

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity, Session 5, Jonathan Edwards and the First Great Awakening

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This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 5 on Jonathan Edwards and the First Great Awakening.

Outline page to page 13. That will give you a sense of what we're doing here. We're trying to give the religious picture in colonial America. And then we're going to end up by just reversing because here we're doing it by places.

So, we're going to end up reversing it and look at the distribution of churches in colonial America. So, between the two of those, then, we've kind of got a sense, I think, I hope, of what's going on here, kind of denominationally, in terms of what we've studied. And then we will start. We'll be able to start today, lecture number four, the First Great Awakening.

So, okay, religious picture in colonial America. So we are, we are, what we said before we left, I think, was that, remember, we said that many of the churches by the second, third, fourth generation, churches were basically immigrant churches, many of the churches by the second, third, fourth generation were starting to decline and starting to get, to be in trouble. They didn't retain the vitality of what they were when they came in when they came over.

The question is, that we didn't get to is, what are the reasons for that? We didn't start that, did we? What are the reasons? What are the basic reasons for this decline? Okay, number one, the first reason is, did we start this? Does this sound familiar to you? Yeah, no, we didn't start it, right? The first reason is a decline in the fervor of their own members. So, that's the first reason why these immigrant churches did not retain their strength. They came over here, one or two generations, and they started to decline.

The first reason is that the fervor of their own membership has started to cease. Their own members did not retain the fervor or the vitality of the original immigrants who came over. Now, we've already seen that with the Puritans.

Remember what we said with the Puritans: Which came first? Did they increase in wealth? Did that kind of cause them to lose their evangelical fervor? Or did they lose their evangelical fervor and that caused them to increase in, I don't know, what came first, the chicken or the egg? So that's the first thing that becomes problematic. Okay, the second thing that becomes problematic for these immigrant churches is

the number of dissidents who were in their midst. In other words, people who stayed in the denomination but started to have serious disagreements with their denomination and with their particular church.

Disagreements could be theological disagreements, disagreements over church polity or how you establish the church, how you set up the church, and how you govern the church. But number two, there are a lot of dissidents. There's a lot of arguments.

There are a lot of people in the church who are unhappy with the church, which is causing the decline of the church. So that's a second reason. Okay, reason number three is the impact of the 17th century, 18th century age of reason, age of rationality, whatever you want to call it.

The impact of the Age of Reason or Rationality upon the churches. And a good example of this, of course, is deism. Now, we'll be talking a lot about deism in another lecture, but a good example of this is the deism of the 17th century and 18th centuries.

Let me just make it clear: we probably have said this, but in case we haven't, deism is not a religion. It's not a denomination. Deism is a philosophical view, a kind of a religious view.

It will evolve into a denomination eventually, but deism as a kind of rationalistic opposition to these immigrant churches is becoming very, very strong and picking up in the 18th century in America. Now remember, deism is God is up here, we're down here, and there's no connection between God and us. It's kind of like you've heard the clockmaker God.

God made the world like a clockmaker makes a clock, and he wound it up, and it's ticking away down here, but there's no connection between God and us. So that kind of very rationalistic approach to religion, rationalistic view of God, that is going to have a real impact on a lot of denominations, a lot of churches, and a lot of people here in the colonies. So that's number three on our list, right? And number four on our list then is that there are now people, there's a lot of people outside of the church in the colonies because places like Rhode Island and Pennsylvania have emphasized religious freedom, not just religious toleration, not just being tolerant of other people, but absolutely people are free.

And that religious freedom meant that a lot of people chose to be atheists or agnostics. They wanted no part of the church, no part of church life at all. Now, some of those people, not all, obviously small groups, but some of those people started to be pretty antagonistic toward the church and toward organized religion.

So, you get an external antagonism, not just an indifference toward the church, not just an indifference toward religion, not just an indifference toward the tenets of Christianity. You start to get an antagonism toward church, religion, Christianity, the doctrines, and so forth. And we really haven't experienced that before.

We've experienced antagonism in Europe, from one branch of Christianity to another. So, we've had a clash of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism and so forth, but we haven't experienced the antagonism of people outside the church now really calling the church into question, calling Christianity into question. That's kind of new in a sense.

