

Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 12, Pietism in Germany and America Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 12, Pietism in Germany and America, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Roger Green's lecture, part of a course titled "Reformation to the Present," introduces the concept of **evangelical resurgence in church history**, likening it to a pendulum swinging back from periods of criticism and decline. **The lecture focuses on the 17th and 18th centuries**, highlighting three parallel renewal movements: **Pietism in Germany**, the **Awakening in America**, and the **Wesleyan Revival in England**, while noting the absence of such a movement in France due to de-Christianization. **The initial portion examines Pietism in Germany**, detailing its origins with Philipp Spener, the contributions of August Franke, and the emergence of the Moravian movement under Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. **The lecture then shifts to the First Great Awakening in America**, outlining the roles of key figures such as Theodorus J. Frelinghuysen, Gilbert Tennant, and the influential itinerant preacher George Whitefield.

2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 12 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Church History → Reformation to the Present).



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3. Briefing Document: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 12, Pietism in Germany and America

Briefing Document: Evangelical Resurgence - Pietism and the Great Awakening

Introduction:

This briefing document summarizes the key themes and important ideas presented in Dr. Roger Green's Lecture 12, focusing on the Evangelical Resurgence in the Church, specifically Pietism in Germany and the First Great Awakening in America. The lecture frames these movements as a "pendulum swing" back towards spiritual vitality within the church after periods of rationalism, formalism, and decline, as seen in the aftermath of the Reformation and the Enlightenment. Dr. Green emphasizes that these resurgences often address the "nature of the church and of the community of believers," essentially revisiting ecclesiology. He identifies two primary ways these resurgences occur: through charismatic leaders "from above" and through renewal movements among the laity "from below," with a potential third combining both.

I. The Cycle of Decay and Renewal:

Dr. Green begins by observing a recurring pattern in church history: movements of the spirit eventually "die down" and can lead to a "cycle of decay." This loss of vitality can stem from internal inertia, a lack of forward thinking, or external "suffocation." He provides examples of this cycle in four contexts:

- **Germany (Post-Luther):** The spontaneity of Luther settled into "German rationalism," where "dogmas" became more important than the "Christian life," lacking "joy in the Christian experience."
- **England:** A "reasonable religion" and "deism settled into English life," where "the head was moved, but the heart was unmoved."
- **America (Post-Puritanism):** Early Puritan creativity and biblical focus devolved into a "suffocating life" where "earning things meant more to them than a life of the heart and a life of the mind for Christ." He also notes the influence of deism among the founding fathers.
- **France:** Experienced a radical "de-Christianization" during the French Revolution, which Mark Noll describes as "the end or at least the beginning of the end of European Christianity as the dominant expression of Christianity in the world."

This resulted in France becoming a secular state with no significant resurgence at the time.

Dr. Green highlights the dramatic decline in church attendance in England as an example of this historical shift, noting a drop from approximately 65% in the 19th century to about 3% today. He suggests that this decline can be seen as a "missionary challenge" for the church.

II. Pietism in Germany:

Dr. Green identifies Pietism as the "movement of resurgence, the evangelical resurgence movement in Germany" during the 17th and 18th centuries.

- **Philipp Spener (1635-1705):** Considered the founder of Pietism, Spener was a "good Lutheran" who never intended to leave the Lutheran Church but aimed to "bring the church alive through the Reformation principles." He emphasized four key aspects in his ministry:
 1. **Practical Devotional Life:** Moving beyond merely listening to sermons to cultivate individual devotional practices.
 2. **Spiritual Transformation (New Birth):** Stressing the necessity of a "true, genuine spiritual transformation" for each believer, beyond inherited faith. He often referred to this as the "new birth."
 3. **Scripture Study with Lay Groups:** Encouraging the study of Scripture not just in sermons but also in lay gatherings.
 4. His 1675 book, *Pious Longings*, became the "Bible of the Pietist movement," widely read and applied by Lutherans seeking spiritual renewal. The term "pious" was intended as a positive descriptor.
 5. **Characteristics of the Pietist Movement under Spener: Central Emphasis on the Word of God:** Believing that bringing the Bible alive in preaching and study would revitalize people. This challenged the "dead, dry, not necessarily textual, more scholastic, more philosophical" preaching of the time.
 6. **Renewal of the Priesthood of All Believers:** Emphasizing the spiritual roles of laypeople in praying for each other, counseling, and forgiving sins, without diminishing the specific vocation of the preacher.
 7. **Marriage of Head and Heart:** Countering the trend of Lutheranism becoming solely intellectual ("a life of the mind") by emphasizing the importance of both

intellect and genuine heartfelt faith. Dr. Green refutes the accusation that Pietism was solely a "heart religion."

