zinzendorf sought to bring the church's headquarters there. He remained in London until 1755, expanding the number of Brethren communities in the British Isles through publishing and outreach. He returned to Saxony in 1755 and resumed leadership of the communities there. When Zinzendorf died in 1770, the Moravian church had over 9,000 members in Europe and missionaries in Greenland, Surinam, the West Indies, Jamaica, Antigua, Berbice, and among the Native

¹⁵⁶Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 64.

¹⁵⁷Andrew Fuller, *The Diary of Andrew Fuller, 1780–1801*, in *Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Michael D. McMullen and Timothy D. Whelan (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2017), 1:220.

¹⁵⁸Meyer, "Zinzendorf, Nikolaus Ludwig Von," 759.

Americans.¹⁵⁹

Zinzendorf effectively transferred Pietism into a third stage: a global missionary free-church movement.¹⁶⁰ Moravian leaders were influential among early evangelical leaders, particularly John Wesley. As Noll writes, “Contact between representatives of the Renewed Unity of the Brethren and early English evangelicals would have the most far-reaching consequences imaginable.”¹⁶¹ Such contact between Moravians and evangelicals was not restricted to Wesley and his Methodist counterparts but occurred in Northamptonshire as well.¹⁶²

The Holy Spirit and Evangelical Historiography

Since its publication in 1989, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* by David W. Bebbington, Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Stirling, has proved a seminal work for defining and explaining Evangelicalism. In his work, Bebbington argues that evangelicalism must be understood as possessing four primary characteristics: conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism. These characteristics, known now as the Bebbington Quadrilateral, have together provided a base from which historians of the varied and complex movement known as Evangelicalism have been able to work.¹⁶³

The influential nature of Bebbington’s thesis has produced two results consequential to this thesis. First, the Bebbington Quadrilateral has affected the way in

¹⁵⁹Meyer, “Zinzendorf, Nikolaus Ludwig Von,” 761.

¹⁶⁰Meyer, “Zinzendorf, Nikolaus Ludwig Von,” 761.

¹⁶¹Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 64.

¹⁶²J. C. S. Mason, *The Moravian Church and the Missionary Awakening in England, 1760–1800* (Suffolk, England: Boydell Press, 2001), 88.

¹⁶³For evidence of Bebbington’s enduring influence on Evangelical historiography, see Charlie Phillips, “Re-Examining David Bebbington’s ‘Quadrilateral Thesis,’” *Fides et Historia* 41, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 44–45.

which figures and movements that fall within Evangelicalism have been studied and assessed. This is certainly true of the Baptist theologian Andrew Fuller.¹⁶⁴ Fuller, in certain respects, proves a model Evangelical for Bebbington.¹⁶⁵ Second, numerous historians have critiqued Bebbington's thesis.¹⁶⁶ Recently, Baylor historian Thomas Kidd provided a friendly critique, suggesting that the Bebbington Quadrilateral should incorporate a fifth element, an emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁷ In his interaction with Bebbington, Kidd argues that "from the outset of the movement, belief in the active, immediate ministry of the Holy Spirit was precisely what made evangelical Christianity as novel and controversial as it was. . . . The ministry of the Spirit was arguably the most distinctive, controversial, and energizing principle behind the piety of the new evangelicals."¹⁶⁸ Kidd believes his study of George Whitefield (1714–1770) establishes his critique.¹⁶⁹ Bebbington, in his response to Kidd, admits that an "emphasis on the third person of the Trinity can often be discerned within the evangelical movement," but insists "it cannot be conceded that the ministry of the Spirit was consistently on par with the other prominent features of evangelicalism."¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴In the most recent biography of Fuller, Peter Morden assumes Bebbington's thesis regarding Evangelicalism and appropriates the terminology of the Quadrilateral. Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*.

¹⁶⁵Bebbington states, "The logic of Evangelical activism was founded on the doctrine of duty faith. It was most logically systematically expounded by Andrew Fuller, the Baptist theologian who put his convictions into practice by becoming the first secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society." Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 64.

¹⁶⁶For a comprehensive critique, as well as Bebbington's response, see Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart, eds., *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2008). Also see Phillips, "Re-Examining Bebbington's 'Quadrilateral Thesis'."

¹⁶⁷Thomas S. Kidd, "The Bebbington Quadrilateral and the Work of the Holy Spirit," *Fides et Historia* 41, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 54-57.

¹⁶⁸Kidd, "Bebbington Quadrilateral and Work of Holy Spirit," 54.

¹⁶⁹For Kidd's presentation of Whitefield the Evangelical, see Thomas S. Kidd, *George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

¹⁷⁰David W. Bebbington, "The Evangelical Quadrilateral: A Response," *Fides et Historia* 41, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 89.

In making this argument, Kidd echoes the sentiment of B. B. Warfield, the great Princeton theologian, who pointed to a developed doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit as particularly associated with Reformed Protestantism.¹⁷¹ In a preface to Abraham Kuyper's book *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, Warfield claimed that "the developed doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is an exclusively Reformation doctrine, and more particularly a Reformed doctrine, and more particularly still a Puritan doctrine."¹⁷² Warfield cited John Calvin as the source of the first "systematic and adequate expression" of the doctrine of the work of the Spirit.¹⁷³ For Warfield, however, the doctrine of the work of the Spirit received full expression under Reformed churches who had experienced "the Second Reformation," which "deepened the spiritual life of the churches."¹⁷⁴ The unique focus on the work of the Spirit among those within the Reformed heritage, however, did not conclude at the end of the Puritan period. Warfield added that "for a century and a half afterward, indeed, this topic continued to form the hinge of the theologizing of the English Nonconformists."¹⁷⁵ The doctrine of the Holy Spirit remained at the center in the twentieth century, Warfield said: "Nor has it lost its central position even yet in the minds of those who have the best right to be looked upon as the successors of the Puritans."¹⁷⁶ For Warfield, that would have almost certainly

¹⁷¹For an overview of Warfield's theology, see Fred G. Zaspel, *The Theology of B. B. Warfield: A Systematic Summary* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

¹⁷²Benjamin B. Warfield, introductory note, in *Work of the Holy Spirit* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1900), xxxiii.

¹⁷³Warfield states, "The doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is a gift from John Calvin to the Church of Christ." Warfield, introductory note, xxxiii.

¹⁷⁴By the term "Second Reformation," Warfield is referencing English Puritanism and the Dutch Further Reformation. For an overview of English Puritanism, see John Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603-1689* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998). For connections between English Puritanism and the Dutch Reformation, see Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1982).

¹⁷⁵Warfield, introductory note, xxviii.

¹⁷⁶Warfield, introductory note, xxviii.

meant the Evangelicals of his generation.¹⁷⁷

Sandemanianism

From the American colonial frontier of the British Empire, Jonathan Edwards articulated a distinct version of the Reformed faith and birthed a theological tradition that would take root in his own land and beyond. His near contemporary, John Glas (1696–1773), a Scotsman, likewise developed a distinct form of Reformed Christianity with adherents in Scotland and abroad.¹⁷⁸ Though these men never encountered one another, their theological heirs eventually would. The followers of Edwards and Glas came to realize that their two conceptions of faith proved incompatible.

Glas found his most faithful student in his son-in-law, Robert Sandeman (1718–1771). Eventually the influence of Sandeman would grow to the extent that his name supplanted that of his father-in-law in association with the theological system. Through the efforts of Sandeman, Glas’s thought spread to various denominations in Scotland and even to the colonies of New England. The Sandemanians, as they were generally called, continued to popularize Glas’s theology long after his death.

Faith according to Glas and Sandeman. John Glas was brought up in a pastor’s home that prized the strict Calvinist orthodoxy of the Scottish Presbyterian church.¹⁷⁹ Eventually, Glas entered the ministry himself. His first pastorate proved

¹⁷⁷Warfield uses the term “evangelicalism” in a broad sense to denote a commitment to Reformation theology. See Benjamin B. Warfield, *Calvin and Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1932), 354–55. For a discussion of Warfield’s place within the Evangelical movement, see Geoffrey R. Treloar, *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, Mcpherson, and Hammond*, A History of Evangelicalism (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 67–90.

¹⁷⁸For a scholarly treatment of John Glas, see John Thomas Hornsby, “John Glas (1695–1773)” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1936).

¹⁷⁹John Howard Smith, *The Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion: A History of Sandemanianism in the Eighteenth Century* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 17. Smith provides a helpful history of Sandemanianism in his work, one of the few writings on the subject. My section on Sandemanianism relies heavily on Smith’s work.

extremely difficult due to political conflict within the congregation. After several years of failed attempts at reconciling struggles between various parties, Glas began to resent the wedding of political and religious authority in Scotland. As John Howard Smith explains, “He came to the conclusion that the kingdom of Christ is essentially a spiritual one, and must be completely independent of state authority and control, as well as the support of a secular government.”¹⁸⁰ Glas continued his departure from the confessional Scottish church and eventually, in 1728, the General Assembly brought charges against him. Smith summarizes Glas’s contested beliefs,

Glas maintained that as the kingdom of Christ was not of this world, the civil magistrate as such had no authority in the Church; that the kingdom of Christ could not be advanced by earthly power or defended by arms or civil sanctions; that the Covenants had no warrant in either the Old or the New Testaments, and that the first Christian churches were congregational churches; that the members of the visible church were those whose Christian character was revealed in obedience to the law of Christ; that none should be admitted to Communion without the consent of the congregation, and that the admission of unbelievers tarnishes that fellowship.¹⁸¹

Glas challenged the authority of the governing presbytery and synod and—refusing to back down—was expelled from the Scottish Presbyterian Church. Glas would not, however, leave the state church alone.

The opinions of Glas struck a chord with many of his congregants and beyond. In fact, the deposed Scottish pastor began to draw quite a following. Smith is again helpful when he states, “What had so alarmed the commission was not so much the doctrinal errors . . . but that he had attracted an impressive following.” This group, Smith continues, “. . . began to look increasingly like a separate church, complete with elders and an emerging ecclesiological structure that threatened the coherence of the National Church.”¹⁸² Moving to Dundee, Glas continued to develop his new church according to

¹⁸⁰Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 20.

¹⁸¹Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 27–28.

¹⁸²Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 33.

his restorationist agenda. Ultimately, however, it was not his ecclesiology or beliefs regarding church and state relations that drew the most widespread criticism. As Michael Haykin has stated, “Most significantly, Glas’s and Sandeman’s followers also distinguished themselves from other eighteenth-century Evangelicals by a predominantly intellectualist view of faith. They became known for their cardinal theological tenet that saving faith is ‘bare belief of the bare truth.’”¹⁸³

According to Smith, “Glas spent the majority of his life pondering the question of how a sinful person can obtain salvation and peace with God.”¹⁸⁴ For Glas, justification was clearly by faith alone. In this regard, Glas stood firmly in line with Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformers. Furthermore, Glas accepted the understanding of election and predestination promoted by Calvin. Glas found a certain amount of solidarity with the Reformed tradition, over against the spreading Arminian theology. This is not to say, however, that Glas’s understanding of salvation was entirely the same as the Reformers.

For Glas, “saving grace . . . is neither more nor less than a belief of the truth or testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ passively received by the understanding. Therefore, it is not an act of the human will but the production of the divine spirit.”¹⁸⁵ For Glas, in his early influential work *The Testimony of the King of Martyrs*, faith is quite simply “a persuasion of a thing upon a testimony.”¹⁸⁶ To insist that faith requires more than a notional persuasion of divine truth, was to add works as a requirement of faith and

¹⁸³Michael A. G. Haykin, “Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy,” in *At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word’: Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 226.

¹⁸⁴Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 38.

¹⁸⁵Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 39.

¹⁸⁶John Glas, *The Testimony of the King of Martyrs* (Edinburgh: 1729), 142.

confuse faith with its affects.¹⁸⁷ According to Glas, one of the worst popular definitions of faith was found in the Westminster Shorter Catechism: “What is faith in Jesus Christ? Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.” For Glas, words such as “receiving, embracing, trusting in, and resting in” were unhelpful depictions of faith, putting more into the concept that Scripture allowed.¹⁸⁸

Glas’s ideas found a zealous promoter in the originator’s own son-in-law, Sandeman. The concept of faith introduced by Glas would be taken up and trumpeted as Sandeman’s life work. Born in Perth in 1718 to parents who held membership in a Glasite church, Sandeman eventually joined the inner ranks of Glasite leadership.¹⁸⁹ Sandeman developed into a competent apologist and evangelist for the Glasite cause, eventually publishing *Letters on Theron and Aspasio* in 1757.¹⁹⁰ The work, originally intended as a critique of James Hervey’s *Dialogues*, became a definitive statement of Sandeman’s doctrine and practice.¹⁹¹ In terms of spreading ideas, the student would far exceed his master in the case of Glas and Sandeman; for Sandeman’s work proved quite influential in reaching many for the Glasite cause.

According to Sandeman, preachers associated with the Great Awakening had fallen into the error of the Anglican Church by “promising deeds cultivate holiness.”¹⁹² Such preachers proclaim a salvation based “not simply on what Christ hath done, but more or less on the use we make of him, the advance we make toward him . . . or on

¹⁸⁷Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 40.

¹⁸⁸Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 40.

¹⁸⁹Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 70.

¹⁹⁰Robert Sandeman, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio* (Edinburgh, 1757).

¹⁹¹Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 70.

¹⁹²Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 72.

something we feel or do concerning him.”¹⁹³ What Sandeman saw was “a kind of labor of the mind and will that proved to be no less offensive than other forms of works theology.”¹⁹⁴ In presenting saving faith as requiring “some good motion, disposition, or exercise of the human soul,” popular Awakening preachers actually clouded the minds of hearers.¹⁹⁵ In doing this, Sandeman set the theology inherited from Glas in direct opposition to the revival theology of Jonathan Edwards.

Smart sees Sandeman as opposing Edwards’s main concern in writing *Religious Affections*. Because Sandemanianism denied the presence of “any affectional desires or feelings” in saving faith, it “opposed . . . Edwards’s ideas that encouraged preachers to raise the affections of their hearers, to seek for a new sense or sensible knowledge of God given by the Holy Spirit or to obtain assurance by both the inward and outward spiritual work of grace.”¹⁹⁶ By advocating faith as “bare belief in the bare truth,” Sandeman directly challenged the heart religion advocated through the experiential preaching and revival theology of America’s greatest theologian. Edwards died soon after the initial publication of Sandeman’s *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*. However, through his leading disciples, though dead, the New England theologian found a voice to combat the surge of Sandemanianism affecting the British Isles and his home colonies.

High Calvinism

Recalling a conversation on doctrine in his “Memoir” Andrew Fuller spoke to the diversity present among eighteenth-century Calvinists.¹⁹⁷ Fuller identified three categories of Calvinists: high, moderate, and strict. The “high Calvinists,” Fuller noted

¹⁹³Sandeman, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*, 411.

¹⁹⁴Smith, *Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion*, 72.

¹⁹⁵Sandeman, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*, 282.

¹⁹⁶Smart, *Jonathan Edwards’s Apologetic*, 300.

¹⁹⁷Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:77.

were “more Calvinistic than Calvin himself; in other words, bordering on Antinomianism.”¹⁹⁸ “Moderate Calvinists,” he explained, were “half Arminian” and sometimes called “Baxterians.”¹⁹⁹ “Strict Calvinists,” the group with which he identified, Fuller referred to as “those who really hold the system of Calvin.”²⁰⁰ Fuller’s taxonomy remains a testimony to the diversity within the Reformed tradition, as well as provides helpful categories for understanding the debates that occurred within eighteenth-century Particular Baptist life.²⁰¹

While diversity may be found among those who held the position, High Calvinists generally held to a form of five-point Calvinism in which salvation was considered primarily in terms of the “eternal and immanent acts of God”; additionally, “irresistible grace is stressed so that the elect become passive in their regeneration and conversion.”²⁰² The elect gain assurance through a felt experiential confirmation, and since faith is not the duty of unbelievers, High Calvinist preachers generally avoided free gospel offers.²⁰³ High Calvinists were almost always supralapsarian and many tended toward antinomianism.²⁰⁴ High Calvinism and the term “Hyper Calvinism” are often used synonymously in the literature. Apart from confirming Fuller’s preference for the term “High Calvinism” as the norm for his day, Nuttall has argued that the label of “high

¹⁹⁸Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:77.

¹⁹⁹Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:77.

²⁰⁰Fuller was quick to add, “I do not believe everything that Calvin taught, nor any thing because he taught it; but I reckon strict Calvinism to be my own system.” Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:77.

²⁰¹For a more in-depth treatment of Fuller’s categories, see Ian J. Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action: Calvinism in the City Manchester and London, C. 1810–1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 10–12.

²⁰²Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 11.

²⁰³Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 11.

²⁰⁴Supralapsarianism contends that God’s eternal decrees of election and reprobation occurred logically prior to his permissive decree to allow the fall. See *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 3rd ed., s.v. “Supralapsarianism”; *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Supra Lapsum.”

Calvinist” is “less prejudiced and question begging.”²⁰⁵ Furthermore, most to whom the term has been applied have rejected its validity and accuracy.²⁰⁶

High-Calvinism blossomed in the eighteenth century, but its roots stretched back into the Reformation, particularly to Theodore Beza (1519–1605) who was not a High Calvinist, but did propose a supralapsarian ordering of eternal decrees.²⁰⁷ Peter Toon contends that William Perkins (1558–1602) popularized the Bezan scheme in England. Then, doctrinal antinomianism as represented by John Eaton (1574/5–1630/31) and Tobias Crisp (1600–1643) furthered the theological deviation toward High Calvinism. Crisp’s sermons, which were republished in 1689-1690, advocated that justification in time was merely a realization of what had been true in eternity, but continued to encourage free offers of the gospel.²⁰⁸ Joseph Hussey’s 1707 work *God’s Operations of His Grace but No Offers of His Grace* proved a significant development as he argued against free offers of the gospel based on the doctrine of irresistible grace from within a supralapsarian scheme.²⁰⁹

John Gill stands as arguably the most significant figure within the development of High Calvinism in the eighteenth century.²¹⁰ Debate surrounds the question of whether or not Gill was actually a High Calvinist, but his influence within the ranks of High Calvinism remains certain.²¹¹ Toon included Gill as one of three significant

²⁰⁵Geoffrey F. Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question: A Turning-Point in Eighteenth-Century Dissent,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 16, no. 1 (April 1965): 101 n.4.

²⁰⁶Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 11.

²⁰⁷Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689-1765* (London: Olive Tree, 1967), 13. Toon’s work remains an important source for understanding high Calvinism, but suffers from a dependence upon the older “Calvin vs. the Calvinists” historiography.

²⁰⁸Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 14; Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 28.

²⁰⁹Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 15.

²¹⁰Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 15.

²¹¹Shaw, *High Calvinists in Action*, 15.

Robert Oliver affirms that Gill was a High Calvinist, though with nuance. Oliver, “John Gill,”

representatives of High Calvinism, but demonstrated Richard Davis (1658–1714) to be a key influence on Gill and his other representatives, Lewis Wayman (d. 1764) and John Brine (1703–1765). Davis served as a Congregationalist minister in Rothwell, near Kettering, in Northamptonshire.²¹² Welsh by birth, Davis displayed an evangelistic fervor in the earlier years of his ministry and many converts in the region embraced the preacher as their spiritual father. However, in the later years of his ministry, Davis became persuaded by the writings of Joseph Hussey against the free offer.²¹³ As Toon argues, “It is very probable that many of his [Davis’s] converts and followers adopted Hussey’s belief that the doctrines of grace should only be preached not offered.”²¹⁴ Ironically, his evangelistic fervor allowed Davis a prominent platform from which he could spread the “no offer” message.²¹⁵

Davis’s promotion of “no offer” theology did not go unopposed in Northamptonshire, and even within his own congregation. The minister who succeeded Davis at Rothwell in 1715, Matthias Maurice (1684–1738), initially appeared an able

27–29. Curt Daniel argued in his doctoral dissertation that “the definitive doctrines of Hyper-Calvinism receive prominence in [Gill’s] writings.” Curt D. Daniel, “Hyper Calvinism and John Gill” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1983), 11.

Thomas Nettles has challenged the conclusion that Gill was a High Calvinist. Nettles writes, “The nomenclature of hyper-Calvinist in speaking of Gill must be questioned seriously in light of his clear, perceptive zeal for the gospel, his earnestness of desire for the salvation of his hearers, his statements regarding the perpetuity of the law as exhibited in the gospel, and his belief concerning the blameworthiness of rejecting the gospel message and all it contains.” Tom J. Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life*, 20th anniversary ed. (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2006), 54. George Ella also denies that Gill should be considered a High Calvinist. See George Melvyn Ella, *John Gill and the Cause of God and Truth* (Durham, England: Go Pub., 1995), 151–83, 259–70.

²¹²Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 51–52.

²¹³Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 93. See John Gill, preface to Richard Davis, *Hymns Composed on Several Subjects, and on Divers Occasions*, 7th ed. (London, 1748), v.

²¹⁴Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 93.

²¹⁵Keith S. Grant, *Andrew Fuller and the Evangelical Renewal of Pastoral Theology*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 36 (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 27.

exponent of High Calvinism.²¹⁶ However, in 1737, Maurice published *The Modern Question Modestly Answer'd*, in which he asked whether or not it was the duty of unconverted sinners who hear the gospel to believe in Christ.²¹⁷ Much to the surprise of those who had been associated with Davis, Maurice answered, “God does by his Word plainly and plentifully make it the duty of unconverted Sinners, who hear the Gospel, to believe in Christ.”²¹⁸ In response, Davis’s High Calvinist protégés objected. One such individual, Lewis Wayman, joined Davis’s Rothwell congregation as a youth, and when the congregation discerned the gift of preaching he was sent out as pulpit supply to neighboring churches.²¹⁹ Wayman argued that the modern question “was not really modern at all” but had been answered in the negative thirty years prior by Hussey.²²⁰ Wayman doubled-down on the “no offer” position, arguing that ministers should maintain a close eye on their congregation and only lead individuals to Christ when it became apparent God’s grace was working within them.²²¹

The controversy soon spread to London, where two Particular Baptist pastors with Kettering, Northamptonshire, roots, entered the fray.²²² While it cannot be known for certain, Davis likely influenced the founding of the congregation at Kettering that developed into the Particular Baptist church there.²²³ The congregation was initially congregational, but as an increasing number of members came to hold Baptist convictions, the Baptists separated, and William Wallis led them to reconstitute as a

²¹⁶Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question,” 215.

²¹⁷Matthias Maurice, *The Modern Question Modestly Answer'd* (London: 1737), 3.

²¹⁸Maurice, *Modern Question Modestly Answer'd*, 4.

²¹⁹Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 95.

²²⁰Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question,” 217.

²²¹Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 130.

²²²Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 131.

²²³Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question,” 214.

Particular Baptist congregation.²²⁴ The church counted both Gill and Brine as members in their youth. Each would become influential pastors in London, as well as critics of Maurice's answer to the modern question.

Along with Davis, Gill and Brine shared another common influence in John Skepp (1675–1721). A Particular Baptist minister, Skepp's congregation met in Currier's Hall, Cripplegate.²²⁵ Skepp fell under the influence of Hussey and his theology evidenced an extreme focus on irresistible grace similar to what may be found in Hussey's *God's Operations of Divine Grace*.²²⁶ Daniel identified Skepp as the "first Baptist Hyper-Calvinist."²²⁷ Similarly, Toon wrote, "Skepp stands as it were, in the history of dogma, as the connecting link between Hussey's theology and the Hyper-Calvinism of many Particular Baptists throughout the eighteenth century."²²⁸ When Gill arrived in London to assume the pastorate of Horsleydown, Skepp took part in the ordination ceremony.²²⁹ Brine took over as pastor of the congregation Skepp pastored at Cripplegate in 1729, just eight years after Skepp's death.²³⁰

From their influential London pulpits, Gill and Brine effectively promoted High Calvinism among Particular Baptists.²³¹ While High Calvinism certainly involved more than a reluctance to make free offers of the gospel, the issue of calling the

²²⁴Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill," 7.

²²⁵Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 85.

²²⁶Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 85.

²²⁷Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill," 6. For more on Hyper-Calvinism, refer to Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill," 2n5.

²²⁸Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 88–89.

²²⁹Gill also wrote the preface to the second edition of Skepp's book *Divine Energy*. Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 97.

²³⁰Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 101.

²³¹John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope Illustrated in the Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button and Son, 1816), 8.

unconverted to repentance and faith stood forth as a central issue because of its practical nature.²³² According to Ryland, much of the blame for Baptist ministers failing to imitate Jesus in calling sinners to repentance and faith lay at the feet of Gill and Brine.²³³ While the degree to which Gill was responsible for the decline of Particular Baptists in the mid-eighteenth century may be debated, his writings and influence do appear to have influenced a number of Particular Baptist ministers to avoid making free offers of the gospel.²³⁴ Of greater significance, the overall doctrinal fidelity of Gill helped protect the Particular Baptist churches from heterodoxy in a day when many denominations lost themselves to anti-Trinitarianism.²³⁵

Conclusion

As the awakenings of the 1730s rippled through the remainder of the eighteenth century, the character of Protestantism experienced a significant change. While historians have relentlessly debated the exact nature of the transformation that led to evangelicalism, Bruce Hindmarsh argues that Whitefield, Edwards, and the Wesleys “would each have a ready answer to the question of what was the spirit of early evangelicalism. It was the Holy Spirit.”²³⁶ The Particular Baptists initially resisted the revival for reasons mentioned above, but in time, they would also experience a “remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God.”²³⁷

²³²Michael A. G. Haykin, “Hyper-Calvinism and the Theology of John Gill” (paper presented at True Church Conference, Grace Life Church, Muscle Shoals, AL, February 19–20, 2010), 5.

²³³Ryland, *The Work of Faith*, 8.

²³⁴Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 164–65.

²³⁵Haykin, “Hyper-Calvinism and the Theology of John Gill,” 16.

²³⁶D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 268.

²³⁷Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 173.

CHAPTER 5
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EVANGELICALISM:
ITS PNEUMATOLOGY

In tracing a history of the doctrine of the Spirit, George Smeaton (1814–1889) referenced Spener’s Pietism, then commented that “the next great fact connected with the doctrine of the Spirit, is *the Awakening in Great Britain and America* in the middle of last century, and the theological development resulting from it.”¹ He continued, “It was undoubtedly the greatest stream of divine life since the days of the Reformation, and . . . an outpouring of the Spirit so powerful in its character and so fruitful of consequences, that we are warranted to say it has by no means spent its force.”² Helpfully, Smeaton spoke of the awakening as both an “outpouring of the Holy Spirit” and as theological development.³ While evangelical pneumatology was “in a large degree a restoration of Puritan theology,” genuine theological development occurred as evangelicals made “a return to the Bible.”⁴ Though he did not appreciate all of Edwards’s contribution, Smeaton held the Northampton theologian to be the most influential evangelical thinker regarding the work of the Spirit.⁵ Furthermore, Smeaton recognized Edwards’s

¹George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1882), 339.

²Smeaton, *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 339.

³Smeaton, *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 341.

⁴Smeaton, *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 340.

⁵Smeaton wrote of Edwards, “No man can dispute his claim to a place among the acknowledged magnates of theology, whether we consider his profound exposition of the high doctrines of sovereign grace, or his view of the *Religious Affections*, in which he states his doctrine of the Spirit, or his almost unparalleled logical power. Had the theological reading of Edwards and his acquaintance with the productions of previous theological schools been in any proportion to his spiritual experience and mental powers, he would have taken his place along with Augustin, Anselm, Calvin, and Owen as one of the greatest formers of thought for all time. But from lack of acquaintance with the theological thought and style of the previous ages of the Church, he does not always lay down his premises or first principles with

theological development to be incompatible with High Calvinism. In this, Andrew Fuller agreed. As Fuller worked through texts written by evangelical authors, particularly Edwards, he found them persuasive. Ultimately, Fuller's mature pneumatology resembled the evangelicalism of Edwards over the High Calvinism of Gill.

The Spirit in Conversion

Within both the High Calvinism of Gill and the evangelical theology of Edwards, great emphasis was placed on the work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of sinners.⁶ The colonial theologian would have likely affirmed his London counterpart in his belief that “man in his natural estate, can do nothing but what is carnal and sinful; and is wholly incapable of doing that which is spiritually good, until he is born of the Spirit.”⁷ Similarly, wrote Edwards, “All gospel righteousness, virtue and holiness is called grace, not only because 'tis entirely the free gift of God, but because 'tis the Holy Spirit in man.”⁸ While the two eighteenth-century giants shared a common starting point within the Reformed tradition concerning the bondage of the will and the necessity of the Spirit's work, differences quickly emerged as to the manner of the Spirit's work in conversion and the implication this had for unregenerate sinners and gospel preachers.

Both Edwards and Gill possessed grand theological visions involving both

sufficient breadth and caution.” Smeaton, *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 342.

⁶Edwards knew of Gill and was familiar with some of his writings. Peter Thuesen surmises that Edwards first encountered Gill when the Hampshire Association acquired the Lime Street lectures in 1741, which included several sermons from the Baptist minister. The *Boston Gazette* also reported Gill's awarding of an honorary D.D. in 1748. Two years later, on a trip to Boston, Edwards learned of Gill's *Cause of God and Truth* and acquired a copy soon thereafter. Edwards cited the Baptist minister in his work *The Freedom of the Will*, which like Gill's book, took aim at Daniel Whitby. Edwards also possessed Gill's work against infant baptism, which he lent to other New England ministers engaged in defending the matter. Jonathan Edwards, *Catalogues of Books*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Peter J. Thuesen (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 26:55.

⁷John Gill, *The Cause of God and Truth; in Four Parts. With a Vindication of Part IV from the Cavils, Calumnies, and Defamations of Mr. Henry Heywood, & C.*, new ed. (London: Thomas Tegg and Son, 1838), 234.

⁸Jonathan Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos. 1-500, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Thomas A. Schafer, corrected ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 13:345.

God's activity in eternity and human redemption in time. The way these two Reformed theologians worked out such a program, however, could hardly have been more different. Furthermore, the manner by which each theologian connected the eternal and temporal within their theology had ramifications for their understanding of the Spirit's work of conversion.

As Timothy George highlighted, Gill was "the first Baptist to develop a complete systematic theology."⁹ James Leo Garrett, in his assessment of Gill, concluded, "Gill can be reasonably described either as three-fifths or as four-fifths a Hyper-Calvinist, he not being an antinomian and being ambiguous on supralapsarianism."¹⁰ Richard Muller described Gill's theology as a "reformulation of the federal system around the principles of the eternal decree, the absolutely free and unmerited gift of grace in salvation, and [the] justification of the elect from eternity."¹¹ He continued, "These doctrines, together with the equation of the covenant grace with the eternal covenant of redemption or *pactum salutis* between the persons of the Trinity, tended in Gill's system to become the basis for interpreting all other doctrine."¹² Similarly, Thomas Ascol wrote, "Gill so closely identifies the council with the covenant of grace that the distinctions between them are virtually meaningless."¹³ Consistent with this interpretation, the High Calvinist's doctrine of conversion operated within his overall system, particularly in

⁹Timothy George, "John Gill," in *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition*, ed. Timothy George and David S. Dockery (Nashville: B & H Pub., 2001), 12.

¹⁰James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology: A Four-Century Study* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 100.

¹¹Richard A. Muller, "The Spirit and the Covenant: John Gill's Critique of the Pactum Salutis," *Foundations* 24, no. 1 (January–March 1981): 4.

¹²Muller, "Spirit and the Covenant," 4.

¹³By "council" here, Ascol is referring to the eternal counsel comprised of each member of the Trinity at which they agreed to the covenant of redemption. Thomas K. Ascol, "The Doctrine of Grace: A Critical Analysis of Federalism in the Theologies of John Gill and Andrew Fuller" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary), 77.

conjunction with his doctrine of eternal justification, to maintain a strongly monergistic doctrine of salvation.¹⁴

Gill's development of the Spirit's role within the covenant of redemption exalted the role of the Spirit as having agreed to work in the hearts of the elect in order to make the immanent acts of the Godhead related to salvation manifest in time.¹⁵ As a result, Gill's *ordo salutis* differed from the mainstream thinking of the Puritan era. Muller explained the consequences thus:

Whereas many, indeed most, of the seventeenth-century orthodox thinkers allowed for the freedom of secondary causes, for some element of human willing following the initial divine act of regeneration, and for the temporal working out of justification following regeneration, calling, conversion, and faith, Gill's precise systematization of the antinomian position reduced all of Christian theology to a thoroughgoing determinism which, if lacking the warm piety of earlier Reformed and Puritan thought, at least overcame any charge of inconsistency in maintaining a totally gracious salvation for the elect.¹⁶

According to Gill, "the blessed Spirit approved of" the promises and blessings of the covenant and agreed to "the application of them in time."¹⁷

Like Gill, Edwards attempted to formulate doctrine in a way that did justice to the eternal aspects of God's work of salvation. However, Edwards maintained a more traditional form of covenant theology and *ordo salutis*.¹⁸ Though he affirmed the eternal covenant of redemption, he distinguished it from the work of redemption. Where Edwards did adjust aspects of traditional covenant theology, he did so to prioritize divine

¹⁴For more here, see Michael A. G. Haykin, "Hyper-Calvinism and the Theology of John Gill" (paper presented at True Church Conference, Grace Life Church, Muscle Shoals, AL, February 19–20), 9–14.

¹⁵Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689-1765* (London: Olive Tree, 1967), 113–14.

¹⁶Muller, "Spirit and the Covenant," 12.

¹⁷John Gill, *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity: Or a System of Evangelical Truths, Deduced from the Sacred Scriptures*, new ed. (London: Thomas Tegg & Company, 1839), 1:351.

¹⁸Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 321.

goodness by demonstrating that God did not create persons for the purpose of punishing them.¹⁹

Regeneration

Both High Calvinists like Gill and evangelicals such as Edwards drew upon the Reformed Scholastic tradition when articulating a doctrine of regeneration.²⁰

Fundamentally, these men believed the doctrine of regeneration to be a monergistic work of the Spirit of God upon the soul of man, quickening the elect to new life. Furthermore, Gill and Edwards held the grace of God to be the general context in which grace must be understood.

Regeneration in John Gill. In his *Body of Divinity*, Gill treats regeneration within the context of “the blessings of grace, which come by Christ.”²¹ He identified the “everlasting love of God” as the “source and spring of every blessing of grace,” including regeneration.²² Gill covered regeneration after justification and adoption, giving some sense of his logical priority. The London pastor did not subsume adoption within justification but considered it as a distinct blessing that like justification, was “provided and bestowed in the everlasting covenant of grace.”²³ Gill carefully distinguished adoption from regeneration. While the two acts share multiple properties, “adoption is before regeneration; the one is an act of God’s will in eternity, the other is an act and

¹⁹McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 388.

²⁰Ray Yeo cited Francis Turretin (1623–1687) and Peter van Mastricht (1630–1706) as specific influences upon Edwards’s doctrine of regeneration. Ray S. Y. Yeo, *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, ed. Harry S. Stout (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), s.v. “Regeneration.” Muller identified “the great Reformed and Puritan writers of the seventeenth century” as “the main positive points of reference for Gill’s theology.” Richard A. Muller, “John Gill and the Reformed Tradition: A Study in the Reception of Protestant Orthodoxy in the Eighteenth Century,” in *The Life and Thought of John Gill (1697–1771): A Tercentennial Appreciation*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1997), 55.

²¹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:1.

²²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:6.

²³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:93.

work of his grace in time; the one is the cause, the other the effect.”²⁴ Citing Galatians 4:6, Gill claimed regeneration testified to adoption. He summarized, “Adoption gives the name of sons, and a title to the inheritance; and regeneration gives the nature of sons, and a meetness for the inheritance.”²⁵ For Gill, adoption and regeneration stand together as almost twin graces; the former having occurred within the eternal covenant of redemption and the latter occurring within the temporal application of redemption.

Gill defined regeneration as “the first principle of grace infused into the soul; which makes it a fit object of effectual vocation, a proper subject of conversion, and is the source and spring of that holiness which is gradually carried on in sanctification, and perfected in heaven.”²⁶ Thus, regeneration stands at the forefront of an elect sinner’s spiritual life. Gill expounded on the implied relationship between one’s natural birth and regeneration:

The first birth is of sinful parents, and in their image; the second birth is of God, and in his image; the first birth is of corruptible, the second birth of incorruptible seed; the first birth is in sin, the second birth is in holiness and righteousness; by the first birth men are polluted and unclean, by the second birth they become holy and commence saints; the first birth is of the flesh, and is carnal, the second birth is of the Spirit and is spiritual, and makes men spiritual men. . . . by the first birth men are children of wrath, and under tokens of divine displeasure; at the second birth they appear to be the objects of the love of God; regeneration being the fruit and effect of it, and gives evidence of it.²⁷

The “washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost” produce new men because the “principle of grace infused . . . is something *de novo*, anew implanted in the heart.”²⁸ Gill emphasized that regeneration was not mere restoration to a state of

²⁴Gill spoke of the similarities between adoption and regeneration: “They both have the same author; the same God and Father adopts and regenerates; they flow from the same love and grace; and the same persons that are adopted are regenerated.” Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:97.

²⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:97.

²⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:107.

²⁷Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:107–8.

²⁸Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:108.

innocence, but a wholly new creation beyond what Adam in his state of innocence possessed. Regeneration produces “new affections” of which “Adam knew nothing of in Paradise.”²⁹ Furthermore, regenerate sinners receive “new eyes to see divine and spiritual things.”³⁰ Gill also spoke of the “quickenings” associated with regeneration as the infusion of spiritual life, which produced desires for prayer and the Word of God, brought conviction of sin, and allowed sinners to feel “the workings of the Spirit of God in their hearts.”³¹ Further aspects of regeneration Gill listed include the image of Christ being stamped upon the heart (Gal 4:12), and being made “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet 1:14) defined as a “resemblance . . . in spirituality, holiness, goodness, kindness, &c.”³² Citing 1 John 3:9, Gill summarized “the first principle of grace implanted in the heart, seminally contains all the grace which afterwards appears, and all the fruits, effects, acts, and exercises of it.”³³

In his treatment of regeneration within his *Body of Divinity*, Gill discussed the “efficient, moving, meritorious, and instrumental” causes of regeneration.³⁴ God stands as the efficient cause because man cannot regenerate himself. Giving Nicodemus as an example, Gill highlighted, “Regeneration is one, and a principal one, of the things of the Spirit of God, and which a natural man cannot discern and understand.”³⁵ Furthermore, prior to regeneration, a person sees no need of it. Gill wrote that each member of the Trinity was involved in regeneration.³⁶ Citing 1 Peter 1:3, Gill demonstrated the Father

²⁹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:108.

³⁰Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:109.

³¹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:110.

³²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:110.

³³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:111.

³⁴Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:111.

³⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:111.

³⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:113.

“begets men according to his abundant mercy.”³⁷ Christ is also active in regeneration, since he is the “author of the spiritual resurrection to a spiritual life.”³⁸ Gill continued, “It is through his [Christ’s] powerful voice in the gospel that the dead in sin hear and live; it is his Spirit which is sent down into the hearts of his people.”³⁹

While Gill certainly employed the principle of inseparable operations to explain regeneration, he does contend “the Holy Spirit of God is the author of regeneration, and to him it is ascribed by our Lord.”⁴⁰ Gill cited John 3:5, denied that “water” in the text corresponded directly with the ordinance of water baptism, but referred to the “grace of the Spirit.”⁴¹ The reference to water correlated to the cleansing and purifying aspect of the Spirit’s work, which Gill related to the blood of Christ. For Gill, “The new creature is his [the Spirit’s] workmanship; quickening grace is from him.”⁴²

Gill then identified the “impulsive, or moving cause” of regeneration as the “free grace, love, and mercy of God.” Noting Ephesians 2:4–5, Gill emphasized that regeneration involved an extensive display of God’s love toward sinners motivated only by God’s grace and mercy. Next, Gill credited the “resurrection of Christ from the dead” as the “virtual or procuring cause” of regeneration.⁴³ Finally, as to the “instrumental cause,” Gill referred to the “word of God, and the ministers of it.”⁴⁴ He referenced 1 Peter 1:23 and James 1:18, and argued that ministers of the gospel were “instruments by whom

³⁷Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:113.

³⁸Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:133.

³⁹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:113.

⁴⁰Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:113.

⁴¹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:113.

⁴²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:113.

⁴³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:114.

⁴⁴Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:114.

others believe.”⁴⁵ The High Calvinist pastor carefully explained that the infusion of the first principle of grace in the soul occurred by “immediate infusion,” but the ministry of the word should be understood as “the exertion of the principle of grace, and the drawing it forth into act and exercise.”⁴⁶ To further elucidate the distinction, Gill offered an example from the early church: “So the three thousand first converts, and the jailor, were first regenerated, or had the principle of grace wrought in their souls by the Spirit of God, and then were directed and encouraged by the ministry of the apostles to repent and believe in Christ; whereby it became manifest that they were born again.”⁴⁷

Regeneration, in Gill’s theology, may be identified as the work of the Spirit making manifest in the life of the sinner the love and mercy of God which has existed before all-time per the eternal covenant of redemption. In a 1724 funeral sermon, Gill explained regeneration as “the first display and discovery of grace and mercy to a poor sinner.”⁴⁸ “It is true,” Gill exclaimed, “there was grace and mercy in God’s heart before, grace and mercy in the covenant before, and grace and mercy shewn in giving Christ, but until now the poor soul knew nothing of it.”⁴⁹

Regeneration in Jonathan Edwards. Edwards, like his Baptist contemporary, held regeneration to be a monergistic work of the Spirit, infusing a new spiritual principle within a person and marking a distinct change.⁵⁰ Edwards also maintained a strong Trinitarian emphasis within his doctrine of regeneration. For Edwards, to merely credit

⁴⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:114.