So that is going to be problematic. Therefore, we are starting in the 18th century in the colonial period, and many churches are starting to be in trouble. They're not able to sustain the life that they had when they first came over.

Now the question is what's going to happen with that, but we won't worry about that now. Let me just do the number two, the distribution of churches in America. Now, this is reversing it.

This is looking like it is not colony by colony, but what's happening there? This is reversing it and just mentioning the different denominations and where you could find them. So, I hope that between one and two, you get a bit of a picture of the American church during the colonial period.

Okay, so the distribution of churches. I'm on page 13 of the outline. Okay, first of all, congregational churches.

Congregational churches, congregationalism. Where do you find this in the colonial period? You find it almost exclusively in New England. You find very little of congregationalism or congregational churches outside of New England.

It is kind of a New England product. Number two is the Anglican church, which will eventually be called the Episcopal church. But right now, the Anglican church, where do you find the Anglican church? Actually, you find the Anglican church spread throughout the colonies.

They are fairly dominant in some places like Virginia, but you even find the Anglican church down in Georgia. And it's that Anglican church in Georgia to which John Wesley went. John and Charles Wesley would talk about that perhaps later.

So, Anglicanism is kind of spread out. Presbyterianism. Presbyterianism is small during the colonial period.

Some of you may be from Presbyterian backgrounds, but Presbyterianism is small. But it is pretty much spread out throughout the colonies. There's no one place where you can say, boy, this is the heart and soul of Presbyterianism, not during the colonial period.

Number four, the Baptists. Well, the Baptists are everywhere. So, they're spread out throughout the colony as well.

You find Baptist strengths in places like Rhode Island, of course, but they are spread throughout the colony. We're going to continue throughout the course. We'll continue with some of these denominations and see where they go from here.

The Roman Catholic church. The Roman Catholic church is quite small, and it's concentrated in the middle colonies. So that's where the heart of the Roman Catholic church is in places like New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the middle colonies.

You're going to say, when we say that about the Roman Catholic church middle colonies, you're going to say, hey, wait a minute. I live in Boston. Boston is so heavily Roman Catholic.

So why are you saying they're just in the middle colonies? Well, the Catholic immigration that hit Boston doesn't come until the next century. So that's a long time from the period we're talking about. Right now, the Roman Catholic church, small, middle colonies, is where it's concentrated.

You know, the Quakers preferred to be called the Friends, and they were spread throughout the colonies, but they were heavy in New England and the middle colonies. And that's partly because, of course, they were welcomed into Rhode Island in such great numbers and welcomed into Pennsylvania in such great numbers as well. So, it is the Middle Colonies, but also New England.

The Quakers are finding a home. The Friends are finding a home there. Okay, the Lutheran church.

Lutherans are found in the middle colonies. Remember, it was Pennsylvania that so welcomed German Lutherans and other smaller groups like the Dunkers and so forth. Well, middle colonies, but there are Lutherans as well in Georgia, as well as there were Anglicans in Georgia, so there are Lutherans in Georgia as well.

But basically, the middle colonies are where you find the Lutheran church. Finally, we mentioned the Dutch Reformed church. The Dutch Reformed church is in the middle colonies.

Of course, it is very heavy in New York. Even though New York became British, it was the first New Netherlands, and so was the Dutch Reformed church. So, in New York, New Jersey, we'll see the First Great Awakening.

One of the beginnings of the First Great Awakening was among Dutch Reformed people in New Jersey and New York. So, the Dutch Reformed, that's where they're concentrated, basically. Okay, so that's Lecture 3. Are there any questions about Lecture 3, what's going on with this, what we're calling, and what we title this lecture? Denominationalism.

Denominationalism in the American colonies. So by the time of the Revolutionary, well, by the time of the First Great Awakening, we've got a fair number of denominations now in the American colonies. All of them are immigrant churches.

They all came over from the old country, but they're kind of getting settled in. But yet, some of them are having trouble with their existence because there are the four reasons we mentioned. But are there any questions about that? All right, we are going to journey on to Lecture 4, Jonathan Edwards and the First Great Awakening.

Lecture 4, Jonathan Edwards and the First Great Awakening. All right, if you're following along in the outline, you can see what we're going to do. We're going to take a fairly long time to talk about Jonathan Edwards, the life and ministry of Jonathan Edwards.

