

#1. WHAT WAS THE GREAT AWAKENING, WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON THE COLONIES?

- The Great Awakening was a series of religious revivals which swept over the colonies 1730-1740's. The first shared religious exp. amongst Americans.
- This movement appeared in most colonies, but its biggest impact was in the middle colonies amongst Presbyterians and the Dutch reformed churches.
- The movements objective was to entice (scare) people back to God by threatening eternal damnation for sin. Religious piety on the decline.
- Chief movement leaders (preachers).
Jonathan Edwards (New England) "sinners in the hands of an angry God".
George Whitefield (Maine – Georgia) even a skeptical Ben Franklin emptied pockets.
- Basic Philosophy:

Rejected Calvinism / theory of predestination. A liberal movement which taught that a life of good work was only part of salvation, complete dependence on God's grace was essential.

Anti-intellectual movement which sought to evoke emotion from the audience. Emphasized God's forgiveness, a fresh start.

- Effects:
Brought thousands back to church. Promoted religious diversity and tolerance.
Caused a doctrinal / ideological split.
New Way - personal conversion (New Light)
Calvinist Way – predestination. (Old Light)
Taught colonists that they could be bold when confronting religious authorities.
Prompted the establishment of three Colonial Colleges (new light centers) to train ministers.
Presbyterians - Princeton 1746
Baptists - Brown 1764
Dutch - Rutgers 1766
Movement had immense social significance, (women, 3rd and 4th sons)
Missionary efforts among the Native American population surge.
***Created a democratic spirit in religion which sowed the seeds for later political independence.**

Tended to break down boundaries and get Americans to think as one people.
Taught that religious power was in the hands of the people too, not just ministers.
Later taught Americans that political power was not just in the hands of the King.
If you can break off from a church to make a new one, why not a new nation?

Second Great Awakening 1830 – 1850

Age of Jackson the “Common Man”

- Spread to the frontier, eastern ministers worried about western brethren.
- Like 1st Awakening it touts “personal conversion”.
- Thousands converge on “Revival Camps” where they are held spellbound by “fire and brimstone” sermons – “Hellfire Gospel”. Personal experiences, emotionalism, much “writhing” on the ground. Found mainly amongst Baptists and Methodists.

Message: Individuals must readmit God into their lives, that piety and good work could save you from the “fires of hell”.

Effects:

- Brought thousands back who “got religion” at the camp meetings
 - Shunned autocratic religion for a more democratized version.
 - **Became the seed bed for such movements as;**
 - Prison reform**
 - Temperance (alcoholism)**
 - *Women’ rights (Seneca Falls Convention 1848)**
 - Abolitionist movement**
 - Public Education**
- *American Women not just wives and mothers anymore, they are involved on a national level for the first time. (Mrs. Adams and Dolly Madison would be proud.)

Chief Leaders:

Peter Cartwright – Methodist
Tennessee – Illinois circuit rider

Charles Finney -- New York (anti-slave, anti alcohol)
President of Oberlin College
Abolitionism central