⁴⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:114.

⁴⁷Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:115.

⁴⁸John Gill, “Sermon XXI: The Glory of God’s Grace Displayed, in Its Abounding over the Aboundings of Sin,” in *A Collection of Sermons and Tracts* (London: George Keith, 1773), 342.

⁴⁹Gill, “Glory of God’s Grace Displayed,” 342.

⁵⁰Yeo, “Regeneration,” 491.

the Spirit with applying redemption falls short of the Trinitarian reality.⁵¹ Furthermore, Edward connected the Spirit with God's love, and focused on the human heart or will as the primary locus of regenerative activity.⁵² For Edwards, saving faith always follows this regenerative activity of the Spirit.

Edwards's doctrine of regeneration was located within a distinct Trinitarian framework that sought to bring greater attention to the person and work of the Spirit. Edwards wrote on the heels of a seventeenth-century pneumatological renaissance.⁵³ He possessed Owen's *Pneumatologia* (1674) and built upon certain emphases such as the immediate agency of the Spirit in regenerating sinners.⁵⁴ Along with a background in experiential Puritan theology, Edwards drew from personal experience and his role in the revivals to advance a doctrine of the Spirit that may be considered a genuine theological contribution.⁵⁵ For Edwards, the Protestant tradition had not gone far enough in their Trinitarian reflection on the application of redemption. "Our dependence is equally upon each in this affair." Edwards continued, "The Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and himself accepts the price and grants the thing purchased; the Son is the Redeemer by offering up himself, and is the price; and the Holy Ghost immediately communicates to us the thing purchased by communicating himself, and he is the thing purchased."⁵⁶ For the evangelical theologian, the Puritan tendency to speak of the Spirit as the one who applies the work accomplished by Father and Son devalued the Spirit.⁵⁷ If the Spirit's

⁵¹Sang Hyun Lee, editor's introduction to Jonathan Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 21:38–39.

⁵²Yeo, "Regeneration," 491.

⁵³Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1992), xxviii.

⁵⁴McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 262.

⁵⁵McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 262.

⁵⁶Edwards, *Discourse on the Trinity*, in *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:136.

⁵⁷Lee, editor's introduction, 21:39.

work consisted in application alone, then he was but a spectator.⁵⁸ The Northampton theologian sought to rectify this devaluing of the Spirit's glory by speaking of the Spirit as the "thing purchased" by Christ's atonement.⁵⁹ Edwards emphasized, "The sum of all that Christ purchased for man was the Holy Ghost."⁶⁰ The result was that "the atonement made the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the believer equal in value to the death of Jesus Christ."⁶¹

While Edwards sought to ensure the Spirit received equal honor and glory as the Father and Son, the Spirit still functioned practically as the means of application of grace to the sinner. "'Tis the immediate work of the Holy Ghost," Edwards wrote, "actually to make men partakers of that salvation; 'tis he that doth the finishing stroke."⁶² Furthermore, Edwards maintained a conviction that regeneration occurred according to the will of the Lord and not due to the activity of man. In a chapter demonstrating "how a principle of grace is from the Spirit of God," Edwards cited John 3:5–6, Ezekiel 3:26–27, and Titus 3:5 to demonstrate his point that "regeneration is by the Spirit."⁶³ He contended the act of regeneration occurred immediately solely based on divine prerogative. "Natural men are not in any degree spiritual," Edwards wrote.⁶⁴

Edwards's doctrine of regeneration should also be understood within the context of his understanding of grace. Sang Lee has demonstrated that Edwards

⁵⁸McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 263.

⁵⁹Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:136.

⁶⁰Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:136.

⁶¹McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 264.

⁶²Jonathan Edwards, "The Threefold Work of the Holy Ghost," in *Sermons and Discourses, 1723–1729*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 14:377.

⁶³Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:176.

⁶⁴Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:179.

understood the application of grace to primarily be the work of the Spirit.⁶⁵ Edwards argued “what is done in conversion is nothing but conferring the Spirit of God, which dwells in the soul and becomes there a vital principle of action.”⁶⁶ What is infused within the believer, then, is the Spirit himself.⁶⁷ Referencing 1 Corinthians 2:11–12, Edwards elaborated that the Spirit infused within a believer may be understood as love. “True saving grace,” Edwards added, “is no other than the very love of God.”⁶⁸ In *Charity and Its Fruits* Edwards explained why the glory of the work of the Spirit in conversion exceeds the glory of the gifts of the Spirit. In doing so, he equates the Spirit with love:

The Spirit of God is a spirit of love. And therefore when the Spirit of God enters into the soul, love enters. God is love, and he who has God dwelling in him by his Spirit will have love dwelling in him. The nature of the Holy Spirit is love; and it is by communicating himself, or his own nature, that the hearts of the saints are filled with love.⁶⁹

Upon regeneration, the infusion of God’s Spirit is an infusion of a disposition of divine love.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the love given is the same love that binds the Father and Son. As Yeo states, “When believers are infused with the Holy Spirit in regeneration, they are simultaneously caught up in eternal Trinitarian love within the Godhead and thereby participate in the Trinitarian life.”⁷¹

Edwards understood regeneration within the context of his grand vision of the divine life and the manner in which redeemed persons were allowed to participate. As Robert Caldwell demonstrates, “The regeneration of the soul’s powers unto holy knowing

⁶⁵Lee, editor’s introduction, 40.

⁶⁶Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos. 1-500, 462.

⁶⁷Yeo, “Regeneration,” 491.

⁶⁸Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 194.

⁶⁹Jonathan Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. George S. Claghorn and Harry S. Stout (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 16:132.

⁷⁰Yeo, “Regeneration,” 491.

⁷¹Yeo, “Regeneration,” 491.

and loving of God is the direct result of the Spirit's union with the soul; and second, this transformation of the individual is actually, from the widest possible angle, a participation in God's immanent Trinitarian life."⁷² Edwards employed two traditional terms to capture the reality of regeneration: illumination and infusion. According to Caldwell and Conrad Cherry, these two works of the Spirit are not to be properly distinguished, since Edwards employs both illumination and infusion with a great degree of overlap.⁷³ Kyle Strobel, however, speaks of "illumination" as the "foundation for the other features of regeneration, because in illumination the believer is able to have faith and thereby incline to Christ."⁷⁴ Edwards spoke of the power of illumination,

one glimpse of the moral and spiritual glory of God, and supreme amiableness of Jesus Christ, shining into the heart, overcomes and abolishes this opposition, and inclines the soul to Christ, as it were, by an omnipotent power: so that now, not only the understanding, but the will, and the whole soul receives and embraces the Savior.⁷⁵

Illumination, for Edwards, was properly the work of the Spirit, but with a focus on the beauty and excellency of Christ. Infusion, then, described the Spirit's work of infusing himself in the soul of the elect. Edwards explained, "God's Spirit, or his love, doth but as it were come and dwell in our hearts and act there as a vital principle, and we become the living temples of the Holy Ghost."⁷⁶ He continued, "And when men are regenerated and sanctified, God pours forth of his Spirit upon them, and they have fellowship or, which is the same thing, are made partakers with the Father and Son of their good, i.e. of their

⁷²Robert W. Caldwell, *Communion in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit as the Bond of Union in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006), 104.

⁷³Caldwell, *Communion in the Spirit*, 104. For a lengthy discussion on this, see Conrad Cherry, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards: A Reappraisal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 27–39.

⁷⁴Oliver D. Crisp and Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to His Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 161. Also see Kyle C. Strobel, "By Word and Spirit: Jonathan Edwards on Redemption, Justification, and Regeneration," in *Jonathan Edwards and Justification*, ed. Josh Moody (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 45–69.

⁷⁵Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:61.

⁷⁶Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:124.

love, joy, and beauty.”⁷⁷ The Spirit, then, “functions as both the union of love and the nature of holiness given to believers.”⁷⁸

For Edwards, the indwelling of the Spirit brought changes to the nature of the soul of the newly regenerated person. He explained, “Divine things now appear excellent, beautiful, glorious, which did not when the soul was of another spirit.”⁷⁹ Since Edwards held that a holy act, such as an exercise of faith, was possible based on a present holy disposition, the resultant change from regeneration allowed for conversion to take place.⁸⁰ Although Edwards primarily referred to changes in the will, regeneration affected the entire person and resulted in a new spiritual sense.⁸¹

Faith

Both the High Calvinist, Gill, and the evangelical, Edwards, agreed that a regenerate Christian displayed a “saving faith.” Gill spoke of “the work of faith” as “a principal part of the work of conversion.”⁸² Furthermore, faith in Christ was not a work of man, but “the gift of God, and the operation of the Spirit of God,” which gave “evidence of regeneration.”⁸³ Similarly, Edwards spoke of “faith and conversion” as “the effects and fruits of the Spirit.”⁸⁴ Both parties were also concerned with displays of “temporary” or “historical” faith held by unregenerate persons. While these two versions of Reformed theology shared common elements regarding faith, significant differences

⁷⁷Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:124.

⁷⁸Crisp and Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards*, 162.

⁷⁹Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos.1-500, 13:462.

⁸⁰McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 269.

⁸¹Yeo, “Regeneration,” 491.

⁸²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:138.

⁸³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:116.

⁸⁴Jonathan Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos. 1153-1360, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Douglas A. Sweeney (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 23:72.

existed based on the overall theological framework, and with tremendous theological and practical consequences.

Faith according to John Gill. Gill developed his doctrine of faith within the entirety of his eclectic High Calvinist theological framework. The Spirit maintained a prominent, but altered role, from traditional Reformed theology. The Spirit, Gill explained “sets it [the gospel] in the view of an awakened sinner, and shows him his suitableness, fulness, and excellency, works faith in him to receive it, and pronounces in his conscience his justification by it.”⁸⁵ In his High Calvinist scheme, the Spirit did work faith in time, but as a “consequence of” and to the “tenor of” the eternal covenant of redemption.⁸⁶

Within Gill's theological system, the doctrine of faith, as it related to justification, was altered significantly. Whereas the 1689 *London Confession* spoke of “the grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls,” Gill could state, “God does not justify any because they believe in Christ. . . . A man is not more justified after faith, than he is before faith.”⁸⁷ Faith, while not a condition of justification in any sense, remained significant for Gill. As Peter Naylor demonstrates, Gill retained a strong connection between justification and faith by distinguishing between usages of justification terminology.⁸⁸ For Gill, justification should be understood

⁸⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 351.

⁸⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 355.

⁸⁷John Gill, “Sermon III: The Doctrine of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, Stated and Maintained; in Several Discourses,” in *A Collection of Sermons and Tracts* (London: George Keith, 1778), 172.

Gill's theology of justification diverged from that found in the 1689 *London Confession*. Following the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the seventeenth-century Baptists firmly rejected eternal justification, instead confessing that men “are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them” (1689 *London Confession*, 11.4). For more on Gill's deviation, see Robert W. Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists 1771-1892: From John Gill to C. H. Spurgeon* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2006), 4–12.

⁸⁸Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic*

in two ways. “Active justification” described God's act of declaring a sinner justified as an “internal and immanent act . . . of God from eternity.”⁸⁹ Gill used active justification to speak of justification in a proper sense, and to distinguish it from what a believer experiences during conversion.⁹⁰ “Passive justification,” then, described a believer’s perception of their justification, which was connected intimately with faith. Gill stated, “Faith does not justify us, it being neither the whole, nor a part of our justifying righteousness, nor the cause or condition of our justification; yet, as it apprehends and receives Christ’s righteousness for our justification, it brings much peace, joy, and comfort into our hearts.”⁹¹ Justification was not by faith in a traditional Reformed sense, but Gill was able to use traditional terminology to argue “passive justification” was by faith.⁹²

In his *Body of Divinity* Gill presented various types of “faith” referenced in Scripture.⁹³ For Gill, there were two primary counterfeits to saving faith. First, “historical faith” described a faith that consented to the veracity and divine origin of Scripture, but remained on the theoretical or speculative level.⁹⁴ Using language similar to the Sandemanians, but with completely different import, Gill explained historical faith to be nothing more than “bare naked assent to the truth of what is contained in the word concerning God and Christ.”⁹⁵ For Gill, historical faith formed an essential component of

Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 190.

⁸⁹Muller, “Spirit and the Covenant,” 11.

⁹⁰Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and the Baptists*, 191.

⁹¹Gill, “Doctrine of Justification,” 180.

⁹²Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and Baptists*, 191.

⁹³For a more extensive treatment of Gill’s usage of the term “faith,” see Jonathan Anthony White, “A Theological and Historical Examination of John Gill’s Soteriology in Relation to Eighteenth-Century Hyper Calvinism” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010), 151–61.

⁹⁴Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:388.

⁹⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:388.

saving faith, but lacked any salvific character. “It must be and is where true faith is, and there can be no true faith without it,” Gill continued, “but if a man stops here and goes no further, it falls short of spiritual, special faith, or the faith of God’s elect, and is no other than the faith of devils, and of bad men.”⁹⁶ The problem with historical faith, then, was not a lack of accuracy but affection.

Along with historical faith, Gill identified “temporary faith” as a dangerous counterfeit to saving faith. Temporary faith initially resembled saving faith, according to Gill, but always failed to last. Citing Luke 8:13, Gill wrote, “This sort of faith differs from the former, in that it is not a mere assent to truth, but it is attended with affection, joy, and gladness.”⁹⁷ Temporary faith arose from a “principle of self-love” and lacked “the root of grace in the heart.”⁹⁸ Gill emphasized that “when trouble and persecution” came, those with a mere temporary faith forsook their profession, whereas those with true faith “continue to believe to the saving of the soul.”⁹⁹ Finally, Gill identified “special faith, which is peculiar to God’s elect, and is by some called saving faith.”¹⁰⁰ “Strictly speaking,” Gill argued, “salvation is not in faith.”¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, those who possessed special faith were “true believers” who received “the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls.”¹⁰²

An important difference between special faith and historical or temporary faith involved the work of the Spirit. Commenting on Acts 10, Gill emphasized “that whoever believes in Christ, not with an historical or temporary faith, or in profession only, but

⁹⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

⁹⁷Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

⁹⁸Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

⁹⁹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

¹⁰⁰Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

¹⁰¹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

¹⁰²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:389.

with the faith of God's elect, which is the gift of God, and the operation of his spirit, which works by love, and makes Christ precious, shall receive it as a free gift."¹⁰³

Elsewhere, Gill connected faith with the Spirit when he described faith as "a blessing of the covenant of grace, which flows from electing love, is a gift of God's free grace, [and] the operation of the Spirit of God."¹⁰⁴

Gill also addressed the question of "whether faith is a duty of the moral law, or is to be referred to the gospel?"¹⁰⁵ While Gill never wrote a direct answer to "the modern question," his answer to the above question revealed related distinctions the High Calvinist drew within his understanding of faith. For Gill, the law required a "faith and trust in God, as the God of nature and providence."¹⁰⁶ This faith, however, Gill understood as wholly different from the special faith given to the elect. Thus, man had a duty to exercise faith, but not faith in Christ for salvation.

Faith according to Jonathan Edwards. In order to grasp why Edwards's followers became natural combatants of Sandemanianism, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the nature of faith according to Edwards. In many ways, Edwards remained a typical Reformed theologian in his soteriology. However, he did express his understanding of the nature of faith in a way that would enable his theological descendants to grasp and combat the errors proposed by Sandemanianism. In relation to the Sandemanian controversy, which centered on the nature of true faith, Edwards's most powerful contribution came through his understanding of "religious affections."

Religious Affections and faith. In *Religious Affections* Edwards presented a

¹⁰³John Gill, *An Exposition of the New Testament* (London: Mathews and Leigh, 1809), 2:42.

¹⁰⁴Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 535.

¹⁰⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 1:534.

¹⁰⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 1:534.

thorough analysis of religious experience and articulated his mature thoughts on how the work of the Spirit in man's heart may be rightly discerned.¹⁰⁷ In the work, which Iain Murray called "one of the most important books possessed by the church on the nature of true religion," Edwards provided a guide by which the presence of true religion may be discerned to a reasonable degree.¹⁰⁸ Taking 1 Peter 1:8 as his primary text, Edwards offered a Puritan plain-style treatment of the passage.¹⁰⁹ Edwards explains that in 1 Peter 1:8,

the Apostle observes how true religion operated in the Christians he wrote to, under their persecutions, whereby these benefits of persecution appeared in them; or what manner of operation of true religion, in them, it was, whereby their religion under persecution, was manifested to be true religion, and eminently appeared in the genuine beauty and amiableness of true religion, and also appeared to be increased and purified, and so was like to be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.¹¹⁰

Edwards found his exegetical foundation in Peter's recognition that persecution refined true religion into a discernable purified state.¹¹¹

True religion, according to the theologian, manifested itself in two ways: love to Christ and joy in Christ. First, Edwards described those Christians undergoing persecution as possessing "a supernatural principle of love to something unseen . . . Jesus Christ, for they saw him spiritually."¹¹² Second, Edwards spoke of the persecuted Christians as possessing "inward spiritual joys . . . greater than their sufferings." Such

¹⁰⁷Stephen R. Holmes, "Religious Affections by Jonathan Edwards," in *The Devoted Life: An Invitation to the Puritan Classics*, ed. Kelly M. Kopic and Randall C. Gleason (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 289.

¹⁰⁸Iain H. Murray, *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987).

¹⁰⁹Holmes notes that the Puritan sermonic form "was capable of almost infinite expansion." Holmes, "Religious Affections by Jonathan Edwards," 289–90.

¹¹⁰Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 2:94.

¹¹¹Holmes, "Religious Affections by Jonathan Edwards," 290.

¹¹²Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:94.

supernatural joy enabled them to “suffer with cheerfulness.”¹¹³ The significance for Edwards came in the fact that both love and joy are affections.¹¹⁴

From 1 Peter 1:9, Edwards presented the foundational doctrine for the entire text: “True religion, in great part, consists in holy affections.”¹¹⁵ “We see that the Apostle,” Edwards explained, “in observing and remarking the operations and exercises of religion . . . singles out the religious affections of love and joy . . . wherein their religion did thus appear true and pure, and in its proper glory.”¹¹⁶ For Edwards, “affections” provided the key for discerning true religion. He defined them as such, “The affections are no other, than the more vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and will of the soul.”¹¹⁷ As such, the affections reveal what the soul is either drawn to in approval or repelled by in disdain.¹¹⁸

After defending his proposed doctrine in part 1, Edwards worked out the consequences over two parts. Part 2 and part 3 present a framework for understanding and identifying true religion as consisting of religious affection. First, he offered twelve non-signs, or certain observations and tests that fail to prove the genuineness of a person’s affections one way or another. Using the theological framework constructed in

¹¹³Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:94.

¹¹⁴Holmes, “Religious Affections by Jonathan Edwards,” 290.

¹¹⁵Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:95.

¹¹⁶Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:95.

¹¹⁷Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:96.

¹¹⁸Brad Walton has shown that Edwards’ concept of religious affections is an extension of the Puritan concept of “heart religion” and not in opposition to it. Walton summarizes, “So far from representing a discontinuity with puritan traditions, Edwards’s *Religious Affections* is, in fact, a conservative extension of traditional puritan ‘heart religion’ into the context of the Great Awakening. More precisely, *Religious Affections* is a reassertion—elicited by the events of the Great Awakening—of traditional puritan ‘experimental’ spirituality, cast largely in the same form, and using the same language and conceptualization, as seventeenth-century puritan analyses of true piety, spiritual sensation and heart religion, but differing from them chiefly in its more philosophically rigorous presentation.” Brad Walton, *Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections and the Puritan Analysis of True Piety, Spiritual Sensation and Heart Religion*, Studies in American Religion 74 (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 2002), 1.

part 1, the New England divine explained away a number of commonly understood signs of true religion as inconclusive.

Finally, in part 3, Edwards offered twelve “distinguishing signs of truly gracious and holy affections.”¹¹⁹ Marsden notes, “Several of the twelve signs had to do with God being both the subject and the source of the affections.”¹²⁰ Strobel helpfully describes the affections, “Religious affections are a composite reaction of understanding and will, vigorously effected by a spiritual sight of God.”¹²¹ For Edwards, gaining spiritual sight of God was key, but required the work of the Spirit. Strobel, again, is helpful:

The Spirit’s work in the heart . . . is the driving force of the affections. The Spirit is, Edwards claims, ‘a powerful holy affection,’ and upon receiving the Spirit with his sanctifying and saving work, the elect are thereby baptized with fire. The Spirit’s procession in the Godhead is, as it were, God’s own affection. Fittingly, the effect of the Spirit’s work in the hearts of the saints follows suit, vigorously inclining them to the goodness, beauty and love of God.¹²²

Understanding that no perfect system of distinguishing true and false professors exists, Edwards maintained that God has not provided men with the means to know with unassailable certainty who their fellow brothers in Christ are, but “the Scriptures do abound with rules, which may be serviceable to ministers, in counseling and conducting souls committed to their care, in this pertaining to their spiritual and eternal state.”¹²³ It is Edwards’s explanation of these rules that makes the *Religious*

¹¹⁹Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:197.

¹²⁰George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 288.

¹²¹Kyle Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 214.

¹²²Strobel, *Jonathan Edward’s Theology*, 214.

¹²³Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:193.

Affections, in the opinion of many scholars and pastors, “the most important and accurate analysis of religious experience ever written.”¹²⁴

Edwards on faith. For Edwardseans, the *Religious Affections* presented the understanding of faith they needed to combat the tide of Sandemanianism. Edwards understood faith within a comprehensive framework of salvation rooted in eternity past and continuing indefinitely as the elect experience an increasing union with the Triune God.¹²⁵ Men and women experience salvation only on the basis of God’s free grace delivered unconditionally to the elect. In this respect, Edwards was thoroughly Calvinist. Cherry states, “Jonathan Edwards’s depiction of faith supposes at every point that faith is a gift of God; it is a possibility only as God gives it through Word and Spirit.” He continues, “In fact, the keystone of Edwards’s Calvinist theology is the unremitting insistence that God is sovereign in man’s salvation.”¹²⁶ Faith, therefore, could not be considered as meriting justification, but merely the means of receiving it. For Edwards, faith then was not a requirement of salvation, but “an act of union by which a sinner is joined to Christ.”¹²⁷

McClymond and McDermott divided Edwards’s concept of faith into three foci.¹²⁸ First, faith included a component that may be described as ““belief in” or “assent” to testimony, truth, and promises.”¹²⁹ The truth that must be believed was the gospel of Jesus Christ. Second, Edwards understood faith as “trust” in Christ, which implied

¹²⁴Sam Storms, *Signs of the Spirit: An Interpretation of Jonathan Edwards’s Religious Affections* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 21.

¹²⁵McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 357.

¹²⁶Cherry, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 56. Edwards’s fidelity to the Reformation tradition has been contested by a number of scholars. For a helpful overview of this discussion, see McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 396–404.

¹²⁷McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366.

¹²⁸McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366.

¹²⁹McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366.

submission.¹³⁰ For Edwards, “A true faith includes more than a mere belief of it; it includes all acceptance.”¹³¹ This comprises trust in all the promises of God and in Christ’s work for us as sufficient and complete.¹³² Third, Edwards emphasized the “stable” and “abiding” character of faith.¹³³ God’s gift of faith was permanent; thus, any fleeting possession of faith proved no true possession at all. Edwards also understood the possession of faith to have robust consequences. According to McClymond and McDermott, faith became, “a foundational principle in its subject and conditioned a person’s whole existence.” They continue, “Thus, faith had real effects, and a principle effect was repentance. . . . The two are inseparable.”¹³⁴

Faith, for Edwards, was a rather complex notion. It required mental assent to gospel truths, yet that was not the sole component of faith. To exercise faith was to love the object of faith. For Edwards, love accompanied faith by either working itself out in good works towards one’s neighbor or by revealing a heart of love focused toward God.¹³⁵ Citing 1 John 5:1, Edwards concluded, “Saving faith implies in its nature divine love.”¹³⁶ For Edwards, love stood as chief among the affections.¹³⁷ Love played a double role, serving as the “essence of all true religion” and as an affection itself.¹³⁸ In fact, love

¹³⁰Edwards understands “belief” to be the primary New Testament designation for faith, while “trust” is the primary Old Testament designation. McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366.

¹³¹Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:419.

¹³²McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366.

¹³³McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366.

¹³⁴McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 366–67.

¹³⁵Cherry, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 71.

¹³⁶Edwards, *Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, 21:448.

¹³⁷John E. Smith, “Religious Affections and the ‘Sense of the Heart,’” in *Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 104.

¹³⁸Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:107.

was the “fountain” from which all other affections sprung.¹³⁹ This, however, did not mean faith may be equated with mere feelings of love, for faith is greater than sentimentality.

Faith involved the whole person—an act of the soul and not just the mind.¹⁴⁰ To come to faith meant to find Christ beautiful and attractive, more than it meant finding an argument compelling. Such distinctions need not be pressed too far, as Edwards understood human beings in a holistic fashion. Differentiation among the various elements of the human psyche proved useful only insofar as they explained how the complex, but integrated, embodied, rational, affectionate human operated.¹⁴¹

For Edwards, faith necessarily implied the presence of religious affections. Such affections were inspired by a new “sense of heart” imparted through the Spirit’s revelation of “a divine and supernatural light.”¹⁴² Edwards used heart in a biblical sense to describe “the spiritual center of the person in relation to God.”¹⁴³ Borrowing from John Locke’s (1632–1704) faculty psychology, Edwards understood the heart as comprised of the understanding and inclination or intellect and will.¹⁴⁴ The concept of heart, for Edwards, was the biblical language he needed to describe the unifying principle behind the various faculties of a human being.¹⁴⁵ Drawing insights from Scripture, Locke, and the Cambridge Platonists, as well as his own experience, Edwards formulated an understanding of the heart and its affections distinct from any contemporaries.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁹Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:108.

¹⁴⁰McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 367.

¹⁴¹Michael A. G. Haykin, *Jonathan Edwards: The Holy Spirit in Revival* (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2005), 124.

¹⁴²McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 379.

¹⁴³Smith, “Religious Affections and the ‘Sense of the Heart’,” 106.

¹⁴⁴Stephen J. Nichols, *Jonathan Edwards: A Guided Tour of His Life and Thought* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Pub., 2001), 112–13.

¹⁴⁵Walton, *Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections and Puritan Analysis*, 165.

¹⁴⁶Smith, “Religious Affections and the ‘Sense of the Heart’,” 106. This is not to say that the heart of what Edwards said regarding the affections was novel. A number of scholars have persuasively

The new sense of the heart was not a new physical capability of perception given to the heart, over and above the existing five senses ordinarily endowed to humans.¹⁴⁷ The new sense, as Edwards conceived it, was given by God immediately through the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁸ Edwards explained, “Affections that are truly spiritual and gracious, do arise from those influences and operations on the heart, which are spiritual, supernatural, and divine.”¹⁴⁹ The Spirit always served as the force behind the affections.¹⁵⁰ Though affections were given to different degrees, the Spirit never failed to give the redeemed elect affections. Thus, any person of true faith experienced religious affections and its attendant results.

This directly contradicted the idea of faith as intellectual assent as proposed by the Sandemanians. For Glas, saving faith was merely a work of the Spirit on the mind, convincing one of the veracity of the gospel. For Edwards, saving faith was a work of the Spirit on the heart, on one’s entire being, producing affection—most notably love to God. And while Edwards did not directly repudiate the doctrine of Glas and Sandeman, an Edwardsean heir in old England was more than ready for the task.

Revival

The evangelicals themselves understood the experience of revival to be first and foremost a work of the Spirit of God.¹⁵¹ As Mark Noll notes, as historians “the early

argued that Edwards continued a long-standing Christian tradition of “heart religion.” See Walton, *Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections and Puritan Analysis*.

¹⁴⁷Nichols cautions, “We should not read the affections as pointing to some type of a mystical sense, or a sixth sense, that transcends ordinary knowledge and ordinary experiences.” Nichols, *Jonathan Edwards*, 112.

¹⁴⁸Smith, “Religious Affections and the ‘Sense of the Heart,’” 108.

¹⁴⁹Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 2:167.

¹⁵⁰Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 215.

¹⁵¹Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 138.

evangelicals were deeply impressed with the role that the extraordinary effusions of the Holy Spirit had played in the entire pilgrimage of the church.”¹⁵² In his *History of the Work of Redemption* Edwards established the primary interpretation: “From the fall of man to this day wherein we live the Work of Redemption in its effect has mainly been carried on by the Spirit of God.”¹⁵³ Joseph Milner (1749–1797), the first evangelical church historian, echoed Edwards when he focused his church history on “those effusions of the Spirit of God, which from age to age have visited the earth, since the coming of Christ.”¹⁵⁴ Evangelicalism, then, was founded upon the belief that God occasionally brings seasons of revival by his Spirit and that the early evangelicals were living in just such a time.¹⁵⁵

Many opponents of the revival, likewise, appealed to the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁶ As Noll summarizes, “In their judgment, the excesses of revival proved that it came not from the Holy Spirit.”¹⁵⁷ Gill, according to Tom Nettles, presented a more complicated case.¹⁵⁸ While Gill did not participate in the evangelical movement associated with the revivals, his coolness toward the evangelicals should be understood not as a rejection of the legitimacy of revival, but as the manifestation of theological differences and conflicts of personality. Gill opposed Wesley’s Arminian tendencies, which he felt veered toward the

¹⁵²Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 138.

¹⁵³Jonathan Edwards, “Sermon 3,” in *A History of the Work of Redemption*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. John F. Wilson (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 9:143.

¹⁵⁴Joseph Milner, *The History of the Church of Christ*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1800), 2:3.

¹⁵⁵For an extensive treatment of the relationship between the work of the Spirit and revival, see Haykin, *Jonathan Edwards*.

¹⁵⁶Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 140.

¹⁵⁷Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 140.

¹⁵⁸Thomas J. Nettles, “John Gill and the Evangelical Awakening,” in *The Life and Thought of John Gill (1697–1771): A Tercentennial Appreciation*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1997), 169.

anti-supernatural and man-centered.¹⁵⁹ According to Nettles, Gill and Whitefield agreed on the fundamental aspects of theology, but differed in application.¹⁶⁰ Not only did Whitefield's gifting far outmatch that of Gill's, who was quite extraordinary in his own right, but Whitefield's "passion and vocabulary of his call to sinners was not matched by Gill."¹⁶¹ Haykin agrees that the Arminianism of the Wesley brothers accounted for some of the coolness the Particular Baptists felt toward the evangelical revivals.¹⁶² However, Haykin emphasizes that part of the reason so few Particular Baptist pastors associated with Whitefield was due to the evangelist's "Arminian accent."¹⁶³ Philip Roberts concluded that Gill and his High Calvinist associates did not reject revival, but were "pro-revival in the sense that they favored a genuine renewal of the church."¹⁶⁴ Both the High Calvinists and the evangelicals believed in the legitimacy of revival and attributed it to the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁵ Major differences existed, however, in whether revival should take place according to the manner of the evangelical awakening or in "Old Dissenting terms."¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁹Nettles, "John Gill and Evangelical Awakening," 169.

¹⁶⁰Nettles, "John Gill and Evangelical Awakening," 169.

¹⁶¹Nettles, "John Gill and Evangelical Awakening," 169.

¹⁶²Michael A. G. Haykin, "The Baptist Identity: A View from the Eighteenth Century," *Evangelical Quarterly* 72, no. 2 (1995): 141.

¹⁶³Haykin, "The Baptist Identity," 141; Michael A. G. Haykin, "'The Lord Is Doing Great Things, and Answering Prayer Everythwere': The Revival of the Calvinistic Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century," in *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition*, ed. Robert D. Smart, Ian Hugh Clary, and Michael A. G. Haykin (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 70.

¹⁶⁴R. Philip Roberts, *Continuity and Change: London Calvinistic Baptists and the Evangelical Revival, 1760-1820* (Wheaton, IL: Richard Owens Roberts, 1989), 79. Roberts connected the high Calvinist position with the belief that a true revival would produce ecclesiological health and faithfulness. Therefore, the catholic nature of the awakening proved a repellent.

¹⁶⁵Anthony R. Cross, *Useful Learning: Neglected Means of Grace in the Reception of the Evangelical Revival among English Particular Baptists* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Pub., 2017), 18. Cross cited John Brine's *A Treatise on Various Subjects* to demonstrate that High Calvinists held the Holy Spirit to be the source of revival.

¹⁶⁶Roberts, *Continuity and Change*, 79.

Means of Conversion

To attribute the awakening to the Holy Spirit is not to imply human agency had no significant role. On the contrary, early evangelicals combined powerful preaching with effective organization to great effect.¹⁶⁷ That God would work through human instruments to bring revival was not surprising to the evangelicals. The Reformed tradition had long held that God promised to work through specified means to bring the supernatural effects of the Spirit upon the hearts of men and women.¹⁶⁸ The High Calvinists held a similar perspective, though were careful to qualify the means of grace by placing them within the context of God's decrees.

The means of conversion in Edwards. Consistent with the Reformed tradition, Edwards held that the Spirit of God worked through ordinary means to accomplish the salvation and sanctification of the elect.¹⁶⁹ According to Brian Cosby, Edwards “believed that the means of grace included all of Christ’s ordinances, but especially the Word, prayer, the sacraments, as well as public and private worship, meditation, reading edifying literature, godly conversation, and the like.”¹⁷⁰ The preached word, Scripture, and stories of eminently holy saints proved to be particularly used by the Spirit in the conversion of sinners.

The means of conversion played a significant role within Edwards’s *ordo salutis*, but were far from formulaic.¹⁷¹ For Edwards, the Spirit of God was bound by no

¹⁶⁷Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 141.

The brilliance of the early evangelical leadership led some to charge these men with creating the awakening. For example, see Frank Lambert, “*Pedlar in Divinity*”: *George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals, 1737-1770* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

¹⁶⁸For a traditional overview of the topic of “means of grace” within the Reformed tradition, see Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1873), 3:466–84.

¹⁶⁹Brian Crosby, *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Means of Grace.”

¹⁷⁰Crosby, “Means of Grace,” 369.

¹⁷¹Crosby, “Means of Grace,” 369.

means, but graciously chose to work through appointed means according to the will of God. In an entry in his *Miscellanies* Edwards wrote,

Grace is from God as immediately and directly as light is from the sun; and that notwithstanding the means that are improved, such as word, ordinances, etc. For though these are made use of, yet they have no influence to produce grace, either as causes or instruments, or any other way; and yet they are concerned in the affair of the production of grace, and are necessary in order to it.¹⁷²

The means of grace were concerned because “by them the Spirit of God has an opportunity to cause acts of grace in the soul.”¹⁷³ In his first published sermon “God Glorified in Man's Dependence,” Edwards argued that “though means are made use of in conferring grace on men’s souls, yet ’tis of God that we have these means of grace, and ’tis God that makes them effectual.”¹⁷⁴ He continued, “Their efficacy depends on the immediate influence of his Spirit.”¹⁷⁵

Edwards had harsh words for those who have long enjoyed “powerful and eminent means of grace,” but remained unconverted.¹⁷⁶ In a sermon preached soon after his grandfather’s death, Edwards reminded the Northampton congregation that “when sinners have lived long unconverted under eminent means of conversion,” they find themselves in “great danger of being finally left of God.”¹⁷⁷ In addition, such sinners will “have a great deal more to answer for than others who lived under less advantage.”¹⁷⁸

¹⁷²Jonathan Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos. 501–832, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 18:84.

¹⁷³Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos. 501–832, 18:84.

¹⁷⁴Jonathan Edwards, “God Glorified in Man’s Dependence,” in *Sermons and Discourses, 1730–1733* in *Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 17:203.

¹⁷⁵Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1730–1733*, 17:203.

¹⁷⁶Edwards, “Living Unconverted Under an Eminent Means of Grace,” in *Sermons and Discourses, 1723–1729*, 14:357.

¹⁷⁷Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1723–1729*, 14:360.

¹⁷⁸Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1723–1729*, 14:363.

For Edwards, preaching served as the primary means of conversion.¹⁷⁹ Referencing Stoddard's ministry after his death, Edwards rebuked those “who have lived . . . under a most clear, convincing dispensation of God’s word” in a land “full of gospel light,” yet remained unconverted.¹⁸⁰ “Powerful preaching,” he argued “if it don’t awaken, it hardens more than other preaching.”¹⁸¹ Edwards often preached on the conversion of sinners, approaching the doctrine from various angles.¹⁸² In his sermon “A Divine and Supernatural Light,” Edwards revealed what Hughes Oliphant Old identified as “a highly developed doctrine of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁸³ Displaying his careful thinking regarding the Spirit’s work, Edwards claimed “the Spirit of God in acting in the soul of a godly man, exerts and communicates himself there in his own proper nature.”¹⁸⁴ He continued, “Holiness is the proper nature of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit operates in the minds of the godly, by uniting himself to them, and living in them, and exerting his own nature in the exercise of their faculties.”¹⁸⁵ God accomplished this through the means of preaching but was in no way bound to do so. As Edwards emphasized to his Native American congregation, “Unless God gives his Spirit, all will be in vain.”¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁹For an overview of Edwards’s preaching, see Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*, vol. 5, Moderatism, Pietism, and Awakening (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 248–93; John Carrick, *The Preaching of Jonathan Edwards* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2008); McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 494–512; Michal Choinski, *The Rhetoric of Revival: The Language of the Great Awakening Preachers* (Gottingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016).

¹⁸⁰Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1723–1729*, 14:366.

¹⁸¹Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1723–1729*, 14:357.

¹⁸²Old, *Reading and Preaching the Scriptures*, 284–85.

¹⁸³Old, *Reading and Preaching the Scriptures*, 291.

¹⁸⁴Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1730–1733*, 17:411.

¹⁸⁵Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1730–1733*, 17:411.

¹⁸⁶Jonathan Edwards, *The Salvation of Souls: Nine Previously Unpublished Sermons on the Call of Ministry and the Gospel by Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Richard A. Bailey and Gregory A. Wills (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002), 154.

The means of conversion in Gill. High Calvinism, as represented by Gill, maintained a significant but slightly modified role for means in the conversion of sinners. Fuller, in a statement regarding the High Calvinism which marked his youth, highlighted an important aspect of High Calvinism:

With respect to the system of doctrine which I had been used to hear from my youth, it was in the High Calvinistic, or rather Hyper Calvinistic strain, admitting nothing spiritually good to be the duty of the unregenerate, and nothing to be addressed to them in a way of exhortation, excepting what related to external obedience. Outward services might be required, such as an attendance on the means of grace; and abstinence from gross evils might be enforced; but nothing was said to them from the pulpit, in a way of warning them to flee from the wrath to come, or inviting them to apply to Christ for salvation.¹⁸⁷

According to Fuller's testimony, High Calvinist preachers encouraged sinners to attend to the means of grace, so as to place themselves in the channels by which the Spirit normally worked.

An example of this type of encouragement to pursue means may be found in a funeral sermon Gill preached for a friend. Addressing the children of the deceased, Gill exhorted,

May you, his children that survive him, tread in his steps, and imitate him in every thing praise-worthy, civil, moral and religious; attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it in his due time, that you may fear and serve your father's God, and fill up his place in the world and church.¹⁸⁸

Gill's encouragement here was to attend to the means of grace, primarily church attendance and preaching given the context, but there was no encouragement toward actual conversion.¹⁸⁹ Gill's words signaled hope, but no urgency.

¹⁸⁷John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope Illustrated in the Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button and Son, 1816), 50–51.

¹⁸⁸Gill, "Sermon XXXI: Christ, the Ransom Found. Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Davenport," in *A Collection of Sermons and Tracts*, 1:530.

¹⁸⁹Curt D. Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1983), 453.

The reluctance the High Calvinists felt to directly encourage hearers to exercise faith in Christ came from an exalted, if misguided, view of the work of the Spirit.¹⁹⁰ Since faith was passive, sinners were encouraged to attend to the means of grace where they could wait for the Spirit's illumination.¹⁹¹ Commenting on John 1:13, Gill emphasized that even "the best of men . . . who, though ever so willing and desirous, that their children, relations, friends, and servants, should be born again, be partakers of the grace of God, and live in his sight, yet cannot effect any thing of this kind: all that they can do is to pray for them, give advice, and bring them under the means of grace; but all is ineffectual without a divine energy."¹⁹²

For Gill, the means of grace included the preaching and reading of the word, prayer, and the ordinances.¹⁹³ In a sermon commending attendance at public worship, Gill explained that "there are the means of grace, the word and ordinances, which are the *golden pipes*; through which the *golden oil* of grace is communicated from Christ unto his saints."¹⁹⁴ For Gill, the fact that preaching was the primary means in which the Spirit chose to work to bring faith elevated the task.¹⁹⁵ Commenting on Acts 16:15, Gill argued that Christ's command to "preach the gospel to every creature" was not restricted to the Apostles, but given to "all the ministers of the Gospel in succeeding ages, to the end of the world."¹⁹⁶ Like his evangelical counterparts, Gill maintained the conviction that the

¹⁹⁰Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill," 574.

¹⁹¹Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill," 574.

¹⁹²Gill, *Exposition of the New Testament*, 1:743–44.

¹⁹³The means of conversion are a subset of the means of grace and include the means related to the word, but not the ordinances or prayer. Daniel, "Hyper Calvinism and John Gill," 696.

¹⁹⁴Gill, "Sermon XVI: Attendance in Places of Religious Worship, Where the Divine Name Is Recorded, Encouraged," in *A Collection of Sermons and Tracts*, 1:261.

¹⁹⁵Thomas J. Nettles, *The Baptists*, vol. 1, *Beginnings in Britain* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor), 215.