8. **Avoidance of Controversy:** A deliberate decision to not engage in religious battles and to disagree in love.
9. **Revolutionized Training of Ministers:** Aiming to produce "scholars and saints" by emphasizing not just academic and philosophical training but also spiritual formation. This led to the creation of their own training schools.
10. **Emphasis on Edifying Preaching:** While valuing preaching, Pietism stressed that it should be "an edifying word" that reaches the hearts and lives of people, not just a display of the preacher's knowledge.
 - **August Franke (1663-1727):** A second-generation Pietist who joined the movement and became a leader. He also remained within Lutheranism and aimed for reform from within. His key contributions included:
 1. **Christianity in Action:** Emphasizing the practical application of faith through acts of love for one's neighbor, particularly the poor, exemplified by his establishment of orphanages in Leipzig.
 2. **College of Piety:** Forming small cell groups of laity within local churches that met weekly for Bible study, prayer, hymn singing, confession, and mutual edification, complementing the Sunday preaching.
 3. **Reinvigorating Justification by Faith:** Shifting the understanding of this doctrine from a purely intellectual acceptance to the "living presence of Christ in the life of the believer," emphasizing Christ's presence in the heart.
 - **Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760):** Reared in Pietism with connections to Spener (his godfather) and Franke (his teacher). While initially a Pietist within the Lutheran Church, Zinzendorf eventually led his followers to form a new denomination called the Moravians. This was not a forced or contentious split but a conviction that faithfulness to Christ required this separation. The Moravian movement became a "very strong missionary movement" with a "pretty wide influence," even impacting John Wesley.

III. The First Great Awakening in America:

Dr. Green introduces the Great Awakenings as "resurgence, evangelical resurgent movements within the church, and even within the broader society" in America. He clarifies that while there is debate among scholars about the number of Great

Awakenings (two or three), this lecture will focus solely on the **First Great Awakening (circa 1734 onwards)**.

1. **Four Important Leaders of the First Great Awakening: Theodorus J. Frelinghuysen (1691-1747):** A Dutch Reformed minister in New Jersey who brought renewal to his own denomination through itinerant preaching, impacting churches in New Jersey and extending to other middle colonies like Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. He also influenced Presbyterians in New Jersey.
2. **Gilbert Tennant (1703-1764):** A Presbyterian minister influenced by Frelinghuysen who sought to bring life to the Presbyterian churches in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. His father, William Tennant, established a home-based training for ministers in 1726, derisively called the "Log College," which ironically became the foundation for Princeton University in 1746. Gilbert Tennant's revival movement ran parallel to Frelinghuysen's.
3. **George Whitefield (1714-1770):** A British Anglican known as the "Grand Itinerant" for his seven arduous trips to America. Unlike the previous leaders who primarily focused on their own denominations, Whitefield was a revivalist who "crossed denominational lines," preaching to both the converted and unconverted from Maine to Georgia. He was a "charismatic leader" known for his dramatic open-air preaching, often drawing crowds of thousands (with Benjamin Franklin estimating around 10,000 in Philadelphia). Despite facing distractions and opposition, Whitefield's preaching was highly impactful. He is buried in Newburyport, Massachusetts, under the pulpit of a Presbyterian church he helped found.

Conclusion:

Dr. Green's lecture highlights the recurring theme of spiritual ebb and flow in church history, with Pietism in Germany and the First Great Awakening in America serving as significant "swings" back towards evangelical fervor. Both movements emphasized personal piety, the importance of Scripture, and a more heartfelt engagement with faith. While Pietism initially aimed to reform the Lutheran Church from within (with the exception of the Moravian split), the First Great Awakening in America saw a more interdenominational revival, significantly shaped by charismatic preachers like George Whitefield. These movements represent crucial periods of renewal that profoundly impacted the development of Protestantism in both Europe and America.