And then, we'll look at other important leaders. We'll look at reactions to the First Great Awakening and the results of the First Great Awakening. As usual, this will put us maybe a day or so ahead in our lectures, and that's a good thing.

We're rejoicing in that. So, if we get a winter like last winter and have to miss a day, we know that we're still ahead of the game, so we're doing okay. All right, so Jonathan Edwards.

There is a lot to say about Jonathan Edwards. This is one of the people on the course. Maybe there's, I don't know, maybe there's four or five people in the course.

I take a fair amount of time talking about them biographically because they are so important. They so shaped American religious life and American cultural life. So, I could have you read five or six more biographies, but I figured you would be ready for this: five or six more biographies, five or six more books.

So, I'm here to help. So, one of the ways I help is by giving you the biography and the biographical highlights. So, we do so with Jonathan Edwards, a remarkable person.

Okay, there is 1703, 1758, not a very long life, as we'll see, for reasons we'll see later. And I'm calling him one of the greatest of American-born theologians and philosophers, American-born. Now, some of the people who have come over, you know, some of those immigrants who have come over, leaders of the church and so forth that we've mentioned, that's fine, but they weren't born here in America, whereas Jonathan Edwards was born here in America.

So, we give him this credit, and he is certainly one of the greatest. Notice I've said theologians and philosophers. So, he had this remarkable ability in both theology and philosophy and in other things as well.

I don't know, and I'd have to look at the cards. Are any of you from Hartford, Connecticut? Are any of you in East Windsor, Connecticut? So, Jonathan Edwards was born in East Windsor, Connecticut. So, you people from Connecticut can claim him as his place of birth, no doubt about that.

Very born, and then they soon found out that they had a very precocious child on their hands with Jonathan. Because here's a couple of good examples. He was fluent in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and seemed to have pretty well mastered Latin, Greek, and Hebrew by the time he was 13.

So, you know, that's a pretty good thing to do, isn't it? I mean, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew by the time you're 13 or so forth? That's right. He was born with a special brilliance. So, he's a pretty remarkable person.

So here he is. Another thing about him was that he was very interested in the natural sciences. So, remember now, we're talking about the 18th century, so we're not talking about the tremendous knowledge of natural sciences that we have now.

But he was very interested in natural sciences, and it demonstrated the power of observation that he had, which will stand him in good stead theologically and philosophically, too. So, his interest in natural science and observation of the natural world and so forth, he's going to translate that well into theology and philosophy and be a keen observer in theology and philosophy and so forth. So, of course, he was interested in philosophy and theology, and then he entered Yale when he was not yet 13 years old.

So, he's ready to go to university now. So today, in a sense, we would say that he was trained in the home by his parents and the things we talked about, languages, philosophy, theology, natural sciences, and so forth. Now, so he goes to Yale.

He wasn't quite 13 when he entered Yale, so he was 17 when he finished Yale. But I do want to say a couple of things about Yale. When you think of Yale University, you think of Yale and New Haven.

We've mentioned this before about these great universities that we've been talking about. You think about Yale and New Haven and this great, massive university. On the left-hand side is Yale University, as Jonathan Edwards would have known it.

There was a church, and to the right of it were dormitories, lecture halls, and so forth. This is what he would have known of Yale. Now, I am very interested in this because I know about the Wethersfield Church.

There, you can see it on the right-hand side. The Wethersfield Church is the church that you see on the left-hand side here because Yale University began in Wethersfield, Connecticut. It didn't start in New Haven.

It moved to New Haven eventually, but it began in Wethersfield, Connecticut. Anybody from that area, by any chance? Wethersfield, New Haven, town? You did. This is a wonderful church.

We know a lot of people from this church because a lot of people from this church have gone with Karen and me to Israel. We've got another Israel trip coming up, and then we've got some people from the Wethersfield Church going to Israel with us as well. You probably saw the Jonathan Edwards Room then.

Did you notice that Jonathan Edwards's Room? So, in Wethersfield, Connecticut, when Jonathan Edwards was a student at Yale, this was the church he attended because the church was kind of on the campus, in a sense. So, this was the church that he attended because it's not in New Haven yet. And there is a Wethersfield Room in the church.