¹⁹⁶Gill, *Exposition of the New Testament*, 1:494.

gospel should be preached to all peoples.¹⁹⁷ He did not conclude, however, that the gospel should be offered to everyone indiscriminately. “That there are universal offers of grace and salvation made to all men, I utterly deny,” wrote Gill.¹⁹⁸ This denial was not based in a disregard for the conversion of souls, but in his theological system. He continued, “Nay I deny that they are made to any; no not to God’s elect: grace and salvation are promised for them in the everlasting covenant, procured for them by Christ, published and revealed in the gospel, and applied by the Spirit.”¹⁹⁹ Important to Gill, however, was that the Spirit applied grace and salvation through appointed means.

Gill also spoke of the importance of the means of conversion in the context of parenting. In a critique of infant baptism, Gill acknowledged that “there is a difference between the offspring of believers, and those of infidels, pagans and idolaters.”²⁰⁰ He explained, since “they are brought up under the means of grace, there is hope of them; and it may be expected that the promise of God to such who use the means will be accomplished.”²⁰¹ Similarly, in covering the “duties of parents” in his *Body of Divinity*, Gill encouraged that “they [parents] should bring them [children] under the means of grace, the ministry of the word; and teach them to read the Scriptures as soon as may be; and instruct them in the knowledge of divine things, as they are able to receive it.”²⁰² He also encouraged parents to “instruct them [children] in the necessity of faith in God and in Christ, and of the use of prayer . . . [and] to teach them their miserable estate by

¹⁹⁷Nettles, *The Baptists*, 220.

¹⁹⁸John Gill, “The Doctrine of Predestination Stated, and Set in the Scripture-Light; in Opposition to Mr Wesley’s Predestination Calmly Considered: With a Reply to the Exceptions of the Said Writer to the Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints,” in *A Collection of Sermons and Tracts* (1778), 3:269.

¹⁹⁹Gill, “Doctrine of Predestination Stated,” 3:269.

²⁰⁰Gill, “Glory of God’s Grace Displayed,” 2:359.

²⁰¹Gill, “Glory of God’s Grace Displayed,” 2:359.

²⁰²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:738–39.

nature, and the way of recovery and salvation by Christ.”²⁰³ Gill was adamant that parents were to encourage their children to attend to the means of grace, and to equip them to do so; however, Gill went no further. In his direction to parents, Gill fell short of exhorting parents to encourage their children to look to Christ and be saved.

The Spirit in Mission

Two of Fuller’s Particular Baptist friends and associates, John Collett Ryland, and his son, John Ryland Jr., shared a copy of Edwards’s *Life of David Brainerd*.²⁰⁴ The two ministers took their turns reading and annotating Edwards’s text. On the flyleaf, Ryland Jr. labelled the book one “which he prizes above almost all others.”²⁰⁵ Both father and son were apparently quite moved by Edwards’s telling, however. In the margin of page 279, the younger Ryland recorded, “J.R.j. read thro this a second time 16.1.1776. O God give me the like Spirit.” To this notation, his father added: “Amen, Amen, Amen!”

The anecdote described one sampling of the ripple effects the writings of Jonathan Edwards had on the Particular Baptists, particularly those associated with the Northamptonshire Association. In a helpful summary, Bruce Hindmarsh surveyed the reception of Edwards among these Baptist ministers, concluding, “The eager reception of the *Life of Brainerd* . . . helped to stimulate . . . concern for mission that climaxed in the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society.”²⁰⁶ He continues, “The writings of Edwards

²⁰³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:739.

²⁰⁴Jonathan Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 7 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002). I am indebted to Hindmarsh for this remarkable anecdote. D. Bruce Hindmarsh, “The Reception of Jonathan Edwards by Early Evangelicals in England,” in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons*, ed. David W. Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 202.

²⁰⁵The Rylands’ copy of the *Life of Brainerd* is in the possession of Bristol Baptist College, Bristol, England.

²⁰⁶This is not to give the impression that Edwards’s *Life of Brainerd* was the only or even the most influential Edwards manuscript read by Fuller, the Rylands, and other Particular Baptist associates. Hindmarsh, “Reception of Jonathan Edwards,” 210.

were an important part of the chain of events that led to early modern missionary endeavor.”²⁰⁷ Among William Carey’s prized possessions which he carried to India was his copy of the *Life of Brainerd*, which he considered as “almost a second bible.”²⁰⁸

The impulse to mission, captured in Edwards’s *Life of Brainerd*, and transmitted to Fuller and his contemporaries, Bebbington places under the category of activism, described as “the expression of the gospel in effort.”²⁰⁹ Edwards described this well: “Persons, after their own conversion, have commonly expressed an exceeding great desire for the conversion of others. Some have thought that they should be willing to die for any soul.”²¹⁰ Indeed, many early evangelical converts placed life and limb in jeopardy for the cause of Christ.

According to Bebbington, “The quest for souls generally drove Evangelicals out . . . to the parishes and to the foreign mission field. The missionary movement of the nineteenth and twentieth century was the fruit of the Evangelical Revival.”²¹¹ The emphasis on mission among evangelicals was largely a new development and a point of discontinuity from their Puritan forbearers. As the dominant interpretation of Matthew 28 shifted, the evangelicals grew comfortable with, and even insistent upon, the use of means. Bebbington argued,

The new Evangelicals practiced what they preached. Edwards supported his friend David Brainerd in a mission to the Indians and at the end of his life undertook the same work himself. Carey established the Baptist Missionary Society, the first

²⁰⁷Hindmarsh, “Reception of Jonathan Edwards,” 210.

²⁰⁸Joseph Conforti, “Jonathan Edwards’s Most Popular Work: *The Life of David Brainerd* and Nineteenth Century Evangelical Culture,” *Church History* 54 (June 1985): 188–201.

²⁰⁹David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 3.

²¹⁰Jonathan Edwards, *The Great Awakening*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. C. C. Goen, rev. ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 4:184.

²¹¹Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 12.

foreign mission to spring from the revival, and by 1793 was pioneering its operations in India. Mission was now held to be essential to Christianity.²¹²

That Carey, Fuller, and Ryland would earn such a legacy regarding mission was by no means a foregone conclusion. While possible the High Calvinists would have found it agreeable to send missionaries to preach the general truths of the gospel, it is unlikely based on the trajectory they were on. More likely, the Particular Baptists would have further declined into a small and insignificant sect. That, however, was not the case, and Edwards played no small role. As Roger Hayden argued,

Jonathan Edwards's impact on eighteenth century Baptists in Britain is almost incapable of exaggeration. Out of his experience of revival and through his theological and narrative writing he produced evidence for a vital evangelical Calvinism which could stand side by side with the vitality of the Wesleyan movement. He produced theological keys which unlocked the closed doors of hyper-Calvinism with absolutely no concession to Arminianism or antinomianism. He fired the English Particular Baptist imagination with his own involvement with revival and his descriptions of the remarkable missionary endeavours of David Brainerd among the American Indians. What English Baptists yearned for, as the Association letters testify so often, Edwards was able to demonstrate as the true heart of the old Puritan Gospel—an evangelical Calvinism which could legitimately reach out into all the world with the gospel of Christ.²¹³

The result was evangelical renewal that resulted in missionary activity, first, among the Particular Baptists. The missionary zeal, however, would not be restricted to the Baptists. “Overseas missions,” Bebbington wrote, “were to remain a permanent expression of the energy that characterized the Evangelical movement.”²¹⁴

Evangelical Missionary Activity

While limited examples of missionary concern could be found among the Puritans, the evangelical awakening expanded the conviction that the redeemed were responsible for taking the gospel to the ends of the earth. While the evangelical

²¹²Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 41.

²¹³Roger Hayden, “Evangelical Calvinism among Eighteenth-Century British Baptists with Particular Reference to Bernard Foskett, Hugh and Caleb Evans and the Bristol Baptist Academy, 1690–1791” (PhD diss., University of Keele, 1991).

²¹⁴Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 42.

missionary enterprise was not seriously developed until the 1790s, strong currents of mission ran throughout the mid-eighteenth century, gathering force and waiting for further expansion.²¹⁵ Thomas Kidd notes that “hundreds of Anglican, dissenting, and Moravian missionaries went to the Native Americans of New England and New York between 1700 and 1755.”²¹⁶ For early evangelicals like Edwards, the missionary enterprise went hand in hand with the revivals occurring in the transatlantic world. The Northampton preacher considered the expansion of the Christian religion among the various unreached peoples of the world a foregone conclusion. Edwards saw a day when “all countries and nations, even those that are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge.”²¹⁷ He continued, “It may be hoped that many of the Negroes and Indians will be divines, and that excellent books will be published in Africa, in Ethiopia, [and] in Turkey.”²¹⁸ Edwards did more than dream, however. Through his writings and ministry to the Native Americans, the New England pastor laid a foundation for a great missionary movement to take place among evangelicals.²¹⁹

While Edwards played a significant role in encouraging mission work, a variety of factors in the eighteenth century contributed to the growing impetus toward missions. Anglicans had begun establishing voluntary societies aimed at the advancement of religion at the end of the seventeenth century. Thomas Bray (1656–1730), along with

²¹⁵Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 223.

²¹⁶Kidd further states that “the evangelical movement saw the emergence of key Native American pastors and missionaries, too. These Native Americans rarely enjoyed fair treatment within the movement, leading some to separate from the white evangelicals and start their own independent churches.” Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 190.

²¹⁷Edwards, *History of the Work of Redemption*, 9:480.

²¹⁸Edwards, *History of the Work of Redemption*, 9:480.

²¹⁹While there are numerous examples of missionary endeavors among Native Americans during the first half of the eighteenth century, this section focuses on Edwards and Brainerd due to the influence the publication of the *Life of David Brainerd* had on Fuller, his Particular Baptist associates, and the evangelical movement as a whole.

four laymen, founded the “Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge” (SPCK) in 1698 in order to provide Christian education to the poor and distribute Bibles and devotional literature.²²⁰ In 1701, Bray and his associates established the “Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts” (SPG) to assist the SPCK by focusing on serving British citizens overseas and evangelize non-Christians in the territories controlled by England.²²¹ During the eighteenth century, the SPG focused on North America and the West Indies. Furthermore, the “Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge” (SSPCK) was established in the first decade of the eighteenth century and incorporated into royal charter in 1709, for the purpose of spreading the Reformed Christian religion into underserved areas of Scotland.²²² Bray and the SPCK encouraged the Scottish founders, who—following Bray’s lead—aimed at the establishment of schools in the Scottish highlands and islands. SSPCK efforts were then reproduced in America, where the organization appointed their most famous missionary, David Brainerd (1718–1747), in 1742.²²³

In the early years of the evangelical movement, the most prominent efforts toward mission surrounded reaching the Native Americans. Brainerd was born in the farming village of Haddam, Connecticut, and experienced conversion in July 1739.²²⁴ In September of the same year, Brainerd entered Yale College to begin studies to become a Congregationalist minister. Brainerd excelled academically, but was expelled in early 1742 after being accused of suggesting that one of his tutors possessed no more grace

²²⁰F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: University Press, 2005), s.v. “SPCK.”

²²¹Cross and Livingstone, *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, s.v. “SPG.”

²²²Frederick V. Mills, Sr., “The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge in British North America, 1730-1775,” *Church History* 63, no. 1 (March 1994): 16.

²²³Mills, “Society in Scotland,” 21.

²²⁴R. W. Pointer, “David Brainerd,” in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Timothy Larsen, David Bebbington, Mark Noll, and Steve Carter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 75.

than a chair.²²⁵ Brainerd felt his situation mishandled and treatment harsh, so he continued to pursue ministry training through an apprenticeship to the Congregational pastor, Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790). While there, Brainerd evangelized the Native Americans along the Housatonic River; an important foreshadowing of things to come.²²⁶ In the fall of 1742, Brainerd received an invitation to appear before the colonial commissioners of the SSPCK in New York City regarding an appointment as a missionary to Native Americans. The SSPCK extended an offer to Brainerd, which he accepted.

Brainerd's first appointment among the Native Americans was to a small settlement of Mahican Indians at Kaunaameek, New York.²²⁷ While there, Brainerd received training from John Sergeant (1710–1749), the missionary to the Native Americans at Stockbridge, Massachusetts.²²⁸ The young missionary found many of the standard tactics for reaching the Native Americans to be ineffective, particularly the further inland one went. In May 1744, Brainerd traveled to eastern Pennsylvania, where he began work among the Delaware Indians. While the tribe would generally listen to Brainerd preach, they appeared unwilling to abandon their traditional religion for Christianity. In correspondence with SSPCK officials, Brainerd claimed the Native Americans believed they were created by a different god than the English settlers.²²⁹ As he traveled deeper into Pennsylvania by way of the Susquehanna River, the Native Americans he encountered there were even less receptive. Brainerd struggled over the apparent fruitlessness of his efforts and experienced significant melancholy, which he

²²⁵Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 7:154.

²²⁶Pointer, "David Brainerd" 75.

²²⁷Pointer, "David Brainerd," 75.

²²⁸For an overview of Sergeant's ministry at Stockbridge, see Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 192–94.

²²⁹Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 197.

recorded in his journal. For instance, one Lord's Day entry read,

Scarce ever felt myself so unfit to exist, as now: I saw I was not worthy of a place among the Indians, where I am going, if God permit: I thought I should be ashamed to look them in the face, and much more to have any respect shown me there. Indeed, I felt myself banished from the earth, as if all places were too good for such a wretch as I: I thought I should be ashamed to go among the very savages of Africa; I appeared to myself a creature fit for nothing, neither heaven nor earth. None knows, but those that feel it, what the soul endures that is sensibly shut out from the presence of God: Alas, 'tis more bitter than death!²³⁰

Eventually, Brainerd resigned himself to the pursuit of faithfulness in his missionary endeavors, without trusting his happiness to the number of converts birthed.²³¹

Brainerd encountered another group of Delaware Indians at Crossweeksung, New Jersey in June 1745, and found them much more receptive to the gospel.²³² Within six weeks, a spiritual awakening erupted at Crossweeksung. Brainerd gave himself to the task of catechizing and pastoring the Native American converts. Wanting to provide a permanent home for his congregation, Brainerd worked to acquire land for a new town in Cranberry, New Jersey. In May 1746, Brainerd led the tribe to Cranberry and spent the next six months helping them get established and tending to their spiritual needs. By November of the same year, a bout of tuberculosis caused Brainerd to return to New England. While he hoped to recover and resume ministry among the Delaware Indian converts, tuberculosis would ultimately take the young missionary's life.

Near the end of his life, Brainerd spent time at the Edwards home in Northampton, where Jerusha (1730–1748), Jonathan's daughter, helped nurse the sick missionary.²³³ Brainerd had been among the students at Yale when Edwards delivered the

²³⁰Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 7:195–96.

²³¹Pointer, "David Brainerd," 76.

²³²Pointer, "David Brainerd," 76.

²³³A great deal of speculation surrounds Brainerd and Jerusha, since she rarely left his side for the final months of his life. However, Brainerd made no reference to Jerusha in his published diary, and Edwards never mentioned an engagement. For more, see Pettit, editor's introduction, in Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 68–71; Joseph C. Harrod, "Jerusha Edwards: A Heart Uncommonly Devoted to God" (conference lecture, Jonathan Edwards Society, Northampton, MA, October 7, 2011), 8–11.

commencement speech published as *Distinguishing Marks*.²³⁴ Brainerd affirmed Edwards's understanding of the awakening and embodied the rich evangelical piety advocated by the Northampton pastor. Brainerd had never been particularly happy, often suffering from bouts of melancholy and physical suffering, but his diaries recorded a persevering faith and a commitment to serving God through difficult circumstances. Furthermore, Brainerd had recorded the work of God among the Native Americans. Brainerd's diaries, then, under the editorial hand of Edwards became "test cases" presenting the evangelical religious experience Edwards had been arguing for.²³⁵ Reflecting on the diary in an appendix to the work, Edwards summarized its usefulness: "We have here opportunity . . . to see the nature of true religion; and the manner of its operation when exemplified in a high degree and powerful exercise."²³⁶ Edwards continued,

In him was to be seen the right way of being lively in religion: His liveliness in religion did not consist merely or mainly in his being lively with the tongue, but in deed; not in being forward in profession and outward show, and abundant in declaring his own experiences; but chiefly in being active and abundant in the labors and duties of religion; "not slothful in business," but "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" [Rom 12:11], and "serving his generation, according to the will of God" [Acts 13:36].²³⁷

For Edwards, Brainerd—as a child of the awakening—represented the fruit of true religion. Others found the account powerful as well. In 1930, William Warren Sweet could say, "David Brainerd dead was a more potent influence for Indian missions and the missionary cause than was David Brainerd alive."²³⁸

²³⁴Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 196.

²³⁵Pettit, editor's introduction, in Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 7:5.

²³⁶Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 7:500.

²³⁷Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 7:510.

²³⁸William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1930), 236. For more regarding the legacy of Brainerd, see Conforti, "Jonathan Edwards's Most Popular Work," 188–201.

Brainerd's work proved inspirational for numerous evangelical missionaries in the years following through Edwards's publication of the *Life of Brainerd*. However, he was not the only young missionary birthed by the awakening. Other early evangelicals, such as David's brother, John Brainerd (1720–1781), Samuel Davies (1723–1761), Gideon Hawley (1727–1807), and even Edwards himself, engaged in mission work among the Native Americans.²³⁹

When Sergeant died in 1749, Edwards filled the opening as missionary to the Mohican tribe at Stockbridge, moving to the frontier settlement in June 1751.²⁴⁰ Edwards's disposition towards the Native Americans was generally positive and he remained hopeful of their spiritual possibilities. Edwards applied his doctrine of original sin consistently, understanding the Native Americans as both equally depraved and equally subject to redemption as the English colonials.²⁴¹ He worked for not only the conversion, but also the education of the Native Americans. Furthermore, Edwards sought to protect the Native Americans from mistreatment at the hands of the British.²⁴² Many English traders were all too happy to defraud and embezzle the inhabitants of the Indian nations. Edwards protested such abuse, which he considered detrimental to political and spiritual causes. The French, according to Edwards, had proven more trustworthy. They were also Roman Catholic and in Edwards's opinion, refused to teach the Native Americans true religion or to read the Scripture themselves.²⁴³ The missionary work was of enormous spiritual significance, not just because the souls of the Native

²³⁹For an overview of the work of John Brainerd and Gideon Hawley, see Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 200–206. For a fine study on Samuel Davies, see Joseph Charles Harrod, "The Divine Life in the Soul Considered": Theology and Spirituality in the Works of Samuel Davies" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014).

²⁴⁰Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 194; Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 375.

²⁴¹Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 194.

²⁴²Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 387.

²⁴³Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 385.

Americans were at stake, but because he understood the mission work in eschatological terms, as part of an ongoing conflict between the Protestant and Roman Catholic powers.²⁴⁴

Brainerd and Edwards represented the mainstream of early evangelical missiological endeavors. These evangelicals possessed the conviction, concern, and enthusiasm necessary to mobilize persons and resources to spread the gospel, but focused on areas within and important to the British colonial venture.²⁴⁵ By the end of the eighteenth century, the evangelical movement blossomed into a global enterprise. Several factors contributed to this turn, including a growing knowledge of and interest in exotic places spurred on by the accounts of the voyages of Captain James Cook (1728–1779) and the reports concerning misgovernment of Britain’s colonial affairs by Warren Hastings (1732–1818), governor-general of India from 1772–1785.²⁴⁶ The influence of missions-minded Moravians upon the evangelicals also played a role. As W. R. Ward contended, the Moravians “bridge[d] the gap between revival and missions.”²⁴⁷ Less than half-a-century after his death, Edwards’s prophetic interpretation claiming that “as there is no place in the vast ocean where there is not water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind where there is not the knowledge of the Lord” was well on its way to becoming true.²⁴⁸ In a remarkable turn of events, a missionary to India would draw strength from reading accounts of Brainerd’s work among the American Indians from Edwards’s *Life of Brainerd*.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁴Kidd, *Great Awakening*, 195.

²⁴⁵Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 225.

²⁴⁶Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 224.

²⁴⁷W. R. Ward, “Missions in Their Global Context in the Eighteenth Century,” in *A Global Faith: Essays on Evangelicalism and Globalization*, ed. Mark Hutchinson and Ogbu Kalu (Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1998), 116.

²⁴⁸Jonathan Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 5:332.

²⁴⁹David W. Bebbington, “Remembered Around the World: The International Scope of

Edwards's Theology of Mission

For Edwards, missions, which he frequently referred to as the “propagation of the gospel,” fit within the overall context of the history of redemption.²⁵⁰ As Brian Franklin emphasizes, “Missions and missiology are best understood in Jonathan Edwards’s life not as independent subjects, but as companions to a more central theological concept: God’s progressive redemption of the world through Jesus Christ.”²⁵¹ This resulted in a spirit of postmillennial optimism concerning the spread of the gospel among all peoples, particularly the Native Americans and Africans with whom he was most familiar.

The Spirit of God had brought revival among existing churches, a key component in God’s work of worldwide redemption. For Edwards, this was how the process worked. According to McClymond and McDermott, Edwards believed “the history of missions is dynamized by periodic revivals powered by the Holy Spirit, who first inspires men and women to pray for them.”²⁵² In his *History of the Work of Redemption* Edwards summarized the missional expectations, when, citing Zechariah 4:6–7, he stated, “God’s Spirit shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful revival and propagation of religion. This great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by God’s Holy Spirit.”²⁵³ The promise of God’s Spirit, then, served as a great encouragement for mission.

Edwards affirmed that God would accomplish the propagation of the gospel

Edwards’s Legacy,” in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons*, ed. David W. Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 186.

²⁵⁰McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 549.

²⁵¹Brian R. Franklin, *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Missions and Missiology.”

²⁵²McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 550.

²⁵³Edwards, *History of the Work of Redemption*, 9:460.

throughout the world by way of particular means.²⁵⁴ For the Northampton theologian, prayer and the empowerment of pious Christians served as the two most important means. In the late 1740s, Edwards thought deeply about both, as he worked on his book *A Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer* (1748), while David Brainerd lay dying in his home.²⁵⁵ In *A Humble Attempt*, Edwards emphasized the prayers of the saints as the primary human catalyst God used to bring about outpourings of the Spirit.²⁵⁶ By speaking of God's prayers as the primary means, and comparatively downplaying preaching, Edwards applied the Great Commission, not only beyond the original Apostles, but to the entirety of the contemporary church, both laity and minister.²⁵⁷ Commenting on Zechariah 8:22, Edwards predicted

that there shall be given much of a spirit of prayer to God's people, in many places, disposing them to come into an express agreement, unitedly to pray to God in an extraordinary manner, that he would appear for the help of his church, and in mercy to mankind, and pour out his Spirit, revive his work, and advance his spiritual kingdom in the world, as he has promised.²⁵⁸

This impetus to pray would then result in widespread revival which would incite more prayer. Eventually, the entire world would be united around the purpose of intercession for the accomplishment of God's grand purpose of redemption.²⁵⁹

Edwards's sermons to the Native Americans revealed details about his missiology as he fleshed them out before the very people he hoped to reach. In a sermon delivered on August 16, 1751, before the leaders of the Mohawk nation, who were

²⁵⁴Franklin, "Missions and Missiology," 384.

²⁵⁵Franklin, "Missions and Missiology"; Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, 5:307–435.

²⁵⁶McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 551.

²⁵⁷McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 51.

²⁵⁸Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, 5:317.

²⁵⁹Franklin, "Missions and Missiology," 384.

considering relocating to Stockbridge for the purpose of educating their children, Edwards began by stating the English diplomats had come in the name of the king of England, “but I in the name of Jesus Christ.”²⁶⁰ This statement reflected Edwards’s view of the Native Americans, bound to some degree by his identity as an English colonist, but driven by theological and biblical categories.²⁶¹ Reflecting on 2 Peter 1:19, Edwards presented a concise narrative of the gospel. He spoke of God’s creation of man in a holy state, the fall of man, and the resulting darkness. Building on imagery of light and darkness, Edwards then stated, “But the great God took pity of mankind and gave ‘em the holy Scriptures to teach men and to be in this world as a light shining in a dark place.”²⁶² Furthermore, “after many ages, he sent his own Son into the world to die for sinners and more fully to instruct the world.”²⁶³ Along with instructing the Apostles to complete the Scriptures, “Christ commanded that his word contained in the Bible should be oped to all nations, and that all should be instructed out of it.”²⁶⁴ Some nations enjoyed the light of the Scripture, while others remained in darkness.

For Edwards, the fundamental difference between the godly and ungodly was not based on nationality, but upon inward spiritual illumination.²⁶⁵ In his work against Arminianism, *Original Sin*, written while at Stockbridge, Edwards affirmed the spiritual equality of the English and Native American.²⁶⁶ Both were descendants of Adam and equally in need of redemption. Edwards told the Mohawks, “We are no better than you in

²⁶⁰Jonathan Edwards, *The Sermons of Jonathan Edwards: A Reader*, ed. Wilson H. Kimnach, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Douglas A. Sweeney (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 105.

²⁶¹Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 385.

²⁶²Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 106.

²⁶³Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 106.

²⁶⁴Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 106.

²⁶⁵Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 385.

²⁶⁶Rachel M. Wheeler, “Edwards as Missionary,” in *Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 206–7.

no respect, only as God has made us to differ and has been pleased to give us more light. And now we are willing to give it to you.”²⁶⁷ The English had received the light prior to the Native Americans, but “since the white people came over the seas and have settled in these parts of the world, they have not done their duty to you.”²⁶⁸ This “shameful neglect” has made “the great God . . . undoubtedly . . . very angry.”²⁶⁹ After stating, “Jesus Christ gave command that the gospel should be preached to all nations,” Edwards accused the French of failing to teach the Native Americans to read, so as to keep them from God’s word, which would reveal the French’s Roman Catholicism to be disagreeable to Scripture.²⁷⁰ The Protestant English and Dutch settlers did not conduct themselves more honorably, since they opposed the instruction of the Native Americans “for the sake of making a gain of you.”²⁷¹ However, in recent years, according to Edwards, many English had been concerned both with the work of spreading the gospel among the Native Americans and with the importance of giving money to fund it.

The sermon covers several key aspects of Edwards’s theology of mission. First, for Edwards, equipping the Native Americans to read Scripture was foundational. As Marsden argues, Edwards “believed that literacy was key to effective missions, since the Indians needed to be able to read and understand God’s Word.”²⁷² Education, therefore was paramount and Edwards took a keen interest in the instruction of the Native American children at the mission school.²⁷³ Second, Edwards considered tending to the

²⁶⁷Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 108.

²⁶⁸Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 107.

²⁶⁹Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 107.

²⁷⁰Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 107.

²⁷¹Edwards, *Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, 108.

²⁷²Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 389.

²⁷³Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 385–86.

practical interests of the Native Americans a vital part of the mission work.²⁷⁴

Mistreatment of the Native Americans undermined the gospel message and jeopardized the mission. Throughout his time at Stockbridge, Edwards gave himself not only to the detailed management of the Stockbridge mission, but his constant advocacy for and defense of the Native Americans under his care.²⁷⁵ Third, Edwards approached the Native Americans as spiritual equals. While he maintained the superiority of English culture, Edwards held that the English and Indian were spiritual equals before God.²⁷⁶

Edwards's theology of mission was innovative in that it expanded the responsibility for mission to include the entire church.²⁷⁷ Not only did Edwards incite the entire church to pray for the advance of the gospel, but he recognized the importance of giving to missionary causes. Furthermore, Edwards brought missiology into the mainstream of Reformed theology, giving it a "new depth and sophistication."²⁷⁸ Through his theological writings, *Life of Brainerd*, and personal example, Edwards became a major inspiration and resource for the missionaries of the nineteenth century.²⁷⁹ With good reason, Edwards has come to be regarded as the "grandfather of modern missions."

Eschatology. As has been noted, Edwards's eschatology influenced his theology of mission significantly. However, Edwards's work among the Native Americans at Stockbridge also influenced his grand eschatological vision.²⁸⁰ Near the end

²⁷⁴Franklin, "Missions and Missiology," 385.

²⁷⁵Franklin, "Missions and Missiology," 385.

²⁷⁶Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 394.

²⁷⁷McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 551.

²⁷⁸McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 551.

²⁷⁹Franklin, "Missions and Missiology," 385.

²⁸⁰McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 563.

of his life, McClymond and McDermott argue that Edwards experienced a “cultural-historical turn” in which he became preoccupied with foreign cultures, both historical and contemporary, and how they fit into God’s plan for the world.²⁸¹ During this period, the pastor turned missionary sketched hundreds of notebook entries related to non-Western nations and non-Christian civilizations. In what was to be his *magnum opus*, the *History of the Work of Redemption*, Edwards planned to work out the purposes of God throughout the cultures of the world.²⁸²

In his *History of the Work of Redemption*, which was never completed, Edwards planned to weave together a “tri-world vision,” in which the activities of heaven, earth, and hell were interwoven in a grand narrative of God’s purposes.²⁸³ For Edwards, the story began in heaven with divine decrees but was executed in history by way of anticipation in the Old Testament period and fulfillment in Christ’s incarnation and earthly ministry.²⁸⁴ The work would then continue through the age of the church until it concluded with the reign of the saints in heaven and the punishment of the wicked in hell. Edwards made extensive use of Old Testament prophecy and typology to show that the center of redemption, and therefore history, is Christ.²⁸⁵ As Wilson noted, however, “The principle of Spirit witness or presence becomes increasingly important . . . from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world.” He continued, “There the Spirit is the

²⁸¹McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 188–89.

²⁸²McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 563.

²⁸³Jeffrey C. Waddington, *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, s.v. “*History of the Work of Redemption* (1739, 1774)” ; Harry S. Stout, “Jonathan Edwards’s Tri-World Vision,” in *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. D. G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 27–46.

While Edwards never completed the *History of the Work of Redemption* as he intended, the basis of the work—thirty sermons on Isaiah 51:8 preached in 1739—was published posthumously, giving readers a sense of what the projected work would have been. Robert G. Lee, *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Eschatology.”

²⁸⁴Waddington, “*History of the Work of Redemption*,” 293.

²⁸⁵Waddington, “*History of the Work of Redemption*,” 294.

great agent through whom the Work of Redemption—which Christ has finished—is developed and completed.”²⁸⁶

Like his Puritan theological forbearers, Edwards gave a great deal of attention to thinking about the culmination of history and how current events related to Christ’s coming.²⁸⁷ “My mind,” Edwards stated, “has been much entertained and delighted, with the Scripture promises and prophecies, of the future glorious advancement of Christ’s kingdom on earth.”²⁸⁸ He understood the church to be progressing in triumph, where the glory of God would fill the entire earth, which would usher in Christ’s return. The progress of the church included the dissemination of the knowledge of God throughout the whole earth through revival and missions. Protestant Christianity would emerge victorious over Roman Catholicism and Islam. Like numerous other Protestant theologians, Edwards identified the papacy with the Antichrist. The Reformation began the process of the destruction of the Antichrist, which he understood to be progressing in favor of the Protestants throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Edwards also associated Islam with Satan, believing the devil established Islam as a false religion for the people of the East. He predicted a final battle with Islam that led to the spreading of the gospel among the nations of the East.

For Edwards, the millennium would be a time of rest for the church.²⁸⁹ Protestant Christianity would have spread across the whole earth. This expansion would occur as the Spirit brought prayer, revival, and mission to his people.²⁹⁰ Furthermore, for

²⁸⁶John F. Wilson, editor’s note, in Edwards, *History of the Work of Redemption*, 60.

²⁸⁷For an overview of the connections between Cotton Mather and Edwards, see Sidney H. Rooy, “Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards: The Progress of Mission,” in *The Theology of Missions in the Puritan Tradition: A Study of Representative Puritans, Richard Sibbes, Richard Baxter, John Eliot, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 242–309.

²⁸⁸Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings*, 16:800.

²⁸⁹Lee, “Eschatology,” 204.

²⁹⁰Rooy, *Theology of Missions in the Puritan Tradition*, 306–8.

Edwards, such a day appeared to be fast approaching. The revival theologian turned missionary “came to believe that what God was doing among Native Americans . . . was tangible evidence that the great work of God’s Spirit may have begun.”²⁹¹

Missio Dei. In an early entry in his *Miscellanies* Edwards wrote that God “created the whole world for his own glory.”²⁹² If God’s bringing glory to himself was his goal, then God’s mission was to unite all parts of his “tri-world vision” to himself.²⁹³ Redeemed humanity would experience the glory of God and reflect it back upon him. The means by which God would accomplish this was redemption accomplished in Christ and applied by the Holy Spirit.

In his *End for Which God Created the World*, published posthumously, Edwards distinguished between a “chief end” and an “ultimate end.”²⁹⁴ For Edwards, the “supreme and ultimate end of the work of creation, and of all God’s works, is the emanation and true expression of God’s internal glory.”²⁹⁵ This involved both a manifestation and communication of God’s fullness *ad extra* as well as a reciprocal love and joy in God on the part of the creature.²⁹⁶ “God,” according to Edwards, “in seeking this end, seeks the creature’s good.”²⁹⁷

²⁹¹McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 269.

²⁹²Edwards, “*Miscellanies*”:Entry Nos.1-500, 13:276.

²⁹³Sean Michael Lucas, *God’s Grand Design: The Theological Vision of Jonathan Edwards* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 61.

²⁹⁴Edwards, *Dissertation I Concerning the End for which God Created the World*, in *Ethical Writings*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 8:403–535.

²⁹⁵Edwards, *Dissertation I*, 8:526.

²⁹⁶Joe Rigney, *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, s.v. “*End for Which God Created the World* (1765).”

²⁹⁷Edwards, *Dissertation I*, 8:530.

If God's ultimate end was his own glory, then the chief means for accomplishing this was the work of redemption.²⁹⁸ Redemption, for Edwards, reconciled fallen sinners back to God, communicating his infinite glory in an unending and ever-increasing fashion, uniting the redeemed to God through the Son in a manner that models the Father-Son relationship, but without comprising the distinction between God and his creation.²⁹⁹

Edwards understood God's mission in the history of the world to be advancing the cause of "gathering together all things and causing all things to partake of his glory."³⁰⁰ All of history, for Edwards, was eschatological and driven by God's mission.³⁰¹ Nothing happens that does not contribute to the summing up of all things in Christ. "The wheels of providence," according to Edwards, "are not turned round by blind chance, but . . . they are guided by the Spirit of God, where the Spirit goes they go."³⁰² The work of redemption advances through the agency of the Spirit, who causes God's mission to become realized in history.³⁰³ For Edwards, the church participates in the mission of God as the Word of God is proclaimed, which the Spirit uses to bring about conviction and conversion.³⁰⁴

Gill and Mission

As mentioned above, Gill considered the Great Commission of Matthew

²⁹⁸Lucas, *God's Grand Design*, 62.

²⁹⁹Rigney, "End for Which God Created the World," 198.

³⁰⁰Lucas, *God's Grand Design*, 63.

³⁰¹As Stein notes, "The controlling principle in Edwards's eschatology, is the connection between first and last things." Stephen J. Stein, "Eschatology," in *Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, 238.

³⁰²Edwards, *History of the Work of Redemption*, 9:519.

³⁰³Lucas, *God's Grand Design*, 63.

³⁰⁴Stein, "Eschatology," 239.

28:19–20 to apply to all ministers of the gospel, not just the Apostles.³⁰⁵ In a treatise written in response to John Wesley, Gill affirmed “the gospel is indeed ordered to be preached to every creature to whom it is sent and comes.”³⁰⁶ In his *Body of Divinity* Gill encouraged prayer for “unconverted sinners . . . and especially . . . for the conversion of God’s elect.”³⁰⁷ However, while Gill could sometimes make evangelical statements, his thought and practice regarding missions differed significantly from his Evangelical contemporaries and consequently, the next generation of Particular Baptists. Whereas the Evangelicals considered the employment of means in the conversion of sinners as a matter of Christian responsibility, Gill spoke of the use of means, and therefore missions, in the context of God’s sovereignty.

In his *Cause of God and Truth* Gill responded to objections to Calvinism based on “the state and the case of the heathens.”³⁰⁸ Observing the reality that “God suffered the heathen world to walk in their own ways, leaving them without a revelation of his mind

³⁰⁵Matt 28:19–20, what is commonly referred to now as “The Great Commission” passage, has undergone significant shifts regarding its usage and interpretation throughout the history of the church. As Haykin and Robinson note, the early church primarily used the text for the support of orthodox Trinitarianism. The Anabaptists and Baptists of the sixteenth and seventeenth century used the text to argue for believer’s baptism by immersion. It was not until near the end of the eighteenth century that the text began to be used as primarily a missionary text. Michael A. G. Haykin and C. Jeffrey Robinson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin’s Missional Vision and Legacy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 11. A key point of contention regarding this passage has been whether the command applies to all believers, or only to the Apostles whom Christ is directly addressing. See Robert L. Plummer, “The Great Commission in the New Testament,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 9, no. 4 (2005): 4–5; D. A. Carson, “Conclusion: Ongoing Imperative for World Mission,” in *The Great Commission: Evangelicals and the History of World Missions*, ed. Martin I. Klauber and Scott M. Mantetsch (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 179. William Carey’s work, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen* (1792), sparked a general shift in the application of Matt 28:19–20. His first chapter, “An Enquiry whether the Commission given by our Lord to his Disciples be not still binding on us,” directly addressed the text in question. David Paul Parris referred to Carey as “one of the giants of the church that introduced a major interpretive turn or significantly influenced how a passage subsequently came to be read. William Carey’s reading of Matt 28:18–20 is one such example. To this day his *Enquiry* is seen as one of the most influential works that shaped how we understand the missiological mandate of the church.” David Paul Harris, *Reading the Bible with Giants: How 2000 Years of Biblical Interpretation Can Shed New Light on Old Texts*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015), 140.

³⁰⁶Gill, “Doctrine of Predestination Stated,” 3:269.

³⁰⁷Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:689.

³⁰⁸Gill, *Cause of God and Truth*, 383.

and will, without the gospel, and means of grace; and which has been, and still is, the case of multitudes to this day,” Gill argued “this it cannot reasonably be thought he would have done, had it been according to the counsel of his will that all the individuals of mankind should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.”³⁰⁹ The distribution of the means of conversion correlated to God’s decree of election. This line of reasoning was consistent with the high Calvinist tendency to emphasize God’s immanent acts.³¹⁰ Operating within his high-Calvinist system, Gill concluded, “All men, such as Indians and others, are not obliged to believe in Christ.”³¹¹ The London preacher did not conclude, however, that the church possessed a responsibility to preach the gospel to the Indians.

Gill’s eschatology also proved a significant hindrance to mission. Barry Howson concludes that the opposition to mission among the Particular Baptists “has as much to do with . . . eschatology as . . . soteriology.”³¹² Whereas the eschatology of the Evangelicals encouraged them to pursue missionary endeavors, Gill’s eschatology discouraged missionary activity until an appointed future time. A hallmark of Gill’s eschatology was his belief that the church awaited two future epochs where Christ would exercise his kingly reign in an increasingly glorious fashion.³¹³ The first coming epoch, which he referred to as the “spiritual reign of Christ,” would be characterized by significant continuity between the church age in which he lived, but “administered . . .

³⁰⁹Gill, *Cause of God and Truth*, 383.

³¹⁰Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 144–45.

³¹¹Gill, *Cause of God and Truth*, 58.

³¹²Barry Howson, “The Eschatology of the Calvinistic Baptist John Gill (1697–1771) Examined and Compared,” *Eusebia* 5 (Autumn 2005): 33-66.

³¹³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:636. Howson explains that Gill’s eschatology conflated postmillennialism with premillennialism, arguing for both a “spiritual reign” of Christ and a literal millennium that would begin with Christ’s second coming. Howson, “Eschatology of John Gill,” 56.

with greater purity, and to a greater degree of perfection.”³¹⁴

An important aspect related to mission was that this coming spiritual reign would be a time of great gospel advancement around the world. Gill explained, “The kingdom of Christ will be carried on by the ministry of the word, as now; the gospel will then be preached; . . . but in this [spiritual reign] there will be multitudes to be converted.”³¹⁵ Furthermore, Gill argued that during the spiritual reign “the gospel is to be preached unto the end of the world.”³¹⁶ He offered six characteristics of the preaching of the Word due to take place during the spiritual reign. Number five particularly addressed missions:

The gospel will have a greater spread than now; at present it lies in a narrow compass, chiefly in the isles, very little on the continent; and in the countries where it is, it is but in few places there; but hereafter many will run to and fro, and knowledge, evangelical knowledge, will be increased; the earth shall be full of it, as the waters cover the sea; the angel, or a set of gospel-ministers, shall have it to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Those living waters, the doctrines of grace, which are the means of quickening sinners and enlivening saints, shall go out from Jerusalem, the church of God; half of them towards the former, or eastern sea, and half of them towards the hinder, or western sea; that is, they shall go east and west, even into all parts; in summer and in winter shall it be; these waters shall be always flowing, or these doctrines constantly and continually preached, Isa 9:9, Zech 14:8.³¹⁷

Gill’s vision for the spread of the gospel throughout the world was a hopeful one; however, he also believed the time had not come for such a widespread advance of the gospel.

According to the London minister, two events had to take place before the spiritual reign of Christ could begin. First, the antichrist had to be destroyed.³¹⁸ Like much of the Reformed stream, Gill believed the papacy to be the antichrist and projected

³¹⁴Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:636.

³¹⁵Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:637.

³¹⁶Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:637.

³¹⁷Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:637–38.

³¹⁸Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:639.

that Roman Catholic states would be destroyed through the preaching of the gospel and war with Protestant nations.³¹⁹ The second thing required before the spiritual reign of Christ was the mass conversion of the Jewish peoples.³²⁰ This would follow the destruction of the papacy, as “the Popish religion is the great stumbling-block which lies in the way of the Jews.”³²¹ The thinking went like this: as the Jewish people are resettled in their own land, the door will be opened for a great spread of the gospel in the East and the conversion of the Gentiles will be complete.