4. Study Guide: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 12, Pietism in Germany and America

Study Guide: Pietism and the First Great Awakening

Key Concepts:

- **Evangelical Resurgence:** A renewal movement within the church that seeks to bring it back to its core spiritual foundations, often characterized by a focus on personal conversion, the authority of Scripture, and active faith.
- **Pendulum Swing of Church History:** The cyclical nature of church history where periods of spiritual vitality and growth are often followed by periods of decline, rationalism, or stagnation, leading to subsequent renewal movements.
- **Pietism:** An influential religious movement that emerged in the late 17th century within Lutheranism in Germany, emphasizing personal piety, spiritual experience, practical Christianity, and the study of Scripture in small groups.
- **Priesthood of All Believers:** A Protestant doctrine emphasizing that all baptized Christians have direct access to God through Christ and share in the priestly work of intercession and service to one another.
- **Justification by Faith:** A central tenet of Protestantism asserting that salvation is received as a free gift from God through faith in Jesus Christ, rather than through good works or adherence to religious law.
- **The Awakening (First Great Awakening):** A significant series of religious revivals that swept through the American colonies in the 1730s and 1740s, characterized by passionate preaching, emotional conversions, and the formation of new religious identities.
- **Itinerant Preaching:** A style of ministry where preachers travel from place to place, rather than being permanently stationed in a single church, to spread their message and encourage religious revival.

Quiz:

1. Describe the "pendulum swing" of church history as explained in the lecture. Provide an example from the periods discussed prior to the Evangelical Resurgence.

2. What were the four areas (countries/regions) where the lecture noted a "settling down" or decay of the church prior to the 17th and 18th century renewal movements? Briefly describe the nature of this decline in one of those areas.
3. According to the lecture, what are the two primary ways that revival or resurgence typically occurs in the church? Give a historical example for each of these ways mentioned in the lecture.
4. Identify Philipp Spener's primary goal for the Lutheran Church and name two of the four things he emphasized in his ministry to achieve this goal.
5. Explain the significance of Philipp Spener's book *Pious Longings* for the Pietist movement in Germany.
6. Describe two key characteristics of the Pietist movement that emerged under Spener's influence, beyond his initial emphases.
7. What was August Franke's significant contribution to the Pietist movement beyond Spener's initial work? Provide one specific example.
8. How did Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf's involvement with Pietism differ from that of Spener and Franke? What new denomination emerged from his leadership?
9. Identify two of the key leaders of the First Great Awakening in America mentioned in the lecture and briefly describe their denominational background and primary area of ministry.
10. Explain why George Whitefield was known as the "Grand Itinerant" and describe a notable characteristic of his preaching style or impact during the First Great Awakening.

Answer Key:

1. The "pendulum swing" of church history refers to the recurring pattern of the church experiencing periods of spiritual vitality followed by decline and then renewal. An example is the decline of the spontaneity of Luther's Reformation into German rationalism and an emphasis on dogma over Christian living in subsequent generations.
2. The four areas were Germany (rationalism and emphasis on dogma), England (reasonable religion and deism), America (suffocating Puritanism and deism), and France (de-Christianization). In England, the church settled into a "reasonable

religion" and deism where intellectual assent to faith increased while personal spiritual experience waned.

3. Revival often comes through charismatic leaders who bring new ideas and reshape the church from above, like Martin Luther. It also frequently arises from below through charismatic renewal movements among the laity who seek a deeper spiritual life, such as the charismatic movement within the Roman Catholic Church.
4. Spener's primary goal was to bring the Lutheran Church alive through the principles of the Reformation. Two things he emphasized were a practical devotional life for individuals (not just listening to sermons) and spiritual transformation (the "new birth") in the life of every believer.
5. *Pious Longings* became a foundational text for the Pietist movement, inspiring individuals within the Lutheran Church to pursue a more personal and active faith. It was widely read and applied to personal lives, helping to launch and shape the early stages of Pietism.
6. Two key characteristics of the Pietist movement under Spener were a central emphasis on the word of God (both preached and studied in a lively manner) and a renewal of the priesthood of all believers (emphasizing mutual ministry and support among laypeople).
7. August Franke's significant contribution included putting "Christianity in action" by establishing orphanages and engaging in social outreach, reflecting the love of neighbor. He also formed "colleges of piety," small groups of laity meeting weekly for Bible study, prayer, and mutual edification.
8. Unlike Spener and Franke, who remained within the Lutheran Church to reform it from within, Zinzendorf eventually left with his followers to establish a new denomination called the Moravians. This split was not forced but arose from Zinzendorf's conviction to follow what he believed to be the light of Christ.
9. Theodorus J. Frelinghuysen, a Dutch Reformed minister in New Jersey, is considered an important early leader who brought renewal to his own churches and influenced others in the Middle Colonies. George Whitefield, a British Anglican, was another key figure known as the "Grand Itinerant" for his extensive preaching tours across the colonies.
10. George Whitefield was called the "Grand Itinerant" because he made seven arduous trips from England to America in the 18th century to preach. A notable

