

A Powerhouse for The Gospel

OUT OF THE WORD - Minister – Josh Yonts, First Christian Church of Pinckneyville- fccop.info

The eighteenth century for the English-speaking world was a monumental period of spiritual awakening. Since the seventeenth century Gospel preaching had become numb throughout Europe, but particularly in England. George Whitefield (1714-1770) was a man who has had a mighty influence upon England, Wales, Scotland and America. He was one of the greatest preachers of all time. He was known for his thundering voice and his serious affection for Jesus Christ. Whitefield had stated that the more he looked upon Christ's holiness, the more he became aware of his own sin. There had been open-air preachers before Whitefield in the fields, but none could compare to the sheer power of Whitefield. Whitefield preached eighteen thousand sermons in his thirty-four years of ministry. Conservative estimates are that Whitefield spoke a thousand times every year for more than thirty years. In the United States of America alone, eighty percent of the colonists heard him preach. To understand this in a deeper capacity this would mean that Whitefield was seen by far more settlers than George Washington. Whitefield crossed the Atlantic Ocean thirteen times for the chief purpose of the advancement of the Gospel. He spent almost three years of his life on a ship in route to preach. Eight years of his life was spent in America, fifteen trips to Scotland, two to Ireland, and one each to Gibraltar, Bermuda, and the Netherlands. Minister

Just like Moses in Egypt, and the Apostle Paul in Rome, The Lord always chooses for service. It was the providence of God that had placed George Whitefield to be a powerful revivalist and a powerhouse within the eighteenth century. It was a season of spiritual renewal unlike any in Church history. George Whitefield was the voice to awaken the Church from it's slumber and to awaken her dead faith to the living God.

Although I do not agree with all of Whitefield's theology, I respect his deep-seated obedience to obey our Lord's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). It's instructive to note that in the original Greek text this verse is in the imperative mood (which means it is a command). I am deeply concerned with the lack of evangelism in the Lord's Church today. Men like Whitefield would be kicked out of most Churches' today. Why is this? Because the content of Whitefield's preaching was that mankind has rebelled against his creator, and God is Holy and righteous. Therefore, He is a righteous judge and God will punish sin. But yet God's love and mercy demands to be extended to mankind who was created in His image. His righteous justice demands mankind an opportunity to make restitution-But because God's Holy, mankind has NOTHING to offer God. The only thing that will satisfy the divine bar in heaven is sinless blood (Lev.17:11). So, God offers Himself voluntarily in the person of Jesus Christ to shed innocent blood for mankind. And for mankind to be acquitted of his crimes against God he must be legally justified by the divine court according to God's Holy prescription (*plan of salvation, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38*), namely in and through Jesus Christ. This was the thrust of Whitefield's preaching that God is Just and Justifier, that is to punish sin and offer forgiveness according to His holiness. May the Lord raise up a new generation of zealous evangelists who will preach with passion and urgency for lost sinners dying and going to hell. May the Lord grant preachers and Christians alike the passion, heart, and zeal of George Whitefield.