In Gill’s scheme, the Holy Spirit would also become increasingly active during the spiritual reign. He wrote, “There will be a more plentiful effusion of the Spirit of God upon ministers and churches, in this state.”³²² The prophecy of Joel will become complete as the Spirit pours forth on all Gentiles. Though Gill’s vision of the spiritual reign required significant political and military events to occur, the Spirit also possessed a key role. He wrote, “Many and great conversions in the Gentile world, will be, not by might or power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.”³²³ Saints around the world would experience the gifts and fruit of the Spirit to a much greater degree. Peace would reign through the work of the Spirit. Eventually, Christ would return in his second coming of judgment, ushering in the second epoch, his personal reign.³²⁴

The way in which Gill’s eschatology unfolded, accompanied by his date-setting, led to an eschatological framework that discouraged mission work, particularly to

³¹⁹Howson, “Eschatology of John Gill,” 38.

³²⁰Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:640.

³²¹Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:640.

³²²Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:642.

³²³Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:642.

³²⁴Gill, *Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity*, 2:643; Howson, “Eschatology of John Gill,”

the East.³²⁵ Gill affirmed the gospel was to be preached to all. However, that conviction was heavily qualified by an emphasis on divine providence and eschatological expectation. The time would come to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth—but for Gill, that time was not yet.

Conclusion

The eighteenth century witnessed great transition as men such as Edwards and Gill sought to maintain doctrinal fidelity to their Puritan forbearers amidst a changing intellectual climate and a rapidly expanding world. Gill led the Particular Baptist denomination to a faithful preservation of key doctrines, particularly the Trinity, during a time when much of Old Dissent crumbled into heterodoxy. Edwards promoted the work of revival as both a preacher who experienced a great work of the Spirit and as a careful theologian of the Spirit's work. Both men would be influential upon the ministry of Andrew Fuller and the Northamptonshire Association. Gill's strong leadership undoubtedly helped the Northamptonshire Baptists remain faithful to the biblical truth and therefore, to have a saving gospel to preach. The work of the Evangelical from Northampton undoubtedly provided the Particular Baptists with the theological tools needed to call sinners to faith and repentance indiscriminately, as well as to mobilize in order to take the gospel to the nations.

³²⁵Howson, "Eschatology of John Gill," 57.

CHAPTER 6

ANDREW FULLER'S PNEUMATOLOGICAL WRITINGS: PERSONAL, PASTORAL, AND POLEMICAL CONTEXT

As 1781 dawned, Andrew Fuller remarked in a January 1st journal entry, “Surely it does not seem consistent, that a heart so full of stupidity and unholiness as mine . . . can be the residence of the Holy Spirit of God.”¹ Fuller’s internal struggle regarding what the Spirit was capable of within his own heart, mirrored in a sense his theological development regarding the work of the Spirit more generally. How did the Spirit convert sinners and what part were men and women to play? Could the Spirit bring renewal to the floundering Particular Baptist denomination? Fuller’s ministry and writings sought to answer these questions, among others.

Fuller knew the Particular Baptist denomination had been in decline for some time. In a 1796 letter, Fuller stated that until recent years the Particular Baptists were in danger of becoming “a very dunghill in society.”² Fuller also understood the success of Particular Baptists depended upon the Spirit. In his first published sermon, “The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith,” the Particular Baptist minister encouraged, “O brethren, let us pray much for an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon our ministers and churches.”³ The Baptist pastor not only prayed, but devoted himself to the work of leading his denomination to embrace evangelical theological principles. Fuller’s efforts

¹Andrew Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, in *Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Nathan A. Finn (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 9: 22.

²Andrew Fuller, *Essays, Letters, Etc. On Ecclesiastical Polity*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 3:478.

³Andrew Fuller, “The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:131.

were both practical and theological. Remarkably, the preacher from Northampton, who received little by way of formal education, produced numerous theological treatises, sermons, and letters that dealt with the most pressing issues of his day.⁴ In response to his notable achievements, both Princeton and Yale offered him an honorary Doctor of Divinity. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the term “Fullerism” had come into use to describe his theological system.⁵ As Geoffrey Nuttall remarked, “The coining of it, and its acceptance by friend as well as foe, points to a remarkable achievement.”⁶

Fullerism, a label to which Fuller himself objected, proved an effective contribution to the revival of Particular Baptist life.⁷ According to its namesake, Fullerism represented the evangelical Calvinism of numerous Puritan and Reformed authors and could more accurately be named “Owenism” or “Bunyanism.”⁸ While this claim was accurate in many respects, the Baptist theologian also incorporated numerous insights from Jonathan Edwards. Fullerism, then, could not accurately be described as Puritan theology, but as a theology derived from the Puritans but with new evangelical emphases. A significant element of this new theological synthesis involved pneumatology, particularly as it related to conversion, revival, and mission.

Fuller developed his pneumatology in the context of pastoral and denominational service. Unlike Owen, Fuller never wrote a full-length treatise on the Spirit. However, understanding the work of the Spirit proved an important part of his

⁴Cross refers to Fuller as “one of the Baptists’ most prominent autodidacts” and reminds that “it should in no way be assumed that he was uneducated or unintelligent.” Anthony R. Cross, *Useful Learning: Neglected Means of Grace in the Reception of the Evangelical Revival among English Particular Baptists* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Pub., 2017), 317.

⁵Geoffrey F. Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question: A Turning-Point in Eighteenth-Century Dissent,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 16, no. 1 (April 1965): 207.

⁶Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question,” 207.

⁷Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question,” 228–30.

⁸Peter J. Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2015), 1.

theological program for the revitalization of the Particular Baptist denomination and the advancement of the missionary cause. Fuller also shouldered the burden of defending his church, denomination, and evangelical Christianity against false teaching. This often involved polemical debates in which disagreement over the biblical understanding of the work of the Spirit played a major part. As Tom Nettles remarks, “For Fuller, no contradiction existed between a revival-missions-type Christianity and a polemical stance toward the vital theological issues of the day.”⁹

Conversion to Evangelical Calvinism

The conversion of Andrew Fuller from High Calvinism to evangelical Calvinism not only stands as one of the great influential doctrinal shifts within Particular Baptist history, but church history as well. When Fuller began his first pastorate at Soham in May 1775, he began as a proponent of the High Calvinism that had marked his entire religious upbringing to that point. However, he also possessed a commitment to seek out truth first-hand. “Being now devoted to the ministry,” wrote Fuller, “I took a review of the doctrine I should preach, and spent pretty much of my time in reading, and in making up my mind as to various things relative to the gospel.”¹⁰ A desire to “take up no principle at second-hand; but to search for every thing at the pure fountain of thy [God’s] word” marked Fuller’s ministry.¹¹ This determination also led the Particular Baptist pastor to pursue doctrinal change where necessary.

Fuller’s Conversion within its High Calvinist Context

As Fuller reflected on his conversion to Christ years later, he recalled an

⁹Thomas J. Nettles, “Preface to the New Edition,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:xvi.

¹⁰Andrew Fuller, “Memoir,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:12.

¹¹Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:19.

experience “both of pain and pleasure.”¹² The High Calvinism that marked his youth had contributed to a troubled conversion experience. Fuller described John Eve, the pastor of the Particular Baptist church at Soham during Fuller’s youth, as “tinged with false Calvinism.”¹³ Eve rarely addressed the unconverted from the pulpit and therefore, Fuller felt no concern from what he heard. “The preaching upon which I attended,” Fuller reflected, “was not adapted to awaken my conscience.”¹⁴ Around the age of fourteen, however, Fuller began to undergo conviction through his own “reading and reflection.”¹⁵ Fuller spoke of being stirred to reflect on the nature of faith, as well as being troubled in his conscience when he joined other teenage boys in sin. Not insignificant for Fuller’s future ministry, he recounts at times being “very much affected, in thinking of the doctrines of Christianity, or in reading such books as Bunyan’s *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, his *Pilgrim’s Progress*” and other works by the same author.¹⁶ Fuller also recounted being moved to tears when reading of the doctrine of salvation presented in Ralph Erskine’s *Gospel Sonnets*.¹⁷ While Fuller experienced interest and emotion related to the gospel, his heart experienced “no radical change.”¹⁸

As Fuller progressed through his teenage years, he continued to occasionally

¹²Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:2. Fuller recorded his account of his conversion in a series of letters to Charles Stuart (1745–1826). Stuart was a Scottish Baptist friend of Fuller’s who had trained for ministry within the Church of Scotland before coming to Baptist convictions and attempting to begin a Baptist church in Edinburgh. See note 1 in Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Armies of the Lamb: The Spirituality of Andrew Fuller*, Classics of Reformed Spirituality (Dundas, ON: Joshua Press, 2001), 65.

¹³John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope Illustrated in the Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button and Son, 1816), 17.

¹⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 18.

¹⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 17.

¹⁶Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 20. Morden referenced these as “staples of Nonconformist piety.” Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 29.

¹⁷Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 20.

¹⁸Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 20.

feel “convictions and affections” that led him to consider himself converted.¹⁹ In a memory reflective of his High Calvinist upbringing, Fuller recounted a 1767 occurrence where he suffered under strong conviction and was “deeply affected in thinking” of his spiritual condition.²⁰ He wrote, “I felt myself the slave of sin, and that it had such power over me, that it was in vain for me to think of extricating myself from its thralldom.”²¹ Unaware that he “could repent at any time,” he continued, “I perceived that my heart was wicked, and that it was not in me to turn to God, or to break off my sins by righteousness.”²² Furthermore, he realized that his wicked heart would not accept God’s forgiveness if it meant forsaking all future wicked pursuits. Fuller recounted,

This conviction was accompanied with great depression of heart. I walked sorrowfully along, repeating these words; —Iniquity will be my ruin! Iniquity will be my ruin! While pouring over my unhappy case, those words of the Apostle suddenly occurred to my mind, “Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” Now the suggestion of a text of scripture to the mind, especially if it came with power, was generally considered by the religious people with whom I occasionally associated, as a promise coming immediately from God.²³

Consistent with the High Calvinist piety of his upbringing, Fuller took this “Scripture impression” as confirmation of his conversion.²⁴ He became overjoyed to the point of weeping and resolved to flee sin. However, by evening “all was gone and forgotten, and I

¹⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 21.

²⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 21.

²¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 21.

²²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 21.

²³Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 21–22.

²⁴Keith Grant defines “Scripture impression” as “a widespread element of eighteenth-century high Calvinist piety, in which the sudden and powerful suggestion of a text of Scripture was understood to be a personal promise or revelation from God, usually respecting the precise predicament of the recipient, or perhaps the spiritual condition of another person, future events, or temporal matters.” Keith S. Grant, *Andrew Fuller and the Evangelical Renewal of Pastoral Theology*, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* 36 (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 32.

returned to my former vices with as eager as gust as ever.”²⁵ The young Fuller had wrongly taken a scriptural impression as a sign of assurance of faith. The issue was not that Fuller misunderstood the text, but that he drew significance not primarily from the meaning of the passage, but from the fact that the Scripture had been forcefully applied to his mind at random.²⁶ He could have echoed John Ryland’s warning, “I therefore wish you, and all Christians, to ground your consolation not on the *manner* in which the promises are brought to the mind, but on the *matter* contained in the promises themselves.”²⁷ “It is unsafe,” Ryland continued, “for persons to think themselves Christians because they have had promises brought *suddenly* to minds.”²⁸

Fuller gave little thought to religious matters and felt no inclination to pray following his scriptural impression. Due to the importance of scriptural impressions in his morphology of conversion, however, Fuller considered himself still truly saved. The next year, he began reflecting again on his spiritual condition and concluded that he was in a backsliding state.²⁹ He received yet another scriptural impression that seemingly confirmed his belief that he was truly converted, but backslidden.³⁰ Joy overcame the young man once more and he wept over having been restored after such a long period of backsliding. Fuller’s sorrow did not last. “This was also a mere transient affection,” he concluded.³¹ Reflecting on these experiences, Fuller concluded, “I have great reason to

²⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 22.

²⁶Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 32.

²⁷John Ryland, Jr., *Remarks Upon the Notion of Extraordinary Impulses and Impressions of the Imagination Indulged by Many Professors of Religion; Contained in a Letter to a Friend* (Bristol, England: Button, 1800), 4.

²⁸Ryland, *Remarks Upon the Notion of Extraordinary Impulses*, 4.

²⁹Ryland Jr., *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 23.

³⁰Fuller was impressed with the words of Isa 4:22: “I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.”

³¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 23.

think that the great deep of my heart's depravity had not yet been broken up, and that my religion was without any abiding principle."³²

The teenage Fuller continued in a life of frivolity and sin for about another year, until in the autumn of 1769, conviction of sin and concern for his spiritual state returned.³³ This time, rather than dissipate, Fuller's guilt over sin increased and concern for the welfare of his soul grew. He wrote, "The reproaches of a guilty conscience seemed like the gnawing worm of hell. . . . The fire and brimstone of the bottomless pit seemed to burn within my bosom."³⁴ He continued, "I saw that God would be perfectly just in sending me to hell, and that to hell I must go unless I were saved of mere grace, and as it were in spite of myself."³⁵ The burden of guilt, sin, and punishment continued to plague Fuller, but he felt no warrant of faith and was unsure how to respond.³⁶ Fuller later reflected on this experience through the lens of his mature theology: "I was not then aware that any poor sinner had a warrant to believe in Christ for the salvation of his soul; but supposed there must be some kind of qualification to entitle him to do it; yet I was aware I had no qualifications."³⁷

Fuller slowly began to progress through his tumultuous spiritual state. As he repeated Job's resolution, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him (Job 3:15)," he began to experience a hopeful determination that he "might . . . cast . . . [his] perishing soul upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation."³⁸ As he struggled under the weight of sin, hampered by the High Calvinist system, Fuller drew encouragement from the example of

³²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 23.

³³Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 24.

³⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 26.

³⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 27.

³⁶Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 30.

³⁷Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 29.

³⁸Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 28–29.

Esther, who “went into the king’s presence contrary to the law, and at the hazard of her life.”³⁹ Moved by both the fear of judgment and an attraction to Christ, Fuller decided, “I must—I will—yes, I will trust my soul—my sinful, lost soul in his hands.”⁴⁰ He continued, “I was determined to cast myself upon Christ, thinking peradventure he would save my soul.”⁴¹ For over an hour, Fuller wept and prayed that God would take mercy upon him for Christ’s sake. His spiritual gaze gradually fixed itself upon Christ, bringing relief to his overwhelming sense of guilt and fear. Fuller recounted, “Having found rest for my soul in the cross of Christ, I was now conscious of my being the subject of repentance, faith, and love. . . . My heart felt one with Christ . . . and [I] was conscious that I had passed from death unto life.”⁴² Fuller sensed new spiritual affections, greater than what he had known before, but remarked that unlike previous experiences, his focus remained upon the object of his affections and not the feelings themselves. Summarizing his experience, Fuller wrote, “I now knew experimentally what it was to be dead to the world by the cross of Christ, and to feel an habitual determination to devote my future life to God my Saviour.”⁴³

As Fuller reflected on his conversion, the lens with which he evaluated his experience was that of his emergence from High Calvinism. As he wrote, thirty-years removed from the events, Fuller not only accommodated his telling to the well-established “evangelical conversion narrative,” but addressed concerns related to his evangelical commitments.⁴⁴ According to Fuller, he likely would have found peace in

³⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 29.

⁴⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 29.

⁴¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 29–30.

⁴²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 31.

⁴³Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 32.

⁴⁴For information related to the establishment and characteristics of the “Evangelical conversion narrative,” see D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford: University Press, 2005). For an evaluation of Fuller’s

Christ sooner had it not been for his belief that he required a warrant to approach Christ in faith.⁴⁵ Keith Grant demonstrates that Fuller's fear of presumption played a central role in his reluctance to turn to Christ.⁴⁶ Fuller, channeling the spirit of High Calvinism, felt that without a warrant, which he understood to be a sense of confidence that he was among the elect, an unworthy sinner like him had no grounds upon which to turn to approach Christ. Experiencing conversion under the influence of High Calvinism provided Fuller a first-hand account of the spiritual dangers possible within the system. As he reflected upon his conversion, then, Fuller did so with an intention toward promoting an evangelical conversion experience, which avoided the pitfalls he suffered by removing the need for a warrant and encouraging sinners to trust Christ much sooner than he did. He penned his conversion narrative partially for the benefit of "others, who may be kept in darkness and despondency, by erroneous views of the gospel, much longer" than he was.⁴⁷

Controversy

Following his genuine conversion, Fuller was baptized by Eve in April 1770 and became a member of the Particular Baptist church at Soham. The new convert progressed steadily in his walk with Christ, remembering the summer months following his conversion as "a time of great religious pleasure."⁴⁸ Fuller recounted that his love for his pastor and fellow church members made the summer a particularly joyous one. Just months later, however, during the fall months, Fuller found himself involved in a dispute

conversion along the lines of Hindmarsh's work, see Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 31–33. For an examination of Fuller's conversion with a view towards his evangelical pastoral concerns, see Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 23–50.

⁴⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 30.

⁴⁶Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 37.

⁴⁷Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 30.

⁴⁸Fuller, "Memoir," 1:8.

that resulted in the dismissal of Eve. Fuller later reflected upon this period as “wormwood and gall of my youth.”⁴⁹

The controversy began when word circulated that one of the Soham church members, James Levit, was given to drunkenness.⁵⁰ Fuller, who was one of the first to find out, went to Levit to speak with him directly and encourage him to forsake his sinful conduct. The man responded to Fuller by arguing that he was unable to keep himself from excess drinking. Levit’s response, according to Peter Morden, revealed “the presence of Antinomianism at Soham.”⁵¹ Fuller considered the response an attempt “to excuse the inexcusable” and told Levit he was capable of maintaining sobriety. At this, the man was offended and told Fuller that he “was young” and “did not know the deceitfulness” of his own heart.⁵² Fuller reported his conversation to Eve, who commended the young convert and explained that “we certainly could keep ourselves from open sins.”⁵³ Eve continued, “We had no power, (he observed,) to do things spiritually good; but as to outward acts, we had power both to obey the will of God, and to disobey it.”⁵⁴ Levit was brought before the congregation due to his habitual bouts of excessive drinking and the church voted to exclude him from membership. The controversy, however, raised a theological question and Eve’s answer eventually resulted in his resignation.

During the church’s dealings with Levit, Eve argued that while fallen men and women possessed no power to do anything spiritually good, they did have the ability to

⁴⁹Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:9.

⁵⁰Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 34.

⁵¹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 34.

⁵²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 38.

⁵³Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 38.

⁵⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 38.

obey God in external matters.⁵⁵ A number of church members objected to Eve's statement, including Fuller's friend, Joseph Diver (d. 1780). Fuller recounted, "The [Levit] affair being disposed of, the abstract question, of *the power of sinful men to do the will of God, and to keep themselves from sin*, was taken up by some of the leading members of the church."⁵⁶ Both sides reasoned from Scripture, and Fuller initially sided with his pastor who "distinguished between internal and external power."⁵⁷ Eve marshalled numerous scriptural exhortations and asked "if we had no power to comply with them, why were they given to us?"⁵⁸ Eve's opponents, who held to a more consistent form of High Calvinism, agreed Scripture exhorted humanity to do good and avoid evil, but that this did not imply an ability to actually do so.⁵⁹ They argued that the best of men in Scripture prayed for the Lord to keep them and reasoned that whatever restraint upon sin men experienced was due to the grace of God. After a few months of supporting Eve's position, Fuller "felt difficulties on the subject" that he "could not answer" and shifted his support in favor of Diver and the others who opposed Eve.⁶⁰

Due to the controversy, Eve resigned the Soham pastorate in October 1771. Fuller recounted the pain associated with such a personal breach: "I loved him, and he loved me, and took it hard that I had in some respects changed my views."⁶¹ "I never look

⁵⁵Michael A. G. Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul: John Sutcliff of Olney, His Friends and His Times* (Durham, England: Evangelical Press, 1994), 136.

⁵⁶Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 38.

⁵⁷Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 39.

⁵⁸Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 40.

⁵⁹Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 136.

⁶⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 40.

⁶¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 41.

back upon these contentions,” he continued, “but with strong feelings.”⁶² The experience was not only painful, but formative.⁶³ According to Fuller,

these unpleasant disputes . . . were ultimately the means of leading my mind into those views of divine truth, which have since appeared in the principal part of my writings. They excited me to read and think and pray with more earnestness than I should have done without them: and if I have judged or written to any advantage since, it was in consequence of what I then learned by bitter experience, and in the midst of any tears and temptations.⁶⁴

The church nearly dissolved, but the members who had been of one mind regarding Eve’s error began gathering to worship after several weeks. The reconstituted congregation had no pastor and distance kept the remnant from joining ranks with another Particular Baptist church. Fuller’s friend, Diver, who was a deacon, often expounded upon Scripture during the worship gathering. When Diver could not attend worship due to a sprained ankle, Fuller was asked to substitute and though initially reluctant, spoke for thirty minutes on a Scripture he had been meditating on the day before.⁶⁵ The pleased congregation invited Fuller to speak again soon thereafter, but Fuller grew frustrated when he struggled with his delivery. About a year later, Fuller again substituted for Diver and this time, Fuller spoke so effectively that “the attention of the people was fixed, and several young persons in the congregation were impressed with the subject, and afterwards joined the church.”⁶⁶ After this occasion, both Fuller and the church began to entertain the idea of Fuller’s becoming a pastor. When an elderly woman from the congregation died in January 1774, she left a request that Fuller preach her funeral sermon. This provided the catalyst for Fuller’s call to ministry, and church leadership called for a day of fasting and prayer to occur on January 26, at which point Fuller

⁶²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 42.

⁶³Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 136.

⁶⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 42.

⁶⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 48.

⁶⁶Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 48.

became the primary preacher.⁶⁷ He accepted the call to the pastorate on February 19, 1775 and was formally installed on May 3 of the same year.⁶⁸ Years after accepting the call, Fuller reflected, “As the disputes in the church were the occasion of turning my thoughts to most of those subjects on which I have since written, so were they the occasion of my engaging in the Christian ministry.”⁶⁹

Fuller as High Calvinist Pastor

When the 21 year-old Fuller accepted the call to Soham, he had long been influenced by the congregation, since his family had been in attendance there since he was six. Initially, Fuller expected the congregation, which knew him so well, would not respect him as their pastor. In this, he was presently surprised, stating, “I had, indeed, more respect shown to me than I looked for.”⁷⁰ In time, Fuller would suffer criticism from members of the congregation due to his changing doctrinal views and the practical implications his theological opinions had in the life of the church.⁷¹ The theological orientation of the Soham congregation had for years been that of High Calvinism. Fuller remarked,

With respect to the system of doctrine which I had been used to hear from my youth, it was in the high Calvinistic, or rather hyper Calvinistic, strain, admitting nothing spiritually good to the duty of the regenerate, and nothing to be addressed to them in a way of exhortation, excepting what related to external obedience.⁷²

At Soham, the unregenerate were sometimes encouraged to perform external duties such

⁶⁷Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 36.

⁶⁸Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 36.

⁶⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 45.

⁷⁰Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:12.

⁷¹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 38.

⁷²Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:12.

as “attendance on the means of grace” and “abstinence from gross evils.”⁷³ However, the lost were not encouraged “to flee the wrath to come” or invited “to apply to Christ for salvation.”⁷⁴ Fuller’s early ministry at Soham followed this pattern and like his predecessor, John Eve, Fuller “had little or nothing to say to the unconverted.”⁷⁵ At this point in his life, Fuller appears to have escaped any evangelical influence associated with the revivals that had been affecting his homeland since the 1730s.⁷⁶ This was not the case forever, as Fuller’s Soham pastorate was a time of great theological development that changed the trajectory of not only his ministry, but the Particular Baptist denomination as a whole.

Fuller’s participation in and fellowship with the Northamptonshire Baptist Association proved instrumental in both Fuller’s own theological development and his influence within the Particular Baptist community. The Soham church of Fuller’s youth had been fairly isolated.⁷⁷ However, about a month after Fuller began his pastoral charge, on June 8, 1775, the Soham congregation voted unanimously to join the Northamptonshire Association of Particular Baptist churches.⁷⁸ The Association had been founded in 1765 and grown rapidly to include churches outside of Northamptonshire.⁷⁹ This new network provided a venue for mutual encouragement among Particular Baptist churches and their ministers, as well as expanded opportunities for the exchange of ideas. Furthermore, the presence of the Association served as an indication of changes in

⁷³Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:12.

⁷⁴Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:12.

⁷⁵Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:2.

⁷⁶Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 37.

⁷⁷Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 39.

⁷⁸Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 39.

⁷⁹Thornton S. H. Elwyn, *The Northamptonshire Baptist Association* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1964), 15.

Particular Baptist life.⁸⁰ The Northamptonshire Association, according to John Briggs, was the “archetype of the new associations, born out of the Evangelical revival.”⁸¹ Through his participation in the Association, Fuller encountered many of the authors and ideas that spurred on his theological development. As Morden notes, “It is unlikely either the congregation or indeed Fuller himself had any real idea the impact that becoming part of this wider body would have on their fellowship.”⁸²

The Soham Particular Baptists likely joined the Northamptonshire Association at the behest of their new pastor, and also encouragement from Robert Hall, who was a senior minister among the association.⁸³ Hall participated in Fuller’s ordination, where before the service the older pastor asked Fuller about the circumstances surrounding Eve’s dismissal. Upon hearing the details of the situation and Fuller’s thoughts concerning it, Hall recommended Fuller read “Edwards on the Will.”⁸⁴ What Hall intended was for Fuller to read Jonathan Edwards’s famous work *A Careful and Strict Enquiry Into the Modern Prevailing Notions of the Freedom of the Will* (1754), but the young pastor was unfamiliar with both the author and the book, and instead read *Veritas Redux* by the Anglican clergyman John Edwards (1636–1716).⁸⁵ Fuller appreciated the book, but failed to understand why Hall had recommended it since it did not address the particular issue they had discussed. Fuller did not realize the mistake until two years later, when he realized Hall had been referring to a work by Jonathan Edwards of New England. Nevertheless, Hall’s belief that Edwards could help clarify Fuller’s thinking on

⁸⁰Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 40.

⁸¹John H. Y. Briggs, *English Baptists of the Nineteenth Century* (Didcot, England: Baptist Historical Society, 1994), 203.

⁸²Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 39.

⁸³Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 39.

⁸⁴Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:14.

⁸⁵Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 138.

the power of man to do the will of God would prove correct in time.⁸⁶

Fuller's theological development continued, now with regular preaching responsibilities and a wider circle of influence. He continued to entertain questions as to the "power of man to do the will of God" that had been stirred up in the controversy with Eve.⁸⁷ He wrote of his struggle, "Though our late disputes had furnished me with some few principles inconsistent with these notions [High Calvinism], yet I did not perceive their bearings at first, and durst not for some years address an invitation to the unconverted to come to Jesus."⁸⁸ As he gave further consideration to the matter, Fuller began to realize that God's will "extended to the inmost thoughts and intents of the heart" and that a distinction between internal and external action was untenable.⁸⁹ In 1775, on a visit to London, Fuller came across a pamphlet written by Abraham Taylor (fl. 1726–1740), which caused Fuller to further consider the High Calvinist system.⁹⁰ Taylor's work *The Modern Question Concerning Faith and Repentance* (1742), introduced Fuller to the ongoing debate surrounding the modern question.⁹¹ What impressed Fuller about Taylor's pamphlet was not his reasoning, but the biblical passages Taylor used in his argumentation. Fuller found Taylor's argument that John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Apostles addressed the ungodly concerning repentance and faith persuasive, which

⁸⁶Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 138.

⁸⁷Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 51.

⁸⁸Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 51.

⁸⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 51.

⁹⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 55. Taylor was an independent minister, classical scholar, and well-known defender of orthodox Calvinism. John H. Thompson, "Taylor, Abraham (fl. 1726–1740)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB] (Oxford: University Press, 2004–), accessed February 28, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27016>.

⁹¹Cross, *Useful Learning*, 308. Taylor's work had been published in the context of a controversy with John Gill over whether or not good works are necessary for salvation. See Cross, *Useful Learning*, 116–17. Nuttall addressed the dispute between Taylor and Gill in terms of Arminianism versus Calvinism, as did Priest. Nuttall, "Northamptonshire and the Modern Question," 221–23; Alan P. F. Sell, *The Great Debate: Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 79.

caused Fuller to doubt his former views and examine them more closely.⁹² Fuller also recalled reading a sermon from John Martin (1741–1820) on Romans 10:3 about the same time.⁹³ Martin’s published sermon, *The Rock of Offence* (1771), argued, according to Fuller, that the “submission to the righteousness of God was the same thing, for substance, as believing in Christ for righteousness; and that non-submission to it was owing to willful ignorance, pride, prejudice, and unbelief.”⁹⁴ Fuller, struggling to answer the reasoning of both Martin and Taylor, devoted himself to further pursuit of the matter, but vowed to not speak of it from the pulpit until his mind was made up.⁹⁵

The year 1776 marked another important marker along Fuller’s path toward evangelical Calvinism. On May 26, 1776 Fuller attended his first meeting of the Northamptonshire Association, where he met John Sutcliff, the recently called pastor of Olney, and John Ryland, Jr., pastor of Northampton.⁹⁶ Fuller developed life-long friendships with these men, who were undergoing similar transformations from High Calvinism to Evangelical Calvinism.⁹⁷ Furthermore, Sutcliff and Ryland introduced Fuller to the writings of Jonathan Edwards and related New England figures, such as

⁹²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 60.

⁹³At the time of the sermon’s publication (1771), Martin was the pastor of the Particular Baptist church at Sheephead, Leicestershire. He became the minister of the church at Grafton Street in 1773, the church later relocating to Keppel Street, London. Under the influence of Gill and Brine, Martin moved toward a High Calvinist position as his career progressed. Cross, *Useful Learning*, 308.

⁹⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 61.

⁹⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 61.

⁹⁶Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 40; Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 56. For details on John Sutcliff, see Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*. For more on John Ryland, Jr., see Grant Gordon, “John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825),” in *The British Particular Baptists, 1638–1910*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 2000), 76–95. For an important study of Ryland as a biographer, see Christopher Ryan Griffith, ““Promoting Pure and Undeified Religion”: John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825) and Edwardsean Evangelical Biography” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017).

⁹⁷Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 139.

Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790) and David Brainerd.⁹⁸ Sutcliff had come into contact with Edwards through his relationship with either Caleb Evans (1737–1791) or John Fawcett (1740–1817). Ryland’s father, John Collett Ryland (1723–1825), held Edwards in high esteem and likely introduced his son to the New England theologian. “In them,” Fuller stated regarding Sutcliff and Ryland, “I found familiar and faithful brethren.”⁹⁹

Thoughts on the Power of Men to Do the Will of God (1777/1778)

By 1777, all the components of Fuller’s turn to Evangelical Calvinism were in place. The young pastor had encountered the problems associated with High Calvinism personally, as a pastor, and had been introduced to the ongoing discussion both through literature and friends.¹⁰⁰ As he struggled through the concepts involved, Fuller kept returning to how best to understand divine sovereignty and human responsibility.¹⁰¹ The year 1777 also marked Fuller’s introduction to the writings of Edwards, when the Soham pastor read Edwards’s *Freedom of the Will* for the first time.¹⁰² As Nettles stated, Fuller and his friends found in Edwards “the key to their perplexity.”¹⁰³

After six years of reflection on the issues surrounding High Calvinism and what ability humans may possess in their natural state, Fuller began a more formal process of writing out his thoughts on the matter. The first substantial treatise Fuller

⁹⁸Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 139.

⁹⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 56.

¹⁰⁰While Fuller’s friendship with Sutcliff and Ryland were significant, Fuller’s ministry in Soham was still a solitary one. Ryland remarked, “Perhaps he had fewer means of assistance from men and books, than he might have had elsewhere; but he was obliged to think, and pray, and study the scriptures, and thus make ground good as he went.” Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 69.

¹⁰¹Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 139.

¹⁰²Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 43.

¹⁰³Nettles, “Preface,” 1:xv.

wrote was *Thoughts on the Power of Men to do the Will of God*.¹⁰⁴ Fuller's son, Andrew Gunton Fuller (1799–1884), mentioned the existence of the unpublished manuscript in his 1882 biography of his father.¹⁰⁵ Andrew Gunton Fuller dated the manuscript to 1776 and claimed it possessed “the elements” of his later work *GWAA*.¹⁰⁶ The manuscript remained in the archival deposit of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School for a number of years before being purchased by the library of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2010. The manuscript bears the inscription “wrote in 1777, or 1778”; a date which is to be preferred over Andrew Gunton Fuller's claim.¹⁰⁷

In the manuscript, Fuller addressed the question, “whether man since the fall has any power to do the will of God?”¹⁰⁸ The question harkened back to the Levitic controversy that led to the dismissal of Fuller's former pastor, Eve. His answer—“I think there is a sense in which he has, and a sense in which he has not”—which he sought to prove in the treatise, pointed to more recent influences and conclusions.¹⁰⁹ The young pastor recognized the difficulties inherent in the question: “To deny this question universally would be reducing us to mere machines . . . on the other hand, to absent the question universally would be contrary to the express declarations of the most high.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴Andrew Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men to Do the Will of God* (1777/1778), archives special collections, James P. Boyce Centennial Library, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

¹⁰⁵Andrew Gunton Fuller, *Andrew Fuller* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1882), 168.

¹⁰⁶Fuller, *Andrew Fuller*, 168.

¹⁰⁷Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 1. For discussion surrounding this artifact, see Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of the Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 8 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 47, 50–51; Chun, *Legacy of Edwards in Theology of Fuller*, 40–43; Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion, and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 206.

¹⁰⁸Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 1.

¹⁰⁹Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 1.

¹¹⁰Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 1.

To solve the quandary, Fuller introduced the distinction between natural and moral ability that would factor in so prominently to his published works.¹¹¹ “I cannot but think the distinction made by some divines between natural and moral ability sufficient to determine this difficulty,” Fuller stated.¹¹² He then explained what he meant by the distinction:

By the former I understand, and I think they understand, the enjoyment and exercise of the faculties of our souls, and the members of our bodies. By the latter, an inclination or disposition of the mind to exercise these natural powers to good or holy purposes. Or thus, natural power is simply a power of acting; moral is a power of acting well. . . . When I ascribe power to men, I mean mere natural power; when I deny power to men, I mean moral power, both as above defined.¹¹³

For Fuller, men and women, since they possess natural ability, have the ability to perform whatever God asks. However, the “dreadful depravity” of all mankind “inhabits all these powers, and . . . totally subverts them.”¹¹⁴

To support his distinction between natural and moral ability, Fuller cited Calvin’s *Institutes*, Edwards’s *The Freedom of the Will*, and Gill’s *Cause of God and Truth*. He then set out to further explain his thesis. First, Fuller explained, at the fall, man lost all “moral rectitude,” “happiness,” and the ability to employ natural powers in a virtuous way.¹¹⁵ The natural powers, themselves, however, “seem constituent parts of our nature, and essential to our existence.”¹¹⁶ Though man forfeited his “right to the regular and comfortable exercise of his natural powers,” God has generally allowed man’s use of them to continue.¹¹⁷ However, Fuller contended, “Men have lost all moral power to do

¹¹¹Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 1.

¹¹²Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 1.

¹¹³Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 2.

¹¹⁴Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 3.

¹¹⁵Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 6.

¹¹⁶Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 6.

¹¹⁷Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 6–7.

the will of God.”¹¹⁸ Fuller cited “that great man and servant of God, Mr. John Brine,” in support of his position, and addressed a passage from Gill’s *Cause of God and Truth*, showing how the London pastor should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the distinction between moral and natural ability.¹¹⁹

Fuller then began to expound on the implications of the distinction. Man possessed power, but not the will to do good, since man’s heart controls all voluntary actions. Citing Matthew 12:34, Fuller summarized that “mere natural power, without a moral ability, or inclination to do good, is insufficient for the performance of a good action, or the avoiding of an evil one.”¹²⁰ Furthermore, the sinful inclinations of the will cannot be changed apart from the “power of God.”¹²¹ Important to the argument, the Particular Baptist explained that man’s inability to do good must be charged as “criminal . . . wicked . . . [and] blamable” because of its moral nature.¹²² Quoting Owen extensively, Fuller emphasized that mankind remains in need of special grace due to the weakness inherent in fallen humanity. Perhaps reflective of the Levit controversy that perplexed him as a young man, Fuller dealt extensively with the implications of the distinction between moral and natural ability related to personal holiness and keeping the will of God. For Fuller, the distinctions presented balanced divine sovereignty and human responsibility. He concluded, “There can be no absurdity, sure, in supposing that he that made us would so make us as that he could have access to our minds without violence upon them.”¹²³

¹¹⁸Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 6.

¹¹⁹Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 9–14.

¹²⁰Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 15.

¹²¹Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 16–17.

¹²²Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 19.

¹²³Fuller, *Thoughts on the Power of Men*, 59.

The manuscript, according to Andrew Gunton Fuller, was not meant for publication.¹²⁴ However, Fuller's *Thoughts on the Power of Men* did contain the theological principles the Particular Baptist would employ so powerfully in the coming years. As the title suggests, the manuscript reflected the concerns Fuller had been struggling with since the dismissal of Eve.¹²⁵ As he solidified this theological turn, Fuller began to realize the implications a shift to Evangelical Calvinism would have for his pastoral work and broader ministry.

From Soham to Kettering

Fuller had undergone an immense theological transformation while the pastor at Soham. Yet, the young minister remained cautious in his implementation of the implications warranted by his newfound Evangelical Calvinism. Remembering his early ministry, Fuller recalled that he “durst not for some years address an invitation to the unconverted to come to Jesus.”¹²⁶ This changed in December 1779, when the Soham pastor began making direct appeals to the unconverted to trust Christ.¹²⁷ As Morden suggests, Fuller's shift in preaching methodology likely occurred over a period of months as he grew more comfortable with the implications of his Evangelical Calvinism.¹²⁸ As a result, a number of church members “exhibited great bitterness of spirit because their preacher had become accustomed to invite sinners to put their trust in Christ for salvation.”¹²⁹ His shift to Evangelical Calvinism strained Fuller's relationship with the

¹²⁴Fuller, *Andrew Fuller*, 168.

¹²⁵Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 50.

¹²⁶Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:12.

¹²⁷Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 43; Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 72.

¹²⁸For evidence of the continued influence of High Calvinism on Fuller's pastoral ministry, including dealings with his father, through the early 1780s, see Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 44–45.

¹²⁹Fuller, *Andrew Fuller*, 45.

Soham congregation, whose meager financial support had already been a challenge to the Fuller family for several years.¹³⁰

The final months of 1779 had not only brought opposition within the Soham church, but an invitation for Fuller to become the pastor of the Particular Baptist church at Kettering as well.¹³¹ According to Ryland, Robert Hall, an eminent leader among the Particular Baptist churches in the region, first suggested Fuller as a good replacement for the Kettering church's incapacitated pastor.¹³² Hall knew both the Kettering congregation and Fuller's difficulties at Soham. Following Hall's suggestion, leaders at Kettering initiated correspondence with Fuller to determine his interest in the vacant pastorate. The Kettering church was already committed to Evangelical Calvinism, and able to provide a suitable stipend for the young pastor with a growing family.¹³³ Fuller initially rebuffed the offer out of a commitment to the Soham congregation, but the trials at his present post only continued. His diary during this period reflected the anguish he felt related to the situation. In an entry on June 30, 1780, Fuller recorded,

My heart has been much affected today in thinking of my situation. I prayed to the Lord earnestly, that, if there were any thing in this world which might direct me, he would my mind to it. Here I must wait. The Lord may have designed to lead me in a way that I have not known.¹³⁴

The fraught pastor recorded numerous similar entries through January of 1782.¹³⁵

The difficulty Fuller experienced at Soham in the early 1780s should not be taken as a sign that his ministry bore no significant fruit during this period. Precarious as his situation was personally, church records indicated an increase in the number of

¹³⁰Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 42.

¹³¹Fuller, *Andrew Fuller*, 45.

¹³²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 72.

¹³³Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 45.

¹³⁴Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:5.

¹³⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 73.

conversions and baptisms that occurred—likely as an outworking of Fuller’s new theology.¹³⁶ Furthermore, Fuller’s status as a preacher continued to rise as more and more townspeople and surrounding villagers attended.¹³⁷

In the fall of 1781, the Kettering church again approached Fuller with an invitation to become their pastor.¹³⁸ Fuller’s consternation over the issue increased to the point of his becoming physically ill and unable to leave his home.¹³⁹ The Soham congregation, aware of the offer from Kettering and Fuller’s difficult circumstances, referred the matter to Robert Robinson (1735–1790), a Particular Baptist pastor in Cambridge.¹⁴⁰ Robinson recommended Fuller remain at Soham another year in order to give his home church an opportunity to raise his salary to twenty-six pounds annually.¹⁴¹ If at the end of the year, the church had not met their obligations or Fuller found it impossible to live on this income, he was free to depart Soham. Fuller’s friends, notably Hall and Sutcliff, expressed disappointment at Robinson’s proposal, but Fuller agreed to the terms, and in what was a “grievous disappointment” to the Kettering church, Fuller wrote informing them of his decision to remain at Soham.¹⁴²

Fuller’s problems at Soham did not abate during the winter of 1781 and spring of 1782; on May 26, 1782, Fuller wrote, “My continuance [at Soham] would not be to my or their profit.”¹⁴³ Correspondence with Kettering resumed and this time Fuller agreed to

¹³⁶Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 45–46.

¹³⁷Interestingly, Ryland recorded the increase in those who attended Fuller’s preaching as a source of concern for some within the Soham congregation. Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 72; Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 45.