characteristic was his charismatic and dramatic open-air preaching style, which drew large crowds and crossed denominational lines, leading to widespread revivals.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the cyclical pattern of spiritual vitality and decline in the church as described in the lecture. Using examples from the lecture, discuss the factors that contribute to both the decline and the subsequent resurgence of faith.
2. Compare and contrast the approaches of Philipp Spener and August Franke in fostering the Pietist movement within Germany. What were their shared goals and distinct contributions?
3. Evaluate the significance of the First Great Awakening in the American colonies. How did leaders like Theodorus J. Frelinghuysen, Gilbert Tennant, and George Whitefield contribute to this period of religious renewal, and what were some of its lasting impacts?
4. Discuss the similarities and differences between the Pietist movement in Germany and the First Great Awakening in America. Consider their origins, key figures, core emphases, and overall impact on the church and society in their respective contexts.
5. The lecture suggests that renewal movements can arise "from above" through charismatic leaders or "from below" through lay initiatives. Analyze the extent to which Pietism and the First Great Awakening exemplify these different (or combined) approaches to religious resurgence.

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Dogma:** A set of beliefs or principles held to be absolutely true, especially by a religious authority.
- **Rationalism:** A belief or theory that opinions and actions should be based on reason and knowledge rather than on religious belief or emotional response.
- **Deism:** An Enlightenment-era belief in a supreme being who created the universe but does not intervene in its affairs. Deists typically rejected organized religion and revelation.
- **Scholasticism:** A method of critical thought dominant in medieval European universities from the 11th to the 15th century, based on logic and dialectical reasoning and often applied to theological and philosophical questions.
- **Secular Government:** A government that is separate from religious institutions and does not enforce or promote any particular religion.
- **Charismatic Leader:** A leader who possesses compelling attractiveness or charm that can inspire devotion in others. In a religious context, this often refers to individuals seen as having special spiritual gifts or authority.
- **Laity:** The ordinary people in a religious community as distinguished from its clergy.
- **Edifying:** Providing moral or intellectual instruction; improving or uplifting.
- **Ostentatious:** Characterized by vulgar or pretentious display; designed to impress or attract notice.
- **Itinerant:** Traveling from place to place, especially to perform a religious ministry or other service.

5. FAQs Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 12, Pietism in Germany and America, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: Evangelical Resurgence - Pietism and the Great Awakening

1. What was the "Evangelical Resurgence" described in the lecture, and why did it occur? The Evangelical Resurgence was a period of renewal and revival within the Christian church, characterized by a return to core spiritual principles and a revitalization of faith. It occurred as a reaction to the preceding Age of Enlightenment, which saw significant criticisms leveled against Christianity, the church, and the Bible, even questioning the historical existence of Jesus. This resurgence represented a "swing of the pendulum" back towards a more experiential and personal faith, aiming to reignite the church's "first love."

2. The lecture mentions a cyclical pattern in church history. What is this pattern, and what are some examples provided in the context of Germany, England, America, and France? The lecture describes a cyclical pattern where periods of spiritual vitality and growth in the church tend to wane over time. This decline can occur through inertia (a lack of movement or forward thinking) or suffocation (internal or external pressures stifling the church). Examples include:

- **Germany:** The initial spontaneity of the Lutheran Reformation under Martin Luther settled into a more rationalistic German theology where dogmas became prioritized over Christian living.
- **England:** A vibrant religious life gave way to a "reasonable religion" and Deism, where intellectual assent to faith did not necessarily translate into heartfelt devotion.
- **America:** Early Puritanism, initially characterized by creativity and a strong biblical foundation, devolved into a focus on material gain and a decline in spiritual fervor.
- **France:** The French Revolution led to a radical "de-Christianization," marking a significant decline in Christianity's dominant influence in the region.