It's probably about half the size of this room, and it has a lot of paraphernalia from Jonathan Edwards. And books that he read and so forth. So, it's a wonderful church, and I'm glad to say, pastored by a Gordon College graduate.

So, we're rejoicing in that. So, it's a great church, isn't it? Yes, right. Isn't it a great church? Oh, right.

Yes. I forget his name now, but his brother-in-law is here on campus. So, there are all kinds of wonderful connections here.

So, the Wethersfield Church. So, there he goes to Yale. Before he actually turned 13, he started as a student at Yale.

His view of science says he's working through that at Yale. His view of science is he's concerned about faith in reason alone. The laws of nature are derived from God and demonstrate his wisdom and love.

So, as he looks at science, he's very concerned that people are going to put their faith only in reason, and they're going to understand science only through their reason and their minds. But he wants to remind people that the laws of nature are derived from God. The laws of nature are demonstrative of the wisdom and the love of God.

And that's really kind of the proper way to view science. And, of course, will be the proper way to view theology, philosophy, and so forth. So, he's kind of getting all this kind of together as a student at Yale.

Now, we should just mention that as he's at Yale and then as he leaves Yale, he argues for what? He argues for the theology of John Calvin and the theology of the Puritans. He will be a great defender of Calvinistic theology and early Puritan theology because he believes that Calvinistic theology best represents the Bible. It's the best interpretation of the biblical word.

He then argues against the growing theology of Jacob Arminius and a growing deism, which is a rationalistic kind of theology, arguing against that. He argues against the theology of Jacob Arminius because Arminius stresses free will. And he argues against the deists because they don't believe that Jesus is God.

So, he's a very careful scholar and a very careful student with a very clear mind and a clear heart. And so, this will be what he's going to argue for and against in his theology and his preaching and so forth. Now, we should just mention that as we see what he's interested in theologically here, we should just say that the theology of Calvin and the theology of the Puritans have died out in American life and culture.

By the time we get to Jonathan Edwards, that has lost its kind of glory days. And Arminian theology is becoming much more prevalent. This theology of free will is becoming much more prevalent.

So, it is Jonathan Edwards who brought Calvinist Puritan theology back into American theological life and back into American church life with the First Great Awakening. Another thing we should just mention about Jonathan Edwards is that he talks about his conversion experience. Well, there are a lot of writings by Jonathan Edwards you might want to just be familiar with.

A personal narrative is one of them, though, because, in a personal narrative, he talks about his own kind of religious pilgrimage. Another thing you want to be familiar with Jonathan Edwards is his sermons, of course. His sermons were pretty remarkable.

So, the personal narrative and sermons of Jonathan Edwards that's going to get you reading good stuff from Jonathan Edwards. But here is how he describes his own conversion experience. Now, he was reared in a Christian home.

He knew Christianity and so forth. But here it is. On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God and wrote it down, giving up myself and all that I had to God to be for the future, in no respect my own, to act as one that had no right to himself in any respect.

So, in terms of his own conversion experience, he describes it as giving himself up to God, totally giving himself up to God, and letting God own him in a sense. Now, so obviously, he didn't feel that he had done that, even though he was reared in a Christian home. He didn't feel that he had done that previously in his life.

And so now he comes and, in a personal narrative, tells us about his own dimension of his life. Okay, another thing about Jonathan Edwards. Jonathan Edwards decides he's going to 1727.

He decides he's going to move to Northampton, Massachusetts. Anybody from Northampton by any chance? Central Massachusetts? Northampton? Okay. Well, I've never been there, but I want to go there someday because his grandfather, whose picture we have here, Solomon Stoddard, was a very important person in Massachusetts, a very important pastor and preacher, and he lived from 1643 to 1729.

He's the grandfather of Jonathan Edwards, and he has that congregational church in Northampton, Massachusetts. So, what happens is in 1727, Jonathan Edwards decides, well, earlier, he had had a quick pastoral ministry in New York, but then in 1727, he decides he's going to go and assist his grandfather in the Northampton Congregational Church. So, he made this very important move in his life in 1727 to the Congregational Church in Northampton.

Went there in 1727. You see the date of his grandfather. Grandfather died in 1729.