¹³⁸Fuller’s correspondence with the Kettering congregation was primarily through Beeby Wallis, the leading deacon of the congregation and evidently, a man Fuller greatly admired.

¹³⁹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 46.

¹⁴⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 82–83.

¹⁴¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 83.

¹⁴²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 85–86.

¹⁴³Andrew Fuller, “A Narration of the dealings of God in a way of Providence with the Baptist

accept their offer. On October 2, 1782, Fuller and his family departed the Particular Baptist congregation at Soham in what must have been a painful experience. After spending their entire lives in Cambridgeshire, the Fullers relocated sixty miles west to Northamptonshire, where Fuller assumed the pastorate of the church he would come to be most closely associated with.¹⁴⁴

Drafting *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*

During the final years of his Soham ministry, Fuller drafted the manuscript to what would become his most influential work: *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*.¹⁴⁵ Still in his twenties and in a period of personal and pastoral turmoil, Fuller composed the substance of a book that would shift the trajectory of the Particular Baptist denomination. In a nod to Karl Barth's *Commentary on Romans*, Timothy George referred to the GWAA as falling "like a bombshell on the playground of the theologians."¹⁴⁶ Fuller initially circulated the manuscript among his like-minded friends, including Ryland and Sutcliff, and among others who disagreed with his position.¹⁴⁷

In the preface to the first edition, Fuller noted, "When the following pages were first written, which was in the year 1781, I had no intention whatever of publishing

Church at Soham from the year 1770, N/B - Soham R70/20," Cambridgeshire County Archives (Cambridge: 1770), 50.

¹⁴⁴Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 47.

¹⁴⁵Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation: Or the Obligations of Men Fully to Credit, and Cordially to Approve, Whatever God Makes Known. Wherein Is Considered the Nature of Faith in Christ, and the Duty of Those Where the Gospel Comes in That Matter* [GWAA (1785)] (London: 1785).

¹⁴⁶Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 56.

¹⁴⁷Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 47; Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 205.

them to the world.”¹⁴⁸ His reluctance to publish came from a sense of unworthiness, as well as a desire to avoid the controversy publishing the work would bring. In a diary entry dated August 20, 1784, Fuller wrote, “I feel myself a poor, ignorant creature, and have many misgivings of heart, about engaging in defence of what I esteem truth, lest the cause of Christ should be injured through me.”¹⁴⁹ “The weight of publishing,” he recorded three days later, “still lies upon me. I expect a great share of unhappiness through it.”¹⁵⁰ Fuller desired a life of peace but began to sense a duty to publish his work. By October, his confidence had grown: “I feel some pain in the thought of being about to publish on *the obligations of men to believe in Christ*, fearing I shall hereby expose myself to a good deal of abuse, which is disagreeable to the flesh. Had I not a satisfaction that it is the cause of *God and truth*, I would drop all thoughts of printing.”¹⁵¹ On November 16, 1784, Fuller was finishing the manuscript for press. Just days later, on November 22, he left Kettering to visit Northampton for the purpose of printing his manuscript.¹⁵²

Installation at Kettering and the Prayer Call of 1784

Along with Fuller’s decision to publish the *GWAA*, the year hosted another important event in the life of the young pastor, the so-called “prayer call” of 1784. Fuller had been inducted as the pastor of the Kettering church two years prior, on October 7, 1783, after spending a year with the congregation on a trial basis, a practice customary

¹⁴⁸Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), iii.

¹⁴⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 205.

¹⁵⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 205.

¹⁵¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 206.

¹⁵²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 207.

for the time.¹⁵³ Sutcliff, Ryland, and Hall participated in the service, in which Fuller read a “statement of circumstances” and a “statement of principles.”¹⁵⁴ The doctrinal statement, recorded by Ryland, placed Fuller well within the Evangelical Calvinist tradition.¹⁵⁵ In article 15, Fuller stated,

I believe it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it; and as I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore of the criminal kind, and that it is their duty to love the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in him for salvation though they do not; I therefore believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them to be not only consistent, but directly adapted as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls.¹⁵⁶

Morden argues that Fuller’s doctrinal statement came at “a watershed moment in his life,” and contained all the elements of what would come to be known as “Fullerism.”¹⁵⁷ The statement, Morden notes, “reads like a summary of the main points of the *Gospel Worthy*, still two years away from publication.”¹⁵⁸

When Fuller arrived at Kettering, the town consisted of about 3,500 people, and life for many residents was a hard existence.¹⁵⁹ The town experienced economic difficulty throughout his first decade of ministry due to changing patterns of industry, and the population fell considerably.¹⁶⁰ Spiritual life in Kettering was another story, however. Along with the parish church, Kettering had boasted a strong Independent congregation

¹⁵³Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 71.

¹⁵⁴Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 71.

¹⁵⁵For an analysis of Fuller’s statement of principles, see Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 72.

¹⁵⁶Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 106.

¹⁵⁷Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 72.

¹⁵⁸Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 73.

¹⁵⁹Fuller, *Andrew Fuller*, 52.

¹⁶⁰Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 70.

since 1662, which met at the “Great Meeting,” a structure that reminded Andrew Gunton Fuller of the “Puritan days.”¹⁶¹ The “Little Meeting,” a Baptist offshoot of the Independent church, had formed in 1696. By the time Fuller arrived in Kettering, both churches were solidly Evangelical.¹⁶² In this new environment, friendlier to his evangelical convictions, Fuller immersed himself in the work of the ministry; faithfully praying for, visiting, and preaching to church members and surrounding inhabitants.¹⁶³

Located in Northamptonshire, Kettering also provided Fuller with increased access to the wider Particular Baptist and Evangelical community and allowed him to spend more time with his ministerial friends, Hall, Ryland, and Sutcliff.¹⁶⁴ As their friendship grew, so did their mutual influence upon one another. A forerunner of things to come, in 1784, Fuller, Ryland, and Sutcliff began to devote themselves to prayer for the sake of revival in their community and around the world.¹⁶⁵

In April of 1784, Ryland received a copy of Jonathan Edwards’s 1748 treatise *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God’s People in Extraordinary Prayer For the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture-Promises and Prophecies concerning the Last Time*.¹⁶⁶ John Erskine, who had been a part of the original Evangelical network committed to promoting revival and a regular correspondent with Edwards, sent the work to Ryland, who quickly read it and passed it along to his friends, Fuller and Sutcliff.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 52.

¹⁶²Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 71.

¹⁶³For more information on Fuller’s ministerial work during this period, see Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 73–75; Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 17–22.

¹⁶⁴Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 75.

¹⁶⁵Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 163.

¹⁶⁶Jonathan Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 5:307–435.

¹⁶⁷Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 158.

Edwards's *Humble Attempt* had been inspired by a "Concert of Prayer" held in Lowland Scotland that began in October 1744 and ran for nine years.¹⁶⁸ According to Edwards,

a number of ministers in Scotland, taking into consideration the state of God's church, and of the world of mankind, judged that the providence of God, at such a day, did loudly call such as were concerned for the welfare of Zion, to united extraordinary applications to the God of all grace, suitably acknowledging him as the fountain of all the spiritual benefits and blessings of his church, and earnestly praying to him, that he would appear in his glory, and favor Zion, and manifest his compassion to the world of mankind, by an abundant effusion of his Holy Spirit on all the churches, and the whole habitable earth, to revive true religion in all parts of Christendom, and to deliver all nations from their great and manifold spiritual calamities and miseries, and bless them with the unspeakable benefits of the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer, and fill the whole earth with his glory.¹⁶⁹

In response to sensing this call, the Scottish ministers agreed to spend time every Saturday evening and Sunday morning in special prayer, as well as devoting four Tuesdays a year to solemn prayer for this cause.¹⁷⁰ When Edwards received word of this effort, he immediately encouraged his congregation to participate and encouraged other like-minded fellowships to do the same. Ultimately, his efforts resulted in the publication of the *Humble Attempt* and his recommendations would be heeded by a small band of Northamptonshire Particular Baptist pastors.

Within days of reading Edwards's *Humble Attempt*, Fuller, Ryland, and Sutcliff devoted themselves to meeting on the second Tuesday of every other month "to seek the revival of real religion, and the extension of Christ's kingdom in the world."¹⁷¹ The efforts of the three pastors would soon expand throughout Northamptonshire, as the

¹⁶⁸Scottish believers initially agreed to maintain this concert of prayer for two years but extended it seven more. Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 159.

¹⁶⁹Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, 5:321.

¹⁷⁰Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, 5:321.

¹⁷¹John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith: The Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope, Illustrated; in the Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (Charlestown, MA: Samuel Etheridge, 1818), 96. Morden dates the beginning of the prayer meetings as May 11, 1784. Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 112.

annual meeting of the Association was set to occur June 2-3 in Nottingham.¹⁷² Fuller had been selected as the preacher for the 1784 meeting, but nearly could not attend due to flooding.¹⁷³ At one point during his journey, Fuller nearly had to turn back due to washed out roads, when a local resident urged him to drive his horse through the water. While the water did reach the preacher's saddle, he made it through safely and was moved by the experience to preach on 2 Corinthians 5:7: "We walk by faith, not by sight."¹⁷⁴ The sermon, which would be Fuller's first publication, attempted to "explain the nature" and "show the importance" of walking by faith as a Christian, but included elements drawn from the *Humble Attempt* as well.¹⁷⁵ After encouraging his hearers to draw encouragement by looking to the promise of better days, Fuller admonished the gathered Baptists to attend such forward-looking hope "with earnest and united prayer to him by whom Jacob must arise."¹⁷⁶ "A life of faith," suggested Fuller, "will ever be a life of prayer."¹⁷⁷ In an exhortation reminiscent of Edwards's treatise, Fuller exclaimed, "O brethren, let us pray much for an outpouring of God's Spirit upon our ministers and churches, and not upon those only of our own connexion and denomination, but upon 'all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours!'"¹⁷⁸ Summarizing the tenor of the associational meeting, Brian Stanley spoke of it as "dominated by the message of Edwards' *Humble Attempt*."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷²Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 114.

¹⁷³Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 163.

¹⁷⁴Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 163; Fuller, "Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith," 1:117-34.

¹⁷⁵Fuller, "Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith," 1:117.

¹⁷⁶Fuller, "Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith," 1:131.

¹⁷⁷Fuller, "Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith," 1:131.

¹⁷⁸Fuller, "Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith," 1:131.

¹⁷⁹Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1992* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992), 4.

Following the sermon, Sutcliff encouraged those in attendance to heed the Spirit's instruction and establish monthly prayer meetings in their respective congregations.¹⁸⁰ "The grand object in prayer," spoke Sutcliff, "is to be that the Holy Spirit may be poured down on our ministers and churches, that sinners may be converted, the saints edified, the interest of religion revived, and the name of God glorified."¹⁸¹ Collectively, the churches of the Northamptonshire Association would ask God for revival at home and "the spread of the gospel to the most distant parts of the habitable globe."¹⁸² All the representatives in attendance approved of Sutcliff's proposal and agreed to introduce the plan into their home churches. As Elwyn noted, the Evangelical Calvinists of the Northamptonshire Association displayed a concern for global missions well before William Carey's *Enquiry*.¹⁸³

The prayer call was well-received, not only by Northamptonshire churches, but by other Particular Baptist churches and even some outside of the denomination.¹⁸⁴ By the early 1790s, Particular Baptists in the Warwickshire and Western Associations had joined the "concert of prayer" and discussions were taking place as to how the Baptists may engage directly in world missions.¹⁸⁵ Decades after Edwards wrote the *Humble Attempt* in Northampton, his vision for a "concert of prayer" for revival and the worldwide spread of the gospel had been taken up again in Northamptonshire. In a few years' time, the prayers of the Association would be answered by their own efforts.

¹⁸⁰Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 163.

¹⁸¹John Ryland, Jr., *The Nature, Evidences, and Advantages, of Humility, Circular Letter of the Northamptonshire Association* (1784), 12.

¹⁸²Ryland, "The Nature, Evidences, and Advantages, of Humility," 12.

¹⁸³Elwyn, *Northamptonshire Baptist Association*, 17.

¹⁸⁴Elwyn, *Northamptonshire Baptist Association*, 17. Sutcliff republished *Humble Attempt* in 1789.

¹⁸⁵Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 115.

***The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation,*
1st ed. (1785)**

Fuller's ministry came before the public eye in 1784, and in 1785 came the limelight. Fuller had made the decision in late 1784 to put his views on Evangelical Calvinism into print and in 1785, he published the first edition of *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* in Northampton. Fuller subtitled the first edition, *The Obligations of Men Fully to Credit, and Cordially to Approve, Whatever God Makes Known, Wherein is Considered the Nature of Faith in Christ, and the Duty of Those where the Gospel Comes in that Matter*.¹⁸⁶

In the preface to *GWAA* Fuller began by referencing the struggle with High Calvinism that led him to write the book. "I had formerly entertained different sentiments," Fuller recalled, but "had begun to doubt whether all my principles on these subjects were scriptural."¹⁸⁷ Along with Scripture, Fuller cited the missionary exploits of Elliot and Brainerd as a reason for reconsidering his views. As he sought how best to understand unbelief and faith, Fuller cited Edwards's "distinction of natural and moral ability, and inability" found in *Freedom of the Will* as notably helpful.¹⁸⁸ The former High Calvinist, then, clarified that he did not intend to dispute the doctrines of election or total depravity.¹⁸⁹ Fuller understood himself as in no way undermining the doctrines of grace and quoted a number of respected Reformed authors in the work, including Stephen Charnock, John Owen, and Herman Witsius.

In the introduction of the work, Fuller challenged the prevailing definition of faith held by his High-Calvinist brethren, which he defined as "a believing our personal

¹⁸⁶The second edition—published in 1801, and which will be discussed below—was subtitled simply, *The Duty of Sinners to Believe in Jesus Christ*.

¹⁸⁷Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), iii.

¹⁸⁸Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), v.

¹⁸⁹Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), vii–ix. Robert W. Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists 1771-1892: From John Gill to C. H. Spurgeon* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2006), 94.

interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁹⁰ Whereas the High Calvinists focused on a sinner’s “internal persuasion” as evidence of a “warrant of faith,” Fuller contended “the Scriptures always represent faith as terminating on something without us; namely, on Christ, and the truths concerning him.”¹⁹¹ Fuller understood the High-Calvinist definition of faith to be unbiblical and went to great lengths to argue against it. If the High Calvinists were right and faith “was someone’s belief that they were ‘interested’ in Christ, then it could not be the ‘duty’ of the unconverted to believe.”¹⁹² Scripture, according to Fuller, defined faith as “the belief of the truth,” by which he meant “a cordial reception” of the glorious truths of the gospel.¹⁹³ In his opinion, the High Calvinists had replaced faith with assurance, and therefore, replaced the objective with the subjective, thus excluding all who felt no warrant from believing.¹⁹⁴ In Fuller’s definition, every man and woman had a duty to believe the gospel, because God exempted no one from belief in the truth.¹⁹⁵

In part two, Fuller defended his understanding of “duty faith” and as a biblicist in the best sense, marshalled arguments from Scripture. “In the New Testament,” Fuller claimed, “we find true saving faith enjoined upon unregenerate sinners, as plain as words can possibly express it.”¹⁹⁶ He even pointed to Christ himself as one who called upon unbelievers to exercise faith.¹⁹⁷ Against those who demanded a warrant prior to encouragement to faith, Fuller explained,

¹⁹⁰Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 5.

¹⁹¹Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 6.

¹⁹²Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 48.

¹⁹³Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 11–13.

¹⁹⁴Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 96.

¹⁹⁵Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 33.

¹⁹⁶Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 40.

¹⁹⁷Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 40.

When we say it is the duty of men to trust in Christ for salvation, we mean it is their duty to cease trusting in everything else, and to cast themselves on the Lord Jesus Christ as the only possible way to escape. . . . Surely it is every man's duty to think of himself as he really is, and as God hath said he is.¹⁹⁸

Furthermore, to call sinners to repentance and faith was not inconsistent since "every man has a warrant so to trust in Christ."¹⁹⁹

In an essential piece of Fuller's theology, the Evangelical Calvinist maintained that Scripture ascribed a lack of faith to man's depravity and treated it as a "heinous sin."²⁰⁰ Taking for granted a man cannot be said to sin by neglecting what was never his duty, Fuller contended that Scripture often charged men with failing to exercise faith. To explain how this charge remained consistent with Scripture's claim that faith is a divine gift, Fuller turned to the distinction between moral and natural ability. The "cannot itself consists in a will not, or in other words, in the want of a heart to come to Christ."²⁰¹

After making a positive case for Evangelical Calvinism in parts one and two, Fuller turned to answering objections. Against the objection that his proposal proved inconsistent with God's decrees regarding election, Fuller contended that "the decrees of God were never designed for, nor can they be made any rule of, human action."²⁰² He then addressed the question as to whether or not his proposal violated the doctrine of particular redemption. Fuller responded by arguing, "The act of trusting in Christ does not . . . necessarily imply that the party should know his particular interest in his death at the time."²⁰³ In support of his position, Fuller cited several divines, including Owen and Witsius, who "allowed repentance and faith to be incumbent on men in general, and this

¹⁹⁸Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 47.

¹⁹⁹Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 47.

²⁰⁰Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 65.

²⁰¹Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 71.

²⁰²Fuller, *GWAA* (1785).

²⁰³Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 132.

they thought consistent with particular redemption.”²⁰⁴ To question the compatibility of general offers and particular redemption, Fuller charged, was “a refinement of modern times.”²⁰⁵

Another objection Fuller addressed involved the work of the Spirit and whether or not sinners require the work of the Spirit to fulfill their duty.²⁰⁶ Again, Fuller referenced the distinction between moral and natural ability. Though moral and not natural, man’s inability remains “real and total” and requires “the same need for the work of the Spirit.”²⁰⁷ Fuller continued to answer objections, including a defense of indiscriminately offering the gospel. Near the end of the treatise, he offered “general observations on natural and moral inability,” in which he further demonstrated the distinction with its manifold implications.

The work was a major success and served as a “catalyst for major developments” among his denomination.²⁰⁸ Just as Fuller expected, however, the publication of *GWAA* placed him in the midst of controversy, with both the Arminians and High Calvinists finding fault in his work. As J. W. Morris noted, Fuller found himself “between two fires; the Hyper-Calvinists on the hills and the Arminians in the vallies [sic]; and it was to be seen whether he could keep his ground between them.”²⁰⁹

High Calvinist response. For many of the High Calvinists, a number of whom Fuller had been personally associated with during his ministry, Fuller’s publication was a

²⁰⁴Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 138.

²⁰⁵Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 138.

²⁰⁶Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 145.

²⁰⁷Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 146.

²⁰⁸Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 90.

²⁰⁹J. W. Morris, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller: Late Pastor of the Baptist Church at Kettering, and First Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society*, ed. Rufus Babcock Jr. (Boston: Lincoln and Edmands, 1830), 199.

matter of significant personal offense.²¹⁰ In response, several High Calvinists countered with deeply personal attacks on Fuller. A November 1785 diary entry recorded Fuller's "tremor of mind" at hearing of the printing of a response by a Dr. Withers.²¹¹ Ryland, who referred to Withers as "deeply tinged with Antinomianism," spoke of Withers' reply to Fuller as "extravagant and insolent."²¹² Fuller determined not to dignify Withers' work with a response.²¹³

John Martin, a Particular Baptist pastor in London whose earlier sermon helped Fuller sort out his thoughts regarding High Calvinism, also published three pamphlets against Fuller between 1788 and 1791.²¹⁴ Martin had received significant help from Gill and Brine as a young pastor and so came to their defense when he perceived Fuller was attacking their theology.²¹⁵ Fuller responded to Martin's first pamphlet in 1788, with *Remarks on Mr. Martin's Publication, Entitled "Thoughts on the Duty of Man relative to Faith in Jesus Christ," in Five Letters to a Friend*.²¹⁶ In the first letter, Fuller addressed the High Calvinist's tone and criticized him for substituting slanderous words for a scriptural argument. Fuller charged, "The main points that he seems to have kept in view are, to inform the world that there is such a person as 'Mr. Andrew Fuller, of Kettering, in Northamptonshire [and] that he is a very *obscure, inconsistent, erroneous,*

²¹⁰For an example of a personal and petty grievance by a neighboring pastor, William Knowles, and his church, Rushden Baptist Church, see Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 81.

²¹¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 133.

²¹²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 132. Withers's publication is now only known through quotations in other works, but was titled *Philanthropos, or a Letter to the Revd. Fuller in reply to his Treatise on Damnation* (London, 1786).

²¹³Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 82.

²¹⁴John Martin, *Thoughts on the Duty of Man Relative to Faith in Jesus Christ, in Which Mr. Andrew Fuller's Leading Propositions on This Subject Are Considered* (London: W. Smith, 1788–1791).

²¹⁵For an overview of Martin and a discussion of whether or not he had at one time supported Evangelical Calvinism, see Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 102–5.

²¹⁶Andrew Fuller, *Remarks on Mr. Martin's Publication, Entitled "Thoughts on the Duty of Man Relative to Faith in Jesus Christ," in Five Letters to a Friend*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:716–36.

ignorant, artful, vain, hypocritical kind of a writer.”²¹⁷ In the second letter, Fuller defended the leading propositions of GWAA, particularly the principle of duty faith.²¹⁸ In the second, third, and fourth letters, Fuller dealt with Martin’s accusations in the realm of “love to God, Divine efficiency, and human endeavor” respectively.²¹⁹ In a postscript, Fuller defended Caleb Evans from Martin’s attacks. “Mr. M. seems to be so intoxicated with ideas of his own reputation,” Fuller suggested, “as to be incapable of respecting the character of other men.”²²⁰ Martin’s next two pamphlets remained unanswered by Fuller, who had clearly been offended by his interlocutor’s personal attacks. Though Martin remained a High Calvinist, he later came to regret the haughty tone he took when engaging Fuller.²²¹

A more temperate rebuttal came from the High-Calvinist William Button (1754–1821), a well-respected London Particular Baptist pastor.²²² Button had grown up in Gill’s Carter Lane congregation and came to faith while attending John Collett Ryland’s Northampton Academy.²²³ In 1775, Button became pastor of the Dean Street congregation, a church which had split from Carter Lane over disagreement related to Gill’s replacement.²²⁴ Button possessed a strong reputation among Particular Baptists,

²¹⁷Fuller, *Remarks on Mr. Martin’s Publication*, 2:716–17.

²¹⁸Fuller, *Remarks on Mr. Martin’s Publication*, 2:720.

²¹⁹Fuller, *Remarks on Mr. Martin’s Publication*, 2:726.

²²⁰Fuller, *Remarks on Mr. Martin’s Publication*, 2:735.

²²¹Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 104. See John Martin, *Some Account of the Life and Writings of the Rev. John Martin, Pastor of the Church, Meeting in Stone Street, Bedford Square, London* (London: 1797), 120. Martin continued to have a troubled relationship with other Particular Baptists and publicly accused many of his Baptist associates of harboring republican sentiments during England’s war with France. Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 149–50.

²²²See Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 82–83; Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 99–102.

²²³Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 99.

²²⁴Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 99.

and Oliver describes him as “a representative of those London churches which still revered the memory of John Gill.”²²⁵ As such, Button’s response, *Remarks on a Treatise Entitled the Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation by Andrew Fuller*, merited serious consideration from the Kettering pastor.²²⁶

Button wrote out of concern over the wide welcome Fuller’s *GWAA* had received.²²⁷ Fuller’s work, according to Button, tended toward Arminianism and represented “the cause of man and error,” rather than the “cause of God and Truth.”²²⁸ Button also objected to the disparaging of Gill and Brine that the book instigated.²²⁹ For the High Calvinist, faith could not be the duty of unconverted sinners who hear the gospel, as Fuller had contended.²³⁰ Button centered upon the definition of faith espoused in *GWAA*.²³¹ By defining faith as “the belief of the truth,” Fuller was unable to distinguish between genuine faith and false faith.²³² Button cited numerous Puritan authors and did engage with Fuller’s scriptural arguments, but distinguished between hearers of the gospel being required to give assent to the truths and hearers being required to express sincere faith.²³³ For Button, Fuller’s failed distinction led him to require of an unregenerate person something they were simply not capable of. According to Morden, Button failed to grasp Fuller’s distinction between moral and natural inability, which

²²⁵Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 99.

²²⁶William Button, *Remarks on a Treatise Entitled the Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation by Andrew Fuller* (London: 1785).

²²⁷Button, *Remarks*, iv.

²²⁸Button, *Remarks*, 2.

²²⁹Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 100.

²³⁰Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 83.

²³¹Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 100.

²³²Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 100.

²³³Button, *Remarks*, 18–20.

prevented him from truly understanding Fuller's argument.²³⁴ Near the end of the treatise, Button concluded "calls, invitations, and exhortations to special faith . . . to be inconsistent with Scripture and common sense."²³⁵

Fuller responded in 1787 with *Defence of a Treatise*. From the start, Fuller acknowledged his appreciation for Gill and Brine, but stated that "the successors of these worthy men ought not to set them up as standards of orthodoxy," since "in some things they differed from one another; and on this subject from almost all who had gone before them."²³⁶ Fuller also spoke of his "high esteem" for Button and stressed that he considered the High Calvinists "fellow labourers in the gospel" and "cordial friends."²³⁷ Such language proved more than merely obligatory since Button and Fuller maintained their friendship and Button eventually supported the efforts of the Baptist Missionary Society.²³⁸ In the body of his response, Fuller addressed Button's accusations that Evangelical Calvinism tended toward Arminianism, but on the whole reasserted his core argument with clarity and force. According to Fuller, Button was guilty of making "the decrees of God rules of human action."²³⁹ "We believe the doctrine of Divine predestination as fully as he does," Fuller stated, "but dare not apply it to such purposes."²⁴⁰ Near the end of his defense, Fuller demonstrated his new evangelistic commitments by encouraging the reader "to put one serious question to his own soul,

²³⁴Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 83.

²³⁵Button, *Remarks*, 99.

²³⁶Andrew Fuller, *A Defence of a Treatise Entitled the Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation Containing a Reply to Mr. Button's Remarks and the Observations of Philanthropos*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:421.

²³⁷Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:421.

²³⁸Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 83.

²³⁹Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:453.

²⁴⁰Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:453.

‘Dost *thou* believe in the Son of God?’²⁴¹ Nothing less than “eternal salvation or destruction hangs upon the answer,” Fuller reminded.²⁴² Furthermore, no person should avoid the question based on their present status as a church member or even a preacher. “All this may be true,” Fuller warned, “and yet things may issue in a dreadful disappointment!”²⁴³

Fuller had not transitioned from a High Calvinist to an Evangelical Calvinist in a vacuum. There appeared to be a trend in that direction among Particular Baptists in the 1780s, with men such as Hall, Ryland, and Sutcliff embracing evangelical sentiments during that period. Furthermore, the presence of Caleb Evans testified to the variance and regional differences among the Calvinistic Baptists of the period. But Fuller’s *GWAA* proved a decisive blow to the High Calvinist theology that had dominated so much of Particular Baptist life during the eighteenth century. Hayden attributed “the success of Fuller in breaking through the hyper-Calvinism” to “his ability to provide a complete and comprehensive theology of salvation,” but noted the influence of Bristol-trained pastors.²⁴⁴ According to Phil Roberts, the responses of Martin and Button revealed a lack of ability to produce convincing exegetical arguments for High Calvinism.²⁴⁵ Fuller had been wrestling with the scriptural foundations of High Calvinism at least since reading Taylor’s pamphlet in 1775. He had now drawn his own conclusions and put them into print to great effect. As Nuttall states, “With the publication of *The gospel worthy of all*

²⁴¹Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:458.

²⁴²Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:458.

²⁴³Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:458.

²⁴⁴Roger Hayden, “Evangelical Calvinism among Eighteenth-Century British Baptists with Particular Reference to Bernard Foskett, Hugh and Caleb Evans and the Bristol Baptist Academy, 1690–1791” (PhD diss., University of Keele, 1991), 204.

²⁴⁵R. Philip Roberts, “Andrew Fuller,” in *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition*, ed. Timothy George and David S. Dockery (Nashville: B & H Pub., 2001), 40.

acceptation the walls of High Calvinism fell flat.”²⁴⁶

Arminian response. Though the High Calvinists accused Fuller of tending toward Arminianism, the response to *GWAA* by the Arminian Baptists displayed that they did not recognize him as one of their own.²⁴⁷ On February 5, 1786, Fuller recorded that he received “another” of the “treatises which are published against what I have written.”²⁴⁸ The work Fuller referenced was by Dan Taylor (1738–1816), who had written under the pseudonym “Philanthropos.” Fuller read the Arminian response, and to his delight found “an amiable spirit” who had advanced some things with “a good deal of plausibility.”²⁴⁹ “The more I examine it,” Fuller mused, “the more I perceive that it is open to a solid and effective reply.”²⁵⁰ The following year, Fuller did respond when he included a reply to Taylor as the second part of *A Defence of a Treatise Entitled the Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation Containing a Reply to Mr. Button’s Remarks and the Observations of Philanthropos*.²⁵¹ With his response to “Philanthropos,” Fuller began a dispute with Taylor that resulted in the publication of six treatises between the two Baptist leaders.

Taylor was a well-known General Baptist preacher who founded the New Connexion of General Baptists in 1770.²⁵² Taylor was born on December 21, 1738, at

²⁴⁶Nuttall, “Northamptonshire and the Modern Question,” 230.

²⁴⁷For a more general study relating Fuller to Arminianism, see Clint Sheehan, “Great and Sovereign Grace: Fuller’s Defense of the Gospel against Arminianism,” in *At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word’: Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 83–121.

²⁴⁸Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:49.

²⁴⁹Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:50.

²⁵⁰Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:50.

²⁵¹Fuller’s response to Taylor may be found in Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:459–511.

²⁵²For a recent scholarly treatment of Taylor and the New Connexion, see Frank Rinaldi, *The Tribe of Dan: The New Connexion of General Baptists, 1770–1891: A Study in the Transition from Revival Movement to Established Denomination* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 2008).

Sourmilk Hall, Northowram, Yorkshire, to Azor—a coal miner—and Mary Taylor.²⁵³ Taylor received no formal education, but was naturally precocious, often bringing his books with him into the mines as he assisted his father. As a young man, Taylor fell under the influence of Evangelicals and heard Wesley preach on multiple occasions.²⁵⁴ He preached his first sermon as a Methodist lay preacher at twenty-three and was encouraged to seek training from Wesley.²⁵⁵ Taylor found himself disagreeing with Wesley's leadership, however, and led a group of seceders from the Methodists in 1762. Around this time, Taylor began to doubt the validity of infant baptism and after a period of study, adopted the Baptist position. While Taylor had departed from Wesley on the issue of baptism, he remained an Arminian, and so was denied baptism by several Particular Baptist churches in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He then set out to find a General Baptist congregation, eventually locating the General Baptist church in Gamston, Nottinghamshire. On February 16, 1763, the church's pastor, Joseph Jeffery, baptized Taylor in the River Idle.

The recently baptized Taylor, then, began organizing to establish a General Baptist congregation in Wadsworth. He baptized John Slater, a friend who had accompanied Taylor to Gamston, along with a few others.²⁵⁶ Representatives of the Gamston church joined Taylor in Wadsworth to offer their assistance, and the group built a meeting place in an area known as Birchcliff.²⁵⁷ The church took the name of the hillside upon which it was built and Taylor was ordained as the pastor of Birchcliffe

²⁵³Ernest F. Clipsham, "Taylor, Dan (1738–1816)," in *ODNB*, accessed February 24, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27023>.

²⁵⁴Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987), 160. For a study relating Taylor to Evangelicalism, see Richard T. Pollard, "Dan Taylor: A Baptist Entrepreneur," *Baptist Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (2016): 134–51.

²⁵⁵Clipsham, "Taylor, Dan."

²⁵⁶Clipsham, "Taylor, Dan."

²⁵⁷McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 160.

General Baptist church on July 30, 1763.²⁵⁸ Taylor soon led the congregation to join the Lincolnshire Association of General Baptists, but found significant problems among the associating churches. Not only had they become lifeless and unevangelistic, but many of the General Baptist congregations tolerated Arianism and Socinianism within their ranks.²⁵⁹ In 1764, Taylor encountered a group of five Leicestershire churches who practiced believer's baptism and embraced evangelical theology but refused to associate with the Lincolnshire Association.²⁶⁰ Taylor then proposed a "New Connexion" between the Leicestershire Evangelicals and the General Baptists who held to evangelical convictions. The first assembly of the New Connexion met from June 6th to 8th, 1770, in Whitechapel, London.²⁶¹ Though less than twenty delegates met to form "The New Connexion of General Baptists," the association brought a period of spiritual renewal along evangelical lines to Arminian Baptists.²⁶²

The New Connexion and the older association of General Baptist churches remained separate, but cordial, in the years following; many, including Taylor himself, participated in both bodies.²⁶³ Taylor maintained significant control of the New Connexion throughout his life, and his energetic leadership led to significant growth. By

²⁵⁸McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 160.

²⁵⁹McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 160.

²⁶⁰These churches had been established by David Taylor (1715–1783), an evangelical preacher associated with the Countess of Huntingdon; David Taylor's preaching in the area led to the start of five evangelical congregations, who embraced believer's baptism but had registered as Independent congregations. For more, see McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 159; Raymond Brown, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 2, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1986), 67–69.

²⁶¹Clipsham, "Taylor, Dan."

²⁶²McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 169.

²⁶³Brown, *English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century*, 69. Taylor himself represented the Leicestershire Association at the General Assembly of the General Baptists until 1802. Clipsham, "Taylor, Dan."

the time he published the response to Fuller's *GWAA* in 1788, Taylor had moved pastorate twice and was located at Church Lane, Whitechapel, in London.²⁶⁴

In his *Observations on the Rev. Andrew Fuller's Late Pamphlet, Entitled "The Gospel of Christ worthy of All Acceptation,"* Taylor agreed with Fuller's claim that Scripture called for universal gospel invitations and placed the duty to believe upon every individual.²⁶⁵ Taylor, however, challenged his Particular Baptist opponent on the ground of such invitations. According to Taylor, "Universal calls and invitations of the gospel are founded upon the universality of Divine love to sinful man and on the death of Jesus Christ, as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world."²⁶⁶ In other words, Fuller's commitment to particular redemption undercut his argument for evangelism and missions. "Universal invitations," Taylor argued, "must be founded on universal provision."²⁶⁷ Taylor sought to back up his claims with biblical arguments. "The Scripture never gives us any information," Taylor concluded, "that Christ died for some, and not for others."²⁶⁸ Taylor also objected to Fuller's usage of moral and natural inability language in regard to human nature.²⁶⁹ For Taylor, humanity suffered no impediment that kept them from trusting Christ. To claim otherwise made God into a "merciless tyrant."²⁷⁰

²⁶⁴Taylor moved from Birchcliffe to Halifax, Yorkshire, in 1782, then to Whitechapel two years later. Clipsham, "Taylor, Dan." Taylor's move between multiple churches is notable, since the normative view among Baptists during the period was that a pastor's commitment to a church was usually for life. Taylor established a new precedent, which McBeth suggested "added a note of freshness to some churches." McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 165.

²⁶⁵Pollard, "Dan Taylor," 136.

²⁶⁶Dan Taylor, *Observations on the Rev Andrew Fuller's Late Pamphlet Entitled the Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation* (London: J. Buckland, 1786), title page.

²⁶⁷Taylor, *Observations*, 90.

²⁶⁸Taylor, *Observations*, 29.

²⁶⁹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 88.

²⁷⁰Taylor, *Observations*, 88.

Fuller took the concerns of Taylor with great seriousness, defending the principles set forth in *GWAA*, but also making adjustments to his argument where necessary. In his “Reply to the Observations of Philanthropos” in *Defence of a Treatise*, Fuller likened Taylor’s response from an Arminian perspective to the rebuttal given by Button from a High-Calvinist viewpoint. Both Button and Taylor “agree in denying faith in Christ to be a duty required by the moral law; and in excusing the sinner, unless grace is bestowed upon him.”²⁷¹ Whereas Button held that all could not be required to repent and believe the gospel because all were not among the elect and therefore had no warrant, Taylor charged that since all were required to repent and believe the gospel, that meant all possessed a warrant and ground from which to believe. Fuller then set out his defense in four sections. In section one, Fuller stated the “great question” between him and Taylor was whether or not the Holy Spirit “was the proper and efficient cause of a sinner’s believing” or whether the Spirit merely exerted a “holy influence.”²⁷² According to Fuller, Taylor’s Arminian doctrine of salvation “leaves out the agency of the Holy Spirit . . . [in a] sentiment highly derogatory to the honour of the Holy Spirit, and contrary to the tenor of the sacred Scriptures.”²⁷³ Fuller then, in the second section, reaffirmed the distinction between moral and natural inability, rebuffing the charge that this made God unjust by demonstrating that moral inability is due to a person’s sinful and rebellious heart.²⁷⁴ Section three dealt with faith as a requirement of the moral law. According to Fuller, Taylor “confounded two very different things” by failing to distinguish an “obligation” to believe from an “encouragement to believe.”²⁷⁵

²⁷¹Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:459.

²⁷²Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:463.

²⁷³Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:463.

²⁷⁴Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:477.

²⁷⁵Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:485.

Whereas Fuller confidently asserted his beliefs in the first three sections, in section four, “on the death of Christ,” the Particular Baptist admitted to not being “fully acquainted with the arguments” related to the extent of Christ’s death.²⁷⁶ Fuller apparently felt the force of Taylor’s argument that a sinner cannot “rationally trust” in Christ “before he understand[s] that he died for him.”²⁷⁷ In a later work, Fuller admitted “The truth is, I tried to answer my opponent without considering the sufficiency of the atonement in itself considered, and of its being the ground of gospel invitations; but I could not.”²⁷⁸ In response to Taylor’s challenge, Fuller made a modification in his doctrine of atonement that placed the particularity of redemption in the application of the atonement, allowing for a general provision.²⁷⁹ In doing so, Fuller did not depart from traditional Calvinism, but located himself within a broad stream of Reformed thought that included Owen, Edwards, and even the Synod of Dort.²⁸⁰ Fuller explained that “the particularity of redemption” consisted “not in the degree of Christ’s suffering . . . but in the sovereign purpose and design of the Father and Son.”²⁸¹ Having made this distinction, Fuller could then affirm “that there is in the death of Christ a sufficient ground for

²⁷⁶Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:488.

²⁷⁷Taylor, *Observations*, 31-32.

²⁷⁸Andrew Fuller, *Six Letters to Dr. Ryland Respecting the Controversy with the Rev. A. Booth*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:709.

²⁷⁹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 89.

²⁸⁰Nettles helpfully speaks of “two streams” of limited atonement within Calvinistic Baptists, as well as the larger Reformed community. Fuller represented the stream which “affirms both the sufficiency of the atonement in its nature to save all men and the limitation of the atonement to the elect only in its intent.” The second stream, which Nettles associates with Abraham Booth, “affirms that it is the nature of the atonement to save all for whom it is sufficient, and there its limitation in intent is necessarily a limitation of sufficiency.” Tom J. Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life*, 20th anniversary ed. (Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2006), 340-41. Also, see Jeremy Pittsley, “Christ’s Absolute Determination to Save: Andrew Fuller and Particular Redemption,” *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 135–66.

²⁸¹Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 3:488.

indefinite calls and universal invitations.”²⁸² If the entire world repented, Fuller concluded, “Not one soul need be sent away for want of a sufficiency in Christ’s death.”²⁸³

When Taylor addressed Fuller’s “Reply to Philanthropos” in 1787 with *Observations on the Rev. Andrew Fuller’s Reply to Philanthropos*, the General Baptist remained unimpressed with Fuller’s modification.²⁸⁴ For Taylor, the distinction that Fuller adopted, which argued that the atonement was sufficient for all but efficient for the elect only, failed to resolve the inconsistencies inherent within his system.²⁸⁵ The General Baptist replied to Fuller with detailed exegesis and theological reasoning over the course of four chapters. Taylor also readily admitted that he and Fuller disagreed over whether regeneration comes prior to faith.²⁸⁶ Characteristic of the tone of the debate, Taylor recognized their disagreement as important, but affirmed that preachers such as Fuller who “propose the salvation of Christ to mankind in unlimited language; as able and willing to save all men, without exception, if they come to him . . . are of all men, the most useful.”²⁸⁷

While Taylor transitioned between using a pseudonym and writing under his own name when he published his second reply to Fuller, the Particular Baptist published his second response to Taylor under a pseudonym. In 1788, when he replied to Taylor’s *Observations . . . on the Reply to Philanthropos*, Fuller published *The Reality and*

²⁸²Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 3:488.

²⁸³Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 3:489.

²⁸⁴Dan Taylor, *Observations on the Rev. Andrew Fuller’s Reply to Philanthropos* (St. Ives, England: T. Bloom, 1787).

²⁸⁵Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 91.

²⁸⁶Taylor, *Observations on Reply to Philanthropos*, 8.

²⁸⁷Taylor, *Observations on Reply to Philanthropos*, 141.