3. According to the lecture, how do revivals or resurgences in the church typically begin? Can you provide examples of each type? Revivals often begin in one of two primary ways:

- **Renewal from above through charismatic leaders:** This involves influential individuals with compelling ideas who reshape the church and bring new life. Martin Luther is presented as a prime example of such a leader.
- **Revival from below through charismatic renewal movements among the laity:** This occurs when ordinary believers experience a spiritual awakening and collectively work to revitalize the church. The charismatic movement within the Roman Catholic Church is cited as an example of this phenomenon. A third possibility, the lecture notes, is a combination of both charismatic leadership and a spiritually awakened laity, leading to a powerful "explosion" of revival.

4. What was Pietism in Germany, who were its key figures, and what were its main characteristics? Pietism was an 18th-century evangelical resurgence movement within the German Lutheran Church. Its key figures included:

- **Philipp Spener:** Considered the father of Pietism, he emphasized practical devotional life, spiritual transformation (the "new birth"), and the study of Scripture in lay groups. His book, *Pious Longings*, is considered foundational to the movement.
- **August Franke:** A second-generation Pietist who emphasized "Christianity in action" through social outreach like orphanages, formed small lay groups called "colleges of piety," and revitalized the doctrine of justification by faith by emphasizing Christ's living presence in believers.
- **Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf:** Initially a follower of Pietism, he eventually led his followers out of the Lutheran Church to form the Moravian denomination, known for its strong missionary focus.

The main characteristics of Pietism included: a central emphasis on the preached and studied Word of God, a renewal of the priesthood of all believers (emphasizing mutual ministry among believers), a marriage of intellect and heartfelt faith, an avoidance of religious controversy, a revolution in the training of ministers (aiming to produce "scholars and saints"), and the importance of edifying preaching.

5. What were the Great Awakenings in America, and how many are typically identified? For the purpose of this lecture, which one is the focus, and why? The Great Awakenings were periods of significant religious revival and resurgence in American history. While some scholars identify two (the First and Second Great Awakenings), and others suggest a Third, the lecture focuses primarily on the **First Great Awakening (circa 1734)**. This is because the lecture's scope is within the 18th century. The First Great Awakening is presented as a movement that brought evangelical renewal to the church in the American colonies.

6. Who were the key leaders of the First Great Awakening discussed in the lecture, and what were their denominational backgrounds and primary contributions? The four key leaders discussed were:

- **Theodorus J. Frelinghuysen:** A minister in the Dutch Reformed Church in New Jersey who brought revival to his congregations and then extended his influence to other colonies and Presbyterians.
- **Gilbert Tennant:** A Presbyterian minister who was inspired by Frelinghuysen and led a significant renewal movement within Presbyterianism in the Middle Colonies. His father's home-based ministerial training, derisively called the "Log College," eventually became Princeton University.
- **George Whitefield:** An Anglican preacher from Britain known as the "Grand Itinerant." He made seven trips to America, preaching to large, interdenominational audiences from Maine to Georgia, playing a crucial role in the widespread revival. His preaching style was charismatic and often conducted outdoors.
- **Jonathan Edwards:** (Mentioned briefly in contrast to Whitefield, to be discussed in more detail later).

7. How did George Whitefield's approach to ministry and his impact differ from the other leaders of the First Great Awakening discussed? George Whitefield differed from Frelinghuysen and Tennant in several key ways. Firstly, he was Anglican and came from Britain, whereas the others were rooted in Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian traditions within the colonies. Secondly, Whitefield's ministry was distinctly itinerant and interdenominational. He intentionally crossed denominational lines, preaching to anyone who would listen, both converted and unconverted, throughout the colonies. His impact was widespread geographically, reaching a vast audience. His preaching style was also notably charismatic and dramatic, often conducted outdoors, contrasting with the more localized and denominationally focused revivals led by Frelinghuysen and Tennant.

8. What was the relationship between the German Pietist movement and the Great Awakening in America, based on the lecture? The lecture presents Pietism in Germany and the Great Awakening in America as parallel "evangelical resurgence" movements occurring in the 17th and 18th centuries. They are described as contemporary movements that brought new life to the Lutheran Church in Germany and various denominations in America (including Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, and Anglican). While the lecture does not explicitly detail direct influences between the movements, it frames them as similar responses to periods of perceived spiritual decline within their respective contexts, both emphasizing personal piety, spiritual experience, and the importance of Scripture.