So, Jonathan Edwards took over the pastoral ministry of the church upon the death of his grandfather in 1729. Okay, so this becomes very important now, that date, 1729, when he takes over the church. Now, what is that? Jonathan Edwards is a wonderful pastor and preacher.

He marries Sarah Pierpont, the lovely woman that he married, and also dies the same year that he did. He had 11 children, which was not uncommon in the 18th century. When I'm talking about Susanna Wesley, now she was in the 17th century, but Susanna Wesley had 19 children.

Two of them, you know, John and Charles Wesley. That's a lot of children, isn't it? I think it is a lot of children. But Susanna was one of 25 children.

So, Susanna's mother bore 25 children. That's a lot of children. But here in the 18th century, he had 11 children.

There he is, his life in the church. He studies about 13 hours per day, which isn't that good. Isn't that a wonderful example for you as a student? 13 hours a day? That would be great, wouldn't it? I try to make this point with Jonathan Edwards that all this time in study, you would think that that wouldn't help him to bring about some great revival. But actually, it was because of his study, because he knew the scripture so well, that he was able to be used by God to bring about the great revival.

So, studying is very, very important to Jonathan Edwards every day. Now, he did own slaves. When you read the biography of Jonathan Edwards, you might be a little taken aback by this.

And that's not something that the biographers try to hide. He did own slaves. He was part of his culture in that way.

Part of that daily American life was that. So, he did own slaves. He had an interesting preaching ministry as a scholar-slash pastor.

Now, let me just mention his preaching style. The biographers try to make this very clear, that he treated the slaves very, very carefully, really as employees and not the way some slaves were treated. But he did own slaves.

So, he purchased slaves. He owned slaves. So that becomes a little problematic for some people.

But we have to place him in his culture. And that was still a culture where they were wrestling with the issue of slavery. Yeah.

Yeah. Yes. Right.

About us today. Wow. Well, we have a lot of issues today.

I think, you know, well, one issue. I won't get into the whole gender sexuality issue. But we could get into that and have an interesting discussion about it.

One thing might be women in ministry because the church is struggling with the issue of women in ministry. And some churches have come through that issue and believe it's biblical. Other churches say, no, it's not biblical.

You shouldn't have women in ministry. So, there's a bit of a struggle going on. I use that because it's a little more – it creates a little less of a heated debate than other issues do.

But women in ministry might be an issue where they're going to look back 200 years from now and say, well, they were struggling through this, you know. But now there are even women – not 200 years from now. Now, there are even women Roman Catholic priests and so forth.

So, wouldn't that be interesting? So, I think something like that might be an example. Yeah, good question. The best biography, by the way, of Jonathan Edwards, which I know you'll want to read this summer, is listed in your syllabus.

It's by George Marsden. And it's the best and most recent biography. It's about three years old.

So, I know that you'll want to add that to your summer list. I know that all these readings that I put in here you're going to want to add to your summer reading list. So it will be a joy to do that this summer.

Okay, something else? Let me just mention the preaching, and then I've got to give you a break. But the preaching ministry of Jonathan Edwards. What is the definition of preaching from seminary? What did I learn in seminary?

Preaching is God's truth coming through personality. Preaching is God's truth coming through personality. And Jonathan Edwards was a great preacher.

But it is said of Jonathan Edwards that when he preached, he kept his eye on the rope of the bell in the back of the church. So, he just was preaching in that way, like a lawyer. He had a point to make, philosophical, theological, biblical.

And so he didn't seem to have an eye on all the congregants. And he didn't seem to use a lot of illustrations. It seemed to be from the biblical text, verse by verse.

And that was God's truth coming through personality. But it's very interesting that in some ways, the First Great Awakening began with the preaching of Jonathan Edwards. And the date we usually give is just a round-figure date; it's not an exact date.

But the date we give for the First Great Awakening is 1734. 1734, because of the great preaching of Jonathan Edwards. Now, what we're going to see when we talk about the First Great Awakening is his exact opposite.

It's the exact opposite in terms of preaching. And that's a fellow by the name of George Whitefield. So, you couldn't get a more opposite kind of preacher.

But if preaching is God's truth coming through personality, then Jonathan Edwards was true to his own personality. And George Whitefield was true to his own personality as well. And God used that kind of preaching.