Efficacy of Divine Grace under the name “Agnostos.”²⁸⁸ According to Ryland, Fuller used the pseudonym to avoid lengthening the debate, but Morden suggested the possibility that the Particular Baptist pastor had grown uncomfortable with the modifications he had been forced to make to his doctrine of the atonement.²⁸⁹ Whether or not Morden is correct regarding the pseudonym, Fuller remained convinced that “in the main” he had “engaged on the side of truth” and that his arguments had “not yet been solidly answered.”²⁹⁰

In the *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, Fuller highlighted what he considered the four major points of dispute between the two Baptists: “the work of the Spirit—the excusableness of sinners on the non-provision of grace—the extent of the moral law—and the design of Christ’s death.”²⁹¹ In his initial letter, which dealt with the work of the Spirit in regeneration, Fuller reaffirmed a major difference between the two men’s doctrine of salvation. Whereas Taylor limited the work of the Spirit to “a sort of Divine agency . . . given to men in common,” Fuller maintained “that it is owing to Divine agency, and to that *alone*, that one sinner, rather than another, believes in Christ.”²⁹² Fuller then spent much of the body of the work defending his notion of moral agency, which included a reaffirmation of his distinction between moral and natural inability. Taylor’s “great mistake in these matters,” according to Fuller, was “in considering a bias of mind as destructive of free agency.”²⁹³

²⁸⁸Andrew Fuller, *The Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace, with the Certain Success of Christ’s Kingdom, Considered in a Series of Letters: Containing Remarks Upon the Observations of the Rev. Dan Taylor on Mr. Fuller’s Reply to Philanthropos*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:512.

²⁸⁹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 91.

²⁹⁰Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:512

²⁹¹Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:514.

²⁹²Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:515.

²⁹³Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:519.

Fuller then moved to defend himself against the charge that particular redemption, even of the variety that held the atonement to be sufficient for all, remained inconsistent with universal gospel invitations. Against the charge that his doctrine made God appear unjust, the Particular Baptist argued that both schemes suppose “that God does not do all that for some men which he could, and which is necessary to their salvation,” but that Taylor’s “under the plausible pretext of extending the grace of the gospel,” appears “to enervate if not annihilate it.”²⁹⁴ As Fuller responded to Taylor’s scriptural argumentation, he demonstrated his willingness to take his opponent seriously and to measure his beliefs according to Scripture. Whereas previously Fuller held that the biblical terminology of ransom and propitiation applied to the elect only, he conceded he “misunderstood certain passages of Scripture” and now believed the terms “were applicable to mankind in general.”²⁹⁵ This change represented no substantial difference between the positions of Fuller and Taylor. Both men maintained a general provision derived from Christ’s death, but Taylor went “a step farther” and claimed that “all men have power *to be willing if they will.*”²⁹⁶

The two Baptist Evangelicals were at an impasse. Taylor published the final exchange between them in 1790 with *The Friendly Conclusion Occasioned by the Letters of ‘Agnostos.*²⁹⁷ Morris recorded that Fuller felt no small degree of disgust at Taylor’s claim that he had brought Fuller nearly to his views.²⁹⁸ Rather than reply, the Kettering pastor moved on and the two interlocutors maintained a degree of affinity for one

²⁹⁴Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:543.

²⁹⁵Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:550.

²⁹⁶Fuller, *Reality and Efficacy of Divine Grace*, 2:550.

²⁹⁷Dan Taylor, *The Friendly Conclusion Occasioned by the Letters of ‘Agnostos’* (London: 1790).

²⁹⁸Morris, *Memoirs*, 206.

another, with Fuller preaching in Taylor's church in 1806 and 1807.²⁹⁹ As Michael Watts concluded, "Fuller's contention . . . did not satisfy Arminian critics such as Dan Taylor, but was accepted by the majority of Particular Baptists and 'Fullerism' became the new orthodoxy of the denomination."³⁰⁰ The widespread embrace of Evangelical Calvinism by the Particular Baptists would have global implications.³⁰¹

Missionary Theologian

The 1780s witnessed the maturation of Andrew Fuller as the leading exponent of Evangelical Calvinism among Particular Baptists. According to David Bebbington, *GWAA* became "the classic statement of eighteenth-century Evangelical Calvinism."³⁰² Elsewhere, Bebbington calls Fuller the "outstanding theologian of Dissent at the turn of the nineteenth century."³⁰³ Moreover, he describes Fuller as "the Baptist theologian who put his convictions into practice" through his efforts toward foreign missions.³⁰⁴ As Gilbert Laws summarized, "The *GWAA* . . . had been well wrought as a theme on paper, and would continue for many years to come to do its leavening work in the churches; but

²⁹⁹Adam Taylor, *Memoirs of the Rev. Dan Taylor, Late Pastor of the General Baptist Church, Whitechapel, London; with Extracts from This Diary, Correspondence, and Unpublished Manuscripts* (London: 1820), 177. Morden offers an interesting take on how Enlightenment thinking influenced the dispute between Fuller and Taylor in Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 92–96.

³⁰⁰Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, vol. 1, *From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 460.

³⁰¹Fuller engaged in further debate regarding the particulars of the atonement with the Particular Baptist Abraham Booth (1734–1806). Booth had previously shifted from Arminianism to Evangelical Calvinism and thought Fuller made too many concessions on the particularity of the atonement. For an overview of the controversy, see Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 149–72.

³⁰²David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 64–65.

³⁰³David W. Bebbington, "Remembered around the World: The International Scope of Edwards's Legacy," in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons*, ed. David W. Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 184.

³⁰⁴Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 64–65.

Fuller was destined to work out in incessant toil, travel, and tribulation, the due result of the thesis with which he had challenged the churches.”³⁰⁵ Fuller’s efforts, fueled by concerns that dated back at least to his involvement in the 1784 prayer call, resulted in the formation of the “first of the great Protestant missionary societies” and helped launch a movement among Evangelicals to reach the world with the gospel.³⁰⁶ For Fuller, missionary effort and success could only be ascribed to the outpouring of the Spirit.

Formation of the BMS (1792)

When fourteen Particular Baptists crammed themselves into the back parlor of Martha Wallis’s home on October 2, 1792, to form the “Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen” (hereafter BMS), these Northamptonshire Baptist leaders were acting upon the evangelical convictions that had been developing among them since at least 1779.³⁰⁷ In fact, many who sat in the home of the widow of Kettering’s late deacon, Beeby Wallis, had been engaged in regular prayer for the spread of the gospel abroad since the 1784 prayer call. The establishment of the BMS did represent a momentous occasion in the history of the Particular Baptists and Christian missions more generally, but the creation of the new missionary society was also a genuine outworking of their recently-found evangelical convictions.³⁰⁸

As Fuller himself testified, the person most responsible for the founding of the BMS was William Carey, a local pastor and the first BMS missionary.³⁰⁹ Ryland,

³⁰⁵Gilbert Laws, *Andrew Fuller, Pastor, Theologian, Ropeholder* (London: Carey Press, 1942), 82.

³⁰⁶Stuart Piggin, “The Expanding Knowledge of God: Jonathan Edwards’s Influence on Missionary Thinking and Promotion,” in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad*, 273.

³⁰⁷Ivimey pointed to the year 1779 and the event of Robert Hall, Sr.’s preaching of Isa 57:14 in “Help to Zion’s Travelers” as “the commencement of a new era in the history of our denomination.” Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, (London: 1830), 4:41–42.

³⁰⁸For a historical overview of the BMS, see Stanley, *History of the BMS*.

³⁰⁹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 238.

addressing the “immediate origin” of the BMS agreed, stating, “I believe God himself infused into the mind of Carey that solicitude for the salvation of the heathen, which cannot fairly be traced to any other source.”³¹⁰ The eldest child of Edmund Carey (1736–1816) and Elizabeth Wells (1734–1787), Carey was born in Paulerspury, Northamptonshire, on August 17, 1761.³¹¹ Edmund Carey, a devoted Anglican, served as the schoolmaster and parish clerk during much of Carey’s childhood, giving Carey unusual access to a variety of books.³¹² At the age of fourteen, Carey began as an apprentice to a nearby shoemaker, Clarke Nichols. While serving under Nichols, a fellow apprentice, John Warr, was radically converted and soon began pressing his newfound evangelical sentiments upon Carey.³¹³ Through Warr’s efforts, the future missionary was converted and in 1799 joined the Congregationalist church at Hackleton.³¹⁴ Though not yet a Baptist, Carey attended the annual meeting of the Northamptonshire Association at Olney in 1782, where he heard Fuller preach. By 1783, Carey had come to Baptist convictions under the influence of John Collett Ryland, and in October of that year, Ryland, Jr. baptized Carey in the Nene River.³¹⁵

Carey continued as a shoemaker but began preaching fortnightly for the Particular Baptist congregation at Earls Baton, near Northampton.³¹⁶ Developing an ability with languages that would serve him in a land further than he could then imagine, Carey began the study of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He also joined Sutcliff’s Olney

³¹⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 238.

³¹¹Brian Stanley, “Carey, William (1761–1834),” in *ODNB*, accessed February 24, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4657>.

³¹²Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory*, 281.

³¹³George, *Faithful Witness*, 6–7.

³¹⁴Stanley, “Carey, William.”

³¹⁵George, *Faithful Witness*, 11–12.

³¹⁶Stanley, “Carey, William.”

congregation in an effort to receive a proper ordination. In 1785, he began as the pastor of the congregation at Moulton, and on August 1, 1787, in the presence of twenty Northamptonshire Association ministers, Carey was formally ordained. George captured the significance of the moment well:

Ryland, who had baptized him; Sutcliff, who had commissioned him; and Fuller, who had recognized in him greatness yet unfulfilled, together inducted him by prayer, preaching, and laying on of hands into his new office. How little did any one of them realize that day how their lives would intertwine in an intimacy of love and commitment, the bond of a shared vision to carry the gospel into all the world.³¹⁷

By the time of his ordination, Carey had already developed a deep concern for the many lost souls of the rapidly expanding eighteenth-century world. As a young boy in Paulerspury, Carey became captivated by the stories of his uncle, Peter Carey, who had served in Canada under James Wolfe (1727–1759) during the Seven Years War.³¹⁸ The published journals of Captain James Cook (1728–1779), which Carey discovered in the early 1780s, further fueled his interest in foreign lands.³¹⁹ Cook’s journals recounted his Pacific voyages and included accounts of the discovery of Tahiti, as well as his exploration of New Zealand and Australia.³²⁰ Carey would later recall, “Reading Cook’s voyages was the first thing that engaged my mind to think of missions.”³²¹ As Cook’s writings introduced Carey to peoples who possessed no Scripture, church, or gospel, the burden of missions began to set upon the young pastor. While serving at Moulton, Carey had begun working on a treatise that would bring missions to the forefront of the minds of his Northamptonshire colleagues.

³¹⁷George, *Faithful Witness*, 19.

³¹⁸Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 178.

³¹⁹Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 183. Carey’s uncle, Peter, also introduced Carey to gardening, which became a lifelong passion for the missionary.

³²⁰Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 183.

³²¹Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey, D. D.: Late Missionary to Bengal; Professor of Oriental Languages in the College of Fort William, Calcutta* (London: Jackson and Walford, 1836), 18.

Carey's time at Moulton was formative for the young pastor. Not only did he gain the experience of preaching up to four times a week to a growing congregation, but his friendship with the leading evangelical pastors of the Northamptonshire Association also deepened.³²² Of increasing significance was Carey's relationship with Fuller, whose Kettering congregation sat a mere ten miles away. The two men began a friendship that endured nearly thirty years and would eventually span two continents. By the time Carey moved to Leicester in 1789, the necessity of engaging in foreign missions had been firmly established in his mind and a draft of his famous treatise—*An Enquiry into the Obligations to Use Means for the Conversion of Heathens*—had been completed.³²³

During his first few years at Leicester, Carey led the church through significant internal controversy, all the while continuing to develop his missionary vision. Talk of engaging in some type of mission work had begun among Northamptonshire Baptists, but there was still much resistance.³²⁴ Fuller reported that Carey was “frequently conversing with his brethren in the ministry on the practicability and importance of a mission to the heathen, and of his willingness to engage in it.”³²⁵ Fuller, testifying to Carey's resolve, continued,

At several ministers' meetings, between the years 1787 and 1790, this was the topic of conversation. Some of our most aged and respectable ministers thought, I believe, at that time, that it was a wild and impracticable scheme that had got in his mind, and therefore gave him no encouragement. Yet he would not give it up; but would converse with us, one by one, till he had made some impression upon us.³²⁶

Carey apparently made an impression on Fuller, because at the annual meeting of the Northamptonshire Association on April 27, 1791, the Kettering pastor gave an address

³²²Cross, *Useful Learning*, 330–31.

³²³Stanley, “Carey, William.”

³²⁴Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 115.

³²⁵Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 69.

³²⁶Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 69.

titled “The Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay, in Concerns of Religion,” which served as a catalyst to further action.³²⁷ Taking Haggai 1:12 as his text, Fuller spoke of the “argument which the people used against building the house of God was that *the time was not come*.”³²⁸ Applying the text to his hearers, Fuller charged, “There is something of this procrastinating spirit that runs through a great part of our life, and is of great detriment to us in the work of God.”³²⁹ The Kettering pastor then addressed the particular burden of his friend, Carey:

Let it be considered whether it is not owing to this principle that so few and so feeble efforts have been made for the propagation of the gospel in the world. When the Lord Jesus commissioned his apostles, he commanded them to go and teach “all nations,” to preach the gospel to “every creature;” and that notwithstanding the difficulties and oppositions that would lie in the way. The apostles executed their commission with assiduity and fidelity; but, since their days, we seem to sit down half contented that the greater part of the world should still remain in ignorance and idolatry.³³⁰

In making his point, Fuller implied that the command to take the gospel to the nations remained binding upon believers. Furthermore, the Kettering pastor recognized that the trade routes provided opportunities for not just the exchange of goods, but the propagation of the gospel as well. “We have opportunities in abundance: the improvement of navigation, and the maritime and commercial turn of this country, furnish us with these”; Fuller continued, “And it deserves to be considered whether this is not a circumstance that renders it a duty peculiarly binding on us.”³³¹

As Fuller continued his application of the passage, he dealt with two significant objections to missions common among his dissenting contemporaries:

³²⁷Fuller’s sermon was later published as *Pernicious Consequences of Delay in Religious Concerns*, and may be found in Andrew Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay, in the Concerns of Religion*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:145.

³²⁸Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:145.

³²⁹Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:145.

³³⁰Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:147.

³³¹Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:147.

eschatology and the use of means. In a likely reference to the eschatological system espoused by Gill, Fuller contended, “The truth is, if I am not mistaken, we wait for we know not what; we seem to think ‘the time is not come, the time for the Spirit to be poured down from on high.’”³³² In an allusion to the 1784 prayer call, Fuller suggested the Association had failed to act upon its own convictions: “We pray for the conversion and salvation of the world, and yet neglect the ordinary means by which those ends have been used to be accomplished. It pleased God, heretofore, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believed; and there is reason to think it will still please God to work by that distinguished means.”³³³ He then asked,

Ought we not then at least to try by some means to convey more of the good news of salvation to the world around us than has hitherto been conveyed? The encouragement to the heathen is still in force, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved: but how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?”³³⁴

Fuller, with a characteristic balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility, called the Northamptonshire Baptists to fulfill their “duty” by appropriating the “means of grace” in the pursuit of foreign missions.³³⁵ Fuller’s words readied many within the Association for action and the time had come for Carey to issue the decisive call.³³⁶

On May 12, 1792, Carey published his famous *Enquiry*, which explicitly argued what his friend, Fuller, had implied. The great commission remained binding upon believers, who had a duty to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.³³⁷ In the first section

³³²Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:147–48.

³³³Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:148.

³³⁴Fuller, *Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay*, 1:148.

³³⁵Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 117.

³³⁶Morden highlights that “the importance of Fuller’s Clipstone message for the founding of the BMS is brought out in all the major accounts.” Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 117.

³³⁷William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to Use Means for the*

of the work, Carey addressed objections to global missions often raised by High Calvinists.³³⁸ He then demonstrated the success of missions historically, before providing statistics regarding the known countries of the world and their spiritual condition. In the fourth section, Carey addressed the practical obstacles to mission, and in the fifth, he expounded upon the nature of Christian duty concerning missions, as well as what means should be used.³³⁹ Affirming the previous efforts of the Northamptonshire Baptists, Carey argued that “one of the first, and most important of those duties which are incumbent upon us, is *fervent and united prayer*.”³⁴⁰ He continued, “The most glorious works . . . have been in answer to prayer; and it is in this way . . . that the glorious out-pouring of the Spirit . . . will be bestowed.”³⁴¹ For Carey, however, “We must not be contented however with praying, *without exerting ourselves in the use of means* for the obtaining of those things we pray for.”³⁴² After demonstrating the necessity of engaging in means, Carey proposed a plan. “Suppose,” Carey suggested, “a company of serious Christians . . . were to form themselves into a society and make a number of rules respecting the regulation of the plan, and the persons who are to be employed as missionaries, the means of defraying the expense, &c. &c.”³⁴³ The future missionary then pressed the call to his own denomination: “I would therefore propose that such a society and committee should be formed amongst the particular baptist denomination.”³⁴⁴

Conversion of Heathens (Leicester, England: Ann Ireland, 1792), 8.

³³⁸Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 189.

³³⁹Carey, *Enquiry*, 77.

³⁴⁰Carey, *Enquiry*, 77.

³⁴¹Carey, *Enquiry*, 78–79.

³⁴²Carey, *Enquiry*, 81.

³⁴³Carey, *Enquiry*, 82.

³⁴⁴Carey, *Enquiry*, 84.

On May 30, 1792, three weeks after the publication of his *Enquiry*, Carey preached before the Association meeting held at Friar Lane, Nottingham.³⁴⁵ Taking Isaiah 54:2–3 as his text, Carey roused his hearers with his now famous motto, “Expect great things. Attempt great things.”³⁴⁶ The following morning, Fuller proposed that a plan should be brought forward at the next Kettering minister’s meeting, scheduled for October.³⁴⁷ Following the minister’s meeting at Kettering, fourteen men—twelve pastors, one layman, and one ministerial student—withdraw to the home of the late Beeby Wallis, which had earned the reputation as the “Gospel Inn,” due to the Wallis’s frequent hospitality.³⁴⁸ In the midst of debate concerning the feasibility of the venture, considering the lack of notoriety and wealth among the group, Carey began reading from a recent issue of the *Periodical Account of the Moravian Missions*.³⁴⁹ As he recounted the exploits of the Moravians to reach the slaves of the East Indies and the Indians of North America, the resolve of the group strengthened and a resolution was determined:

Humbly desirous of making an effort for the propagation of the gospel amongst the heathen, according to the recommendations of Carey’s *Enquiry*, we unanimously resolve to act in Society together for this purpose; . . . we name this the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathen.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁵Cross, *Useful Learning*, 119.

³⁴⁶For Fuller’s recollection of the sermon and ensuing events, see Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 75. Unfortunately, Carey’s sermon was not preserved, but the motto is sometimes rendered “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.” The shorter rendering is most likely the original. The first known rendering of the lengthier version of the motto in print came at the hand of Ryland following Fuller’s death in 1815. Christopher A. Smith, “The Spirit and Letter of Carey’s Catalytic Watchword: A Study in the Transmission of Baptist Tradition,” *Baptist Quarterly* 33, no. 5 (January 1990): 226–37.

³⁴⁷Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 75.

³⁴⁸George, *Faithful Witness*, 67. For information on the participants, see Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 220–22.

³⁴⁹George, *Faithful Witness*, 68.

³⁵⁰J. W. Morris, *Periodical Accounts Relative to the Baptist Missionary Society* (Clipstone, England: J. W. Morris, 1800), 1:3–4. For the background of “voluntary societies” in English Christianity at the time, see William H. Brackney, “The Baptist Missionary Society in Proper Context: Some Reflections on the Larger Voluntary Tradition,” *Baptist Quarterly* 34, no. 8 (October 1992): 364–77.

Thirteen of the fourteen present pledged an annual subscription totaling less than thirteen pounds. For Carey, the most passionate advocate of the BMS, even the half-guinea minimum subscription exceeded the limits of his poverty.³⁵¹ F. A. Cox, reflecting on the founding of the BMS some years later recalled,

“What,” said the objectors at the time, “is thirteen pounds the mighty sum with which it is proposed to undertake so vast a scheme?” “And were these the men and the means,” have said opponents since, in fifty years of reiterated scorn, “with which the conversion of the world was to be attempted?” Precisely so, we reply: for means are accepted of God, when they are proportionate to possession, and blessed with success, when they are employed in faith.³⁵²

The fourteen founders of the BMS did not fail to realize the difficulty of the task or their meager means, and likely encountered numerous objections of the sort Cox described. But as Sutcliff had preached at the recent Association meeting, “though the ability of your hand may be very limited; not so, that of your heart. . . . It can embrace a globe. It can stretch its arms like seas, and grasp in all inhabitable shores.”³⁵³

Having formalized their commitment, the group then assigned officers, choosing Fuller as secretary. Reynold Hogg (1752–1843), the only founding member with significant means, was chosen as treasurer, and Ryland, Sutcliff, and Carey completed the leadership circle. When Samuel Pearce (1766–1799) brought a gift of seventy pounds to the next meeting, he joined the leadership of the BMS as well. Through the efforts of Fuller and his co-laborers, the BMS raised a modest amount of financial support from around the country.³⁵⁴ And by 1793, the BMS had found its first two missionaries: Carey, himself, and John Thomas (1757–1800), an East India company

³⁵¹Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 120.

³⁵²F. A. Cox, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society from 1792 to 1842* (London: 1842), 1:18.

³⁵³The day prior to Fuller’s delivery of “The Instances, Evil, and Tendency of Delay, in Concerns of Religion” at the 1791 Northamptonshire Association annual meeting, Sutcliff preached “Jealously for the Lord of Hosts.” For a reproduction, “Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts,” in Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 355–65.

³⁵⁴Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 120–21.

surgeon who desired to return to India as a missionary.³⁵⁵ Finally, on June 13, 1793, Carey and Thomas boarded the *Kron Princessa Maria* for what was to be a five-month voyage to Bengal.³⁵⁶ Carey served in Bengal until January of 1800, when he moved to Serampore to be joined by two new BMS missionaries: Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) and William Ward (1769–1823).³⁵⁷ The “Serampore Trio” soon witnessed their first Hindu convert, Krishna Pal; Carey also oversaw the translation of the entire Bible in six Indian languages, and parts of Scripture in twenty-nine others. On June 9, 1834, after serving as a BMS missionary for over thirty-years, Carey died and was buried in Serampore.

While Fuller never traveled to India, his contribution to the success of the BMS was no less sacrificial.³⁵⁸ As secretary of the BMS, Fuller poured himself into the activities of fund-raising, promotion, and general management of the Society. In what would become a famous anecdote, Fuller later recounted,

Our undertaking to India really appeared to me, on its commencement, to be somewhat like a few men, who were deliberating about the importance of penetrating into a deep mine, which had never before been explored. We had no one to guide us; and, while we were thus deliberating, Carey, as it were, said, ‘Well, I will go down if *you* will hold the rope.’ But, before he went down, he, as it seemed to me, took an oath from each of us at the mouth of the pit to this effect, that while *we* lived we should *never* let go the rope. You understand me. There was great responsibility attached to us who began the business.”³⁵⁹

Referring to Fuller, Ryland wrote, “The whole weight of its concerns lay far more upon him than upon any man in England.”³⁶⁰ According to Laws, “Fuller traveled over

³⁵⁵For more on the selection of John Thomas, see Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 226.

³⁵⁶George, *Faithful Witness*, 86.

³⁵⁷Stanley, “Carey, William.”

³⁵⁸For a discussion of the various aspects of Fuller’s work for the BMS, see Nigel D. Wheeler, “Eminent Spirituality and Eminent Usefulness: Andrew Fuller’s (1754–1815) Pastoral Theology in His Ordination Sermons” (PhD thesis, University of Pretoria, 2009), 44–54.

³⁵⁹Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:68.

³⁶⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 250.

England, Scotland, and Ireland, preaching whenever he could get a hearing, and taking collections for the work.”³⁶¹ The Particular Baptist did not limit himself to members of his own denomination, but “personally canvassed leading Evangelicals of all churches in the principal towns and cities.”³⁶² He also served as the key political correspondent and apologist for the mission, publishing *An Apology for the Late Christian Missions to India* in 1808.³⁶³

***The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation,*
2nd ed. (1801)**

As the nineteenth century dawned, Fuller’s *GWAA* had aged fifteen years and his theology had undergone some minor, though not insignificant, shifts—predominantly related to the doctrine of particular redemption. Citing frequent requests for an updated edition, Fuller published a second edition of *GWAA* with substantial “corrections and additions.”³⁶⁴ On the second edition, Fuller simplified the subtitle to *The Duty of Sinners to Believe in Jesus Christ*, which as Haykin notes, “well expressed the theme of both editions.”³⁶⁵

Significant changes between the editions fit within two broad categories. First, Fuller updated and expanded his exegesis in the second edition.³⁶⁶ Second, Fuller revised

³⁶¹Laws, *Andrew Fuller*, 82.

³⁶²Laws, *Andrew Fuller*, 82.

³⁶³Andrew Fuller, *An Apology for the Late Christian Missions in India*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:763–836. For more information on Fuller’s work as a political advocate and apologist for the BMS, see Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 170–81.

³⁶⁴Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (1801) [*GWAA*], in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:328. For a helpful summary of changes, see Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 156–72; Michael A. G. Haykin, ““The Lord Is Doing Great Things, and Answering Prayer Everywhere””: The Revival of the Calvinistic Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century,” in *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition*, ed. Robert D. Smart, Ian Hugh Clary, and Michael A. G. Haykin (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 83–85.

³⁶⁵Haykin, “The Lord is Doing Great Things,” 83.

³⁶⁶For examples of Fuller’s revised exegesis, see Haykin, “The Lord is Doing Great Things,”

the treatise based on reconsiderations he made on his doctrine of the atonement prompted through his dispute with Dan Taylor and reading of New England divines.³⁶⁷ Fuller also took the opportunity to draw out more explicit practical implications from the theology. “If the foregoing principles be just,” Fuller concluded, “it is the duty of ministers not only to exhort their carnal auditors to believe in Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls; but *it is at our peril to exhort them to any thing short of it, or which does not involve or imply it.*”³⁶⁸ With regard to pneumatology, the second edition included a relevant appendix aimed at defending Fuller’s Evangelical Calvinism against Sandemanianism.³⁶⁹

By publishing a second edition of *GWAA*, Fuller hoped to strengthen his argument that “faith in Christ is the duty of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the gospel.”³⁷⁰ For Fuller, the corollary truth remained just as important. Believers, and particularly ministers, should call on sinners to repent and believe the gospel indiscriminately. According to Clipsham, the publication of *GWAA* served “to remind the Church of its missionary task.”³⁷¹

Polemical Theologian

While the secretary of the BMS from 1792 until his death in 1815, Fuller travelled extensively on behalf of the organization. Ryland wrote of his friend, “Never was a man more indefatigable in any work for God, than Brother Fuller was in his

84–85.

³⁶⁷For information on Fuller’s shifts regarding particular redemption, see Oliver, *History of the English Calvinistic Baptists*, 158–60.

³⁶⁸Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:387.

³⁶⁹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:393–416.

³⁷⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:343.

³⁷¹Ernest F. Clipsham, “Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism,” pt. 4, “Fuller as a Theologian,” *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 6 (1964): 214.

exertions of every kind for the welfare of this Society.”³⁷² While Carey served in India, Fuller remained in the British Isles as the chief theologian and fund-raiser; additionally, while Fuller worked tirelessly to procure donations and promote Evangelical Calvinism, his travels and status brought him into contact with those who opposed aspects of his theology.

Fuller Encounters Sandemanianism

Outside of England, Scotland was Fuller’s most popular destination. The Kettering pastor made a total of five trips north (in 1799, 1802, 1805, 1808, and 1813) in order to raise funds and promote the BMS.³⁷³ While not initially excited about his first venture to Scotland—“my spirits revolt at the idea: but duty calls,” he wrote—Fuller achieved a significant degree of success in raising support for the BMS in Scotland.³⁷⁴ Characteristic of his Evangelical outlook, he did not restrict himself to raising funds among Particular Baptists, but mingled with various denominations. The Particular Baptist minister received a warm welcome from Scottish non-Baptist Evangelicals, such as John Erskine (1721–1803) and the Haldane brothers: Robert (1764–1842) and James (1768–1851).³⁷⁵ However, in the Scotch Baptists, Fuller found both faithful supporters of the mission and a group with which he maintained a significant theological disagreement. Fuller recorded that Sutcliff, who accompanied him on his first visit, asked a Scotch Baptist elder whether or not his theology “allowed a proper and scriptural place for the affections?”³⁷⁶ The clear contention on the part of Fuller and Ryland was that it did not.³⁷⁷

³⁷²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 247.

³⁷³Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 164.

³⁷⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 263.

³⁷⁵Morden, *Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller*, 165.

³⁷⁶Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love*, 276.

³⁷⁷Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 150.

Sandemanianism had affected much of the Scotch Baptist denomination through the influence of Archibald McLean (1733–1812), who became one of Fuller’s chief opponents.³⁷⁸ McLean, who after becoming convinced of Sandemanianism in 1762, was appointed to eldership in the Scotch Baptist denomination in 1768.³⁷⁹ He rose as an effective leader among Scotch Baptist churches, championing his Sandemanian view of faith among other things. First meeting in 1799, Fuller and McLean met several more times, with McLean even visiting Kettering. They also maintained correspondence through letters on a number of issues, many of them doctrinal in nature.³⁸⁰

In 1785, McLean issued *The Commision Given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles Illustrated*, which attacked Fuller’s position on saving faith as failing to uphold justification by faith alone, though not by name.³⁸¹ By including “good dispositions, holy affections and pious exercises of the heart” in the nature of saving faith, McLean contended that some [Fuller] made justification “by the works of the law.”³⁸² Fuller, never one to back down from a challenge, responded in an appendix to the second edition of *GWAA*. For Fuller, the differences between the two men boiled down to one thing: “what the belief of the gospel includes.”³⁸³

McLean desired to limit faith to a passive receiving in the mind of the truth of the gospel, lest someone have faith in their affections for God rather than Jesus

³⁷⁸McLean maintained that his views regarding saving faith differed from those of Robert Sandeman and blamed Fuller for cementing the two together in people’s minds. Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:21.

³⁷⁹Chun, *Legacy of Edwards in Theology of Fuller*, 112.

³⁸⁰Michael A. G. Haykin, “Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy,” in *At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word’: Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 228.

³⁸¹Haykin, “Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy,” 229.

³⁸²Archibald McLean, *The Commision Given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles*, in *Miscellaneous Works of Archibald McLean*, ed. Peter MacDonald (Elgin, Scotland: 1847), 1:66.

³⁸³Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:393.

himself.³⁸⁴ But while Fuller appreciated his concern, he considered McLean's understanding illogical and short of the concept of faith as found in the Bible. According to Fuller, "It is impossible to maintain that faith is a duty, if it contain no holy exercise of the heart. . . . God requires nothing of intelligent creatures but what is holy."³⁸⁵ With this foray, Fuller entered a debate with McLean that would prove one of his most successful. As Martin Lloyd-Jones has noted, Fuller "more or less demolished Sandemanianism."³⁸⁶

Strictures on Sandemanianism (1810)

Nearly a decade after Fuller critiqued Sandemanianism in *GWAA*, the controversy remained unsettled and McLean's influence had extended. In light of this, Fuller published a larger response to McLean's views in *Strictures on Sandemanianism* (1810). Fuller attacked Sandemanian doctrine at several points. However, one particular conclusive rebuttal of McLean's work came as Fuller argued that "knowledge of Christ is a distinct type of knowledge."³⁸⁷ Haykin helpfully summarizes Fuller's argument: "Knowing Christ, for instance, involves far more than knowing certain things about him, such as the fact of his virgin birth or the details of his crucifixion."³⁸⁸ He continues, "It involves a desire for fellowship with him, a delight in his presence, a recognition that among all the beings of this universe he is truly the most beautiful."³⁸⁹

Fuller articulated his point in a distinctly Edwardsean manner. Edwards's concept of faith in *Religious Affections* provided just the support he needed. As John E.

³⁸⁴Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy," 229.

³⁸⁵Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:395.

³⁸⁶David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "Sandemanianism," in *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 173.

³⁸⁷Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy," 232.

³⁸⁸Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy," 232.

³⁸⁹Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy," 232.

Smith notes, “Edwards laid great stress on the difference between, as he called it, a person’s having ‘a merely notional understanding’ of a thing and that person’s ‘being in some way inclined’ toward it.”³⁹⁰ In many ways, this line of argumentation fell directly in line with the errors of the Sandemanians.

Fuller criticized McLean for confusing a mere notional and rationalist understanding of faith with a spiritual understanding. “A great deal of confusion on this subject,” Fuller argued, “has arisen from confounding simple knowledge, pertaining merely to the intellectual faculty, with that which is compound or comprehensive of approbation Simple knowledge, or knowledge as distinguished from approbation, is merely a natural accomplishment, necessary to the performance of both good and evil, but in itself neither the one nor the other.”³⁹¹

At this point in his argumentation, Fuller inserted the lengthiest quote of Edwards to be found within his work in an effort to support his argument for Spiritual Knowledge. Fuller explains, “I will close this letter by an extract from President Edwards’s *Treatise on the Affections*, not merely as showing his judgment, but as containing what I consider a clear, scriptural, and satisfactory statement of the nature of spiritual knowledge.”³⁹² Fuller then proceeded to offer a six-page excerpt from *Religious Affections*.³⁹³

Fuller, as a thoroughgoing Edwardsean, made use of Edwards’s writings, imbibing them into his own thought and expressing the sentiments of the New England

³⁹⁰John E. Smith, “Religious Affections and the ‘Sense of the Heart,’” in *Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 104.

³⁹¹Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:91.

³⁹²Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:97.

³⁹³Haykin clarifies that it is six pages in the Yale critical ed., but only five pages in the Sprinkle ed. Haykin, “Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy,” 232.

theologian both explicitly and implicitly.³⁹⁴ In his debate with the Sandemanians, the senior theologian had left his disciple with a solid theological framework that enabled Fuller to argue persuasively and effectively against McLean. Fuller testified to the importance of Edwards's thought in his final section:

There are, no doubt, many enthusiastic feelings which have no true religion in them. There is such a thing too as to make a saviour of them as well as of our duties. But we must not on this account exclude the one any more than the other. President Edwards, in his *Treatise on Religious Affections*, has proved beyond all reasonable contradiction that the essence of true religion lies in them.³⁹⁵

“The Promise of the Spirit”

By the turn of the century, Fuller had helped transform the Particular Baptist denomination from a fledgling English body, crippled by High Calvinism, to a vibrant Evangelical movement with a global presence. However, the turn toward Evangelicalism had in no way diminished the ecclesial commitment of the Particular Baptists. Fuller, acting in his role as secretary of the BMS, often stressed the responsibility of churches to take the gospel to those near and far.³⁹⁶ Grant rightly describes Fuller as “a certain kind of evangelical,” who “emphasized the evangelical renewal of the congregation.”³⁹⁷ For the Kettering pastor, the local church was not the only important ecclesiological commitment. He remained a committed participant in the Northampton Association until his death, preaching numerous messages and writing the circular letter nine times.³⁹⁸

In 1810, Fuller wrote a circular letter for the Association titled, “The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel,” that directly tied the

³⁹⁴Chun, *Legacy of Edwards in Theology of Fuller*, 132.

³⁹⁵Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:148.

³⁹⁶Haykin, “The Lord is Doing Great Things,” 87.

³⁹⁷Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 110.

³⁹⁸For a list of circular letters, see Elwyn, *Northamptonshire Baptist Association*, 99–106.

church's responsibility to spread the gospel with the work of the Holy Spirit.³⁹⁹ Fuller's letter followed one written by Robert Hall, Jr. entitled *On the Work of the Holy Spirit*, in which Hall argued on the basis of revelation that "there is an operation of the Holy Ghost to which the regeneration and growth in holiness of every Christian is to be primarily imputed, and that without it nothing can be done or attained to any important purpose in religion."⁴⁰⁰ Fuller built on Hall's treatise, connecting the work of the Spirit with the Association's efforts toward evangelization and mission.

In a statement that testified to Fuller's complete embrace of Evangelical Calvinism, he spoke of "the true churches of Jesus Christ" as those which "travail in birth for the salvation of men."⁴⁰¹ He continued, "They [Christian churches] are the armies of the Lamb, the grand object of whose existence is to extend the Redeemer's kingdom."⁴⁰² Addressing the Northamptonshire Association, Fuller recounted, "About eighteen years ago God put it into the hearts of a number of your ministers and members to do something for his name among the heathen."⁴⁰³ The success of their efforts had encouraged the churches of the Association to "press forward in the work, and to search after . . . every consideration that may aid our progress."⁴⁰⁴ Fuller understood the work of the Spirit as promised in Scripture as just such an aid.

³⁹⁹For the text of the letter, see Andrew Fuller, "The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel," in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:39–363. Also, see Andrew Fuller and Michael A. G. Haykin, "The Promise of the Spirit, the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel: A Circular Letter to the Churches of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association (June 1810)," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 17, no. 1 (2013): 36–41.

⁴⁰⁰Robert Hall, Jr., *On the Work of the Holy Spirit*, in *Works of the Rev. Robert Hall, A. M.* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1854), 1:235.

⁴⁰¹Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:359.

⁴⁰²Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:359.

⁴⁰³Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:359.

⁴⁰⁴Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:359.

Conclusion

In Fuller's life, the theological transformation of an entire denomination may be witnessed in the biography of one man. Furthermore, as the leading exponent of Evangelical Calvinism among Particular Baptists in the late-eighteenth century, Fuller's theological writings reveal the details of the transition away from High Calvinism. According to Clipsham, one reason for Fuller's success as a purveyor of Evangelical Calvinism was that he provided "a complete and positive theology of salvation."⁴⁰⁵ Wed to Fuller's evangelical soteriology was pneumatology. Both in his writings against High Calvinism and Sandemanianism, Fuller addressed the work of the Spirit in man's conversion. As a system, Fullerism extended beyond conversion, however, and soon the missionary implications became clear. Mauldin correctly notes that Fuller's *GWAA* "was at its heart a missionary document."⁴⁰⁶ As Fuller's concerns shifted from the High Calvinism of England to the unreached heathen around the world, theological implications related to the doctrine of the Spirit followed.

⁴⁰⁵Clipsham, "Fuller as a Theologian," 269.

⁴⁰⁶A. Chadwick Mauldin, *Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism: A Historical and Theological Comparison of the Missiology of Andrew Fuller and John Calvin* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 60.

CHAPTER 7

“AN ALMIGHTY WORK OF THE SPIRIT”: FULLER’S PNEUMATOLOGY IN CONVERSION AND MISSION

At Andrew Fuller’s ordination service that marked his formal call as the pastor of the Kettering church, he presented a “Statement of Principles” that encapsulated his mature theological reflection, which may best be described as Evangelical Calvinism.¹ After addressing Scripture, the doctrine of God, and the fall of man, Fuller turned to issues of soteriology. God’s purposes to save sinners are nothing less than “glorious,” yet because of sin, man “will not come to Christ for life.”² Fuller continued, “Hence, I believe, arises the necessity of an almighty work of God the Spirit.”³ Later in his confession of faith, Fuller claimed, “I firmly and joyfully believe, that the kingdom of Christ will yet be gloriously extended, by the outpouring out of God’s Spirit upon the ministry of the word.”⁴ In these affirmations, presented to his church and friends within the Northamptonshire Association, Fuller addressed two important aspects of his theology—conversion and mission—with particular reference to pneumatology. Throughout his works, as he expanded upon these two principles, the Particular Baptist

¹For the “Statement of Principles,” see John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith: The Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope, Illustrated; in the Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (Charlestown, MA: Samuel Etheridge, 1818), 64–70; Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian*, *Studies in Baptist Life and Thought* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), 181–87. Ordination services among eighteenth-century Particular Baptists were significant events that required careful planning and execution. For more, see Keith S. Grant, *Andrew Fuller and the Evangelical Renewal of Pastoral Theology*, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* 36 (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub., 2013), 69–70.

²Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 67.

³Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 67.

⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 69.

demonstrated that the work of the Spirit played a vital role in the conversion of sinners, whether present in the pews or across the globe.

The Being of the Spirit

As important as issues of soteriology were to Fuller, that the Particular Baptist maintained an orthodox doctrine of the Spirit was of paramount importance. In his “Statement of Principles,” Fuller confessed: “Here [meaning Scripture], also, I learn that God is one, yet he also is three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The idea which I think the Scriptures give us of each of the sacred three is that of person.”⁵ Throughout his occasional writings, Fuller developed his conception of the Spirit’s being.

Divinely Revealed Truth

In 1814, Fuller began a series of letters that articulated core tenets of the Christian faith. Fuller aimed, per Ryland’s request, at producing an entire body of divinity.⁶ Though he only completed nine of these letters, Fuller presented Trinitarian doctrine with some detail. In “Letter IX: The Trinity,” Fuller described the doctrine of the Trinity as “a subject of pure revelation.”⁷ Addressing the biblical source of Trinitarian doctrine, Fuller wrote:

If the doctrine be not taught in the oracles of God, we have nothing to do with it; but if it be, whether we can comprehend it or not, we are required humbly to believe it, and to endeavour to understand so much as God has revealed concerning it. We are not required to understand how three are one; for this is not revealed.⁸

He maintained that since orthodox Christians do not believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are “both three and one in the same sense,” no logical contradiction exists. According to

⁵Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 64.

⁶Andrew Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 1:684.

⁷Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:707.

⁸Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

the Baptist theologian, the Trinity may be discerned in the Old Testament, but the New Testament reveals the doctrine with much greater clarity. “When the Messiah came,” Fuller explained, “it was expected that he would tell us all things.”⁹ This did not mean Christians fully understood the mystery of Trinity and Fuller advised that believers “leave speculating minds to lose themselves and others in a labyrinth of conceits, while we learn what is revealed, and rest contented with it.”¹⁰ The Kettering pastor maintained, however, that the Scriptures taught the distinct personhood of the Spirit.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

Fuller recognized that the challenge to orthodox pneumatology looked different than most challenges to orthodox Christology. Whereas a defense of the orthodox understanding of the Son often focused on establishing his divinity, defending the orthodox doctrine of the Holy Spirit began with establishing his distinct personhood. For Fuller, the personhood of the Spirit was essential to Trinitarian doctrine. To be Trinitarian is to ascribe personhood and deity to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit equally.