There's nothing worse than seeing a preacher who's trying to be somebody else when he or she is preaching. I mean, they're not themselves. I don't know.

They're trying to copy somebody. Why would they do that? Just like God's truth. Now, I have a long sermon coming up.

So, I'm not going to preach. I'm going to give you a five-second break. So take a five-second break.

Edwards, we're still working through Jonathan Edwards. We haven't left him yet. And I'm doing this so you don't have to read a 400-page biography of Jonathan Edwards.

So I'm saving you. But I love to talk about Jonathan Edwards. So, this is no problem.

Okay, 1734 was the beginning of the First Great Awakening. People knew about the First Great Awakening, but it became kind of, in a sense, popularized by his book in 1737. And he wrote a book called *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton, 1737*.

So *Faithful Narrative* was a book written about the beginning of the First Great Awakening. So, people like John Wesley learned about the First Great Awakening in America. We'll talk about Wesley later.

However, he learned about the First Great Awakening in America through reading *Faithful Narrative*, which is what Jonathan Edwards had to say about that. So, there is a remarkable awakening. Hundreds of people are becoming converted.

Hundreds of people are coming to the Lord through the ministry of Jonathan Edwards. And then he starts to travel quite a bit because he gets invited to preach. And in his preaching engagements, other people are coming to the Lord, and so forth.

So, we generally put 1734. So things are really moving along. And his church is growing.

Other churches are growing. And the First Great Awakening is getting started. Now, there are going to be other people involved in the First Great Awakening.

But we're just here concentrating on Jonathan Edwards. They are basically – well, first of all, they're people within the church who didn't really realize what Christianity was all about. They're kind of joining the church.

But now they're nice people. But they don't realize what Christianity demands of you. And they are also people who have been kind of attackers of the church and attackers of Christianity and so forth.

So, a pretty broad range of people are being converted here. So 1734, First Great Awakening, Jonathan Edwards. Things get started.

Something else here. We still have to just finish up on Jonathan. Okay.

We want to finish up on his story. We've got the First Great Awakening going. There are other people we're going to be talking about.

Do you remember the Halfway Covenant? The Halfway Covenant was developed from 1657 to 1662. One of the things we mentioned about the Halfway Covenant was that baptism entitled one to church membership. So if you're baptized, you're a member of the church, and you might not have to give witness to being a believer in Jesus.

It was a way of becoming a member of the church. This was not strict enough for Jonathan Edwards. He believed, and so, therefore, it's very interesting. By the way, he disagreed with his grandfather over this.

Now, he and his grandfather were co-ministers for only two years. His grandfather believed that baptism in the Lord's Supper can even be for non-believers because maybe through the work of baptism, or maybe through coming to the Lord's Supper, maybe they'll become believers. Maybe this will be a converting ordinance for them.

Well, this was not strict enough for Jonathan Edwards. Jonathan Edwards believed that the only people who should be baptized are people who can bear witness to the Christian faith in a very clear way. And the only people who take the Lord's Supper should be people who are believers.

You shouldn't open up the communion table to non-believers. It's only for the people who believe. So, he had real problems with the Halfway Covenant.

Now remember the Halfway Covenant is beginning to dominate congregationalism in New England and even begins to dominate the church in Northampton. So, here's a sad part of Jonathan Edwards' life. In 1750, he was dismissed from the church.

Very sad. He went there to help his grandfather. He took over as his grandfather.

He led the First Great Awakening from that church. But it's a congregational church, so the congregation decides who the pastor is going to be. And in 1750, they threw him out because of his stand against the Halfway Covenant.

So, the question now is, what happens to Jonathan Edwards after they dismiss him? And in 1750, when he's dismissed, is this going to be the lowest point in his life, or is God going to use it for good? Well, what happens is, in 1750, he goes out to Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Yeah? So, for his belief that he was not going to be used as simply as an infant baptizer? No. Basically, it can include infant baptism if the family is willing to bear witness to the fact that they were raised a child in faith because they're Congregationalists, which means they had been Anglicans.

At one time, Puritans had been Anglicans, and they baptized infants. However, there had to be an affirmation from the parents that we were going to rear this child in the Christian faith. The Halfway Covenant said that children can be baptized whose parents are not Christians.