Fuller accepted the limitations of human language when describing Trinitarian realities. “No sober Trinitarian,” Fuller stated, “would take upon him to say precisely to what degree the distinctions in the Godhead extend. It is generally supposed, however, that the term *person* approaches the nearest to the Scriptural idea of any term that could be applied to this subject.”¹¹ He clarified that “in believing three Divine persons in one essence, I do not mean that the distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the same as that between three human persons.”¹² Three human persons “have no

⁹Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

¹⁰Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

¹¹Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:707.

¹²Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

necessary connexion or union with each other, so as to denominate them one.”¹³

Furthermore, Fuller admitted it “is highly probable that there is nothing in creation perfectly analogous to the mode of the Divine subsistence; and therefore nothing by which it can be fully conceived.”¹⁴ However, no other term satisfied the Scriptural idea. Ultimately, Fuller felt justified in the use of the term since, “Christ is said to be ‘the express image of his Father’s person.’”¹⁵

In an essay titled “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” Fuller directly confronted the challenge of Socinianism. “Where is the wonder,” Fuller asked, “that there should be something in God peculiar to himself, in the mode of his existence, which we cannot comprehend?”¹⁶ He continued, “If Socinians would but modestly consider the weakness of the human understanding, they would not decide so peremptorily on the other hand concerning the unity of God, as that it must needs be personal, or not at all.”¹⁷ Referencing Joseph Priestly, Fuller addressed the heart of the Socinian objection. Socinians reject the doctrine of the Trinity because they find it “incomprehensible.”¹⁸ Priestly denied the first teachers of Christianity taught anything that could not be reasonably understood. Fuller, however, demonstrated that Priestly allowed for the self-existence of God, a truth beyond reason, but not contrary to it. Fuller cited Priestly’s *Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever*, “Though it be above our reason to comprehend how this original Being, and the cause of all other beings, should be himself uncaused, it is a conclusion by no means properly contrary to reason.”¹⁹ Fuller applied the same logic

¹³Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

¹⁴Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:707.

¹⁵Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

¹⁶Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:707.

¹⁷Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:707.

¹⁸Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:708.

¹⁹Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:708.

to God's Triune being. He reasoned, "Why should not this general principle apply to the manner in which God always existed, as an uncaused Being, as well as to the manner in which three persons are one God? And if it be proper to distinguish between things above reason and things contrary to it, in the one case, why not in the other?"²⁰ For Fuller, Scriptural teaching regarding God's triune existence lay beyond comprehension, but not in contradiction.

According to Fuller, the Old Testament contained limited evidence of God's Tri-unity and hence, the personhood of the Spirit. For example, he argued, "From the beginning of the creation the name of God is represented under a plural form; with which agrees the moving of the Spirit of God upon the face of the waters; and all things being made by the Word, and without him nothing made that was made."²¹ In his *Expository Discourses on Genesis*, Fuller commented on the relevant passage:

The writer makes use of the plural term Elohim, which yet is joined to singular verbs. This has been generally thought to intimate the doctrine of a plurality in the unity of the Godhead. It is certain the Scriptures speak of the Son and Holy Spirit as concerned in creation, as well as the Father, John 1:1; Gen. 1:2. Nor can I, on any other supposition, affix a consistent meaning to such language as that which afterwards occurs: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."—"Behold, the man is become like one of us."²²

Though shrouded, the Old Testament presented the Spirit as a personal agent in key passages.

For the Baptist theologian, the New Testament contained clear revelation of God's Tri-unity. First, Fuller referenced Matthew 28:19–20, where Christ commissioned the Apostles to baptize disciples in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He argued, "If . . . the Son and Holy Spirit be considered as Divine persons, and as one with the Father, both in nature and in the economy of redemption, there is a fitness in our

²⁰Fuller, "The Doctrine of the Trinity," 3:708.

²¹ Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," 1:708.

²²Andrew Fuller, *Expository Discourses on the Book of Genesis*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:2.

being baptized into this individual name; but to be baptized into the name of God, a creature, and an energy, must be the height of incongruity.”²³ For Fuller, If the Son and Spirit were not divine persons, then to command baptism in their name was blasphemy.

Fuller presented a litany of other New Testament passages that taught God’s existence in three persons. On multiple occasions, he mentioned 1 John 5:7–8, “There are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one,” which Fuller held to be canonical. He also referenced Romans 8:16: “It is *the Spirit* that beareth witness.” Furthermore, Fuller added the descent of the Spirit in the form of the dove as recorded in Luke 3:22 and Jesus’s promise to send the Spirit as comforter as recorded in John 15:26 as support for the Spirit’s deity.²⁴ Paul’s Triune salutation in 2 Corinthians 13:4 not only spoke of the Spirit as God, but demonstrated that Trinitarian doctrine is essential to “the existence and progress of vital godliness.”²⁵

Fuller’s argument for the Spirit’s deity drew upon connections between prayer the Spirit found in the New Testament. Paul requested prayers on his behalf in the “love of the Spirit” in Romans 15:30.²⁶ Jude 20 referenced, “praying in the Holy Spirit.” And in Ephesians 2:18 Paul claimed that “*Through him* (that is, Christ) we both have access by *one Spirit to the Father*.” With these references at hand, Fuller concluded that “there are in the Divine unity three subsistencies; and as the New Testament constantly represents each of these three as bearing personal names, sustaining personal offices, and performing personal acts, we think ourselves warranted in accounting them three Divine persons.”²⁷

²³Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

²⁴Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:708.

²⁵Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:708.

²⁶Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:708.

²⁷Fuller, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 3:708.

For Fuller, the Scriptures not only taught the personhood of the Spirit, but also presented distinct aspects of the Spirit's personality. To make his point, the Baptist theologian connected pneumatology with Christology. Fuller explained, "Much less is said in the sacred Scriptures on the Divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit, than on those of the Son. The Holy Spirit not having become incarnate, it might be less necessary to guard his honours, and to warn men against thinking meanly of him."²⁸ The Scriptures, however, were not silent regarding the Spirit. Fuller continued, "Yet there is enough said against grieving the Spirit, blasphemy against him, lying against him, doing despite to him, and defiling his temple, to make us tremble."²⁹

Distinct aspects of the Spirit's personality were expressed in relation to Christ. Fuller explained, "In the economy of redemption it is the office of the Holy Spirit, not to exhibit himself, but to 'take of the things of Christ, and show them to us.'"³⁰ This by no means diminished the importance or honor of the Spirit. He continued, "He [meaning the Spirit] is the great spring-head of all the good that is in the world; but, in producing it, he himself appears not. We are no otherwise conscious of his influences than by their effects. He is a wind which bloweth where it listeth: we hear the sound, and feel its effects; but know nothing more of it."³¹

Fuller maintained that the distinct aspects of the Spirit's personality resulted in practical consequences for ministry. He reminded that "the grand object of ministerial exhibition" is not the Holy Spirit, "but Christ, in his person, work, and offices."³² He offered an example from Scripture:

²⁸Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," 1:711.

²⁹Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," 1:708.

³⁰Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," 1:708.

³¹Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," 1:708.

³²Fuller, "Letters on Systematic Divinity," 1:708.

When Philip went down to Samaria, it was not to preach God the Holy Spirit unto them, but to preach Christ unto them. While this was done, the Holy Spirit gave testimony to the word of his grace, and rendered it effectual. The more sensible we are, both as ministers and Christians, of our entire dependence on the Holy Spirit's influences, the better; but if we make them the grand theme of our ministry, we shall do that which he himself avoids, and so shall counteract his operations.³³

According to Fuller, the Spirit was nothing less than “truly and properly God.”³⁴ Yet, Fuller recognized the particular challenge Socinianism brought to the orthodox conception of the Spirit's deity. He explained,

The attempts to reduce the Holy Spirit to a mere property, or energy, of the Deity, arise from much the same source as the attempts to prove the inferiority and posteriority of Christ as the Son of God; namely, reasoning from things human to things Divine. The Spirit of God is compared to the spirit of man; and as the latter is not a person distinguishable from man, so, it has been said, the former cannot be a person distinguishable from God the Father. But the design of the apostle, in 1 Cor. 2:11, was not to represent the Spirit of God as resembling the spirit of man in respect of his subsistence, but of his knowledge; and it is presumptuous to reason from it on a subject that we cannot understand.³⁵

The Socinian problem, according to Fuller, was not the result of a lack of Scriptural teaching regarding the deity of the Spirit, but in a failure to submit to the authority of Scripture and employ sound hermeneutics.

The Spirit in Conversion

Fuller's conversion experience, marked as it was by High Calvinism, suffered from an overly subjective focus on “Scripture impressions.”³⁶ In a sense, the High Calvinists among the English Particular Baptists were guilty of similar errors as the enthusiasts Edwards encountered; each devalued the applicatory work of the Spirit in the heart of a sinner for a transitory and subjective experience. Drawing upon the Puritan tradition and Edwards's writings, Fuller restored the dignity to the work of the Spirit in his normal operations.

³³Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:708.

³⁴Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 64

³⁵Fuller, “Letters on Systematic Divinity,” 1:711.

³⁶See Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 31–37.

Theological Issues Related to Conversion

Clipsham, addressing the “permanent value of Fuller’s theology,” remarked that against the “constant threat” of soteriological errors the Particular Baptist theologian maintained “an equally constant insistence on the primacy of grace in man’s redemption, especially on the necessity of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in conversion.”³⁷ As the previous chapter demonstrated, not all of Fuller’s contemporaries would have agreed with Clipsham’s assessment of Fullerism. For the High Calvinists, Fuller’s soteriology diminished the necessity of the Spirit’s work in the conversion of sinners by exalting man’s ability.³⁸ On the opposite end of the spectrum, Arminian contemporaries of Fuller rejected his theological synthesis as diminishing man’s free will and making God out to be malevolent and unjust.³⁹ Fullerism, however, accounted for both charges. By distinguishing between moral and natural inability, as well as maintaining the priority of regeneration before faith in conversion, Fuller protected the primacy of God’s free grace in salvation, accounted for the biblical themes of both divine responsibility and human responsibility, and protected God’s goodness and benevolence.

Moral and natural ability and inability. In retrospect, Fuller claimed to have encountered the distinction between moral and natural ability early in his theological journey. Though Gill did not employ the terminology, Fuller referenced learning the basics of dichotomous ability upon reading a passage from *The Cause of God and Truth*. As he reflected on Gill’s writings, Fuller summarized the insight: “We have it in the power of our hands to do good, but we are disposed to do evil, and so to do good is not

³⁷Ernest F. Clipsham, “Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism,” pt. 4, “Fuller as a Theologian,” *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 6 (1964): 275.

³⁸Brewster recognizes these two areas as central to the controversy between Fuller and the High Calvinists. Brewster, *Andrew Fuller*, 78–81.

³⁹Clint Sheehan, “Great and Sovereign Grace: Fuller’s Defense of the Gospel against Arminianism,” in *At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word’: Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 88–89.

naturally in the power of our hearts.”⁴⁰ When Fuller read Edwards’s *Freedom of the Will*, however, he “saw the same things clearly stated.”⁴¹ As Clipsham stated, Edwards “provided Fuller with a philosophical basis for his doctrine of a gospel worthy of all acceptance.”⁴² In the preface to *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation* [GWAA] Fuller testified that the distinction between “natural and moral ability, and inability. . . . appeared to me to carry its own evidence, was clearly and fully contained in the Scriptures, and calculated to disburden the Calvinistic system of a number of calumnies with which its enemies have loaded it, as well as to afford clear and honourable conceptions of the divine government.”⁴³ This distinction allowed Fuller to maintain the necessity and freedom of the Spirit’s work consistent with Calvinistic theology, in conjunction with an imperative on human responsibility and the duty of sinners to believe the gospel.

Fuller conceded the point, made by both the High Calvinists and the Arminians, that God could not reasonably and justly hold man responsible for fulfilling an expectation that he possessed no ability to fulfill.⁴⁴ Fuller, drawing upon Edwards, maintained that fallen mankind retained a natural ability to fulfill religious obligations, which held them accountable as lawbreakers and preserved God’s justice. Fuller did not imply, however, that sinners could actually do anything spiritually good apart from the Spirit’s influence. Man’s depravity rendered him so spiritually blind that he retained no

⁴⁰John Ryland, Jr., *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope Illustrated in the Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button and Son, 1816), 43.

⁴¹Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1816), 44.

⁴²Ernest F. Clipsham, “Andrew Fuller and Fullerism: A Study in Evangelical Calvinism,” pt. 1, “The Development of Doctrine,” *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (1963): 110.

⁴³Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation: Or the Obligations of Men Fully to Credit, and Cordially to Approve, Whatever God Makes Known. Wherein Is Considered the Nature of Faith in Christ, and the Duty of Those Where the Gospel Comes in That Matter* (London: 1785), v.

⁴⁴Andrew Fuller, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* [GWAA], in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 2:376.

moral ability to perform a spiritually good action. According to Chris Chun, Fuller's definition of dichotomous ability, while consistent with Edwards's, proved far less philosophically sophisticated.⁴⁵ The Particular Baptist, however, employed the distinction with great practical and soteriological significance. The conversion of a sinner depended upon the sovereign regenerating power of the Spirit of God due to the sinful inclinations associated with man's spiritual inability. But due to man's natural ability, all had a responsibility to repent and believe the gospel and would be held responsible for a failure to do so. Consequently, believers, and particularly ministers, possessed the responsibility to evangelize indiscriminately. Peter Morden, summarizing Edwards's influence at this point, writes, "Edwards allowed Fuller to hold together strict Calvinism (no one would come without the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit) and evangelistic preaching (all had the natural powers to come, even though because of moral or criminal inability they would not, apart from the Spirit's work)."⁴⁶ Chun draws similar conclusions: "It is as if the results of the complex mathematical formula solved by Edwards were taken to their maximum potential by Fuller and applied to the formulation of a precise theology, which became the basis for what was to be known as the Modern Missionary Movement."⁴⁷

The primacy of regeneration in Fuller's *ordo salutis*. For Fuller, distinguishing between moral and natural ability and inability implied that regeneration must occur prior to any expression of repentance and faith on the part of a sinner. Yet, he continually had to assert the claim against High Calvinists, Arminians, and Sandemanians. In an appendix to the second edition of *GWAA* aimed at addressing

⁴⁵Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 52.

⁴⁶Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of the Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 8 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 49.

⁴⁷Chun, *Legacy of Edwards in Theology of Fuller*, 52.

Sandemanianism, Fuller clarified the issue,

That there is a Divine influence upon the soul, which is necessary to a spiritual perception and belief, as being the cause of them, those with whom I am now reasoning will admit. The only question is in what order these things are caused. Whether the Holy Spirit causes the mind, while carnal, to discern and believe spiritual things, and thereby renders it spiritual; or whether he imparts a holy susceptibility and relish for the truth, in consequence of which we discern its glory, and embrace it. The latter appears to me to be the truth.⁴⁸

Having stated his position on the matter, Fuller posited three arguments in support of his conclusion.

First, Fuller argued his case from the doctrine of depravity. “The Scriptures,” he emphasized “represent the dominion of sin in the heart as utterly inconsistent with a spiritual perception and belief of the gospel.”⁴⁹ Man’s depraved heart prevented any true belief. “Spiritual blindness,” he wrote, “is ascribed to aversion of heart The obstinacy and aversion of the heart is the film to the mental eye, preventing all spiritual glory entering into it.”⁵⁰ Referencing the Holy Spirit, Fuller then concluded, “His influence must consist, not in causing the mind to see notwithstanding the obstruction, but in removing the obstruction itself out of the way.”⁵¹ A natural man does not become spiritual by receiving spiritual things. The Spirit, Fuller argued, “removes the obstructing film by imparting a spiritual relish for those things.”⁵²

Next, Fuller articulated that “though holiness is frequently ascribed in the Scriptures to a spiritual perception of the truth,” the “spiritual perception itself, in the first

⁴⁸Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:410.

⁴⁹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:410. For an exposition of Fuller’s statements here, see Gerald Priest, “Andrew Fuller, Hyper-Calvinism, and the ‘Modern Question,’” in *At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word’ Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 55.

⁵⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:410.

⁵¹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:410.

⁵²Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:411.

instance, is ascribed to the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the heart.”⁵³ In support of this claim, Fuller cited the conversion of Lydia: “The Lord *opened the heart* of Lydia, and she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul.”⁵⁴ In his final point, Fuller returned to his understanding of the effects of depravity. Spiritual blindness and unbelief surge from the “original biases” of the heart.⁵⁵ “Every thing which proves spiritual perception and faith to be holy exercises,” he argued, “proves that a change of heart must of necessity precede them; as no holy exercise can have place while the heart is under the dominion of carnality.”⁵⁶

Fuller summarized his position, “It is thus, I apprehend, that God reveals the truth to us by his Spirit, in order to our discerning and believing it.”⁵⁷ However, while he distinguished regeneration from repentance and faith in terms of causation, Fuller was careful not to separate these two aspects of conversion further than they should be. “The truth appears to be,” he stated, “these things [regeneration and faith] are inseparable; and when promises are made to one, it is as connected with the other.”⁵⁸ Fuller also clarified that “the priority contended for is rather in order of nature than of time.”⁵⁹ “No sooner is the heart turned towards Christ,” he claimed, “than Christ is embraced. It is necessary that the evil humours of a jaundiced eye should be removed, before we can see things as they are; but no sooner are they removed than we see.”⁶⁰

⁵³Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:411.

⁵⁴Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:411. Fuller also cited 2 Cor 4:6, 1 John 2:27, and 1 John 2:20 as evidence for his claim.

⁵⁵Fuller cited Edwards’s *Freedom of the Will and Religious Affections* here. Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:411.

⁵⁶Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:411–12.

⁵⁷Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:412.

⁵⁸Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:414.

⁵⁹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:414.

⁶⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:414.

Interestingly, Fuller did not entirely discount the possibility of a temporal difference “owing to the disadvantages under which the party may be placed as to the means of understanding the gospel.”⁶¹ Citing the Bereans as those who possessed a holy desire for the truth of the gospel before being educated as to its proper object, Fuller explained his position: “if there be a priority in order of time owing to the want of opportunity of knowing the truth; yet where a person embraces Christ so far as he has the means of knowing him, he is in effect a believer.”⁶² The Kettering pastor was not arguing for the “absurdity of a godly unbeliever,” but admitted the “absurdity of an ungodly believer.”⁶³ Such a claim required a theology of regeneration that prioritized the sovereign work of the Spirit imparting a new and holy disposition in the heart of a sinner prior to faith.

The Particular Baptist pastor also defended the priority of regeneration to faith in the order of salvation against the Arminian position in his reply to Dan Taylor’s criticisms of *GWAA*.⁶⁴ In an attempt to answer “whether regeneration is prior to our coming to Christ,” Fuller clarified that the “great question” between them was “whether the Holy Spirit of God is the proper and efficient cause of a sinner’s believing in Jesus Christ; or whether it be owing to his holy influence, and that alone, that one sinner believes in Christ rather than another.”⁶⁵ Against Taylor, who held to a Wesleyan Arminian model of common grace, Fuller contended that the reason one sinner hears the word and embraces it as opposed to another who rejects it must be ascribed to the

⁶¹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:414.

⁶²Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:414.

⁶³Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:414.

⁶⁴The relevant section may be found in Andrew Fuller, *A Defence of a Treatise Entitled the Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation Containing a Reply to Mr. Button’s Remarks and the Observations of Philanthropos*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:459–511.

⁶⁵Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:461–62.

“agency of the Spirit.”⁶⁶ Maintaining his Calvinist commitments, Fuller held that regeneration always precedes “coming to Christ, since the cause always precedes the effect.”⁶⁷

Regeneration

Addressing the High-Calvinist system’s denial of faith as the duty of sinners, Fuller claimed that Calvinist theologians had often proven the necessity of the sovereign work of the Spirit based on the realities and implications of man’s fallen condition. With characteristic zeal, Fuller exclaimed in the first edition of *GWAA*,

On account of the blindness of their minds to the beauty of Christ and the gospel, they need the enlightening of the Holy Ghost;—on account of their aversion to God and spiritual things, they need an almighty power to conquer their wills;—and on account of the depravity of their hearts, and pollution of their spirits, they need “a new heart to be given them, and a new spirit put within them.” In one word, on account of their being entirely under the dominion of sin, they must be born again, and be as it were made new.⁶⁸

The logic of Evangelical Calvinism demanded a robust doctrine of regeneration. Responsibility without moral ability exalted the sovereign work of the Spirit in renewing sinners. “The idea of prior obligation to those things which are wrought in us in regeneration,” Fuller argued, “appears plainly therefore to strengthen the evidence for the necessity of the Spirit’s work, rather than weaken it.”⁶⁹

Regeneration defined. As a leading theologian of the Particular Baptist denomination, Fuller received theological queries to which he occasionally would respond. Perhaps due to the emphasis the doctrine had received in the Evangelical Awakenings, at least two such queries involved the doctrine of regeneration.⁷⁰ His

⁶⁶Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:462.

⁶⁷Fuller, *Defence of a Treatise*, 2:462.

⁶⁸Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 148.

⁶⁹Fuller, *GWAA* (1785), 149.

⁷⁰Burkhardt argued that “it was only with the rise of the Anabaptists, the development of

responses articulated two of the basic premises of his understanding of the doctrine.

In “The Nature of Regeneration,” Fuller responded to the question, “Does the Spirit of God, in regeneration, produce a new principle in the heart, or only impart a new light in the understanding!”⁷¹ The pastor-theologian affirmed the former, clarifying that “the Spirit of God in regeneration does produce a new principle on the heart.”⁷² Fuller then offered four reasons in support of his position.

In his first argument, Fuller contended “that which the Holy Spirit imparts in regeneration corresponds with his *own nature*: it is *holiness*, or *spirituality*: ‘That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’”⁷³ Intellectual enlightenment lacked such spiritual qualities. Fuller considered knowledge to be essential to moral agency, but argued that “mere knowledge is in itself neither good nor evil, though it is essential to both good and evil.”⁷⁴ Recognizing that Scripture spoke of “light” and “knowledge” in relation to salvation, Fuller emphasized that such usage metaphorically represented spiritual realities and did not function merely as intellectual terminology. “The Scriptures, it is true, make frequent mention of spiritual light, and of such light being imparted by the Spirit of God,” Fuller wrote. He clarified, however, that what the Spirit imparted must be understood as a “compound idea,” which he defined as “knowledge and love” or “understanding with the heart.”⁷⁵ Fuller’s understanding of spiritual knowledge fit within his faculty psychology: “If I understand any thing of the theory of the human mind, there is a kind of action and

Pietism and the Evangelical Awakenings that special emphasis was placed on regeneration as the individual *starting point* of the Christian life.” H. Burkhardt, *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. David F. Wright and Sinclair B. Ferguson (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1988), s.v. “Regeneration.”

⁷¹Andrew Fuller, “The Nature of Regeneration,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:776.

⁷²Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:776.

⁷³Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:776.

⁷⁴Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:776.

⁷⁵Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:776.

reaction of the understanding and the affections upon each other.”⁷⁶ In true Edwardsean fashion, he stated, “We are not only affected with things by our judgment concerning them, but we judge of many things as we are affected towards them. Every one feels how easy it is to believe that to be true which corresponds with our inclinations.”⁷⁷ Fuller in no way diminished the importance of the intellect in spiritual matters, but concluded “that what is produced by the Holy Spirit in regeneration is something very different from mere knowledge.”⁷⁸

Fuller then argued his position from the nature of divine truth. Citing Romans 6:17, he proposed that “the nature of Divine truth is such that mere light in the understanding is not sufficient to receive it.”⁷⁹ The gospel cannot be captured by intellect alone, but must be impressed upon the heart. Fuller explained the distinction:

The gospel, or the “form of doctrine” which it contains, is a mould, into which the heart, softened like melted wax, is as it were, “delivered,” or cast, and whence it receives its impression. Every mark of line of the gospel mould leaves a correspondent line in the renewed heart. Hence Christians are represented as having the “truth dwelling in them;” their hearts being a kind of counterpart to the gospel.⁸⁰

The nature of divine truth exceeded the capacity of intellectual apprehension and required a reception which corresponded with its holy nature. “That mere light in the understanding is not sufficient to receive the gospel, Fuller contended, “will appear by considering the nature of those truths which it contains.”⁸¹ He continued, “If they were merely objects of speculation, mere light in the understanding would be sufficient to

⁷⁶Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:776.

⁷⁷Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:776.

⁷⁸Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:777.

⁷⁹Fuller wrote, “In proof of the former of these positions, I refer to the words of the apostle, in Rom 6:17, ‘Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you,’ or rather, according to the marginal reading, ‘into which ye were delivered.’” Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:777.

⁸⁰Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:777.

⁸¹Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:777.

receive them; but they are of a holy nature, and therefore require a correspondent temper of heart to enter into them.”⁸² In an illustration that hinted of Edwards, Fuller claimed that “the sweetness of honey might as well be known by the sight of the eye as the real glory of the gospel by the mere exercise of the intellectual faculty.”⁸³ Reception of “the things of the Spirit of God” required “a spiritual or holy temper of heart.”⁸⁴

Third, Fuller reasoned from “the nature of Divine requirements” that the Spirit bestows something greater than intellectual light in regeneration.⁸⁵ “The same thing which is required by God as the Governor of the world,” Fuller argued, “is bestowed by the Holy Spirit in the application of redemption.”⁸⁶ Furthermore, God did not require or the Spirit bestow “mere light in the understanding, but a heart to love him.”⁸⁷ As biblical support, Fuller cited the great commandment and a string of biblical texts that emphasized “a new heart” as a divine requirement.⁸⁸ Scripture, however, not only spoke of requirements, but made promises “perfectly correspondent” as well.⁸⁹

In his fourth and final point, Fuller dealt with the problem of human depravity in relation to regeneration. “That which the Holy Spirit communicates in regeneration, being the great remedy of human nature, must correspond with the nature of the *malady*,” Fuller stated.⁹⁰ He then drew the conclusion, since “the malady of human nature does not

⁸²Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:777.

⁸³Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:777.

⁸⁴Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁸⁵Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁸⁶Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁸⁷Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁸⁸His citation included a summary of the Great Commandment as presented in Mark 12:29–30; Deut 10:16; Ezek 18:31; 1 Sam 12:24.

⁸⁹As corresponding promises, Fuller cited Deut 30:6; Ezek 36:26; Jer 32:40. See Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹⁰Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

consist in simple ignorance, but in the bias of the heart; therefore such must be the remedy.”⁹¹ The Particular Baptist theologian built his argument from the biblical terminology of regeneration. The “washing of regeneration” and the “renewing of the Holy Spirit” both “convey the ideas of restoring us to purity, and recovering us to a right mind.”⁹² “Regeneration implies degeneracy,” Fuller argued, and “that which we had lost was *the love of God and our neighbour*.”⁹³ If love “comprehends the whole of duty,” then the “want, or opposite of love, comprehends the whole of duty.”⁹⁴ Building his case, Fuller claimed that Jews in Scripture who rejected the message of Jesus did so because “His word did not suit the temper of their hearts.”⁹⁵ Since the malady was not intellectual, Fuller argued, “The remedy . . . must consist in being ‘renewed in the spirit,’ or temper, ‘of our minds’; and not merely in having the intellectual faculty enlightened.”⁹⁶

In another writing, Fuller built on his understanding of depravity to reinforce that men and women remain under divine obligations. If man’s insufficiency “arose from a natural impotency” he would be released from obligation.⁹⁷ Fuller recognized that was not the case, but that “sin in some form prevails and has its dominion . . . to such a degree that nothing but the grace of God can effectually cure it.”⁹⁸ “It is depravity only,” Fuller concluded “that renders the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit necessary.”⁹⁹

⁹¹Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹²Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹³Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹⁴Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹⁵Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹⁶Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

⁹⁷Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

⁹⁸Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

⁹⁹Fuller quoted Calvin from his *Institutes* (book 3.2) here to make his point: “‘The bare and outward declaration of the word of God,’ says a great writer, ‘ought to have largely sufficed to make it to be believed, if our own blindness and stubbornness did not withstand it. But our mind hath such an inclination to vanity that it can never cleave fast to the truth of God, and such a dulness that it is always

For Fuller, regeneration could not be reduced to a mere change of intellect. In another place, he suggested the New Testament spoke of regeneration “as expressive of that entire change by which we enter as it were a new moral world, and possess a new kind of being.”¹⁰⁰ The Spirit’s work of regeneration affected a total category change: from sinner to saint. “Sin is the constant course of the wicked,” he emphasized, “but righteousness of the righteous.”¹⁰¹ Fuller was not contending that a regenerate person will be totally free from sin. “There is a sense in which good men, as well as others, are sinners, as every good man will acknowledge,” Fuller admitted.¹⁰² However, upon a sinner’s regeneration, holiness became the “habitual and governing principle of the soul, and that which gives it a leading bias.”¹⁰³ Such an extensive transformation required knowledge, but went far beyond intellectual change since “there is no virtue or holiness in knowledge” unless “it arises from some virtuous propensity of the heart.”¹⁰⁴ For Fuller, “light in the understanding . . . cannot be the grand object communicated by the Holy Spirit in regeneration.”¹⁰⁵

In response to another theological query, Fuller described the Spirit’s work of regeneration as indiscernible at the moment of its occurrence.¹⁰⁶ While he understood the change involved as wholly transformative, Fuller clarified that regeneration occurred as a physically undetectable spiritual action, or “below consciousness.”¹⁰⁷ The regenerating

blind and cannot see the light thereof. Therefore there is nothing available done by the word without the enlightening of the Holy Spirit.” Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

¹⁰⁰Andrew Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:666.

¹⁰¹Andrew Fuller, “Nature of Indwelling Sin,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:790.

¹⁰²Fuller, “Nature of Indwelling Sin,” 3:790.

¹⁰³Fuller, “Nature of Indwelling Sin,” 3:790.

¹⁰⁴Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

¹⁰⁵Fuller, “Nature of Regeneration,” 3:778.

¹⁰⁶Andrew Fuller, “Power and Influence of the Gospel,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:775.

¹⁰⁷The language of “below consciousness” in reference to regeneration was taken from

work of the Spirit became detectable only in retrospect. He explained, “We can form no idea of the influence of the Holy Spirit at all, either with or without the word, but merely of its effects.”¹⁰⁸

Word and Spirit. In a miscellaneous entry on 1 Peter 1:23, “Regeneration by the Word of God,” Fuller addressed the relationship between the Word and Spirit in the regeneration of a sinner.¹⁰⁹ For Fuller, the “seed” referenced in the text should be understood as the seed of an animal and not a plant. Consequently, the word functioned in regeneration in a manner analogous to animal procreation. Just as the procreation of a child requires human and divine instrumentality, regeneration involves a spiritual and physical element. In regeneration, “there is an immediate Divine agency” in the formation of a human soul, but in a manner “consistent with man’s being brought into existence by the instrumentality of man.”¹¹⁰ This in no way violated the belief “that there is a Divine influence . . . which is immediate, or without any instrument whatsoever.”¹¹¹ “Why,” Fuller asked, “should not an immediate influence from Him who ‘quickeneth all things’ be consistent with the instrumentality of the word in regeneration?”¹¹²

For Fuller, regeneration should not be considered totally passive.¹¹³

Matthew Barrett, *Salvation by Grace: The Case for Effectual Calling and Regeneration* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Pub., 2013), 128.

¹⁰⁸Fuller, “Power and Influence of the Gospel,” 3:775. John Stott helpfully captured an idea similar to Fuller’s: “There is no biblical warrant for the view that regeneration is a conscious process We are no more conscious of this infusion of spiritual life, called rebirth or spiritual birth, than we are of our physical birth. In both cases, self-consciousness, consciousness of being alive, develops later.” John R. W. Stott, *Baptism and Fullness: The Work of the Holy Spirit Today*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 84.

¹⁰⁹Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹⁰Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹¹Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹²Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹³This is in contradiction to a number of Reformed theologians. For example, see Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938), 491. However, Fuller does not deny that

“Regeneration,” he clarified, “is passive with respect to the agency of the Holy Spirit in producing the change, so as to contribute nothing towards it.”¹¹⁴ However, since regeneration requires the “mind being in exercise” Fuller argued against understanding it as completely passive.¹¹⁵ He explained that “the very nature of the change itself, being from a state of enmity to love, implies activity of the mind.”¹¹⁶ By recognizing both a divine and human element in regeneration, Fuller accounted for the language of Scripture in texts such as 1 Peter 1:23 and James 1:18. He concluded, “It is as proper to say we are regenerated by the word of God, as it is to say that ‘Abraham begat Isaac’; though in Isaac’s coming into the world he was the subject of a Divine agency in which Abraham had no concern.”¹¹⁷

In his explanation, Fuller distinguished between the efficient cause of salvation, the Holy Spirit, and the instrumental cause, the Word of God. Consistent with Fuller’s explanation, Sinclair Ferguson wrote,

The sovereignty of the Spirit in regeneration is not antithetical to a thoroughgoing emphasis on the role of faith; for faith is born within the context of the word (Rom. 10:14). This is underlined in the New Testament by statements which suggest that regeneration itself takes place by means of the word of God (e.g. 1 Pet. 1:23; Jas. 1:18; Jn. 15:3, in all of which the word is viewed as instrumental in regeneration). The word of God engages us at the level of our consciousness, evoking a response Since the Spirit’s work in regeneration involves the transformation of the whole man, including his cognitive and affective powers, the accompanying of the internal illumination of the Spirit by external revelation of the word (and vice versa) is altogether appropriate.¹¹⁸

regeneration is a monergistic work of the Spirit, but only that man is entirely passive during regeneration.

¹¹⁴Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹⁵Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹⁶Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹⁷Fuller, “Regeneration by the Word,” 1:666.

¹¹⁸Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 124–26.

Like Fuller, Ferguson highlighted the role of the cognitive faculties while maintaining a priority on the work of the Spirit. Fuller would have agreed with Ferguson that “the instrumental use of the Word does not compromise the sovereignty of the Spirit’s regenerating actions.”¹¹⁹

Faith

In the 1801 edition of *GWAA*, Fuller reflected on the past fifteen years of controversy in which he had been engaged: “The controversies which have arisen concerning faith in Jesus Christ are not so much an object of surprise as the conduct of those who, professing to be Christians, affect to decry the subject as a matter of little or no importance.”¹²⁰ Explaining the importance of faith, he continued, “There is not any principle or exercise of the human mind of which the New Testament speaks so frequently, and on which so great a stress has been laid.”¹²¹ At the time of his revising *GWAA*, Fuller had spent years contending that faith was the duty of all who heard the gospel, and that ministers call sinners to faith indiscriminately. Clipsham was surely correct regarding Fuller, when he stated that “whether sinners should be exhorted to repentance and faith was not merely an academic question to him, but a living issue of fundamental importance.”¹²² Furthermore, against Arminians, Sandemanians, and others, the Kettering pastor had diligently advocated for an understanding of faith that he considered both biblical and consistent with Evangelical Calvinism. In order to do so, Fuller had given significant attention to the relationship between the work of the Spirit and faith. Following the publication of the second edition of *GWAA*, controversy with Sandemanians would force Fuller to engage the issue in even greater depth. As Fuller

¹¹⁹Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 126.

¹²⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:332.

¹²¹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:332.

¹²²Clipsham, “Fuller as a Theologian,” 269.

wrote in defense of his positions, two significant areas involving the Spirit and faith emerged. In opposition to the High Calvinists, Fuller reconciled the sovereignty of work of the Spirit in bringing about faith with faith as the duty of all who heard the gospel. Against the Sandemanians, the Evangelical Calvinist insisted that faith possessed a spiritual, and not merely intellectual, component.

The Spirit and duty faith. In part one of *GWAA*, Fuller addressed the importance of possessing a right conception of the nature of faith.¹²³ While he held the overarching concern of the treatise to be determining “whether faith in Christ be the duty of all men who have opportunity to hear the gospel,” Fuller thought it first necessary to establish the nature of faith.¹²⁴ To do this, the Particular Baptist interacted with two conceptions of faith he considered misguided. High Calvinists, represented in the treatise by Lewis Wayman, conflated faith and assurance with an understanding of faith as “a persuasion of our interest in Christ.”¹²⁵ The other conception of faith, represented by an American author by the name of Anderson, Fuller rejected as requiring as a condition that a sinner believe that Christ has offered a gift to mankind in Christ and for him personally. Both Wayman and Anderson made the object of faith something other than Christ and confused the relationship between faith and assurance. Against these conceptions, Fuller argued that saving faith should be understood as “the belief of the truth which God has revealed in the Scriptures concerning Christ.”¹²⁶

Part two of *GWAA* consisted of six arguments in support of Fuller’s position that “faith in Christ is the duty of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the

¹²³Clipsham, “Fuller as a Theologian,” 215.

¹²⁴Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:333.

¹²⁵Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:333.

¹²⁶Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:338.

gospel.”¹²⁷ In the third section, he then sought to answer seven possible objections, including one concerned with pneumatology. In a section titled “Of the Work of the Holy Spirit,” the Evangelical Calvinist responded to the High-Calvinist contention that since “the Scriptures clearly ascribe both repentance and faith wherever they exist to Divine influence . . . they cannot be *duties* required of sinners.”¹²⁸ Whereas by distinguishing between moral and natural ability, Fullerism possessed a mechanism for understanding something as both a duty and an impossibility, High Calvinism did not. As an implication, the High Calvinists considered it “improper to exhort to any thing but what can be done of ourselves, and without the influence of the Holy Spirit.”¹²⁹

Fuller then located the heart of the problem. “The whole weight of this objection,” he explained, “rests upon the supposition *that we do not stand in need of the Holy Spirit to enable us to comply with our duty.*”¹³⁰ The Kettering pastor highlighted that High Calvinism shared an assumption with both Arminianism and Socinianism at this point. Footnoting John Owen, Fuller suggested that Arminianism and Socinianism denied faith and conversion to be acts of God since Scripture spoke of them as acts of obedience. The High Calvinists affirmed the opposite, but with the same result. Since they considered faith and conversion to be acts of God upon the sinner, the High Calvinists determined that “they cannot be acts of obedience.”¹³¹ Evangelical Calvinism, as espoused by Fuller, however, reconciled the two: “But if we need the influence of the Holy Spirit *to enable us to do our duty*, both these methods of reasoning fall to the

¹²⁷Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:342.

¹²⁸Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:379.

¹²⁹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:379.

¹³⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:379.

¹³¹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

ground.”¹³²

For Fuller, the compatibility between duty and moral inability necessitating divine influence did not rest solely on philosophical distinctions but made the best sense of biblical testimony. “The godly in all ages,” he contended, “have considered themselves insufficient to perform those things to which nevertheless they acknowledge themselves to be obliged.”¹³³ Fuller then offered two types of biblical examples. First, he wrote,

The rule of duty is what God requires of us; but he requires those things which good men have always confessed themselves, on account of the sinfulness of their nature, insufficient to perform. He “desireth truth in the inward part:” yet an apostle acknowledges, “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God.”—“The Spirit,” saith he, “helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for *as we ought*: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

For Fuller, dependence upon the Spirit to fulfill a spiritual obligation represented the normal experience of the biblical authors themselves. He then asserted another form of Scriptural evidence. He continued,

The same things are required in one place which are promised in another: “Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart.”—“I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me.” When the sacred writers speak of the Divine precepts, they neither disown them nor infer from them a self-sufficiency to conform to them, but turn them into prayer: “Thou hast *commanded* us to keep thy precepts diligently. Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!”¹³⁴

What the High Calvinists and Arminians found at odds, Scripture spoke of as compatible. “In fine,” Fuller concluded, “the Scriptures uniformly teach us that all our sufficiency to do good or to abstain from evil is from above; repentance and faith, therefore, may be duties, notwithstanding their being the gifts of God.”¹³⁵

Sandemanianism and the spiritual nature of saving faith. In the appendix to

¹³²Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

¹³³Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

¹³⁴Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

¹³⁵Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:380.

the second edition of *GWAA*, Fuller addressed a charge that his position regarding saving faith undermined the doctrine of justification by faith.¹³⁶ The accusation against Fuller had been leveled by Archibald McLean, a leading theologian among Scottish Baptists who adhered to a Sandemanian view of faith.¹³⁷ According to McLean, by including “good dispositions, holy affections and pious exercises of heart” as part of faith, Fuller had perverted justification by faith by reintroducing the works of the law.¹³⁸

In his response, Fuller highlighted the central concern between McLean’s conception of faith and his: “What the belief of the gospel includes.”¹³⁹ Due to his Sandemanian tendencies, McLean reduced faith to an intellectualist “passive reception of truth.”¹⁴⁰ The Scotch Baptist removed any role for the will or affections in the exercise of faith, limiting saving faith as “the bare belief of the bare truth.”¹⁴¹ Against McLean’s conception of faith, Fuller contended faith “to be a persuasion of Divine truth *arising from the state of the heart*.”¹⁴² The Particular Baptist considered the Sandemanian view of faith as incompatible with duty faith. “Whatever proves faith to be a duty,” Fuller suggested, “proves it to be a holy exercise of the soul towards Christ, arising from a heart being turned towards him.”¹⁴³ The Evangelical Calvinist also likely harbored concerns

¹³⁶Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:393.

¹³⁷Michael A. G. Haykin, “Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy,” in *At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word’: Andrew Fuller as an Apologist*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 6 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 228.

¹³⁸Archibald McLean, *The Commission Given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles*, in *Miscellaneous Works of Archibald McLean*, ed. Peter MacDonald (Elgin, Scotland: 1847), 1:66.

¹³⁹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:393.

¹⁴⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:393. For a helpful overview of Robert Sandeman’s notion of saving faith, see Finn’s comments in Andrew Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, in *Complete Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Nathan A. Finn (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 9:6–12.