So, it included that. Then, it included people who came in. It included adults who came into the church and said, I want to join the church.

So, do you have a profession of faith in Christ? Well, not necessarily, but I'm a good person. Okay, we'll baptize you, and that will be church membership. So, as far as he was concerned, it all got kind of watered down.

And that was the issue with the Halfway Covenant. That was the debate over the Halfway Covenant. And he had a much stricter view of what baptism and the Lord's Supper church membership is all about.

So, they threw him out. 1750. Goes to Stockbridge.

Is anybody from near Stockbridge? Goes to Stockbridge. What's in Stockbridge? Well, I mean, beautiful place. I'm sure I've never been to Stockbridge.

But what's in Stockbridge, then? Stockbridge was in the wilderness. This is going out to the wilderness here. This is going out to take a small community of believers and kind of pastor them.

But also, there would be Native Americans or Indians out in Stockbridge to whom I can minister. But where else am I going to go? This was the lowest time in Jonathan Edwards' life. This was a time when he left everything that was near and dear to him, took his family, and went out really to be a missionary in the wilderness.

Okay, so the question is, what happens after that? Jonathan Edwards is at a low time in his life. What happens after that is that he gets to Stockbridge, and he has plenty of time to write. And so, he begins to write.

Now, he had been writing, of course, publishing sermons, personal narratives, and so forth. He had been writing, but this gave him time to really think through because he's got time in his hands so he can really think through his theology and really think through and write it down. So, what started to be the lowest point in his life actually became some of the most productive points in his life.

So, do we ever find that to be true in our own lives, that sometimes what seems to be the most difficult time in your life and the most abandoned time in your life, do we find out that sometimes that's a time when God really works in miraculous ways, and we come through that better people? Well, Jonathan Edwards came through that as a better person. This is one of his writings, *A Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notion of Freedom of the Will*, which is supposed to be central to more agency, virtue, advice, reward, punishment, praise, and blame. Now, it's the title of the book.

It's a book in which he defended predestination and denied the Arminian notion of freedom of the will. So, he's ready to enter into kind of a moral battle here and a theological battle with people who believed in freedom of the will. So that turned out to be really a very important time in his life.

Okay, so let me just finish off his story. I just want to see the results of his life in ministry. There he is. He's in Stockbridge and he's going to probably stay in Stockbridge, but he gets an invitation to go someplace because he's such a brilliant thinker.

He was invited in 1758 to become the president of Princeton University. Now, we haven't talked about Princeton yet. Notice that.

We talked about Harvard, haven't we? And we talked about Brown, but we haven't talked about Princeton. So, we're going to talk about Princeton in this lecture, but later. But anyway, he gets an invitation to go to Princeton University and be the president of Princeton.

In 1758, he moved to Princeton. So, he moves to Princeton. We'll talk about the founding of Princeton.

He moves to Princeton, and, you know, there again, tragedy strikes his life, but he sees it as the glory of God. He had to take a smallpox vaccination so that he wouldn't be susceptible to smallpox, and he died from the vaccination in 1758. He was only president for about three months at Princeton.

So, he had a bit of an untimely end, but he, of course, would see it as the providence of God. This was God's timing in his own life. The timing seems a bit tragic when you look at it from a human perspective, but I doubt if Jonathan Edwards would look at it from that perspective.

Okay, so there he is, Jonathan Edwards, who is really a pretty remarkable person. What I want to do with him now is look, before we leave him, number A here, I want to look at the results of his life, what came as a result of the life and ministry of Jonathan Edwards. But before I do, are there any questions about his very rich, very interesting biography of Jonathan Edwards? Remarkable person.

Okay, what kind? When does what? Well, the First Great Awakening goes after Jonathan Edwards with three other leaders that we'll talk about. So, it goes right, its results go up to the 60s and kind of into the beginning of the 70s, time of the Revolutionary War. And then there is, as we'll see in the course, but then there is a pretty sharp diminishing of religion.

People are turning their attention to politics with the revolution coming and so forth. So, then there's a sharp kind of, and then starting in 1800, though, we have a Second Great Awakening. So, I like to see it, I like to see all of this happening like a pendulum in a sense.