¹⁴¹Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:46.

¹⁴²Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:395.

¹⁴³Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:397.

that McLean’s soteriology, if taken to its logical conclusions, would become anti-evangelistic and anti-missionary in a manner similar to High Calvinism.¹⁴⁴

Against McLean’s intellectualist view of faith, Fuller marshalled eight arguments for understanding “faith in Christ . . . as a persuasion influenced by the moral state of the heart.”¹⁴⁵ In his first proposition, Fuller turned to pneumatology to prove his point. “Faith,” Fuller argued “is a *grace of the Holy Spirit*.”¹⁴⁶ Since Scripture “ranked faith with hope and charity,” faith must also be understood as a “spiritual and holy” exercise.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, he claimed, “Whatever the Holy Spirit *as a Sanctifier* produces, must resemble his own nature.”¹⁴⁸ Faith, therefore, as a grace of the Spirit, had to possess a holy and moral element. He concluded, “Faith which is from above resembles its Divine origin.”¹⁴⁹ Through his next seven arguments, Fuller further developed his more robust and traditionally Calvinistic doctrine of faith.¹⁵⁰ He then demonstrated the importance of faith’s possessing a spiritual nature by pointing to the relationship between union with Christ and justification. Fuller understood the “holy nature of faith” as “necessary to render it genuine, and consequently to unite us to a holy Saviour.”¹⁵¹

In the 1801 appendix to his second edition of *GWAA*, Fuller opposed McLean’s intellectualist view of faith on largely pneumatological grounds. As Nathan

¹⁴⁴For an extended discussion of Fuller’s concerns that Sandemanianism would become anti-missionary, see Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:22; Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 150; Brian Stanley, “Carey, William (1761–1834),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB] (Oxford: University Press, 2004-), accessed February 24, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4657>.

¹⁴⁵Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:397.

¹⁴⁶Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:398.

¹⁴⁷Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:397.

¹⁴⁸Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:398.

¹⁴⁹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:398.

¹⁵⁰Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:398–400.

¹⁵¹Fuller, *GWAA*, 2:402.

Finn highlights, much of Fuller's critique came from his appropriation of Edwards's *Religious Affections and Freedom of the Will*.¹⁵² Summarizing Fuller's usage of Edwardsean thought against McLean, Finn also captures Fuller's pneumatological argument:

Fuller argued that spiritual blindness is ultimately an aversion of the heart to true religion that is only overcome when the Holy Spirit removes the "film" that prevents sinners from fully appreciating God's glory. He also contended that the Holy Spirit imparts a spiritual perception of religious truth that corresponds with Edwards's understanding of the "sense of the heart" at the moment of regeneration. Furthermore, Fuller affirmed the Edwardsean idea of affections as the principal human motivation in spiritual matters and suggested it is a superior way of viewing the nature of faith over against the intellectualist views of McLean.¹⁵³

Drawing from Edwards, Fuller had argued that saving faith, rather than being merely intellectual in nature, must be understood as spiritual; both in terms of faith being a grace of the Spirit and as possessing a spiritual quality.

The following year, McLean published a response to Fuller's view of faith as presented in the appendix to *GWAA*. Apart from an 1803 tract entitled *The Great Question Answered*, which warned against false assurance derived from a Sandemanian view of faith, Fuller remained publicly silent on the issue until 1810.¹⁵⁴ When he finally did respond to McLean with *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, the Particular Baptist "drew up what many regard as the definitive response to Sandeman and his views."¹⁵⁵ In the work, Fuller addressed the Sandemanian system in a series of twelve letters to an unnamed friend.¹⁵⁶ While Fuller interacted with Sandemanianism at a variety of points, his main concern was to defend the concept of duty faith.¹⁵⁷ McLean had charged Fuller

¹⁵²Finn, introduction, Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:24.

¹⁵³Finn, introduction, 9:24.

¹⁵⁴Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:21.

¹⁵⁵Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy," 228.

¹⁵⁶Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:27.

¹⁵⁷Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:27.

with emphasizing the subjective over the objective in his doctrine of faith.

In response to McLean, Fuller laid out a number of criticisms against the Sandemanian view of faith and its implications. According to the Particular Baptist apologist, Sandemanianism allowed for forgiveness without repentance, and denied faith to be a duty and unbelief a sin. Furthermore, Fuller then identified the Sandemanian doctrine of faith with the dead faith of demons and nominal Christians.¹⁵⁸ At this point in his argument, Fuller took the opportunity to demonstrate the deficient pneumatology of the Sandemanian system. He wrote, “If the faith of devils would have issued in their salvation, provided, . . . they had been placed in circumstances of hope, it will follow that faith is not produced by the grace of the Holy Spirit, but merely Divine Providence.”¹⁵⁹ “No one,” Fuller argued, would “ascribe the belief of devils to the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶⁰ Their faith then “must be owing” to their “situation . . . and circumstances.”¹⁶¹ If faith was derived from situation and circumstances in one case, then why not the other? For Fuller, this charge produced devastating consequences. “Sandemanians have often been charged with setting aside the work of the Spirit, and have often denied the charge,” Fuller wrote. “But,” he continued, “whatever may be said of their other principles, their notion of the faith of devils must sap the foundation of that important doctrine.”¹⁶² Fuller clarified that he was not accusing Sandemanians of “designing to undermine the work of the Spirit,” but considered its tendency to do so “sufficiently manifest.”¹⁶³

In “Letter VI: On the connexion between knowledge and disposition,” Fuller

¹⁵⁸Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:67.

¹⁵⁹Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:75.

¹⁶⁰Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:75.

¹⁶¹Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:75.

¹⁶²Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:75.

¹⁶³Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:588.

provided another rebuttal to the Sandemanian view of faith that drew from his understanding of the work of the Spirit.¹⁶⁴ The Particular Baptist's critique drew heavily from the writings of Edwards. As Nettles suggests, "Fuller assumes, in opposition to Sandeman's view of notional faith, Edwards's position that the faith that finds union with the justifying work of Christ is largely a matter of the affections."¹⁶⁵

According to Fuller, a proper view of faith required understanding the difference between "simple knowledge," which pertained "merely to the intellectual faculty," and knowledge that included "approbation."¹⁶⁶ The Evangelical Calvinist then explained the significance of the distinction. "Simple knowledge," which does involve approbation, he considered a "natural accomplishment" with no moral value.¹⁶⁷ "But knowledge is much more frequently used in the Scripture as *including approbation*," Fuller suggested.¹⁶⁸ When "ascribed to men, it is what is denominated a spiritual understanding."¹⁶⁹ Natural knowledge rendered men accountable to fulfill spiritual duties, but spiritual knowledge enabled men to actually fulfill them. Fuller explained, "It is the wisdom from above imparted by the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit."¹⁷⁰ Spiritual knowledge, Fuller argued, "produces holy affections."¹⁷¹ In support of his point, Fuller quoted a lengthy passage from Edwards's *Religious Affections*, which upheld Fuller's distinction between a purely intellectual understanding and a spiritual

¹⁶⁴Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:89.

¹⁶⁵Thomas J. Nettles, "The Influence of Jonathan Edwards on Andrew Fuller," *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 116n5.

¹⁶⁶Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:90.

¹⁶⁷Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:91.

¹⁶⁸Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:91.

¹⁶⁹Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:91.

¹⁷⁰Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:91.

¹⁷¹Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:91.

understanding.¹⁷² For Fuller, holy affections, wrought by the Spirit of God, belong to the essence of saving faith.¹⁷³

Revival

While the Evangelical revivals in Great Britain had begun in the 1730s, the Particular Baptists did not experience revival until the last two to three decades of the eighteenth century. By no accident, the time of revival coincided with Fuller's ministry.¹⁷⁴ As Haykin suggests, "Times of renewal and revival are also times when biblical truth comes to the fore."¹⁷⁵ Along these lines, Fuller's critique of High Calvinism provided the theological reformation necessary for renewal among the Particular Baptists.¹⁷⁶ In 1814, Fuller could write that of the twenty-three churches in Northamptonshire county, only three or four remained High Calvinist in their theological persuasion.¹⁷⁷ In effect, Fuller's Evangelical Calvinism won the day. The Kettering pastor, however, would have never claimed responsibility for initiating or sustaining revival. Such prerogative belonged to the Spirit of God. That being said, consistent with Fuller's tact for balancing divine sovereignty and responsibility, the Evangelical Calvinist maintained a certain role for God's people in the initiation and maintenance of revival.

¹⁷²For the passage as Fuller quoted it, see Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:97. For the critical edition of the passage, see Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 2:270–75.

¹⁷³Haykin, "Andrew Fuller and the Sandemanian Controversy," 223. For Fuller, the claim that saving faith involved the affections demanded that regeneration preceded faith. Returning to similar arguments he used in the appendix to *GWAA*, Fuller defended the priority of regeneration before faith in the seventh letter: "An inquiry whether, if believing be a spiritual act of the mind, it does not presuppose the subject of it be spiritual." Fuller, *Strictures on Sandemanianism*, 9:100.

¹⁷⁴Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 118.

¹⁷⁵Michael A. G. Haykin, *Ardent Love for Jesus: Learning from the Eighteenth-Century Baptist Revival* (Grand Rapids: EP Books, 2013), 75.

¹⁷⁶Haykin, *Ardent Love for Jesus*, 75.

¹⁷⁷Andrew Fuller, "State of the Baptist Churches in Northamptonshire," in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:481.

First, Fuller heartily promoted prayer for revival. In 1784, near the emergence of the revival among the Particular Baptists, Fuller encouraged the ministers of the Northamptonshire Association to “pray much for an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon” their own ministers and churches, as well as those of other denominations.¹⁷⁸ In response to the Prayer Call of 1784, Fuller established monthly prayer meetings at Kettering where he would read passages from Edwards’s *Humble Attempt*; he included singing and extemporaneous prayer for revival.¹⁷⁹ Writing to the Association a year later, Fuller reflected on the prayer call: “It affords us no little satisfaction to hear in what manner the monthly prayer meetings . . . have been carried on, and how God has been evidently present in those meetings, stirring up the hearts of his people to wrestle hard with him for the revival of his blessed cause.”¹⁸⁰ His diary recorded not only his faithfulness to prayer for revival, but the ways in which such prayer affected him.¹⁸¹ At times, Fuller spoke of being “tender in prayer for the revival of religion,” while at other times he lamented being “to a sad degree sunk into a spirit of indifference.”¹⁸² Despite his varied levels of affection in prayer, Fuller’s longstanding commitment to pray for revival testified to his belief that revival comes from the sovereign work of the Spirit. “We cannot but hope,” Fuller reflected, “wherever we see a spirit of earnest prayer generally and perseveringly prevail, that God has some good in reserve, which in his own time he will graciously bestow.”¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸Andrew Fuller, “The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:131.

¹⁷⁹Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 125.

¹⁸⁰Fuller, “Causes of Declension in Religion, and Means of Revival,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:318.

¹⁸¹Andrew Fuller, “Memoir,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:35.

¹⁸²Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:35.

¹⁸³Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:318.

In a 1785 circular letter to the Northamptonshire Association, “Causes of Declension in Religion, and Means of Revival,” Fuller proposed a number of reasons why churches within the Association had been experiencing decline. He then suggested steps to invite revival among their churches. In his argumentation, Fuller presented a second means of pursuing revival: the prizing and prioritizing of biblical truth. The Kettering pastor asked the churches of the Association to inquire whether or not they had grown content with a “mere superficial acquaintance with the gospel.”¹⁸⁴

Fuller then brought three other potential reasons for declension before the Association. A sense of spiritual complacency, comparing one’s self to others rather than God’s Word, and failing to recognize the impact of personal sin, Fuller suggested as possible reasons for the loss of spiritual life.¹⁸⁵ In response to declension, however, he encouraged the Baptists within the Association with the message of Revelation 2:5: “Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works.”¹⁸⁶ He further explained that the believers should both compare the state of the church at previous high points with its current situation, as well as contrast their own lives with times of great spiritual fervor. Such reflection should lead to true repentance and a return to the “earnestness and constancy” in worship that followed conversion.¹⁸⁷ Consistent with his belief that only the Spirit brings revival, Fuller exhorted the Northamptonshire Baptists to “not forget to intermingle prayer with all we do.”¹⁸⁸ Fuller continued, “Our need of God’s Holy Spirit to enable us to do any thing, and every thing, truly good, should excite us to this. Without his blessing all means are without efficacy, and every effort for revival will

¹⁸⁴Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:318.

¹⁸⁵Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:318–22.

¹⁸⁶Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:323.

¹⁸⁷Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:324.

¹⁸⁸Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:324.

be in vain.”¹⁸⁹

Fuller also spoke of a personal experience of revival that may be considered particularly evangelical in nature, as it related to the Kettering pastor’s newfound activism. In a diary entry dated July 18, 1794, Fuller spoke of the spiritual benefits that had accompanied the founding of the BMS.¹⁹⁰ “My heart has been greatly interested in this work,” Fuller recorded.¹⁹¹ “Surely” he continued, “I have never felt more genuine love to God and to his cause on my life. I bless God that this work has been a means of reviving my soul.”¹⁹² Fuller, as well as others involved, experienced such a degree of personal revival from the involvement in the BMS that Fuller concluded, “If nothing else comes of it, I and many more have obtained a spiritual advantage.”¹⁹³ “Grace and peace,” argued Fuller, “have ever been multiplied by the knowledge of God; and in proportion as this has been neglected, those have always declined.”¹⁹⁴ He did not limit the problem to a lack of attention to Scripture and doctrine, but challenged his readers to assess their spiritual commitment to biblical truth. Fuller asked, “We hold the doctrine of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead; but do we cordially enter into the glorious economy of redemption, wherein the conduct of the sacred Three is most gloriously displayed?”¹⁹⁵ “Surely,” Fuller suggested, “if we did, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost would be with us more than it is.”¹⁹⁶

¹⁸⁹Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:3124.

¹⁹⁰Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:65.

¹⁹¹Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:65.

¹⁹²Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:65.

¹⁹³Fuller, “Memoir,” 1:65.

¹⁹⁴Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:319.

¹⁹⁵Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:319.

¹⁹⁶Fuller, “Causes of Declension,” 3:319.

Means of Conversion

Fuller put forth significant effort to reclaim evangelistic preaching within the ranks of Particular Baptists and other Dissenters, because he presumed that the preaching of the gospel, with an accompanying call to repentance and faith, served as a means of the conversion of sinners. That ministers should preach the gospel indiscriminately and encourage all to come to Christ for salvation stood as a corollary truth to the doctrine of duty faith. To preach and evangelize in such a manner did not presume upon the Spirit but was to act in accordance with the Spirit's normal operations. That this had become settled conviction for Fuller by the time of his ordination at Kettering, may be clearly observed in the Evangelical Calvinist's Statement of Principles. In clause 15, Fuller confessed,

I believe, it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it; and, as I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore, of the criminal kind,— and that it is their duty to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and trust in him for salvation, though they do not; I therefore, believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them, to be not only *consistent*, but directly *adapted*, as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty, which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls.¹⁹⁷

For the Kettering pastor, since faith was the duty and obligation of sinners, indiscriminate gospel preaching was the duty of preachers. Bebbington perceptively identifies Fuller's "duty faith" as the essential theological difference between the High and Evangelical Calvinists due to the practical implications of the doctrine.¹⁹⁸ He explains, "If believing was an obligation, preachers could press it on whole congregations. If it was not, they could merely describe it in the hope that God would rouse certain predetermined hearers to faith."¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 68.

¹⁹⁸David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 64–65.

¹⁹⁹Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 64–65.

In relation to the work of the Spirit, Fuller's statement that he believed "free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings . . . to be . . . directly adapted, as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ" possessed particular significance.²⁰⁰ Because every person possessed the obligation to repent and believe in Christ, preachers should press for conversion with urgency and zeal. Since the Spirit accompanied the Word in the application of salvation, preachers could possess confidence that in the act of preaching the gospel, they were participating in God's chosen means for the conversion of sinners. Reliance upon the Spirit, however, did not mean a neglect of study. In a reflection on an associational meeting, Fuller quipped, "If we eat not the book, before we deliver its content to others, we may expect the Holy Spirit will not much accompany us."²⁰¹

Furthermore, since gospel preaching served as a means of conversion, Fuller advocated for preaching that possessed certain evangelical characteristics.²⁰² Keith Grant helpfully delineates Fuller's convictions regarding evangelical preaching as that which preached Christ, included a particular focus on his atoning work, and pressed for sinners to respond in repentance and faith.²⁰³ Furthermore, for the Evangelical Calvinist, in order to be truly evangelical in nature, a sermon must not only possess the right content, but be delivered in an affectionate manner from affectionate motives.²⁰⁴

Fuller recognized the Spirit did not bless all preaching equally. In a treatise comparing the Calvinistic and Socinian systems, Fuller addressed the topic of conversion in order to demonstrate the Calvinist system superior. In the section, Fuller set out to

²⁰⁰Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1818), 68.

²⁰¹Fuller, "Memoir," 1:47.

²⁰²Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 95.

²⁰³See Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 92–95.

²⁰⁴See Grant, *Andrew Fuller*, 95–104.

demonstrate that Socinianism possessed little hope for or history of the true “conversion of profligates.”²⁰⁵ As part of his argument, Fuller claimed there had been a certain type of preaching that the Spirit of God had chosen to bless as the means of initiating great revival and numerous conversions throughout Christian history.²⁰⁶ The Particular Baptist first cited the Reformation with its emphasis on “human depravity, the Deity and atonement of Christ, justification by faith, and sanctification by the influence of the Holy Spirit.”²⁰⁷ Fuller then referenced the ministry of Edwards, and in so doing, placed his own Evangelical Calvinism within the stream of preaching which God has chosen to bless. He wrote,

And what Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse, in their Preface to Mr. Edwards’s Narrative, said of his success, and that of some others, in America, might with equal truth have been said of the rest: “That it was the common plain protestant doctrine of the Reformation, without stretching towards the Antimonians on the one side, or the Arminians on the other, that the Spirit of God had been pleased to honour with such illustrious success.”²⁰⁸

“Charging home sin” and “proclaiming redemption,” Fuller testified, “has been the method which the Holy Spirit has thought fit to seal and succeed in the hands of his ministers.”²⁰⁹

The Spirit in Mission

As a recently converted teenager in a Particular Baptist church “tinged with false Calvinism,” Fuller could not have imagined that a controversy surrounding a church member given to drunkenness would set him on a theological journey that would begin

²⁰⁵Andrew Fuller, *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared, as to Their Moral Tendency, in a Series of Letters, Addressed to the Friends of Vital and Practical Religion*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 2:115.

²⁰⁶Fuller, *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined*, 2:120.

²⁰⁷Fuller, *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined*, 2:120.

²⁰⁸Fuller, *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined*, 2:121.

²⁰⁹Fuller, *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined*, 2:121.

the Evangelical quest for the evangelization of the entire world.²¹⁰ As Haykin has argued, “There is a direct line from the publication of *Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation* to Fuller’s wholehearted involvement in the formation of the . . . Baptist Missionary Society . . . which sent Carey to India in 1792.”²¹¹ Clipsham was surely correct when he stated, “The greatest merit of ‘Fullerism’ however, is that it provided the theological basic for the missionary movement of Carey, and for the evangelical outreach of the churches at home.”²¹² Fuller’s Evangelical Calvinism emphasized the work of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners in a way that preserved both divine initiative and allowed for indiscriminate evangelization. As the implications of Fullerism for missions came to the forefront, so did the importance of the Spirit’s work in the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Fuller’s Theology of Mission

Fuller has often been remembered as Carey’s “rope holder,” as the latter descended into a precious mine to evangelize those who had never heard the gospel. While that designation did properly describe the relationship between Fuller and Carey, as Fuller himself attested, the term should not be limited to Fuller’s fundraising efforts and organizational leadership. As Chun correctly asserts, “It was in his capacities as theologian and apologist that Fuller made his most vital contribution” to the cause of missions.²¹³ “He was, pre-eminently, the thinker, and no movement can go far without a thinker.”²¹⁴ Furthermore, within his theology—and missiology in particular—the work of

²¹⁰ Ryland, *Work of Faith, Labour of Love* (1816), 17.

²¹¹Michael A. G. Haykin, ““The Lord Is Doing Great Things, and Answering Prayer Everythwere”: The Revival of the Calvinistic Baptists in the Long Eighteenth Century,” in *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition*, ed. Robert D. Smart, Ian Hugh Clary, and Michael A. G. Haykin (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 86.

²¹²Clipsham, “Development of Doctrine,” 100.

²¹³Chun, *Legacy of Edwards in Theology of Fuller*, 64–65.

²¹⁴B. G. Griffith, *The Tradition of Great Things*, presidential address to the Baptist Union

the Holy Spirit, as developed within Fuller's Evangelical Calvinist system, played a prominent and essential role.

In his 1810 circular letter to Northamptonshire Baptists, Fuller identified "the promise of the Spirit as the grand encouragement in promoting the spread of the gospel."²¹⁵ In trying to correct those who disown, abuse, and undervalue the Spirit's work, Fuller demonstrated that the entire missionary enterprise depended upon understanding the Spirit as undergirding all efforts toward the conversion of the heathen. Against those who claim moral persuasion can convert the heathen, as well as those who deem human means unnecessary, the Evangelical Calvinist advocated for pursuing the conversion of the nations in total dependence upon the Spirit to achieve success.²¹⁶ In stating his case, Fuller argued that "the success of God's cause" had always depended "entirely upon God."²¹⁷

For Fuller, God's cause in the world could be seen "from the earliest ages" in biblical history.²¹⁸ Furthermore, "it was [God's cause] which interested the heart of his servants."²¹⁹ God "blessed the seed of Abraham, and formed them into a people" for the purpose of "setting up his spiritual kingdom."²²⁰ This work, God extended to generation upon generation through the power of the Spirit. Moses, fearing the destruction of God's people in the wilderness, expressed concern "the Lord should withdraw from them his

Assembly (London: 1942), 8.

²¹⁵Andrew Fuller, "The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel," in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:359.

²¹⁶Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:359.

²¹⁷Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:360.

²¹⁸Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:360.

²¹⁹Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:360.

²²⁰Fuller, "Promise of the Spirit," 3:360.

Holy Spirit.”²²¹ Furthermore, the prophets attributed the preservation and revival of God’s people during the time of captivity to the Lord’s work. Referencing Zechariah 4:6, Fuller emphasized that the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem was not the work of men, but of God.²²² Drawing inspiration from the rebuilding of the temple under hand of God, Fuller argued that “God will prosper his cause, nor by worldly power or armies, but by his gracious influence and superintending providence.”²²³ By way of application, the BMS secretary suggested that no legal or political circumstances should be waited upon before introducing the gospel into a country.

Fuller then moved his discussion of the Spirit’s work into the apostolic age. He argued, “The success of the gospel in the times of the apostles is ascribed to the influence of the Holy Spirit, as its first or primary cause.”²²⁴ While Scripture allowed for secondary causes, the rapid expansion of the church through the ministry of the apostles depended on the Spirit. The fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit is what allowed apostolic preaching to produce more converts than that of Christ himself. The same promise, Fuller argued, should encourage the church “to expect . . . great success . . . in the latter days.”²²⁵

As Fuller’s theology of mission developed, the Kettering pastor began to tease out implications applicable to the entire church.²²⁶ While much of the initial activity related to the founding of the BMS took place among the pastors of the Northamptonshire Association, Fuller’s work as secretary of the society broadened his thinking regarding

²²¹Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:360.

²²²Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:361.

²²³Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:361.

²²⁴Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:361.

²²⁵Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:361.

²²⁶Haykin, “The Lord is Doing Great Things,” 86.

the role of the church in missions. From Edwards, Fuller had learned that prayer for the spread of the gospel was something the entire church was called to. However, by 1806, Fuller was calling upon congregations to do more. “The primitive church,” Fuller argued, consisted of “men gathered out of the world by the preaching of the cross, and formed into a society for the promotion of Christ’s kingdom in their own souls and the world around them.”²²⁷ Just five years before his death, Fuller described “true churches” as the “armies of the Lamb” who “travail in birth for the salvation of men” and exist to “extend the Redeemer’s kingdom.”²²⁸ Haykin concludes that Fuller retained traditional Baptist ecclesiology, but “added one critical ingredient: . . . the vital need for local Baptist churches to be centers of vigorous evangelism.”²²⁹ According to Clipsham, Fuller restored the proper link between soteriology and ecclesiology. Highlighting the “permanent value of Fuller’s theology,” Clipsham suggested,

He believed that the Church is the redeemed community, the company of the saved, the fellowship of believers. But this does not mean that it exists for the enjoyment of its own salvation. It is by its very nature, he emphasized, a missionary community. It exists to reveal God’s love to the world. Mission is not merely part of the church’s task, it is an essential part of its nature, and the Church’s neglect of its missionary calling can only lead to spiritual death.²³⁰

Eschatology. A settled conviction that Christ would ultimately triumph through the work of mission undergirded Fuller’s confidence in the missionary enterprise and connected his eschatology and missiology.²³¹ Clipsham noted that “Fuller had no

²²⁷Andrew Fuller, “The Pastor’s Address to His Christian Hearers, Entreating Their Assistance in Promoting the Interest of Christ,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:346.

²²⁸Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:359.

²²⁹Haykin, “The Lord is Doing Great Things,” 88.

²³⁰Clipsham, “Fuller as a Theologian,” 276.

²³¹Ernest F. Clipsham, “Andrew Fuller and the Baptist Mission,” *Foundations* 10, no. 1 (January–March 1967): 7. For discussion of Fuller’s eschatology as it related to the sixteenth-century Reformers, see Jeffrey K. Jue, “Andrew Fuller: Heir of the Reformation,” *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 42–48. For discussion of Fuller’s eschatology as it related to that of Gill, see Barry Howson, “Andrew Fuller’s Reading of John Gill,” *Eusebia: Bulletin of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies* 9 (Spring 2008): 80–86. For a discussion of the role of

doubts as to the ultimate success of the gospel, whatever difficulties, setbacks, and disappointments might have to be experienced first.”²³² As Fuller studied prophecy, and the Book of Revelation in particular, his hopes and expectations for the success of mission only increased.²³³ In his circular letter *The Promise of the Spirit*, Fuller connected the work of the Spirit with eschatology and mission.

In Fuller’s eschatology, which may be understood as a “modified millenarianism,” he understood the dispensation in which he lived as “the kingdom of the Messiah, fitly called “the ministration of the Spirit.”²³⁴ For the Evangelical Calvinist, the dispensation earned its name because “the richest effusions of the Holy Spirit are reserved for his reign, and great accessions to the church from among the Gentiles ordained to grace his triumphs.”²³⁵ Pentecost, he held, to be “but an earnest of what is yet to come.”²³⁶ Furthermore, to pray for the outpouring of the Spirit during this age was to pray for what the Father’s “soul delighteth.”²³⁷

In his discussion of prophecy, Fuller identified prophetic language with current events. His particular age, he suggested, reflected the “the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound.”²³⁸ Though the “voice . . . ushers in the vials or seven last plagues upon the antichristian powers, is to the church a signal of

eschatology in the founding of the BMS, see James A. De Jong, *As the Waters Cover the Sea: Millennial Expectations in the Rise of Anglo-American Missions* (Kampen, Netherlands: J. H. Kok, 1970), 175–81.

²³²Clipsham, “Andrew Fuller and the Baptist Mission,” 7.

²³³For Fuller’s exposition of Revelation, which included his most detailed discussion of biblical prophecy, see Andrew Fuller, *Expository Discourses on the Apocalypse to the Baptist Church of Christ at Kettering*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:201–306.

²³⁴Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:362. For a discussion regarding Fuller’s “modified millenarianism,” see Jue, “Andrew Fuller,” 48.

²³⁵Fuller, *Discourses on the Apocalypse*, 3:362.

²³⁶Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:362.

²³⁷Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:362.

²³⁸Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:363.

prosperity.”²³⁹ According to Fuller, the present age would begin to experience “glorious things” as preparation for the millennium.²⁴⁰ Connecting global missions directly to the dawning of the millennium, he wrote,

Previous to the fall of Babylon, an angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth; and before that terrible conflict in which the beast and the false prophet are taken, the Son of God is described as riding forth on a white horse, and the armies of heaven as following him.²⁴¹

“The final ruin of the antichristian cause” Fuller suggested, “will be brought upon itself by its opposition to the progress of the gospel.”²⁴²

For the Particular Baptist, the language of biblical eschatology was the language of the work of the Spirit. He concluded, “The time for the promulgation of the gospel is come; and, if attended to in full dependence on the promise of the Spirit, it will no doubt, be successful.”²⁴³ While Fuller may have been mistaken as to the particulars of biblical prophecy, his “missiological optimism,” as Chun labels it, encouraged prayer for and engagement in the work of missions—since through “outpourings of the Spirit,” many would be converted as the Lord’s return drew near.²⁴⁴ According to Clipsham, Fuller “preserved the New Testament relationship between soteriology and eschatology, making the *parousia* an integral part of Christ’s redeeming activity, the climax of salvation, instead of the embarrassing orphan child of theology without a legitimate place in the scheme of salvation.”²⁴⁵

²³⁹Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:363.

²⁴⁰Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:363.

²⁴¹Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:363.

²⁴²Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:363.

²⁴³Fuller, “Promise of the Spirit,” 3:363.

²⁴⁴Chun, *Legacy of Edwards in Theology of Fuller*, 81.

²⁴⁵Clipsham, “Fuller as a Theologian,” 276.

Missio Dei. At the final meeting prior to the departure of the first BMS missionaries, at Leicester in 1793, Fuller delivered a sermonic charge based on the text of John 20:21: “Peace be unto you: as my Father sent me, so send I you.”²⁴⁶ In the sermon, Fuller compared the mission of Christ with that of the missionaries soon to depart for India. While Fuller acknowledged “great disparity” between the two missions, he also acknowledged “various points of likeness” between the undertaking of the missionaries and that of Christ.²⁴⁷ First, Fuller suggested that both parties shared the same “great objects”: “to glorify God, and to seek and to save lost souls.”²⁴⁸ Second, the Kettering pastor spoke of both Christ and the missionaries as acting in obedience to the will of the Father. By way of application, Fuller stated, “Christ acted as the Father’s servant; and you are the servants of Christ.”²⁴⁹ “There is woe upon any minister if he preach not the gospel of Christ,” Fuller exhorted, “but especially upon those whose business it is to preach the gospel among the heathen.”²⁵⁰ Third, Fuller warned, Christ experienced “great difficulties and trials” in the execution of his mission and the missionaries should expect the same.²⁵¹ Finally, he exclaimed that Christ had been sent with both a “promise of support in it and a glorious reward for it.”²⁵² Likewise, Christ sent them with a promise to accompany them “always to the end of the world.”²⁵³ Though Fuller did not mention the Spirit explicitly here, he would have argued that the work of the Spirit undergirded each

²⁴⁶Andrew Fuller, “The Nature and Encouragements of the Missionary Work,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 1:510.

²⁴⁷Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:511.

²⁴⁸Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:511.

²⁴⁹Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:511.

²⁵⁰Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:511.

²⁵¹Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:512.

²⁵²Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:512.

²⁵³Fuller, “Nature and Encouragements of Missionary Work,” 1:512.

of the connections between God's mission and that of the missionaries. The Spirit applied redemption to lost souls to the glory of God, enabled the missionaries to obey God's will, sustained them through suffering and trials, and brought them the refreshing presence of Christ.

Conclusion

In both his theology of conversion and theology of mission, Fuller emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit as the necessary means by which a sinner, near or far, could come to saving faith. Drawing from Edwards's distinction between moral and natural ability and inability, Fuller developed a system that allowed for indiscriminate calls to repentance and faith. Every sinner possessed the duty to believe the gospel due to their natural ability, but due to moral inability, a sinner could only possess saving faith through the sovereign influence of the Spirit regenerating their heart and infusing spiritual life into their soul. Because all men had the duty to respond to the gospel with faith, preachers were under an obligation to call all sinners to faith and repentance. Taken to its logical conclusion, Fullerism demanded that the gospel be preached to the ends of the earth in obedience with Christ's command. Any possibility of success in such an endeavor, however, depended upon the work of the Spirit. Since great outpourings of such work had been promised in Scripture, the church could engage in the work of missions with both dependence upon and confidence in the work of the Spirit.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Andrew Fuller, defending the cause of the BMS in 1808, wrote, “We perfectly agree with our opponents that the Hindoos can never be converted by mere *human means*, though we are equally persuaded they will never be converted without them.”¹ In this statement, Fuller summed up his theological journey and its global implications. The High-Calvinist convert from Soham had become the Evangelical-Calvinist pastor at Kettering and founding secretary of the BMS. Furthermore, Fuller’s theological advances facilitated and encouraged the birth of the BMS and launched the modern missionary movement. Central to this theological transformation stood Fuller’s doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit, particularly as it related to conversion and mission.

The story of Fuller’s theological, and thus pneumatological, development involved both recovery and innovation. He was a Dissenter—a Particular Baptist—whose roots ran deep into seventeenth-century Puritanism. The experiences of John Bunyan, John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, and the first Particular Baptists, as told in chapter 2, stood in the background of Fuller’s ecclesiological context and shaped his understanding of ministry.² The quintessentially Puritan theology of these men played an even more significant role than did their lives. As demonstrated in chapter 3, the Puritan authors had inherited an unusually robust understanding of the work of the Spirit from John Calvin and did their part to expand upon it. By reading the writings of Bunyan, Owen, Goodwin, and other Puritan authors, Fuller imbibed a doctrinal tradition that emphasized the work

¹Andrew Fuller, *An Apology for the Late Christian Missions in India*, in *Works of Andrew Fuller* (1845; repr., Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Pub., 1988), 2:821.

²Andrew Fuller, “Dissent,” in *Works of Andrew Fuller*, 3:475.

of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners and during periods of ecclesial revival. Such authors also served as pillars of Reformed orthodoxy, who Fuller would eventually understand as representing a purer form of Calvinism than John Gill and John Brine.³

Fuller's more immediate context, eighteenth-century transatlantic British Protestantism, formed the backdrop of Fuller's theological shift from High Calvinism to Evangelical Calvinism. As covered in chapter 4, the High Calvinism of mid-eighteenth century Particular Baptists, represented by men such as Gill and Brine, provided the theological and ecclesial context in which Fuller came of age. While Gill and other High Calvinists played a valiant role in defending essential truths of the faith, their theology of eternal justification and related issues, as covered in chapter 5, contributed to an overall decline in the theological and numerical health of Particular Baptists.

In contrast, the birth of the Evangelical movement in the 1730s provided Fuller with an alternate stream of eighteenth-century ecclesial identity and theology. As covered in chapter 4, the eighteenth-century Awakening transformed the religious atmosphere of the transatlantic world of which Fuller was a part, even while the majority of High Calvinists resisted its influence. Most significantly, in the theological writings of Jonathan Edwards, Fuller found a theologian capable of resolving the theological tension between divine sovereignty and human responsibility that his denomination had been struggling with for decades. By building upon Edwards's distinction between moral and natural ability and inability, Fuller found a way to maintain the sovereignty of the Spirit in conversion, while also retaining human responsibility. Practically, this meant all who heard the gospel were accountable to respond in repentance and faith and all who preached the gospel were responsible to call sinners to make such a response indiscriminately. Edwards, through his *Life of Brainerd* and *Humble Attempt*, also provided Fuller and his Northamptonshire counterparts with a model and impetus for the

³J. W. Morris, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (London, 1816), 32.

work of missions. Against the eschatology of Gill, which held the time of the outpouring of the Spirit to be sometime in the future, Edwards promoted an eschatological vision that encouraged immediate action based on a divine willingness to expand Christ's earthly kingdom through the work of the Spirit.

As is always the case, one's Christian experience shapes one's theology, including one's pneumatology. Fuller's experience largely determined the questions he asked of Scripture and the theological quandaries he meditated upon. As chapter 6 laid out, Fuller's conversion within the context of High Calvinism, followed soon after by theological controversy within his church surrounding human responsibility in relation to divine sovereignty, initiated a theological journey; this journey would lead not only to a personal theological transformation, but also widespread renewal among his denomination. During Fuller's first few years of ministry, his practice lined up with what he perceived to be the orthodoxy of the High Calvinists. Under the influence of fellow ministers within the Northamptonshire Association, and through the writings of Evangelicals, Fuller embraced Evangelical Calvinism, and with the 1785 publication of *GWAA*, entered the public stage as its leading advocate among Particular Baptists. Not all who read *GWAA* accepted Fuller's theological reasoning and the Kettering pastor was forced to defend his doctrinal convictions against both High Calvinists and Arminians. As controversy ensued between Fuller and men such as William Button and Dan Taylor, the Evangelical Calvinist sharpened his theology of conversion and further explicated his understanding of the work of the Spirit in conversion. These controversies not only shaped Fuller's mature theological convictions but reveal how vital he believed the work of the Spirit to be in the conversion of sinners. Fullerism as a theological system stood in continuity with Calvin, the Puritans, and the historic Reformed tradition in terms of its heightened emphasis on the work of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners.

As Northamptonshire Baptists shifted from High Calvinism to Evangelical Calvinism, they possessed a growing awareness of the responsibility of churches and

ministers to work toward the spread of the gospel both at home and abroad. For Fuller, the most pressing implication involved the indiscriminate preaching of the gospel that included a call to faith and repentance. Through John Ryland Jr.'s friendship with the Scottish Evangelical, John Erskine, however, the Northamptonshire men became acquainted with Edwards's *Humble Attempt*. As Ryland shared *Humble Attempt* with his Northamptonshire colleagues, including Fuller, Edwards's vision prompted a powerful movement of prayer for the revival of churches and spread of the gospel abroad. The Northamptonshire Baptists continued to pray and William Carey emerged as a champion of the Particular Baptists taking decisive action for the cause of missions. Fuller quickly recognized Carey's vision as an implication of the Evangelical Calvinism he had been developing, and became the mission society's most zealous advocate at home. Chapter 6 delineated Fuller's efforts as a "rope holder" that demonstrated his commitment to the missionary cause and provided the context for him to further develop his theology of mission.

As an Evangelical Calvinist, Fuller developed a pneumatology that prioritized the work of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners and undergirded the expansion of the gospel to the ends of the earth. Chapter 7 demonstrated that Fuller maintained strong convictions about the work of the Spirit in both conversion and mission. For the Kettering pastor, Edwards's distinction between moral and natural ability and inability provided the basis for making all people responsible to respond to the gospel in repentance and faith, while acknowledging that without the sovereign work of the Spirit, none ever would. The logic of Fullerism demanded regeneration be a completely free act of the Spirit upon the human soul prior to repentance and faith. The depravity of man required the Spirit to work decisively and transformatively. Against the Sandemanians, Fuller argued regeneration produced new and holy affections, which he considered essential to the nature of saving faith. For the Particular Baptist, the Spirit not only worked within individuals, but occasionally through outpourings that resulted in

widespread revival and renewal. Consistent with his desire to balance human responsibility and divine sovereignty, Fuller argued that the Spirit ordinarily used means to accomplish his work. In opposition to the High Calvinists, the Kettering pastor encouraged ministers to call hearers to repentance and faith indiscriminately, since such exhortations were God's chosen means for converting sinners.

As Fuller's soteriological convictions matured and his influence expanded, there came a growing sense that Evangelical Calvinism would have implications for both evangelism at home and abroad. R. Philip Roberts is certainly correct when he argues that Fuller's *GWAA* provided "a missionary theology and incentive for world evangelism."⁴ Yet this was by no means Fuller's immediate concern when writing the treatise; for the Evangelical Calvinist, missions became a necessary consequence of his doctrinal shift. Fuller's pneumatology undergirded and propelled his theology of mission. Every advance of the gospel had been due to the Spirit's operations. The evangelism of the world would be no different. God had promised outpourings of the Spirit for the purpose of the spread of the gospel in the very pages of holy Scripture. Missions, pneumatology, and eschatology, then were all intimately linked. Against Gill and others within his denomination, Fuller felt that the time had come for global effusions of the Spirit to take place. For the Evangelical Calvinist, the only obstacles that remained to worldwide evangelization were human ones, and the sovereign Spirit of God was more than capable of overcoming such impediments.

Some have questioned whether or not Fuller deserves the title "Father of Modern Missions," alongside of—or in place of—Carey. While arguing such a claim offers no particular advantages, Fuller's theology, and his doctrine of the Holy Spirit in particular, proved essential for the shift from High Calvinism to Evangelical Calvinism that launched the BMS and gave birth to the modern missions movement.

⁴R. Philip Roberts, "Andrew Fuller," in *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition*, ed. Timothy George and David S. Dockery (Nashville: B & H Pub., 2001), 46.

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ABSTRACT

“THE GRAND ENCOURAGEMENT”: ANDREW FULLER’S PNEUMATOLOGY AS A RECEPTION OF AND ADVANCEMENT ON ORTHODOX, PURITAN, AND EVANGELICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

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This dissertation argues that Andrew Fuller’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit combined traditional Puritan teaching on the sovereign work of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners with an evangelical emphasis on mission. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the Puritan movement, with a particular focus on pneumatological development within the three most influential Puritan theologians for Fuller: John Bunyan, John Owen, and Thomas Goodwin. Chapter 3 examines key issues in Puritan pneumatology, with a focus on the work of the Spirit in conversion and mission.

Chapter 4 surveys the eighteenth-century context which immediately preceded Fuller, namely the High-Calvinist Particular Baptists and the Evangelical revivals. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the work of the Spirit in conversion and mission within the theologies of John Gill and Jonathan Edwards.

Chapter 6 provides the relevant background to Fuller’s pneumatological writings, covering his break from High Calvinism, the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, and apologetic writings. Chapter 7 covers Fuller’s doctrine of the work of the Spirit in conversion and mission.

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