This pendulum started in 1734 and went up into the 50s and 60s. Then, the pendulum will swing over to rationalism, deism, and so forth. And then you'll have the Second Great Awakening.

Something else here? Okay, what are the results? What comes as a result of the life and ministry of Jonathan Edwards? Okay, the first one we've already mentioned, and that's a revival of Calvinism. Revival of Calvinism. It died down, it was brought here by the Puritans.

It died down in the second, third, and fourth generations. The Puritans weren't what they were meant to be. So Calvinism dies down, it comes back up again in the cultural life and the religious life of the colonies. Number two, a wonderful balance of the life of the mind and the life of the heart.

Jonathan Edwards is a great example of that. Beautiful balance of the life of the mind, life of the heart. That's the whole person.

I often say that one of the things we're combating today, if Jonathan Edwards were around, he could help us with this. He helps us by his own life and ministry. One of the things we're combating today in a sense is people are saying you have to make a choice.

You're either going to be a brainless Christian and not use your brain, or you're going to be a rational person and not really believe in all this Christian kind of stuff. You've got to make a choice. Well, you don't have to make a choice, actually, because the life in the mind and the life of experience go beautifully together.

And so if people ever kind of force on you that choice, tell them, I'm sorry, that's a choice I don't have to make. I've made the choice to be a whole person. I feel lonesome.

So that's it, the balance of the life of the mind and life of the heart. An appreciation that all truth is God's truth. And remember, we said how he loved the natural world, science, theology, philosophy, ethics, and economics.

As far as he was concerned, all of this truth is God's truth, so why not study it all? So he's a perfect example of that. Another thing is the power of preaching from the scriptures. He is a great example of that, as are the other people in the First Great Awakening, preaching from the scriptures.

Very important for Jonathan Edwards. Let the word of God speak its own word to the hearts and minds of people. So, he is a good example of that.

He had quite a succession also. The vice president came from the line of Jonathan Edwards. Lots of clergymen came from the line of Jonathan Edwards.

Thirteen presidents of higher learning came from his line, and 65 professors came from his line, which is very interesting. So, he had not only a theological impact, but he had a cultural impact as well. Then, one final thing about Jonathan Edwards's results is that he was followed.

He had a lot of followers. He had a lot of people who studied with him. He had a lot of people, including his own son.

These followers get a name. They are called the Edwardsians, the Edwardsians. The Edwardsians were people, were second-generation Jonathan Edwards people.

And the Edwardsians somewhat carried out his theological agenda, but not totally. So, there are four people, and they had an impact, a tremendous impact, in university life, in cultural life, in church life. And there are four Edwardsians.

Now, I mentioned them by name. Joseph Bellamy is one of them. Joseph Bellamy was trained by Jonathan Edwards, so he was a student of Jonathan Edwards.

Samuel Hopkins is a second, so Samuel Hopkins also knew Jonathan Edwards personally. This is his son, Jonathan Edwards, Jr., and then Nathaniel Emmons. Now, let me just say this about the Edwardsians.

It would take us the whole course just to talk about the Edwardsians. They're a very interesting group of people, but we could get stuck for the next 15 weeks talking about the Edwardsians. So let me just say this about the Edwardsians.

As a group, each one wrote a lot and everything, but basically, as a group, they emphasized more freedom of the will in terms of theology, and they de-emphasized Jonathan Edwards' predestination. So, they had this kind of freedom of the will kind of issues and de-emphasizing predestination. So, they were Edwardsians in some ways.

They carried through his theology in some ways, but in other ways, they really were different from the person that they so admired, and so they emphasized this free will. One of the things that two of them emphasized was original sin. Two of them said there is no such thing as original sin.

Original sin is only the sin of Adam. It's not passed down from generation to generation, but all human beings are sinful, but they're all sinful not because they've inherited original sin from Adam, but because they've acted upon the freedom of the will and chosen to sin. Well, see, that's something that Jonathan Edwards never would have agreed with.

So, the Edwardsians are important. When you come across their names in Asculum Purard or in Hardman, take note of them, and see what they're teaching, but you'll understand that this is about all the time we can take with the Edwardsians. Otherwise, we'd be here until June. So, okay, have a good day.

We'll see you on Friday.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 5 on Jonathan Edwards and the First Great Awakening.